



# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



CELEBRATING  
**75**  
Years  
Since 1942

**United Way**  
United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra





**This past year** United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra celebrated 75 years of ‘connecting our community’s will and resources to improve lives’. We continued our focus on improving the literacy of our children across the region. A majority of our children are still reading below grade level at the conclusion of third-grade, one of the early indicators to high school graduation and future career success. We know this ultimately has a major impact on our growing economy.

We concluded our first three-year funding cycle focused on improving early literacy by investing over \$1 million in early literacy and serving nearly 20,000 individuals. Our work to engage the entire community in this effort was showcased this past year by an official kick off and the implementation of the Northern Nevada Grade Level Reading Coalition. This work has grown two-fold over the past year allowing us to go deeper and increase awareness of our region’s early literacy crisis.

This annual report highlights the hard work and dedication of our volunteers and staff over the past year, ensuring we are making the biggest impact on our community. After reading, we hope that you will be as excited about our work and the future as we are. Turn your excitement into action and join us by volunteering, giving or advocating. We look forward to working with you in the future!

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## Celebrating Early Literacy

In 2017, UWNNS launched the Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition (Reading Coalition) that united 25+ partners, families, educators and community leaders to improve children's literacy from birth to third grade.

This past year marked tremendous 'on the ground' progress, involving the wider community in improving our kids' reading. October 2017 saw the official 'roll-out' of the Community Solutions Action Plan or 'CSAP' which provided the plan for moving forward. A public event

was held at the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows, attended by reading and literacy fans from all over the area.

Speakers engaged the crowd with their own stories about reading. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver made a special stop in Reno to tell the audience about his own upbringing and love of reading instilled by his mother.

The event was a special community celebration of reading and the promise of the Community Plan moving forward.





# Boots on the Ground: The Reading Coalition Moves Forward



Shortly after the plan was publicly unveiled, a manager was hired to lead the effort forward. Lois Ann Porter hit the ground running and began working with current coalition

partners. The coalition focuses its work in the basic areas of creating strong early literacy support systems, making summer and after school a time for literacy growth, and preventing chronic absenteeism.

Lois Ann Porter convened a series of conversations around the key strategies of the plan and invited more organizations to come to the table.

The diagram below shows the original partners, the funded partners and partner growth since October 2017.

**“IT HAS BECOME A MORE COORDINATED EFFORT TOWARD A COMMON GOAL.”**

Coalition Participant

The membership of the Reading Coalition Operations Committee has grown by 100% in 2018 and continues to grow – not only in number but in efficacy, enthusiasm and true collaboration. Each of the Operations Group members have committed to advocating for the coalition, providing information and data about work in the literacy arena and participating in Reading Coalition activities. The initial partners were focused on literacy and reading programming, and as the coalition has progressed other sectors are coming on board. Newer partners, such as Reno Public Housing Authority and Girl Scouts, are bringing value to the coalition due to their ability to reach their own audiences with literacy and reading efforts.



This Coalition provides the ‘community’ behind the Funded Partnerships’ work highlighted in the pages of this report. **Look for this symbol** to see how the Coalition supports the literacy and reading work of the UWNNS Funded Partnerships.



**Kick-Off October 2017**

**June 2018**



## Strengthening Families

It is only after a family's basic needs are addressed that we begin to accomplish our mission. Strong readers start with a strong family, and strong families produce stronger readers.

# IN 2017-2018 UNITED WAY:

Helped families save money on tax preparation fees by offering **MyFreeTaxes.com** with an average taxpayer return of **\$1,645**.



Helped families with the basics, food, shelter and clothing, through our administration of the **Emergency Food and Shelter Program**. UWNNS staff administered the allocation of \$247,548 in federal funding for food and shelter to help people across the region.

Connected families with prescription discounts through our **Familywize** program.



Connected families throughout the region with services through our support for **Nevada 2-1-1**.

### Prescription Savings Card

BIN **610194**  
CARD ID **FAM700**  
GROUP ID **FAM700**  
PCN **FW**



Show this card to your pharmacist every time.

This is not insurance – discounts only



People across our region have saved **over \$400,000** on their prescriptions in this year alone, with a savings of **over \$4.2 million to date, helping almost 40,000 people**.

*“This was nothing short of life changing for me because my prescription was almost \$300 a month, I had to work an additional part time job just to cover the cost. With your discount card my prescription cost went down to \$38 a month! Thank you, thank you, thank you!” — Deb*



## Helps People Across the Region

Families and individuals across the region call Nevada 2-1-1, looking for help, information and assistance. The top requested referrals 2017-18 were for Low Income / Subsidized Rental Housing and Electric Service Payment Assistance. While a majority of northern Nevada callers are from Washoe County, every county in the UWNNS region is served by Nevada 2-1-1.



## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Investing in the First Five

The ‘**Building Blocks to Literacy**’ partnership works in rural and frontier areas serving parents and children, the community and early childhood classrooms. ‘Building Blocks to Literacy’ is a collaboration of the Wells Family Resource Center (lead), Great Basin College Child and Family Center, Nevada Early Intervention Services, and the Elko-Lander-Eureka County Library System. One key element of their work is the introduction of the ‘Ages and Stages’ questionnaire (ASQ) to parents of the youngest learners. This is important because the results help determine if a child’s development is on schedule. Children can fall behind very quickly, and the ASQ assessment helps get them back on track developmentally.

**With a goal of reaching 15 parents with the ASQ:SE (social/emotional) in 2017-18, the program completed 445 assessments — for a total of 557 over the course of three years.** When children are identified through the assessment as not reaching the assessment cutoff, parents are contacted and provided with referrals for more testing or interventions.



**TO SUPPORT LITERACY** for our youngest children, the Reading Coalition has improved the capacity of fifteen Coalition organizations through a training delivered by Diane Barone, Ph.D titled “**Quality Elements of Early Childhood Literacy Programming.**”



### **Building Blocks to Literacy**

Wells Family Resource Center teacher guiding two students through the process of solution cards. These cards provide different visuals and wording to help children solve everyday problems.





## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Investing in the First Five



It's what happens in our first years of life that point us in the right direction. What kind of stage is being set? Sturdy or fragile? 90% of brain development happens within the first 5 years of life – it's an impact for a lifetime.

The '**Family Reading Program**' is a partnership that includes the Northern Nevada Literacy Council (lead), Job Opportunities in Nevada (JOIN), UNR Cooperative Extension, Nevada RSVP, Seniors in Service, Lemelson Academy, Sierra Nevada Journeys, Churchill County Library and Grassroots Books.

The program engages parents (and grandparents, too) and children, building foundational skills for nurturing ongoing literacy, step by step in a variety of sessions.

*In 2017-2018, the Family Reading Program served families in Reno, Sparks, Incline, Elko, West Wendover, Jackpot, Wells, Carson City, Fallon, Yerington, Winnemucca, Lovelock, and Schurz. **The program was attended by 1,397 participants, and 2,623 books were distributed.***



**TO SUPPORT LITERACY** for our youngest children, the Reading Coalition has engaged families through "Reach Out and Read" provided through pediatricians at Renown Health Systems, Community Health Alliance and Northern Nevada HOPES.



Reading Little Pea before building and testing plastic spoon catapults.



## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Supporting Kindergarten Readiness

The ‘**Family Reading Program**’ targets parents and their children from birth through third grade. The program models techniques and activities parents can use with their children to support their literacy development. It also helps parents who are English Language Learners read more fluently to their children. As children rapidly build their early literacy and learning skills, it’s important for parents to continue spending a growing amount of time reading with their child.

▶ Research indicates that the amount and quality of time parents spend reading with their children affects emerging language and literacy skills. In its literacy sessions, the ‘Family Reading Program’ emphasizes to parent participants the importance of reading often and for at least 30 minutes at a time. Parents also learn techniques to use and ways to ‘extend the literacy value of a book,’ through related activities with their child.

### Parent Quotes

“The Family Reading Program continues to be successful at our library. Parents often proudly describe their home libraries. The hard cover books you offered this year have made it seem more important and the parents and children always comment, ‘**this is a nice book!**’ Children sometimes think it’s a library book and they have to bring it back after they have read it at home. They are always thrilled to know **they get to keep the book!**”

“I can share that some of the parents have said they had or were in the process of buying book shelves for the **increase of books** for their children.”

“The science was so much fun. We used to do more than we do now, but I will definitely be bringing it back. **We’re even thinking Science Parties!**”

“Thank you for the wonderful stories and science experiments. **My second grader had the best time!**”

“I like **asking my child questions** in between the pages.”

“I learned that reading with [my child] and asking questions frequently can **help them understand** how books and reading work.”



Families perform the “Skittles Color Experiment” after reading [The Day the Crayons Quit](#) at Dresslerville Head Start.





## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Supporting Kindergarten Readiness

The ‘**Building Blocks to Literacy**’ partnership works to prepare children with fundamentals needed to be ‘school ready.’ A focus on library usage and attaining one’s own library card is emphasized for all children. They provide specialized ‘e-books’ for parents and children who live in remote areas away from libraries.

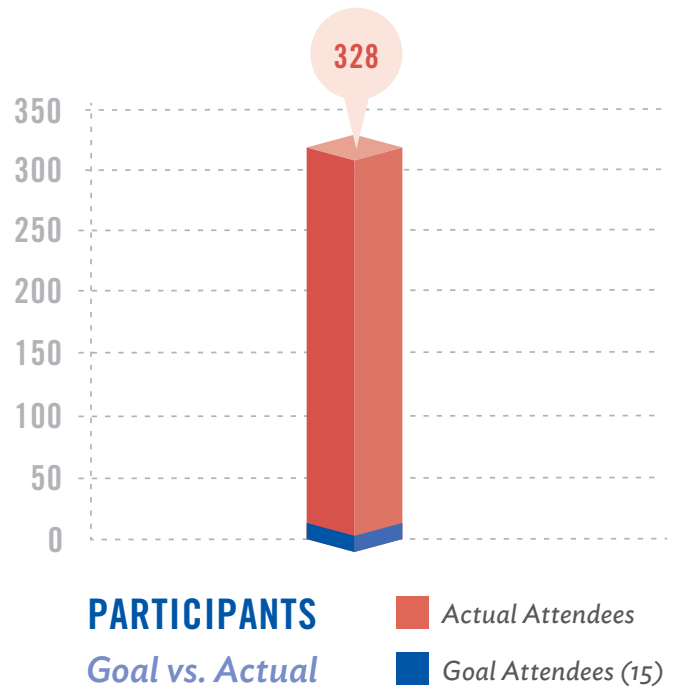
**In 2017-18, 214 new library cards were issued as a result of these efforts.** The program was attended by 1,426 participants (compared with 1,241 in the prior year) and 296 books were distributed to attendees.



### ‘Dr. Seuss Night’ at Great Basin College (BBL partner)

Great Basin College Child and Family Center’s Literacy Night had a Dr. Seuss theme. Families enjoyed several readings of Dr. Seuss books and then explored different literacy stations. Each station had a description on how the hands-on activity develops literacy skills.

### ‘BUILDING BLOCKS TO LITERACY’ Reaches Preschool Teachers with Social-Emotional Skills Training



▶ The foundation to early literacy and language development begins with a child’s ability to build positive relationships with children and adults, follow basic routines, pay attention to the teacher, and develop skills to become emotionally literate across both the home and school environments. The ‘Building Blocks to Literacy’ partnership provides multiple sessions to teach preschool teachers ‘social-emotional’ classroom skills to teach to their own students. The training uses the TACSEI model (Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention). The partnership far surpassed their original goal to reach 15 teachers. **In 2017-18 they reached 328 pre-school teachers, with a total of 825 over three years.**



### TO SUPPORT LITERACY

for our youngest children, the Reading Coalition has expanded the use of KNPB programming and resources via the “**Ready to Learn**” program by offering a connection to PBS Kids programming to all Reading Coalition partner organizations.



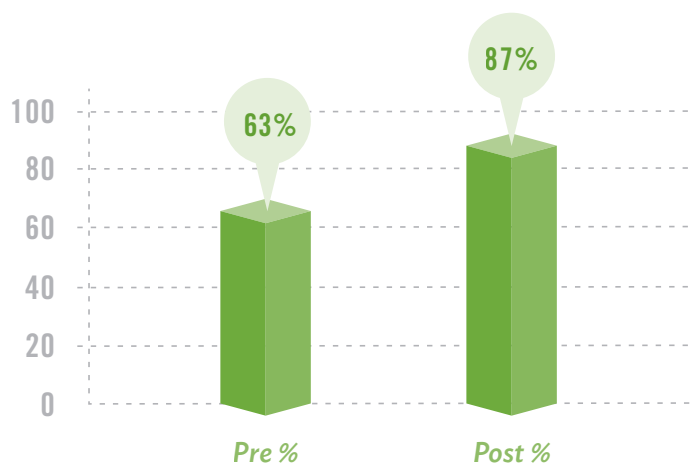
## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Helping Young Readers Stay on Track

‘**Boys and Girls Club Reads**’ is a partnership of Boys and Girls Clubs in Truckee Meadows (lead), North Lake Tahoe, Western Nevada, Mason Valley and Elko.

‘Boys and Girls Club Reads’ utilizes a combination of activities that include group reading, individual reading, online curriculum, afterschool tutoring, summer learning loss prevention programs, library partnerships and parental engagement. **In 2017-18, 1,323 parents and children were served by the partnership across the region.**

Young readers can quickly fall behind in the early grades if they are not consistently reinforced with good literacy and reading habits. The ‘Boys and Girls Club Reads’ partnership works with children in kindergarten through third grade in five Clubs throughout the region. The program emphasizes individual and group activities designed to raise a child’s reading level.

### ‘BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB READS’ Grade-Level Reading Increase



■ % Participants reading at grade level



Emma is a kindergartener at BGC Truckee Meadows who struggled with both reading and spelling. From the beginning of the program, however, Emma demonstrated a deep commitment to learning. She diligently attended her BGC Reads sessions, and even on days without a scheduled session, she would come to our Literacy Coordinator seeking extra practice. At one point, she brought her two closest friends to help her go through the Dibels one-on-one program. Her friends encouraged Emma and helped her continue to build confidence, and the girls even ended up participating in BGC Reads themselves.

Emma’s hard work and determination paid off. She went from missing almost half of the words in her pre-test to only missing four words on her post-test, just one word short of reading at grade level!



## Strong Early Childhood Literacy Supports: Helping Young Readers Stay on Track

‘*Nature’s Transformers*’ is a partnership comprised of Sierra Nevada Journeys (lead), Nevada Outdoor School, Great Basin Institute, and Desert Research Institute’s ‘Green Power’ program. The program includes classroom learning, field study, a literacy kit and book to take home to continue lessons with parent involvement. **In 2017-18, 2,440 parents and children participated in the program and 1,220 new books were provided for home libraries.**



### Nature’s Transformers

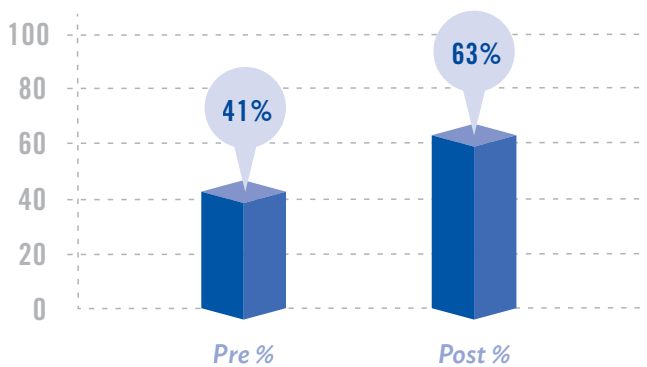
“I was teaching a first grade class about structures and functions and how they help different animals survive. We had just finished reading a book about animals’ different structures and functions and I asked students to pick one of their favorite examples from the book to write about. A student asked if instead they could write about the structures and functions of their class pet, a chameleon named Megan. All the students got really excited about writing about Megan and began to tell me stories of their class pet, how she uses her long tongue to eat food and how she can move her eyes in different directions to see two pictures at once.

In our first lesson we ask our students, “**Who likes science and what do scientists learn about and study?**” Students light up and get excited to share what they know about science. In one class, a boy was so excited and exclaimed he knows about studying animals because he has an animal encyclopedia. Throughout the lesson he demonstrated this knowledge, even going as far as to correct the book’s classification of animals. The book describes a mole and shows a picture. The boy was adamant that it was a star-nosed mole and should be described as such. He also pointed out that I incorrectly pronounced Hyena, “**its Hy-ena, not Hy-hena!**” He really enjoyed the lesson, and I can’t wait to go back for the next lesson to see if I can stump him with some new animal knowledge.”

— **Program Instructor, Van Gorder Elementary School**

Hands-on learning experiences have been shown to promote early literacy by providing an authentic context for learning. With Sierra Nevada Journeys’ ‘*Nature’s Transformers*’ program, field-study experiences provide ‘real-time’ sights, sounds and smells that stimulate cognitive and linguistic learning. The program gauges the level of participant ‘grasp’ of key concepts covered over the course of the curriculum by conducting a pre-assessment prior to the class and then a post-assessment once the program is completed.

### NATURE’S TRANSFORMERS’ PARTICIPANTS Science-Based Literacy Increases



### ASSESSMENT OF SCIENCE-BASED LITERACY KNOWLEDGE & CONCEPTS

■ Assessment Scores



**TO SUPPORT LITERACY** for our youngest children, the Reading Coalition has established a relationship with the Housing Authority of the City of Reno to distribute literacy information and parent supports throughout their sites.



# Volunteers: Multiplying Impact

Many hands come together to make our impact possible. United Way volunteers represent over 50 businesses with outstanding corporate social responsibility, investing in a culture of caring and taking action.

***In 2017-2018, 406 volunteers gave hours of their time reaching a combined value of \$38,406.*** Donated time ranged from serving on our Board or a committee, reading to elementary school students, participating in Day of Action or a company Day of Caring, and running giving campaigns.

We are thankful for every volunteer, knowing that our impact multiplies when we work together.



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NV Energy



# Volunteers: Multiplying Impact



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**Thank you to ALL of our supporters!** Donors listed are those who made Leadership donations in our 2017/18 Workplace Campaign and in our 2017/18 fiscal year. UWNNS has made every effort to accurately acknowledge our benefactors. If we have made an error, please accept our deepest apologies and contact: [melissa.hellmuth@uwnns.org](mailto:melissa.hellmuth@uwnns.org) so we can correct the error in future publications.



# Thank You to our TOP 10 Corporate Partners!



## Financials

### Statement of Financial Position

#### ASSETS

Current Assets	\$642,292
Property and Equipment, Net	\$236,183
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$878,475</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	\$168,898
Long Term Liabilities	\$0
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$593,526
Temporarily and Permanently Restricted Net Assets	\$116,051
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$878,475</b>

### Statement of Activities

#### PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Campaign Support	\$1,094,477
Donor Designations to Other Organizations	(\$376,403)

#### PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE CONT.

Provision for Uncollectible Pledges	(\$67,933)
Net Campaign Support	\$650,141
Grants, Contracts, Fees, Interest, Sponsorship	\$240,561
<b>Total Public Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$890,702</b>

#### EXPENSES

##### Program Services

Community Impact and Impact Initiatives	\$257,820
Direct Program Costs	\$491,949
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$749,769</b>

##### Support Services

Management and General	\$158,817
Fundraising	\$154,916
<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>\$313,733</b>

#### Total Program and Support Services

\$1,063,502

#### Changes in Net Assets

(\$172,800)

# Milestones

- ★ **1942**  
Started as the Reno-Sparks Community Chest
- ★ **1967**  
Changed name to Washoe United Fund
- ★ **1987**  
Changed name to United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
- ★ **1996**  
Began funding of specific programs to impact the community vs funding for operational budgets
- ★ **2001**  
Convened first planning group to implement Nevada 2-1-1
- ★ **2006**  
Became one of the first United Ways to implement the 'Community Impact' model
- ★ **2007**  
Began to offer Familywise Prescription Savings Cards
- ★ **2008**  
Spearheaded the Financial Stability Partnership
- ★ **2014**  
Adopted early literacy focus
- ★ **2015**  
Began MyFreeTaxes.com to bring tax prep savings to the region
- ★ **2016**  
Reached \$100 Million fundraising milestone
- ★ **2017**  
Rolled out the Community Solutions Action Plan for early literacy
- ★ **2018**  
Doubled the number of organizations participating in the Reading Coalition and more than tripled the number of volunteer hours dedicated to literacy activities



THANK YOU  
FOR **75**  
YEARS!

## OUR MISSION

We link the community's will and resources to improve lives

### YOU CAN BE THE DIFFERENCE

and make a lasting impact on our community. It starts with one simple action:

- Donate
- Volunteer
- Share our story
- Follow us online

[uwanns.org](http://uwanns.org) (775) 322-8668   

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