

UNITED WAY OF HENDERSON COUNTY
WOMEN UNITED[®]

2023-2024 Year in Review

Women United is United Way of Henderson County's program connecting and engaging women who want to make a significant impact in our community. Women United members contribute \$1,000 or more annually to United Way of Henderson County (a three-year Step Up program, an under-40 membership level, and other options are available upon request). Our members enjoy frequent networking, volunteering, and giveback opportunities together. Women United's signature initiative, GEM (Girls EMpowered), is a nine-session afterschool program designed to build self-esteem and increase school success. Our GEM program served 62 fifth- and eighth-grade girls this school year.

Here are some additional highlights from our year:

July 2023

- After last year's annual meeting, we donated 135 books to children in foster care.

October 2023

- Women United members collected \$256-worth of feminine hygiene supplies to donate to Project Dignity. Members provided a total of 10.5 volunteer hours creating baggies of supplies ready for individual distribution.
- The GEM program welcomed new cohorts at Hillandale Elementary and Hendersonville Middle Schools.

November 2023

- Dogwood Health Trust awarded United Way of Henderson County a three-year grant to expand Women United's signature program, Girls EMpowered (GEM), from 3 to 12 locations including schools across the county. Women United continues to play a vital role in GEM's success in existing as well as new locations.

December 2023

- Women United members generously opened their hearts and pocketbooks when participating in the Blessing in Boxes program. We gathered together at the Barn at Tall Oaks for a celebration themed around Arts Education while collecting \$12,500-worth of gifts for 50 children in Henderson County who may not have otherwise had a bright holiday season.

January 2024

- We were invited to look inward at a yoga class exclusively for Women United members hosted by Laughing Elephant Yoga. Participants also created their own "Be True to You" essential oil blend to take home before centering themselves on yoga mats for a grounding and empowering practice.

February 2024

- Upward Elementary School welcomed its eighth cohort of GEM girls while Sugarloaf Elementary School welcomed its first! Women United members served once again as volunteers, speakers at GEM sessions, and chaperones on GEM field trips.

March 2024

- On International Women's Day, Women United members teamed up with recent graduates of United Way's Rising Leaders program to participate in Habitat for Humanity's Women Build challenge. This friendly competition had our

team racing against a team of women realtors to see who could help erect the walls of a house first. Our team worked hard, had fun, and got a lot done!

April 2024

- We combined our monthly informal “Kickback & Connect” drop-in with our annual GEM backpack stuffing event. In between sips, snacks, and chats, our members stuffed 62 backpacks and GEM-branded satchels with school supplies, journals, and planners for our soon-to-be GEM graduates to take with them to their next school—be it middle or high school.
- Women United celebrated our GEM girls by distributing certificates of completion and the lovingly stuffed bags at special graduation ceremonies.
- Members were able to join a United Way bus tour of partner agencies to learn more about the work they do to address basic needs, education, financial stability and health concerns in our community.

May 2024

- A group of Women United members volunteered together at the Boys and Girls Club to help paint the teen center. Additional members simultaneously participated in other Days of Caring projects at nonprofits across the county.

June 2024

- GEM began a summer program for 5th grade girls at the Boys and Girls Club for Henderson County.
- The annual meeting and summer social concludes our typical Women United year with transitions of officers and members of the WU Executive Committee and some special recognitions. Presentations of three mini-grants of \$1,000 each are made to three recipient groups.

