

# UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL OHIO CAMPAIGN IDEAS



United Way recognizes that many organizations have established hybrid workforces with associates who work from home several days a week. And due to the convenience, virtual meetings and events are here to stay.

If that's the case at your company, we encourage you to think about your favorite activities from past years and find creative ways to make them virtual! Change the annual bake sale to a cookie recipe sale, for example, or host a virtual stupid pet trick contest or virtual walk/run contest. However, if in-person events are an option, we encourage you to incorporate those in your campaign, as well.

For inspiration, we have ideas that could work both in person and online. For event fundraisers or volunteer experiences, contact your relationship manager for support, as well as for assistance with virtual donation collections.

## FAVORITE FUNDRAISERS

### **Paid Days Off**

Through human resources or similar department, employees can have their name entered into a drawing to receive whole or half days of paid time off for giving to the United Way campaign. Allow time for approval.

### **Lazy Monday**

Employees who give at a certain level can have their name in a drawing to win a Lazy Monday when they can start to work late and have coffee and breakfast delivered to their home.

### **Half and Half Raffle**

Employees each donate a dollar for a raffle. Hold a drawing where the winner receives half the funds in the container and your United Way campaign receives the other half.

## CAMPAIGN INCENTIVES

### **Custom-designed Zoom background**

For each person who participates or gives at a certain level, their name can be put in a drawing for a professionally designed Zoom background.

### **Vacation Time Donation**

Company sponsors the opportunity for employees to donate unused vacation time. The dollar equivalent of the donated vacation time goes to United Way in the employee's name.

### **Workplace Battle**

Have offices, departments or staff teams compete against each other to see who can have the highest participation rate or greatest donation amount raised for an incentive such as a free pizza lunch, portrait of their family, gift certificates, a home office makeover, etc. Announce the winner at the campaign wrap-up meeting.

### **Dress Down Days**

If you have staff not working from home, this will still be a favorite incentive! Each employee who participates or gives at a certain level is entitled to dress down by wearing jeans and t-shirts on the day of their choice. They can earn extra days for adding on to their donation.

## GENERAL FUNDRAISERS

### **Picture Match Game**

Invite employees to try their luck matching baby and/or pet pictures of management on a PowerPoint slideshow or other display. Award the staff member with the most correct answers a fun incentive (e.g. gift certificate, gift basket, VIP parking, etc.). Employees can be charged \$5 (or other amount) per ballot.

### **Silent Online Auction**

Staff can bid silently on items such as longer lunch hours, extra vacation days, gift baskets, gift cards and other items donated by employees or by the company. (iPads are a great option!) Try Qgive as an online silent auction platform.

### **Virtual Bartending/Mixology Class or Happy Hour**

Enlist a professional bartender to lead an online class. Charge employees a small fee to attend and provide a grocery list in advance.

### **Virtual or In-Person Paint & Sip**

Invite staff to join a Zoom event or in-person Paint & Sip for a small donation. Drop off or mail out materials and vote on everyone's favorite final creation.

### **United Way Master Class**

Enlist the help of staff members with unique skills (knitting, painting, cooking, etc.) and charge admission for others to learn from them.

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## COMMUNITY AWARENESS EVENT IDEAS

### Nonprofit Partner Tours and Speakers

Have a United Way agency ambassador speak at your virtual or in-person kickoff events or other campaign activities. Also arrange for a virtual or in-person tour of one of our nonprofit partners to get a look at the United Way's impact on the community.

### Nonprofit Partner or Leaders United Panel Discussions

Your relationship manager can help you set up an online panel discussion with three or four representatives from United Way of Central Ohio's nonprofit partners or from Leaders United.

### Virtual or In-Person Lunch and Learns

One of the best ways to raise awareness of the United Way's work within the community and how we fight poverty is by having one or a series of Lunch and Learns for staff. Lunch and Learns feature a speaker from a United Way agency talking about their work in central Ohio. They can also be continued throughout the year to keep staff engaged in the community outside of the campaign. Set one or a few up with your relationship manager!

## ENTERTAINMENT THEME EVENT IDEAS

### "American Idol"

Employees hold a virtual "American Idol"-type contest, based on the hit TV show. Employees make a donation to vote for the singer or singing group of their choice. The person or group who attracts the most votes will sing a song in front of an audience.

### Virtual BINGO Night

Use an online platform such as [www.myfreebingocards.com](http://www.myfreebingocards.com) and invite employees and their families to donate to the campaign to participate. Have local businesses donate prizes.

### Comedy Hour

Have comedians within your company or their funny family members tell jokes for a lunchtime show. Have employees buy tickets to attend.

### [Company's] Funniest Office Video Contests

Invite employees to create their own work from home videos. Charge an entry fee at a virtual or in-person viewing party; offer a prize.

### Reality Show Campaign

Get real with your employees and conduct your campaign with a theme centered on the realityTV shows that have taken over the world! Hold virtual or in-person activities with a tie to the popular reality shows (e.g. "Top Chef" cooking contest, "Weakest Link" putt-putt challenge, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" trivia).

### Tune into the Community

Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat. Hold a virtual musical talent show complete with revamped songs with lyrics about United Way.

### Talent Show

Hold a talent show to kick off your United Way campaign. As a part of the program, have executives perform songs with lyrics to fit United Way's work. The finale event is the Mr./Mrs. United Way Pageant where divisions nominate a contestant to compete in the pageant. Each pageant contestant must educate the audience about one United Way agency during the talent competition.

## FOOD THEME EVENT IDEAS

### Lunch Box Auction

Have employees create gourmet lunches to be auctioned off and delivered to the highest bidder. Give prizes for the most creative, nutritious, elegant or humorous meals.

### Wine Tasting

Hold an online wine tasting event and select five wines to be rated. All employees and their spouses/guests in attendance are given rating sheets. Special drawings for bottles of wine or wine-themed gifts are also held for contributors to the United Way campaign throughout the week. The larger the contribution the more chances for prizes.

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## TRAVEL/VACATION THEME EVENT IDEAS

### □ **Bon Voyage!**

With a traveling theme, you can host a Bon Voyage party as a victory celebration. Everyone who gives through United Way gets a passport to get into the party. Top contributors will be put into a drawing to win a prize, possibly donated from a travel agency.

### □ **Vacation at Home/Work**

Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian luau, African safari or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Organize a virtual scavenger hunt or online hula-hoop contest.

## OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### □ **Back to School**

Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). Collect school supplies for a United Way partner. Hold a virtual spelling bee between departments. Contestants must spell each word correctly or everyone on the team must pay. The winning team receives a prize. Email United Way pop quizzes to employees and give the winners a prize. Have employees' kids help decorate fliers.

### □ **Balloon Popping for Prizes**

Ask business partners to donate prizes. Before filling a balloon with helium, place a note inside some of the balloons with the name of a prize. In other balloons, place a note with a United Way fact. Pledge forms and other office notices can be shaped like balloons. Have employees purchase and pop balloons during a virtual event.

### □ **Game Contest**

Recruit employees to play an online game (e.g. Bingo, Kahoot quiz, GiveGame, etc.). Create a bracket and pool around the winning team.

### □ **Children's Drawing Contest**

Give employees photographs of some top executives for their children under 12 to draw. Charge a ballot fee to vote for the best portraits. Display the winning portraits. Variations of this event: have children draw people helping other people; poems, collages and photos can also be submitted.

### □ **Online Auction**

Have employees donate household items, books, CDs and videos for a company- or department-wide sale with the proceeds going toward your United Way campaign. [www.communityauctions.com](http://www.communityauctions.com)

### □ **United Way 007**

Clues are given to employees in the form of riddles about United Way's work. The department or individual who figures out all the riddles receives a prize at the end of the campaign.

### □ **Campaign Video Contest**

Quiz employees throughout the campaign about the United Way story videos or campaign video available in the online toolkit at [liveunitedcentralohio.org/for-companies/](http://liveunitedcentralohio.org/for-companies/). The department or individual who figures out all the answers receives a prize at the end of the campaign.