

Tulsa Area United Way History



For 85 years, the Tulsa Area United Way has brought people in the Tulsa area together – people who give so well and so often with compassionate hearts to help take care of those in need.

First known in 1924 as the Tulsa Community Fund, Tulsans combined 11 health and human service organizations under one umbrella and ran their inaugural campaign. That very first campaign goal of \$238,895 was exceeded by \$9,000, establishing a pattern that Tulsa area residents have followed

since. And that campaign lasted only five days.

In 1932, Waite Phillips, one of the largest contributors to the Tulsa Community Fund, donated a three-story building downtown, and Tulsa became one of only a handful of cities where a Fund had a permanent home. This location at 6th and Cheyenne remained the headquarters until 1970 when TAUW moved to its current location, 1430 S. Boulder.

The Depression and World War II posed difficult organizational and funding

challenges, but once again, community support was there. In 1943, the Fund's \$600,000 campaign (\$309,845 raised by Tulsa Community Fund, \$290,155 by the national war effort) supported 22 local agencies, as well as 22 organizations designed for international relief.

During World War II, the organization was known as Tulsa's War Chest and was affiliated with the National War Fund and United War Chest of Oklahoma. The name of the organization was eventually changed to the Tulsa Community Chest

as a result of community growth in the 50s and early 60s. The final name change was in 1974 to the Tulsa Area United Way with a new logo of a helping hand beneath a rainbow of hope.

In 1988, TAUW raised over \$12 million to support 53 partner agencies. That year, a new Venture Grant program was established to fund innovative programs and since its start, has financed initiatives such as the Safe Place Shelter at Youth Services of Tulsa, 2-1-1 Tulsa Helpline and TulsaWORKS at Goodwill.

What began as an idea in 1924 has turned into hundreds of millions of dollars being invested in our community, helping people every day. In 85 years, this incredible community has raised more than \$545,273,000 for the six-county area TAUW serves, putting the organization consistently in the top 10% of all United Ways in the nation.

Today, TAUW works to keep strong the safety net of critical health, human and social services to meet the dramatically increased needs. And every year,

more than 200 community volunteers spend thousands of hours evaluating the needs of the community and how best to invest your gifts strategically to positively impact Tulsa's citizens.

From "Be a Good Neighbor," to "Tulsa's No. 1 Job: Giving the United Way," from "Love Can Move Mountains" to "Your Gift works Wonders," Tulsans have shown from the beginning that they embody the spirit of what it means to truly "Live United" by giving, advocating and volunteering.

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