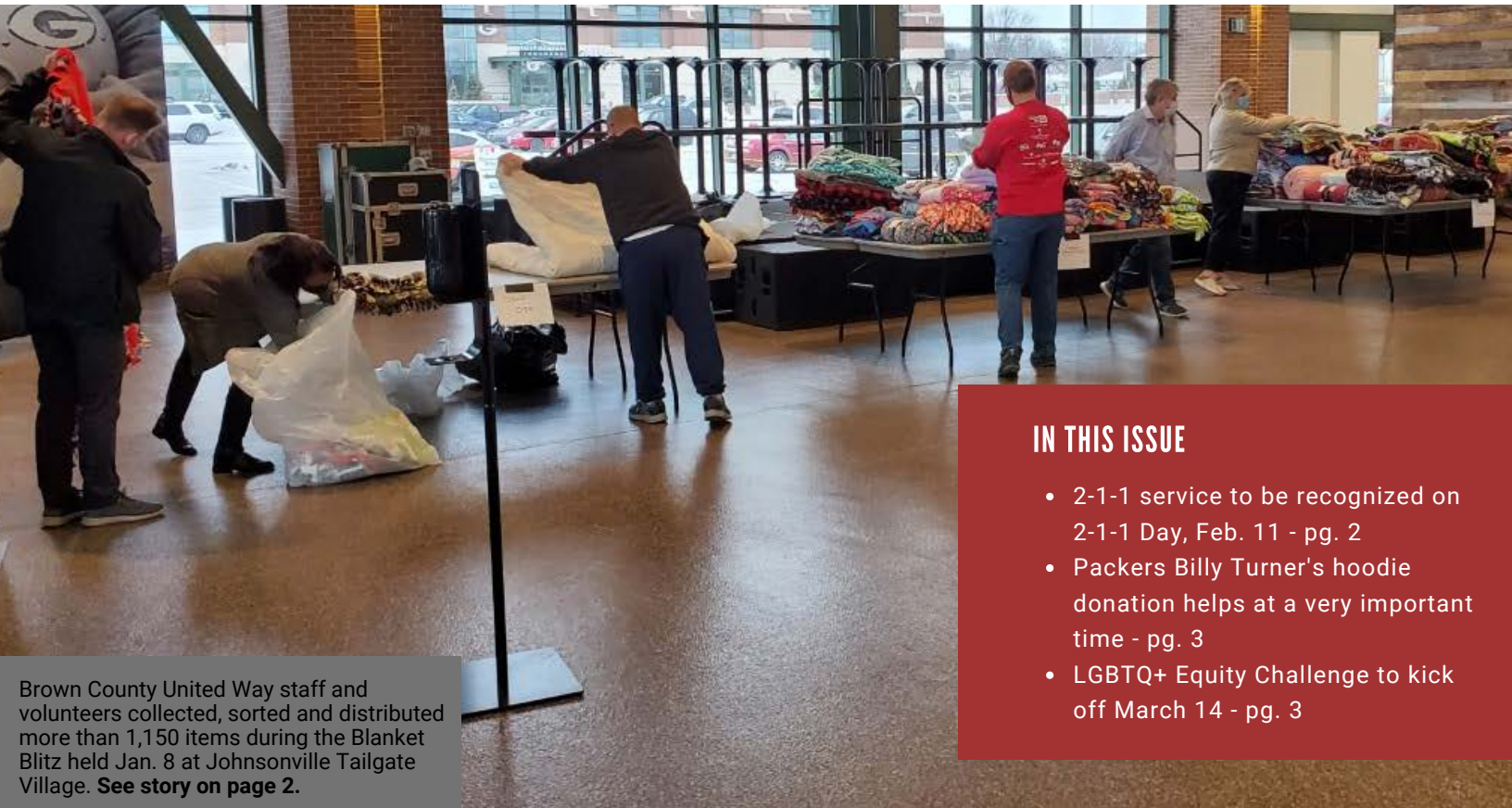


A UNITED WAY FORWARD

A look at the impact Brown County United Way is having on our community



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Brown County United Way staff and volunteers collected, sorted and distributed more than 1,150 items during the Blanket Blitz held Jan. 8 at Johnsonville Tailgate Village. **See story on page 2.**

Brown County United Way, Greater Green Bay Community Foundation launch DEIB collaborative

In remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the brilliant leader who challenged our country to rise up and answer the call to action for a more just world, Brown County United Way and the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation have launched a diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging collaborative partnership.

The purpose of the partnership is to address and ultimately change the structural and institutional racist principles that exist in many organizations and across sectors of society in Brown County.

"The health of these sectors is critical to the health of a community," said Rashad Cobb, community engagement program officer at GGBCF.

"This partnership offers the opportunity to strengthen the capacity of agencies and partners in the diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) space."

The partnership's first initiative will be a series of trainings providing a comprehensive understanding of bias, privilege, discrimination and equity. Participants will also examine their own policies as they relate to structural racism and be given guidance on how to develop new plans that create a healthy DEIB space for everyone. The trainings, which are scheduled to begin in May, will be limited to organizations that have a current active relationship with either BC UW or GGBCF.

With the creation of this new collaborative, both organizations are taking next steps in combatting racism.

"We want to expand our influence and offer our nonprofit partners the tools they need to create structural and institutional change inside their organizations and across the non-profit sector," said Holly Ladwig,

cont. on pg. 2

BCUW's program investment and 2-1-1 manager. "To be successful as a community, we must come together to make a conscious effort to address the causes of our divisions and the need to make our communities safer and engage in meaningful change."

The DEIB trainings are an important step in the journey of creating a true space of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

"The vision is to create a system that delivers helping efforts so that individuals are empowered and we act with mutual respect for all," Cobb said. "One day we hope we can look out into our community as one that is built on our diversity so that we all do better together."

The need for accelerated DEIB work was identified by local nonprofit leaders participating in the Nonprofit Impact Initiative (NII), a local funding and program collaborative facilitated by GGBCF.

As a result of this work, GGBCF and BCUW developed the DEIB collaborative partnership. This effort will increase individuals' and organizations' knowledge and understanding of topics related to DEIB, while highlighting the issues that have led to disparities in outcomes for an increasing number of community members.

BCUW has long been making DEIB a tenet of its work. In 2015, it began offering trauma-informed care trainings and community-awareness events that include training on the relationship of psychological trauma and the effects of discrimination on individuals, organizations and systems.

In 2020, following the George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery murders, it published its United Way Forward statement condemning racism. That statement reads in part: "As we look to the immediate future and beyond, Brown County United Way will continue to engage in the necessary systemic advocacy work that will bring about lasting change both within our organization and throughout the community. Our history of collaboration with diverse stakeholders will and must continue so that multiple perspectives are represented, respected and engaged as we forge the path forward. Now more than ever, we need to Live United. Silence is not an option."

In 2021 BCUW helped present a 21-week equity challenge. This online educational program helped develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and racism affect our lives and communities. In Brown County more than 1,500 community members registered for the challenge, one of the largest participation rates in the state. (See pg. 3 for a story on another equity challenge BCUW is hosting this spring.)

Blanket Blitz collects more than 1,150 items in first year as a one-day event

More than 1,150 items were collected and distributed to area agencies during Brown County United Way's and the Greater Green Bay Labor Council Community Services Committee's annual blanket drive, held this year as a one-day Blanket Blitz on Saturday, January 8 at the Johnsonville Tailgate Village at Lambeau Field.

The event, now in its 11th year, was re-imagined from its original format as the collection, sorting and distribution of blankets to area agencies all happened in a single day. Previously collection was a month-long process.

"It was a fantastic day that allowed us to collect, sort and distribute many blankets all in a few short hours," said Tom Schoffelman, BCUW VP of resource development and communication. "We received a lot of positive comments from people dropping off blankets as they didn't even need to leave their cars because volunteers went out to them when they drove up with their donation. We were also able to engage some new volunteers from area companies who helped throughout the day."

Joining BCUW and the Labor Council in supporting this year's drive were Green Bay Packers GiveBack, Breakthrough Fuel and WFRV TV-5.

Since the drive started in 2012 the community has donated more than 23,000 blankets to help people in need.

MISSION: POSSIBLE

The United Way

Your mission, should you choose to accept it,
is to attend Brown County United Way's
Annual Celebration

- Wednesday, March 16, 2022
 - 7:30-8:30 a.m.
 - Virtual online event
- Sign-up details coming soon!

February 11 recognized as 211 Day

From Hello to Help, 211 is here. And that service will be celebrated statewide and nationally on February 11 (2-11).

211 exemplifies United Way's fight for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in every community.

Each year 211 is leveraged by millions of people across North America. Clients contact 211 to access free and confidential crisis and emergency counseling, disaster assistance, food, health care and insurance assistance, stable housing and utilities payment assistance, employment services, veteran services and childcare and family services.

Last year in the Brown County service area (Brown, Door and Kewaunee counties) 7,441 requests for services were made:

- 1,710: housing/rental assistance
- 1,550: COVID related
- 816: mental health and addiction
- 614: government and legal assistance
- 547: utility assistance
- 294: transportation assistance

Persons can access 211 by dialing 211 or 877-947-2211 from any phone in Wisconsin, texting their zip code to 898211, or going online at www.211wisconsin.org and either chatting with a live specialist or searching a database. Wisconsin's 211 database includes information on more than 12,000 agencies and networks serving the state. Its call specialists can offer help in more than 180 languages.

In recognition of the importance of the 211 service, Governor Tony Evers has signed a declaration making Feb. 11 211 Day.



Creating an inclusive community is aim of LGBTQ+ Equity Challenge

Brown County United Way is presenting a free, online 9-Week LGBTQ+ Equity Challenge beginning March 14 and running through the week of May 9.

The challenge is designed to help people develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and intolerance of the LGBTQ+ community affects people and communities. Participants will receive weekly emails with links to articles, videos, and podcasts that contain updates from local LGBTQ+ advocates. The topics being covered are definitions and terminology, history, intersectionality, violence, education, healthcare, current challenges, and how to be an ally. The challenge will also highlight some of the progress happening for the LGBTQ+ community in Brown County, including UW-Green Bay's Northeastern Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Historical Archives and the meaning behind Green Bay's first-ever LGBTQ+ mural.

"This challenge has value for everyone, no matter your identity or existing knowledge of the LGBTQ+ community," said Justis Tenpenny, BCUW communication and engagement manager, and challenge coordinator. "It's a great opportunity to grow your understanding of the LGBTQ+ community in a safe and easy way."

This challenge follows another equity challenge BCUW was a part of last year: the 21-Week Equity Challenge, which explored how inequity and racism affects people and communities. More than 1,500 people in Brown County signed up for that challenge which was hosted by United

Way of Wisconsin.

Tenpenny believes these challenges help BCUW toward realizing its vision of creating an inclusive community where all individuals are able to meet their basic needs and have equal opportunity for stability in their health, education, financial well-being and connection to the community.

According to the United Way ALICE Project, a study which is helping quantify who is living on the edge of financial insecurity, many in the LGBTQ+ community are considered at risk. According to the report, differences in employment and wages are even greater for those in the U.S. workforce who identify as LGBTQ+. Despite having more education than the general population, these workers are more likely to earn less than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts, and more likely to experience financial hardship.

To learn about the challenge and to register, go to www.lgbtqEquityChallenge.com. Then, every Monday beginning March 14 participants will receive an email with information, articles, videos and more related to the week's topic. On Thursdays, participants will receive a brief questionnaire that will help improve the challenge in the future.

Last year BCUW created a diversity, equity, and inclusion pledge. The LGBTQ+ Equity Challenge is a building block off that pledge and is one of many actionable steps the organization is taking to create a more equitable community for all marginalized populations in Brown County.

Afghan refugees, immigrants to benefit from hoodie donation from Packers Billy Turner

Refugee and immigrant families relocating to Brown County this winter are finding themselves a little warmer after their arrival thanks to a donation of hooded sweatshirts from Green Bay Packers player Billy Turner.



According to Said Hassan, executive director of COMSA, who is handling the distribution of the hoodies, many immigrants from Africa and other moderate climates are not

ready for Wisconsin winters so they are in need of warmer clothing when they get to Brown County.

"Our plan is to give these hoodies to the Afghan families that are currently arriving to the Green Bay area first, and then we will provide them to others who need them," he said.

A recent story on WLUK TV reported that since October, 120 Afghan refugees



Said Hassan from COMSA loads up the boxes of hoodie sweatshirt Packers player Billy Turner donated to Brown County United Way to make a difference in the community.

Turner has a goal to help local youth and with so many immigrant families in need of warm clothing, the donation was a great fit.

have relocated to Brown County. Many of the families had to flee their homeland quickly due the country's sudden collapse, bringing with them very little of their belongings.

Turner donated the sweatshirts to Brown County United Way after talking with Packers Player/Alumni specialist and BCUW board member Tony Fisher about the best way to impact the community.

COMSA (www.comsusa.org) is a

resource center that provides culturally accommodating and customized services for Somali refugee and other immigrant communities in Northeast Wisconsin. Its goal is to provide a welcoming environment for refugees and immigrant families in the community, with services that come alongside families, therefore enabling them to learn English, seek employment and education, and become self-sufficient.

Three area schools awarded Character Playbook grants

Brown County United Way has awarded \$500 grants to three Brown County schools to fulfill a service project that is directly impacting their school as part of the Character Playbook Community Impact Project, a partnership of Everfi, the Green Bay Packers and Brown County United Way.

Overall, 13 projects in the state were awarded grants. The Packers funded 10, and BCUW funded the three local projects, thanks to a gift from Break-through Fuel. The local projects are:

Green Bay Area Public School District: Red Smith Middle School; Project: Building Community and Culture with Flags

The members of the Red Smith School Unity Club are working with all the teachers to display a flag outside of their classrooms that represents a part of their culture. The students are hoping their efforts build a school community that appreciates diversity. The students are researching and supporting design, education and awareness of cultural diversity and celebration.



Green Bay Area Public School District: Lombardi Middle School Project: Asian American Pacific Islander Club Mural

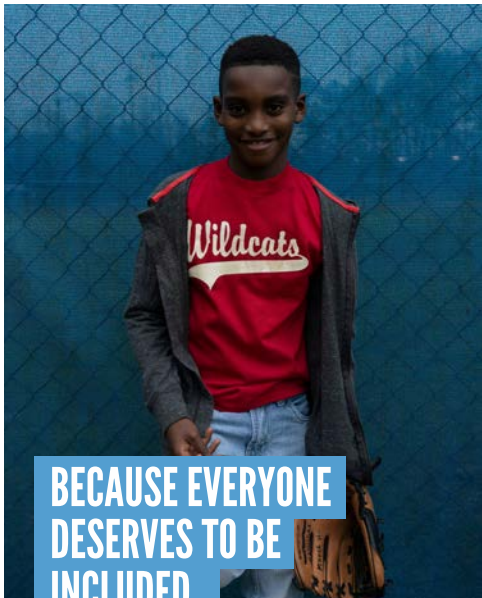
The Asian American Pacific Islander Club is creating a selfie wall mural. The goal of the mural is to promote diversity, inclusion and empowerment to the various cultures at Lombardi. The students want to send a positive and powerful message to the student body to see their fellow students and staff of all colors join in something that helps build community and a sense of belonging.

Ashwaubenon School District: Parkview Middle School; Project: Relaxation Station

The Relaxation Station will create a

calming space within the school for students needing a safe space to regulate their emotions. It is being planned and put together by the students enrolled in the Jags and Be Great Graduate (BGG) programs. Students are helping design, construct and promote the new space. There will be various seating options like bean bag chairs, mats and yoga balls, as well as soft lighting. It will also have sensory items like a Zen garden, stress balls, putty and coloring sheets. Posters and wall decals will encourage appropriate coping strategies for students to practice.

Student groups, under the guidance of a Wisconsin school or nonprofit organization, were invited to submit a service project idea for their school, neighborhood or surrounding community. Selected schools were then asked to present their idea to Green Bay Packers, Character Playbook and Brown County United Way representatives. This is the second year of the program.



BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE INCLUDED.

LIVE UNITED


Thank you

for your past gifts to Brown County United Way in support of the work we do. If you are interested in giving now, you can do so any of the following ways:

Give online at www.browncountyunitedway.org

Send a check to Brown County United Way, PO Box 1593, Green Bay, WI 54305-1593

Contact Tom Schoffelman, VP of Resource Development at tom@browncountyunitedway.org




The Bias Inside Us

The Grand Foyer of the Weidner Center

Through Feb. 13

You are invited to explore the foundational blocks of bias, the psychology of how it forms and how it influences behaviors both consciously and unconsciously in this traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibit. Interactive elements will show how implicit and explicit bias show up in the world and how bias influences systems and policies that have consequences for many people and communities.

The Bias Inside Us is being hosted by UWGB, UWGB's Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs Office and the Weidner Center for the Performing Arts.



Brown County United Way

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