

LIVE UNITED

INTRODUCTION TO HEAD OF THE LAKES UNITED WAY

1.4 HLUW Programs: AFL-CIO Community Services



OVER 70 YEARS AGO, on August 17, 1942, an agreement on cooperation was signed by the National Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) Committee for American and Allied War Relief, the United Nations Relief Committee of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Community Chests and Councils, Inc. (now United Way Worldwide). This agreement encouraged labor representation on Community Chests boards and councils, and for recognition of union members' contributions. The agreement sought cooperation between employee solicitation organized by employers and union representatives who jointly stressed voluntary contributions without coercion.

This agreement came in response to the growing number of fund drives organized to support Community Chests, labor war relief, American Red Cross, the USO, war bond campaigns, plus a number of trade, religious and advocacy groups who wanted to help. To coordinate effective support, organized labor and the Community Chests and Councils, Inc. agreed to join in collaborative fund raising and community development. As a result, labor liaison positions were established on the staffs of local community chests.

In 1946, the Department of Labor Participation was established at United Way Worldwide. The aim was to join United Way, labor and health and welfare agencies in a cooperative, community effort to bring services and people together. To accomplish this, what are currently known as AFL-CIO Community Services liaisons are employed by United Way organizations throughout the country. These representatives are selected by the local AFL-CIO Central Labor Council and serve at the pleasure of United Way and the Council.

Organized labor is a full partner in United Way, as witnessed by the 156 AFL-CIO Community Services liaisons currently serving on the staff of state and local United Ways throughout the country and the 20 Labor Agencies that receive United Way funding. Representatives of unions volunteer in all phases of United Way activities, serve on year-round committees, participate in annual United Way campaigns as part of the campaign leadership structure, and communicate to union members the importance of the campaign and the agencies involved. Union members are involved as volunteers in their communities by working with the many health and human care agencies providing services to the community.

On November 22, 1971 and again on April 4, 1979, the Cooperative Memorandum of Understanding between the United Way Worldwide and the AFL-CIO was reaffirmed.