



Team Captain Campaign Guide 2026

Thank you for being a leader and dedicating your time, energy, and passion to the Ball State University United Way Employee Campaign. It takes people like you, who go above and beyond, to make this campaign successful!

Key Responsibilities

- **Promote the campaign** throughout your teams and departments.
- **Distribute and collect pledge forms** and campaign materials as needed.
- **Communicate issues and field questions for the Campaign Coordinator.**
- **Send out the provided pre-written emails** to your team members each week (or write your own!).
- **Learn and share what you've learned about United Way's role in the community** - Use the United Way Team Captain toolkit to find more information.
- **Be creative** and make giving fun by organizing cash fundraisers with participation incentives!
- **Provide all donations to Campaign Coordinator** in a secure, organized, and timely manner.
- **Thank your team members** who participated.
- **Evaluate your experience and make recommendations** for next year at the end of the campaign.

Key Dates for 2026

- **Campaign Dates** – September 9 through November 18
- **Day of Action** – September 11
- **United Way Team Captain Training** – September 22
- **United Way Kickoff Luncheon** – September 16 in the Student Center Ballroom at 11:00 AM.
- **Leadership Giving Reception** – (Early Spring 2027, Date TBD) – President Mearns will welcome the university's top United Way donors to Bracken for a reception. (Leadership level giving is \$1000 for professional staff and faculty and \$500 for all other staff levels.)



Campaign Materials, Resources, and Tools

1. Team Captain Toolkit and campaign materials

- United Way has customized a toolkit for the Ball State United Way Campaign. To access the toolkit, visit <https://heartofindianaunitedway.org/bsu-toolkit/>. In the toolkit, you will find the following resources:
 - a. A fillable PDF of the BSU pledge form;
 - b. Co-branded posters and fliers;
 - c. Community Resource Guides;
 - d. Funded Partner list (this is also on the back side of the pledge form);
 - e. University Fundraising Guide;
 - f. Team Communication Email Templates;
 - g. NEW Campaign Email Signature Template;
 - h. General handout about Heart of Indiana United Way's work;
 - i. This guide; and
 - j. United Way's website: <https://heartofindianaunitedway.org/>.

2. Physical pledge materials (copies will be provided during Team Captain Training)

- a. Paper pledge forms;
- b. Community Resource Guides; and
- c. Confidential envelopes.

3. Answering questions

- a. To answer common questions about United Way, visit: [FAQ - Heart of Indiana United Way](#) or contact United Way at 765-896-5905.
- b. For questions specific to the BSU campaign or pledging, please contact your Campaign Coordinator.

4. Your Team List

- a. Team lists are generated by organizing all employees on campus into the most cohesive teams for easy reporting, so it may be a little different year to year.
- b. Your team list will be emailed to you at the beginning of the campaign.
- c. Please let the Campaign Coordinator know if anyone leaves or joins the departments or offices you represent during the Campaign. This will help keep our participation rates accurate.



Heart of Indiana
UNITED WAY



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY

Communicating with Your Team

The easiest and most efficient way to communicate basic campaign information to your team is via email.

- **Connect with your team once a week throughout the Campaign.** Templates are provided in the toolkit (link above) to make this easier for you.
- **Please cc the Campaign Coordinator on your team communications** so that they can support you in your efforts.
- **For 2026**, your coordinator will be **Lisa Garner**, lgarner@bsu.edu.
- If team captains are not communicating with their teams, the leadership in that area will be asked to help correct the issue.

Setting Goals and Tracking Progress

The University likes to strive for *participation rate* versus a dollar-raised goal when looking to set campaign goals, but you may set your goal based on what may motivate your team.

- **Participation Rate** – While our suggested overall participation goal is 30%, perhaps strive for 50% or even 100%.
- **Total Contributions** – Many teams have had success by setting a total giving goal. If team members see that giving an extra \$5 or \$10 will push the total closer to your goal, they may be inspired to give more generously.
- **Progress Reporting** – You may expect to receive regular reporting on your team's progress during the campaign. The campaign coordinator will establish the frequency at the start of the campaign.
- **Detail of Reporting** – The Campaign Coordinator can provide a list of your team donors and *total* amount raised to date upon request but is not permitted to share specific donation amounts for individual donors.
- You will receive your team's final participation information in December.
- The final University Campaign totals will be reported in January in an email from the President.



Collecting Donations

All cash, non-cash donations, and pledge forms should be placed in your confidential envelopes, sealed, and submitted to the Office of Community Engagement.

- **Non-cash donations** can be sent via Campus Mail until **Thursday November 13**. After this date, please arrange to have all donations dropped off to or picked up by the Campaign Coordinator.
- **For cash donations**, please contact the Campaign Coordinator to arrange a drop-off or pick up. Please do not send cash gifts through Campus Mail.
- Donations and pledge forms should be turned in to the location below:

Oakwood Building (OW)

Room 124

Attention: Lisa Garner or Addy Jessup

E-pledge Troubleshooting

If a team member is having issues with making an online pledge, make sure that they have tried it on a BSU connected desktop or laptop computer in a Google Chrome Browser. While the system should work on most mobile devices or tablets, some devices may be less compatible than others. If they are on the right device and browser, please try clearing the cache and cookies in the Google Chrome browser before trying to donate one more time.

If you continue to experience issues, please provide the following pieces of information to your Campaign Coordinator:

- Nature of the issue;
- Exact wording or screenshots of any error notifications;
- Device and browser being used;
- Date and time of the error; and
- Donor name and contact information.



Text to Donate

We can set up a unique Text to Donate keyword for your team, fundraiser, or event.

- Simply email **Lisa Garner**, lgarner@bsu.edu and **Denise King**, dking@heartofindiana.org with the details of your event *at least two weeks before it occurs*.
- Payroll deduction is *not an option* through text-to-donate. Make sure to offer the E-pledge link or paper pledge form to those who want to make a payroll deduction donation.
- Once your text-to-give event has ended, you may request a report with your total raised and donor names.

Team Fundraisers

Although we are not allowed to do raffles, *sell* homemade food, or play “games of chance,” there are still many of ways to put the fun in fundraising. Please note that the names of all fundraiser participants are required for our participation goals.

- **Ways to Participate**
 - **Specific Amount** – For example: Anyone who wants to participate needs to donate \$5 in cash at the time of the fundraiser.
 - **Any Amount** – Pick a date right before your fundraiser and make sure everyone on your team knows they need to make any size of donation in some format *by that date*. The campaign coordinator can provide you with a list of all the donors on your team who are eligible to participate. *Please make that request at least 2 weeks prior to the date you will need the donor list, so that the coordinator can plan to send you the information the morning of your fundraiser.*
- **Cash Fundraisers**
 - Please send the campaign coordinator an email with the following information if you plan to host any kind of cash fundraiser or event for your team!
 - Start and end dates; and
 - Explanation of what the event/activity is.



Heart of Indiana
UNITED WAY



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY

- **Cash Fundraiser Reporting Form** – for any cash donations collected during your fundraiser event. This will make transferring those funds more secure and provide better documentation of each step. This form should be turned in to the Office of Community Engagement as soon as possible and will require the following information:
 - Event title;
 - Date;
 - Participating teams;
 - Coordinating Team Captains;
 - Number of bills and coins;
 - Total donation amount;
 - Your signature (and the signature of the employee in OCE that takes your form and the donations); and
 - Please do not collect cash and then write a check for the amount to turn in. This is no longer permitted.
- **For long-term fundraisers**, please make sure to collect ALL NAMES of participants AT THE TIME OF PARTICIPATION for proper documentation and accurate reporting.
 - Providing food, prizes, or other non-monetary contributions to Cash Fundraisers does *not* count as participation. **At least \$1 must be donated TO UNITED WAY in some format to be counted.**
- **Designating a specific agency to benefit from your fundraiser is not permitted.** Fundraisers must benefit all United Way funded partner agencies/general fund, or United Way direct service programs, such as the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Ideas for fundraising events

Everyone loves a good competition! Ask leadership in your area to see if they might help provide prizes. Many Deans, Chairs, and other unit leaders across campus consistently support their Team Captains by providing funds for group activities from office budgets or their personal generosity.

- You may also contact the campaign coordinator to see if Community Engagement and United Way might have items to provide. Your Campaign Coordinator can also assist with printing posters or fliers, proofreading messages, crafting projects, and anything else that my schedule allows to help facilitate your team events.
- Below are some contest ideas for your team.
- **Motivated Group Goal** – Work together to reach a certain participation rate or dollar amount in order to receive a pre-determined group prize. A member of the leadership in your area might be willing to do something entertaining for the good of the cause! The team could choose a member of leadership's Halloween costume, temporary hair dye, or who gets a pie in the face. Some have made the goal a casual dress day and others have done a catered lunch or special workday treat.



Heart of Indiana
UNITED WAY



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY

- **Change for a Change** – Give each department, office, or other designated group their own jar and whoever collects the most money by the end wins! You can use this method for voting too! Each jar can represent a different choice for: art contests, pumpkin decorating, jokes, , photos, costumes etc.
- **Choose Your Favorite** – The group picks their own prize by voting for their favorite treat or group activity that the whole office gets to enjoy. Bring in pizza, bagels, or donuts from the local place voted the best in that category by your team (Ex: Pizza Hut vs. Dominoes vs. Papa John's vs. Little Caesar's) Vote on the team building activity for your next department retreat day (bowling, axe throwing, mini golf, pottery painting, escape room, etc.)
-
- **Reverse Voting** – the jar with the most money loses, so more donations are gathered for UW as competitors fill the other's jars with larger amounts. Some choose to only count pennies and anything larger is subtracted. A rep from the losing group gets a pie in the face by a rep from the winning group, or the losing group agrees to split the cost of providing lunch for the office. Some teams have had a leader from each department in their unit compete like this to decide who must do the chosen task.
- **Challenge the Expert** – Is someone on your team particularly skilled at something? Take donations from other team members to challenge the "expert", with a prize for anyone who beats them. Past "experts" have even chosen to match the donations if they lost to the challenger. Some ideas are chess, running, juggling, building card houses, timed push-ups, Rubix cubes, etc.
- **Tournaments** – participants can donate to sign up in small groups or individually and compete against each other to see who comes out on top! Those that just want to watch other compete might also be willing to donate to do so. Ideas: basketball, corn hole, charades, euchre, Mario Kart, etc.
- **Trivia Games** – Trivia can keep your team engaged while teaching them helpful facts about United Way or other topics. Have participants donate to submit answers, then all correct responses get candy or the ones with the most right get small prizes/bragging rights.
- **Events** -- Team Events are a great way to boost excitement and provide an opportunity for camaraderie while also donating toward a great cause! Charge a small amount for "admission" and allow additional donations as well. Be sure to offer extra pledge forms and envelopes in case people decide they would like to pledge that way during your event. Here are some suggestions to get you started.
- **Casual/Hat/Costume Day** – Participants can donate to wear something special for the day o Just make sure the management of your office is onboard first.
- **Cookoff/Bakeoff** – If a few people on your team are interested in competing for the title of Best Chef, other team members can donate to vote for their favorite after sampling each entry
- **Craft Sale** – A great way to turn hobbies into a way to give back! o Not just for your team but also for students and anyone else who passes by and is interested in contributing to a good cause for a homemade gift!



Heart of Indiana
UNITED WAY



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY

- **White Elephant Auction** – Have participants bring in creatively wrapped donation items (perhaps something funny wrapped to look like something useful), then bid to get their favorite with donations.
- **Pets for Participation** – OCE annually hosts a day where a few of the more well-behaved dogs belonging to team members get to come into the office and those that donate for admission get to play with them while we enjoy some snacks and conversation.
- **After Work Event** – Your fundraising doesn't have to stop at the end of the workday, if you want to spend some time off the clock with your teammates, consider hosting an outdoor projector movie night, game night, dinner party, or other evening of fun for a small admission donation.

Thanking Donors

You are United Way's ambassador for your team and showing appreciation to those who donate toward this worthy cause is so important. These donations are not just getting us closer to our fundraising goals but also improving the lives of those in our community.

Everyone appreciates it when they are authentically recognized, even when it's a simple, "thank you."

- **Email** – The easiest way to thank your team's donors all at once is to send an email to your whole team thanking those who participated.
- **In Person** – If team members turn in their donations directly to you, participate in a fundraiser, or choose to let you know that they donated via E-pledge, a personal and heartfelt "Thank you" would mean a lot to them.
- **Cards or Notes** – A simple thank you card with a personalized message is a lasting reminder of the thankfulness that everyone involved in this campaign and United Way feels toward that donor.
- **Gifts** – In the past, Team Captains have had positive responses to giving out a small piece of candy or other inexpensive gifts to donors. Homemade foods *may* be given as personal gifts to those in your unit



Heart of Indiana
UNITED WAY



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY