

United Way of Ventura County

**LIVE UNITED**

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

E-NEWS FROM YOUR UNITED WAY  
February 2017

## President's Message

Dear Friends,

February is National Children's Dental Health Month and United Way is proud to advocate for increased services on behalf of 100,000 children in Ventura County who qualify for Dent-Cal and do not have access to a dental home. Tooth decay affects more children in the United States than any other chronic infectious disease. And yet, it is the most preventable.

A lack of access to dental care can result in expensive emergency room visits, missed school days, and ultimately poorer academic performance and lost job opportunities. This contributes to multi-generational poverty and increased social costs for taxpayers. Our state health and social safety net programs should provide hope and opportunity for low-income children, not make life harder and perpetuate a cycle of poverty.

United Way is proud to support Assembly Bill 15 to increase Denti-Cal funding in a meaningful and responsible way. Funding would be allocated to increase reimbursement rates for the 15 most common prevention, treatment, and oral evaluation services to the national average. The bill would also increase funding for preventative care and case management services in order to achieve significant long-term cost savings, increased provider participation, and increased beneficiary utilization under the program.

Ultimately, this will help children and families receive the preventative and restorative dental care they are currently being denied. Our goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. Now isn't that something to smile about?

In service,

## Give.

To make the greatest difference, direct your contribution to the **Community Impact Fund**, which supports the focus areas of **Education, Income, and Health**. We also process restricted contributions to qualified 501(c)3 organizations. [Thank you for supporting us and your community!](#)



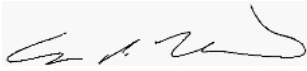
## Advocate.

You can make change happen with your voice. United Way needs people who are passionate about education, income, and health to make some noise.

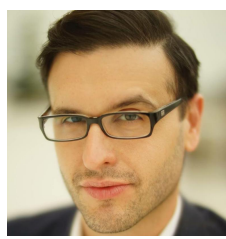
Visit us online at: [vcunitedway.org/advocate](http://vcunitedway.org/advocate) to stay informed. If you would like to become involved in our advocacy work, please email us at: [info@vcunitedway.org](mailto:info@vcunitedway.org).

## Volunteer.

Get involved in your community!  
[Find a volunteer opportunity today.](#)



**Eric Harrison**  
President & CEO  
United Way of Ventura County



HELP US  
STRENGTHEN  
**OUR**  
COMMUNITY

## 2-1-1's 12th ANNIVERSARY & TWO-WAY TEXT LAUNCH

**February 13th at 7:45 AM**  
Check-in/Networking/Breakfast

United Way Community Room  
4001 Mission Oaks Blvd.  
Camarillo, CA



Join us for a gathering of leaders, friends and advocates to experience the arrival of two-way texting capability of 2-1-1. Research confirms that this new feature will make 2-1-1 accessible to a segment of our community who are not communicating via current 2-1-1 and [211ventura.org](http://211ventura.org) "call or click" options.

Limited Space Available, Please RSVP by February 9th to: [Vicki.Raven@vcunitedway.org](mailto:Vicki.Raven@vcunitedway.org) or 805-485-6288 x229.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

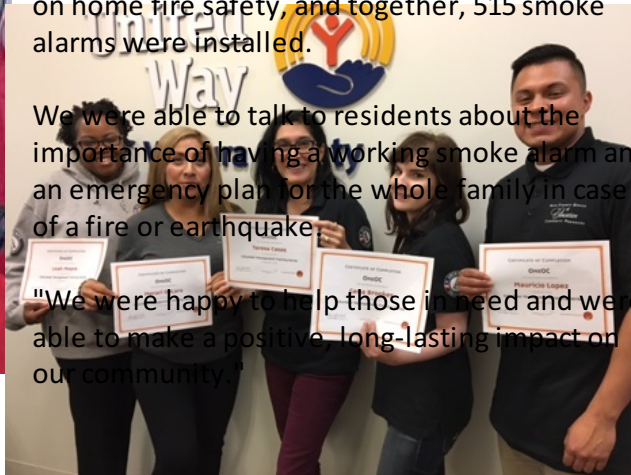


## CONGRATULATIONS AMERICORPS MEMBERS!

Congratulations to AmeriCorps Members, **Leah Moore** (First 5 Ventura County), **Merari Delara** (Lutheran Social Services), **Teresa Casas** (United Way of Ventura County), **Gena Brooks** (Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation), and **Mauricio Lopez** (Boys & Girls Club of Greater Oxnard & Port Hueneme), who recently received their Volunteer Management Webinar Series Certificates.

On Saturday, January 14, 2017, our Ventura County AmeriCorps VIP Cohort volunteered for the American Red Cross MLK Day of Service Home Fire Campaign in Oxnard.

57 volunteers came together to canvas over 275 homes. Over 676 residents received education on home fire safety, and together, 515 smoke alarms were installed.



We were able to talk to residents about the importance of having a working smoke alarm and an emergency plan for the whole family in case of a fire or earthquake.

"We were happy to help those in need and were able to make a positive, long-lasting impact on our community."

AmeriCorps Members completed over 25 hours of volunteer management webinar training modules which included: Understanding Volunteering, Planning (building a solid foundation), Recruitment & Placement of Volunteers, and Training & Orientation. AmeriCorps Members will take the information learned and apply it to their Volunteer Infrastructure Programs.

## EARN IT! KEEP IT! SAVE IT! - VITA SITES NOW OPEN!



VITA sites opened February 4, 2017. 10 sites across Ventura County offer daytime, weekday evening or Saturday hours for free preparation and e-filing of state and federal tax returns for those earning under \$54,000 in 2016.

*Earn It! Keep It! Save It!* is a community partnership led by the United Way of Ventura County, the Human Services Agency of the County of Ventura, Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation and the IRS.

We estimate that by using the services of a free tax preparation site, filers save on the average, \$150 in tax preparation fees. For a family of 4 living on an annual income of \$32,913 (138% of the Federal Poverty Level) this represents a huge savings and money that can instead be used toward food or rent. Last year the average gross income of our VITA clients was just \$21,000.

Last year just over 2000 tax returns were prepared and filed at no charge by 70 volunteers working at 10 VITA sites sponsored by the partnership, representing \$2.7 million in tax refunds infused into Ventura County including \$1.2 million in Earned Income Tax Credit.

Join us in getting the word out to more low and moderate income earners of the availability of the services of the free tax preparation sites - inform employees, friends, neighbors, and

family members. See the [VITA flyer](#) for a list of sites. Appointments can be made for any of the sites by calling 2-1-1.

This is the second year for the **California Earned Income State Credit** for working families modeled after the federal credit. The CalEITC requires earned income reported on a W-2 form, such as wages, salaries and tips which must be subject to California withholding. The CalEITC is available for households with adjusted gross incomes of less than \$5,718 if there are no qualifying children, less than \$10,088 if there is one qualifying child, or less than \$14,162 if there are two or more qualifying children. To check out eligibility click on: <http://caleitc4me.org/earn-it/>.

For those who prefer to file their own tax return, **MyFreeTaxes.org** allows taxpayers with earned income under \$64,000 who are computer savvy and with an e-mail address to file their tax return for free. Check out [www.myfreetaxes.org](http://www.myfreetaxes.org).

Should you have questions or want more information, please contact Susan Englund at: [susan.englund@vcunitedway.org](mailto:susan.englund@vcunitedway.org) or 805-485-6288 x226.

## CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

Children's Oral Health was recently added to the United Way of Ventura County's Advocacy agenda by the Board of Directors. As a result, Eric Harrison, President & CEO, signed on to a letter of support for AB 15. Introduced by Assemblyman Maienschein, AB15 would raise the Denti-Cal reimbursement rates on the 15 most common prevention, treatment, and oral evaluation services to the regional average commercial rates. Current rates in California are the second lowest in the country. In Ventura County, there are more than 18,000 children (0-18) who have never visited a dentist and only one dentist for every 553 kids enrolled in Denti-Cal. Not going to the dentist effects more than just health. In 2007, there were 874,000 school days missed due to dental problems and California school districts lost \$29,700,000 Average Daily Attendance funds annually from absences due to dental illness.

## BUILDING HEALTHY SMILES INITIATIVE

In recognition of National Children's Dental Health Month, The Building Healthy Smiles Initiative hosted a Community Forum on February 2, 2017. At the Forum, we honored Kaiser Permanente for their support of children's oral health and Rio Plaza Elementary School for their leadership in addressing oral health in their school community. The BHS Initiative also recognized Ventura County's oral health champions: CHDP Oral Health Fluoride Varnish Provider Champion of the year, Mark Barrett, MD from Centers for Family Health and the CHDP Oral Health Fluoride Varnish Clinic of the year, Las Islas Family Medical Group.

The Community Forum featured a presentation by Dr. Rebecca Dudovitz, a pediatrician and researcher at UCLA who has been collecting and analyzing data from L.A. Trust's Oral Health Initiative. Dr. Dudovitz discussed the some of the findings of the data and how they have used this data to inform their program design and implementation.

Many thanks to all who attended the Community Forum and especially to CMH for sponsoring the continental breakfast!



**"GRANTS TO YOU" TO THE RESCUE**

**Providing low cost training to local volunteers who want to assist their favorite nonprofit with their grant research and writing.**

Talk about busy people...the day never seems to end for Executive Directors and Funds Development Officers working for nonprofits... from meeting and satisfying the needs of a major donor to emptying the trash cans at the end of the day.

As important as any of the myriad activities is the ongoing and never-ending need to raise funds to support the organization and more specifically to search for grants to fund operations, special programs and capital campaigns.

The mantra of a GTU chapter is simple: "Provide well-trained, competent and motivated volunteers to assist their designated, non-profit agency with their grant research and writing needs utilizing the ever-growing population of caring citizens, all at a minimal cost".

Since its founding in 2002, Grants To You chapters throughout the U.S. have graduated over 1,100 volunteers who have helped to win 262 grants worth \$3.6 million for their designated nonprofit agency. In Ventura County we have held 27 classes and trained 199 volunteers.

Our next Ventura County live class will be offered on February 25 and March 4 from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM and will be located within the United Way offices in the VCCF building at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd. in Camarillo.

To register go online to [grantstoyou.org](http://grantstoyou.org) and click on Classes and then Live Local Classes and then proceed to register. You will need to have the name and contact information of the nonprofit of your choice to enter during the registration process or just select "Need Coordinator Assistance" if you do not have a nonprofit in mind.

For additional information and questions, please either call Ventura County coordinators Paul Baskin (Founder and President) and Shirley Baskin. (GTU Board Member) at (928) 458-7796 or email to [info@grantstoyou.org](mailto:info@grantstoyou.org).

**JOIN US! CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING**



United Way of Ventura County will help you connect your employee teams to meaningful volunteer experiences that impact lives within our focus areas. Whether it's one-day activities or quarterly team building projects, our Volunteer Center is available to assist you through the entire process. No other local nonprofit can connect companies and their employees to socially responsible programs like we can.

For more information contact Yvonne Flores at: 805-485-6288 ext. 276 or via email at: [yvonne.flores@vcunitedway.org](mailto:yvonne.flores@vcunitedway.org).

**SAVE THE DATE - 2017 SPIRIT AWARDS GALA**



# SAVE THE DATE

Please join us for the  
**2017 AXCESS MEMBERSHIP  
SPIRIT AWARDS GALA**

**United Way of Ventura County  
13th Annual Spirit Awards Gala**

**Saturday, August 26, 2017  
Four Seasons Hotel,  
Westlake Village  
Upscale Attire Required**

We are currently selling 2017 Axxess books which can be used NOW! The cost of the Axxess book with membership card is \$30. \$10 of every book sold directly benefits United Way. These discount cards sell themselves and are well worth the cost. They are filled with savings offered throughout Ventura County.

To purchase or preview a book, email: [amanda.conroy@vcunitedway.org](mailto:amanda.conroy@vcunitedway.org)

For sponsorship opportunities, [amanda.conroy@vcunitedway.org](mailto:amanda.conroy@vcunitedway.org)  
(805) 485-6288, ext. 229 or email [Vicki.Raven@vcunitedway.org](mailto:Vicki.Raven@vcunitedway.org)  
Early bird tickets bought before June 30th \$175 and after \$200



## AMAZON SMILE

In a few simple steps, you can help support United Way of Ventura County when you shop on Amazon.com.

Step 1: Visit: [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

Step 2: Select a charitable organization from almost one million eligible organizations.

We're listed as **United Way of Ventura County**.

Step 3: Once you confirm your designated charity of choice, YOU'RE DONE!

Just remember to shop on AmazonSmile at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.05% of the purchase price to your designated charitable organization.



## THANK YOU TO OUR TOP SUPPORTERS

Aera Energy LLC - AT&T - Amgen - Automobile Club - Bank of America  
California Lutheran University - California State Employees - City of Camarillo  
City of Moorpark - Community Memorial Hospital - Costco - County of Ventura  
Edison International - Enterprise Holdings - Exxon Mobil Corporation

Farmers Insurance - FedEx - Kaiser Permanente - Macy's - Monsanto  
Procter & Gamble - Southern California Gas Co. - Target  
United Parcel Service - Union Bank - Wells Fargo Bank

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### TEXT TO GIVE!

Did you know that United Way of Ventura County has gone mobile? Make a \$10 donation to the United Way's Community Impact Fund using your cellphone. Your donation counts! Simply text the keyword **UWVC** to **41444**. Standard message & data rates apply.

### SPREAD THE WORD!

Forward this e-newsletter

You can LIVE UNITED by helping us spread the word. Imagine how many people we could reach if everyone forwards this newsletter to five people.

+ TELL YOUR FRIENDS



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Ph: (805) 485-6288 email: [info@vcunitedway.org](mailto:info@vcunitedway.org)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Questions? Email: [info@vcunitedway.org](mailto:info@vcunitedway.org)

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