Q. I HEARD UNITED WAY IS CHANGING? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
A. Traditionally, United Way has been thought of as a fundraiser – most people think about the dollars raised and the agencies that receive funds. While our United Way is one of the best in the country in terms of fundraising, fundraising and investments alone aren't enough.

That's why United Way has shifted from measuring success by how much the campaign raises and the results of individual programs to measuring success by the results we achieve in our communities as a whole. We're doing that by concentrating on finding solutions to the root causes of the most serious problems. United Way's experience and the experience of others tells us that's the best way to help the most people. United Way is taking a leadership role in engaging our community around priority goals -- preparing children, youth and young adults to succeed in school and life, helping struggling families achieve financial stability, helping seniors remain safely in their homes and supporting people with disabilities so they can live life to its fullest.

Q. WHAT IS THE UNITED WAY IMPACT FUND?
A. United Way works every day to advance the common good by focusing on children and youth, struggling families, seniors and people with disabilities. One gift to United Way's Impact Fund combines with those of thousands of other people to fund solutions to these issues that affect all of us. No other single contribution supports as many critical human service, health and community development programs that make a difference throughout our community.

Q. WHAT IF I WANT TO GIVE TO A SPECIFIC AGENCY?
A. One major advantage of United Way's Impact Fund is that it offers people an opportunity to give once but reach many varied services, each important to a healthy community. When you choose the Impact Fund, your contribution supports priority outcomes and essential services. Some individuals, however, have a special interest in one or more United Way-funded initiatives or agencies because of help they have received or a personal experience. United Way respects our contributor's choices. To designate your gift, you may fill out the designation portion of your pledge form. Some contributors split their designations and give a portion to specific agencies but also support the Impact Fund.
Q. WHO GETS IMPACT FUND CONTRIBUTIONS?

A. Contributions are awarded by review teams who make investment recommendations. Each review team is comprised of volunteers that are representative of the region we serve and United Way staff. Teams review program information including:

1. Do they serve a population with great needs
2. Do they achieve measurable results
3. Do they utilize a sound approach
4. Do they align with United Way’s preferred long-term outcomes and contribute to community change

We are proud of the level of assurance we can give to donors that their contributions are supporting the best agencies and the best programs that have proven to help those in great need make measurable progress. United Way grants the Impact Fund Award for Excellence to agencies who meet the Impact Fund standards.

Q. WHY ISN’T X AGENCY FUNDED BY UNITED WAY?

A. An agency may not have programs that align with United Way’s identified community outcomes. In other cases, the agency may not meet the basic criteria - impact, performance and accountability. Specific elements include alignment with United Way’s community outcomes, actual program outcome results, annual financial audits, and effective management practices. Additionally, some agencies do not wish to receive United Way funding. Once an agency program receives United Way funding, continued support is contingent on maintaining compliance with the criteria and availability of campaign dollars.

Q. HOW MUCH IS USED FOR ‘OVERHEAD’?

A. Currently United Way’s overhead is 12.36 percent, close to one third of the national recommended standard of 35 percent cited by the Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance (www.give.org).

Our sound fiscal policies are one of the reasons we’ve earned Charity Navigator’s 4-Star rating for the third consecutive year. Only 10 percent of charities across the country have received this recommendation for three consecutive years!

Q. OUR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE STRUGGLING. HOW CAN WE ASK THEM TO GIVE?

A. Time and again, some of the most generous donors are those who themselves have needed a helping hand from our community. Everyone should be given an opportunity to express caring through charitable giving, to enjoy the emotional reward that comes from knowing he or she has helped our community become safer and stronger. Only the donor can determine whether he or she can afford to give at this time. Thanks to payroll deduction, even a small amount each pay period can add up over the year, and give the employee a real feeling of connection to our community.

While government dollars often combine with private dollars to fund services in our community, reductions in government funding can affect the ability of agency partners to maintain service levels and can increase the number of people needing help. Your gift to United Way can help prevent that from happening. United Way dollars also provide agencies with a base to leverage available government and foundation dollars.
Q. **HOW CAN I AFFORD TO GIVE TO UNITED WAY?**

A. Even the most modest pledge can provide vital human care services to the people in our community who need help. Payroll deduction provides a convenient and affordable way to spread your gift over the upcoming year. Even just $2 a pay can ensure a senior is receiving healthy meals brought right to her home.

Q. **WHY DIDN'T MY FRIEND GET HELP WHEN IT WAS NEEDED?**

A. Usually, when someone can't get help from an agency, it's because limited funds necessitate long waiting lists or the agency doesn't offer the specific services needed. Government-funded programs in our agencies may have income and/or residency requirements that make a family ineligible for that program. And, unfortunately, sometimes there simply isn't a source where the person can receive help.

Q. **WHO PAYS FOR THE CAMPAIGN EVENTS?**

A. No contributions are used to pay for campaign events. The costs are covered by: guests who pay their own way or are sponsored by their employers; corporate or individual sponsor(s); or a combination of the three.

Q. **IF UNITED WAY IS A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION, WHY DOES IT HAVE PAID STAFF?**

A. Staff people provide support for volunteers, continuity in working toward long-term community solutions and handle administrative functions as well as referrals for service and volunteer opportunities.

Q. **HOW DOES UNITED WAY SET SALARIES?**

A. The Board of Directors recognizes that appropriate compensation is needed to attract and retain qualified, experienced people. Salary ranges are set using comparative information gathered annually on local benchmark jobs and every three years in comprehensive studies conducted by compensation consulting firms. Volunteer human resource specialists routinely review the salary administration program. Individual salaries are based on the ranges and annual performance evaluations. The Executive Committee reviews the president's performance annually.

Q. **WHO MONITORS THE MONEY UNITED WAY RAISES?**

A. United Way strictly adheres to the stringent standards of accounting and financial reporting which govern the fiscal affairs of voluntary health and human service organizations. Each year, an independent public accounting firm performs a financial audit. In addition, a volunteer committee comprised of local business leaders monitors the finances of United Way. This subcommittee of the Board of Directors reports to the full Board regularly.

Q. **WHAT WAS LAST YEAR’S CAMPAIGN TOTAL?**

A. Thanks to our generous community, United Way raised $33,211,190 million through its annual campaign in 2012.
Q. I DON’T BENEFIT, SO WHY SHOULD I GIVE?
A. We all win when children succeed in school, families are financially stable and the elderly and people with disabilities are cared for. For example, the current PA graduation rate is 78 percent, however; a 90 percent graduation rate for PA would yield an estimated $133 million in increased annual earnings and $29 million in increased annual state tax revenues*. So, not only do programs addressing school success help young people achieve, they benefit entire communities.

Q. I FEEL LIKE I’M BEING PRESSURED TO GIVE TO UNITED WAY.
A. Neither United Way nor its volunteers believe people should be forced to give. Pressure defeats the very idea of voluntary giving. United Way hopes people will give because they understand the critical needs of local people and because they feel United Way is one of the most efficient, effective and economical ways to improve people's lives and make our community a better place.

Q. WHY DOESN’T UNITED WAY TAKE MORE OF A PUBLIC STAND ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES?
A. United Way is founded on and pursues the principle of respect for the diversity which exists in our community and the rights and dignity of the people who seek and use the services which are legally available to them. United Way provides a neutral ground for people of diverse interests and beliefs to join together for the greater good of our community. United Way also supports as broad a group of nonprofits as is possible with limited dollars, and advocates for improved public policies in response to what volunteers and contributors consider to be priority community needs.

* statistics from: www.all4ed.org; www.pps.org; www.every1graduates.org