



## United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties & United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties Join Forces to Expand Reach and Serve Even More Individuals and Families

United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties and United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties are excited to announce a merger that will expand their regional reach and enhance their ability to serve individuals and families across a broader area. The merger will combine their existing service areas, allowing both organizations to unite their resources and impact. This strategic partnership is expected to take effect on July 1, 2025.

***“By uniting our missions and resources, we will amplify our impact and broaden our reach, allowing us to serve our communities more effectively. United, we are now more resilient, innovative, and equipped to create lasting change. We are stronger, together.”*** Medley Shamp, United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties Board President

***“By uniting our strengths and expertise, this merger will enhance efficiency, drive innovation, and strengthen our ability to support each community we serve.”*** Darcy Josephson, United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties Board President.

With longstanding histories in their respective communities, both organizations have been pillars of support, ensuring individuals and families thrive. Together, they are excited to expand their services to a larger area and to offer a unified voice for positive change.

***“We are neighboring counties with similar needs and shared goals, so it makes sense to collaborate to expand our reach and impact.”*** Sadie Christiansen United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties Past President Board Member

***“I look at it as expanding our neighborhood. As good neighbors, together we will be stronger to impart more good throughout our communities.”*** Harley Vestrum, United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties Board Member

United Way brings communities together to find strength and share hope. It’s the way we rally in hard times to meet people’s needs so they can rise back up and build a better future.

***“It’s like a growing family—coming together to support each other with even greater strength. By uniting, we’re not just adding members, we’re expanding our ability to care for and strengthen everyone in the community.”***

Jen Jabas Executive Director

Jen Jabas will serve as the Executive Director for the combined organization, with the leadership and experience of a combined Board to continue and grow the mission of both United Ways. Offices will remain in place, and the team members you interact with will remain the same. While the merger is set to be completed by July 1, 2025, donors and stakeholders can expect little short-term change. Community campaigns will proceed as they have in the past, ensuring that local identities are maintained. United Way will continue to work with volunteers, community leaders, and partners to guide local strategies and programs and **most importantly your dollars will continue to be invested in your local community.**

*“As a former director of United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties, I have been deeply committed to its mission and the positive influence it has on our community. I am truly excited about the future merger with United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties. This strategic alliance will enable us to build upon the solid foundation created and broaden United Way’s outreach to support even more individuals and families throughout the four-county area. I have had the honor of mentoring United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties Executive Director Jen Jabas at the start of her journey with United Way, and I have seen her remarkable leadership and dedication firsthand. Over the past nine years, she has guided their organization through impressive growth and achievements. I have full confidence in her vision for the combined organization. This merger is not merely about expansion; it’s about enhancing our collective capacity to provide essential services and foster lasting change in West Central Minnesota. I wholeheartedly endorse this exciting new chapter and encourage our valued donors to join me in seizing this opportunity to make an even greater impact.”*

*Mary A. Phillipe Former Executive Director of United Way of Otter Tail & Wadena Counties*

Listening sessions will be offered to gather feedback from stakeholders. These sessions will provide an opportunity to discuss how the merger will affect local campaigns and continue the identity of individual communities within the larger United Way umbrella.

**UNITED is the WAY that TOGETHER** we will continue our mission to create lasting change by creating healthy communities, advancing youth opportunities and ensuring financial security!

*“We’ve been here, we are here, and we will be here into the future—together, stronger than ever, committed to supporting our community and making a lasting impact for generations to come.” Jen Jabas Executive Director*

We can’t wait to continue this journey with you. Please stay tuned for more information and feel free to reach out with any questions.

Thank you for trusting us to be your non-profit partner in serving your community. Let’s work together to build an even brighter future for all.



**Medley Shamp**

Board President

Otter Tail & Wadena Counties



**Darcy Josephson**

Board President

Douglas & Pope Counties



**Jen Jabas**

Executive Director

[jjabas@uwdp.org](mailto:jjabas@uwdp.org)

For further information or to attend a listening session, please contact your local United Way office.

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