

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNITED WAY NATIONALLY**

In Denver, Colorado 1887, religious leaders founded the Charity Organization Society, the first United Way organization that planned and coordinated local services and conducted a single fundraising campaign for 22 agencies. The first fundraising campaign raised \$21,700.

In 1913, the nation's first Community Chest was born in Cleveland, Ohio. There a program for allocating funds was developed. The name Community Chest was widely used for United Way organizations until the 1950s.

Between 1919 and 1948 the number of Community Chests grew from 39 to over 1,000. Today there are over 1,300 local United Ways in communities across the country, including the statewide umbrella organization, United Way of New York State. There are 43 United Ways in New York.

## **HERE IN TOMPKINS COUNTY**

The Ithaca Community Chest was formed in 1921. Robert H. Treman was the first Community Chest Board President. Mr. Treman served in that role through 1923. He served again as board president in 1925.

Walter F. Willcox was the Community Chest's first Budget Committee Chair, and he held that position through 1928. The first Campaign Chair was Clarence Tarbell. George Rogalsky and William Boyd followed Mr. Tarbell as Campaign Chairs. Both men held the position for two years.

In 1956, the Community Chest became the Tompkins County Community Fund. After serving two years as Community Chest Board President, William H. Keenan became the Tompkins County United Fund's first Board President. He also served in this new position for two years.

Then in 1973, the Tompkins County Community Fund became the United Way of Tompkins County. Wendell G. Earle became the United Way of Tompkins County's first Board President.

In 1983, Elizabeth "Million Dollar Betty" Cornish chaired the first United Way County Campaign that exceeded contributions of \$1,000,000. She was also instrumental in establishing and building the Livermore Society Leadership Giving Society.

In 2007-2008, Rob Mackenzie, M.D. and Jean McPheeters co-chaired the first United Way of Tompkins County Community Campaign that exceeded contributions of \$2,000,000.

In 2007, John Alexander chaired the first Corporate Cornerstone Campaign, a fundraising campaign designed to cover the administrative and operating expenses of United Way of Tompkins County. In 2008, 100% of community raised donations went back to the community, the first time in the history of United Way of Tompkins County.