

# United Way Awards One-time Grants To Two Illinois Nonprofits

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ALTON — The Southwest Illinois Division of [United Way of Greater St. Louis](#) recently awarded Kids Corner and Refuge, two nonprofits that serve Madison County, Ill, with a total of \$14,000 through the Carol F. Martin Trust Grant Fund.

A \$4,000 grant awarded to Kids Corner will help them fund programs for children who have been displaced because of parent separation, and a \$10,000 grant awarded to Refuge will support programs that prevent childhood exposure to violence and abuse.

“United Way of Greater St. Louis is proud to support Kids Corner and Refuge as they focus on the well-being of children and families in our community,” said Maura Wuellner, director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way. “United Way is able to invest in the varying needs of our community because of the generosity and support of our donors, volunteers, and community.”

Kids Corner is managed by the Children’s First Foundation whose goal is to prepare families for typical problems families encounter during the divorce and post-divorce process. Their objective is to educate parents about how long, drawn-out custody battles can negatively impact children. With parents more informed, their pre-divorce custody decisions could hopefully be negotiated in a more open and cooperative way, thereby avoiding the need for numerous post-decree court appearances. The organization also offers Supervised Parenting Time and Parenting Exchange programs for parents and children to meet and bond in a conflict-free environment during divorce processes that may be especially difficult.

“We are so grateful to United Way for supporting Kids Corner and the families we serve,” said Julie Chambers, executive director of Kids Corner. “Our organizations is continually looking for ways to improve how we serve families and their experiences with our programs, and this grant will help us acquire the resources to do these things.”

Refuge works to increase support and protection for families by providing parenting classes, school-based services, community education, consultation, and professional support to enhance the entire community’s capacity to support families dealing with abuse and violence. Refuge uses evidence-based treatment models which incorporate individual, family, and group therapy to address each family’s unique needs and strengths.

“United Way’s generosity will help Refuge achieve our goals and expand our impact,” said Erin Bickle, executive director of Refuge. “We are always exploring ways to improve the quality of resources that we provide for families seeking treatment. We are really grateful to United Way for this support of our programs and services.”

The Carol F. Martin Trust Grant was established in 2015 to provide one-time grants to organizations providing health and human care within the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way of Greater St. Louis area. The receiving organization was determined by a standing committee of the Southwest Illinois Division Auxiliary Board.

A photo of the check presentation to Kids Corner can be found [here](#) (from left to right: Steve Thompson, Board President of United Way of Greater St. Louis’s Southwest

Illinois Division and Regional President Carrollton Bank; Julie Chambers, Executive Director of Kids Corner; Claudette Wangelin, Bookkeeper for Kids Corner; and Maura Wuellner, Director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way).

A photo of the check presentation to Refuge can be found [here](#) (Steve Thompson, Board Chair of United Way of Greater St. Louis's Southwest Illinois Division; Erin Bickle, Executive Director of Refuge; Megan Slusser, Clinical Director for Refuge; Maura Wuellner, Director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way).

### About United Way of Greater St. Louis

*United Way of Greater St. Louis mobilizes the community with one goal in mind — helping people live their best possible lives. Located throughout 16 counties in Missouri and Illinois, United Way helps one in three people in the region build a foundation for a good quality of life through basic needs, financial stability, education, health and strong communities. For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit [www.HelpingPeople.org](http://www.HelpingPeople.org).*