

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. GRADUATE.

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WHY VOLUNTEERS ARE ACTIVE

Not only does the **ENGAGE. EMPOWER. GRADUATE.** initiative address and identify the disadvantages faced by children and families in local elementary schools, it also brings together members of Women United (WU) and Emerging Leaders United (ELU) with community members to actively volunteer in making a difference.

The benefits of volunteering are not exclusive to those being served, but also to those serving. Volunteering gives a sense of purpose to your life, boosts your self-esteem by building your social network and makes you feel good!



"I can see when I go to Jump Start on the first day that some of these kiddos can't hold a pencil correctly. For them to be able to practice writing their name by the end of Jump Start is just remarkable! Learning letter and number recognition, understanding routines, and being so excited for the structure is just totally amazing. I am filled with hopes and dreams for these little people getting such a positive start to their school career and excited to see what they accomplish." —*Shawna Hightree*

"It has been proven that the kids who attend Jump Start to Kindergarten are testing at higher levels than the kids that do not. When you volunteer for the week of Jump Start, you can actually watch the progression the kids make from day one to the end of the program. You get to know them, their personalities, and then you continue to see them in future grade levels as you continue to spend time volunteering at the school through **ENGAGE. EMPOWER. GRADUATE.**" —*T.J. Casady*



"I have been blessed to be able to financially support the students and families at McPhee and Campbell Elementary schools through ELU and I love being a part of a team that comes together for such a great cause. I have three small children and I understand the time and money that I have given to support **ENGAGE. EMPOWER. GRADUATE.** is going to children who do not have the opportunities that most children have. These children will grow up to be contributors to this community right alongside my own children." —*Erin Hart*

"Some of these children do not have the strongest support systems or sometimes have a lot going on at home that most of us can't even imagine. I volunteer to hopefully make a difference in their lives and provide some support and positive encouragement for them." —*Chrissy Waido*



Students who participated in Jump Start to Kindergarten out performed partial and non-participants at the end of the first week of school on all measures of academic achievement.

- 81% of Jump Start participants were meeting or exceeding expectations in writing by the end of the first week of school
- 61.9% of Jump Start participants were meeting or exceeding expectations in letter naming by the end of the first week of school
- 66.6% of Jump Start participants were meeting or exceeding expectations in math by the end of the first week of school

To learn more about WU/ELU, please contact **Lona Thompson** at **402.441.7213** or **lthompson@unitedwaylincoln.org**.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 12

Women in Philanthropy
Networking at
Cooper & Co.

Sponsored by:



March 2

Read Across America Day

April 5

Women United
Recognition Lunch

Sponsored by:

May 8

Women in Philanthropy
Networking at
Earl May

Sponsored by:



June 21

Day of Action

July—August

Jump Start to Kindergarten

October

Women in Philanthropy
Networking at
The Still

Sponsored by: Open

November 12

Women in Philanthropy
Networking at
Stem Gallery

Sponsored by:



INITIATIVE PROGRAMS:

+ **Early Childhood Development**

GOAL: Preparing children for kindergarten.

+ **Family Engagement and Support**

GOAL: Engaging parents with the school.

+ **Adult Education**

GOAL: Teaching both parents and students English.

+ **Mental Health and Family Support**

GOAL: Address behavioral and emotional barriers to learning through the support of a school-based therapist.

+ **Extended Learning Opportunities**

GOAL: Enrichment outside of the classroom to enhance development opportunities and reduce summertime grade level loss.

+ **Youth Development**

GOAL: Providing students with strong role models through mentoring relationships to foster educational engagement.

+ **Prevention Services**

GOAL: Reaching out to families in their homes to build safe environments and prevent child entrance into protective services.



HOW CAN I MAKE AN IMPACT?

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. GRADUATE. initiative is a joint undertaking by Women United (WU) and Emerging Leaders United (ELU). Together we're identifying and addressing the disadvantages that children and families face in local elementary school communities to ensure children and their families, regardless of circumstances, have the opportunity to succeed in school and life through key strategies.

Women United and the Emerging Leaders United members give at these four levels:



- + **WU/ELU Promoters:** minimum annual gift of \$500
- + **WU/ELU Supporters:** minimum annual gift of \$1,000
- + **WU/ELU Investors:** minimum annual gift of \$1,500
- + **WU/ELU Leaders:** minimum annual gift of \$2,500



United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County
UnitedWayLincoln.org



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