

# Education Update

June 2009

Eaton County  
United Way

Eaton County United Way appreciates the investment you've chosen to make to positively impact your community.

This quarterly Education Update will highlight how your money is working to advance the Common Good right here in Eaton County by helping children and youth achieve their potential through education.

Please help us maximize your investment by providing us your email address to avoid future postage costs. Send your email address to [loretta@ecuw.org](mailto:loretta@ecuw.org)

THANKS!

## THE COMMON GOOD FORECASTER

By Greg Toppo, USA TODAY

Researchers have known for decades that rising education levels positively influence a host of social factors: income, health, voting rates and even the likelihood that a person will stay out of prison.

Education matters. A new website seeks to quantify just how much.

The Common Good Forecaster, a joint project of the United Way of America and the American Human Development Project, a New York-based non-profit, uses U.S. Census data to calculate how education influences a handful of other important statistical indicators. It allows users to fiddle with state and county high school graduation rates, college attendance and college graduation rates to predict what the effect of raising those rates might be.

For instance, move all adults in the state of New Mexico up just one level of schooling - those without high school would

graduate, those with a high school degree would get some college (or an associate's degree), and those with some college would earn a four-year



diploma - and the tool predicts, among other things, that life expectancy in the state would increase by nearly two years.

New Mexico's murder rate would drop by more than half, from 8.6 murders per 100,000 people to 3.8.

Meanwhile, median personal income in the state would rise, from, \$27,927 to \$35,253, and the percentage of people who vote would jump substantially, from about 55% to 65%.

Also, the incarceration rate would drop more

than 60%, from 640 people per 100,000 to 246.

"So many of these social and economic issues are linked," says Brian Gallagher, United Way's president and CEO. "Too often we approach them in a siloed way." Twenty-five years of tracking social trends & education has led Gallagher to the firm belief that they're intimately connected, but he says government agencies and non-profit groups find it easier to study - and advocate for - single issues rather than stepping back to see the big picture. "Intuitively, people know these things are connected," he says. "And I think that more than anything, what we have (is) just inertia in systems - in public education systems, in health care systems, in non-profit helping systems. "And quite honestly, it's easier to track your work by issue."



## **Eaton County United Way**

350 Lansing St.— Suite B  
PO Box 14  
Charlotte, MI 48813

Phone: 517-543-5402  
Website: [www.ecuw.org](http://www.ecuw.org)  
E-mail: [ecuw@ecuw.org](mailto:ecuw@ecuw.org)

**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.**

## **PARTNER AGENCIES RECEIVE EDUCATION FUNDING**



116 donors generously gave more than \$10,000 in the impact area of Education during the 2008 fall fundraising campaign.

Because of this investment, two local agencies, serving a combined 1800 children, were able to receive program funding.

Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan received funding for programming that encourages girls to Discover, Connect, & Take Action. This Leadership Program helps girls develop strong self esteem, critical thinking, encourages a feeling of connection to their community, and empowers them to make a difference in the world.

Early Childhood Connections (ECC) applied for and received funding to provide literacy-based programs for

children in Eaton County. ECC programs promote Early Care & Education, Social Emotional Health, and Physical Health through a variety of activities.

*You can learn more about these programs and other Eaton County United Way (ECUW) partner agencies by logging onto [www.ecuw.org](http://www.ecuw.org) and clicking on "Partner Agencies"*