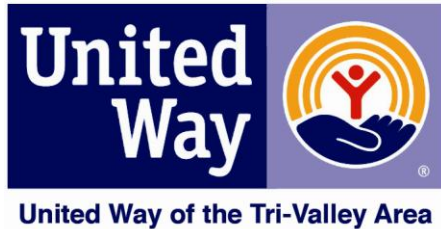


Partner Profiles



Lisa Park Laflin, Executive Director

Editor's Note: This is the ninth in a series of articles that demonstrates the community impact of the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area.

The United Way of the Tri-Valley Area understands the challenges of providing transportation in rural western Maine. That is why a number of organizations receive United Way support to provide transportation to individuals, such as the case with Community Concepts' Elder Ride program, or to support outreach into communities and provide services such as Meals on Wheels offered by SeniorsPlus.

Western Maine Transportation Services, Inc. (WMTS) also receives United Way support and is the focus of today's article. WMTS is a quasi-governmental non-profit 501(C)(3) Public Transportation Corporation, created by statute in 1976, to provide public transportation in Franklin, Oxford and Androscoggin Counties. The majority of the rides provided by WMTS are to the elderly, handicapped, disabled and disadvantaged, although many rides are also provided to the general public. WMTS works with the Maine Department of Transportation and Maine Department of Health and Human Services to provide semi-fixed-route and demand-response service on the familiar green buses as well as through reimbursed "Volunteer" and "Friends & Family" rides.

Western Maine Transportation Services enjoys an outstanding relationship with United Way of the Tri-Valley Area and is very pleased to have been funded by UWTVA to provide the "Community Rides" program again for 2009. The Community Rides program focuses on serving individuals in the UWTVA's service area who do not have access to transportation, or any way to afford transportation, to and from medical appointments or other necessary services and activities.

WMTS is always interested in recruiting additional volunteer drivers. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed 44 cents/mile, tax-free to provide rides to MaineCare recipients and individuals covered by specific Maine DHHS programs.

For further information on the Community Rides Program or becoming a volunteer driver, please contact WMTS at 800-393-9335 and press option "1" to reach customer service.

The mission of the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area is to improve people's lives by focusing the caring capacity of our communities. For more information or to give, advocate, or volunteer in your community, visit www.uwtva.org, call 778-5048 or e-mail info@uwtva.org.