IUPUI launches its United Way of Central Indiana campaign this week, with a goal of $366,500. Your campus colleagues will be offering many compelling reasons why you should contribute, but I’d like to focus on one, but it’s a very big one, and it affects us directly.

Children who grow up in poverty and other unstable conditions will likely be disadvantaged throughout their lives if we can’t find a way to create the community conditions where they can get a good education. If we can’t create those conditions, we all lose. Education used to be the great social leveler, but that level playing ground is being eroded by persistent economic conditions spanning generations in families.

Jerry Selingo, author of *College (Un)Bound: The Future of Higher Education and What It Means for Students,* puts the curse of poverty in stark terms, when he said in an interview last May for NPR: “One of the most disturbing numbers I came across in research for this book was that if you come from a family with a family income above $90,000, you have a 1 in 2 chance of getting a bachelor’s degree by the time you’re in your mid-20s. If you come from a family under $35,000, you have a 1 in 17 chance.”

On a college campus, we see the transformative power of education every day. What we don’t see, as well as we should, are the ones who don’t make it to our doors. These are the ones for whom United Way seeks to open doors. UWCI’s agencies focus not only on working with schools, agencies, and other community partners to improve education in central Indiana but also on the complex combinations of needs—income stability, basic needs, and health care—that get in the way of ensuring children have the skills to succeed throughout their lives.

IUPUI has a great track record for supporting UWCI (IUPUI is a top 20 contributor and number one in the Higher Education Category), but let’s step it up. Participation in the United Way of Central Indiana campaign offers a powerful way for us to make a difference and achieve meaningful change in the communities where we work and live.

Pledges can be made online at [www.iupui.edu/uwaycamp](http://www.iupui.edu/uwaycamp). The campaign runs from September 17th to October 31st.

Comments? Write chancellr@iupui.edu.

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