



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Inaugural Summer Discovery Program Increases Math Skills by 18% for over  
16,000 Kids in Metro Detroit, Data Reveals**

*2025 Program Now Open for Enrollment*

**Detroit, MI – November 19, 2024** – United Way for Southeastern Michigan, in partnership with Building Impact and Ballmer Group Philanthropy, is proud to share the impressive results of the inaugural Summer Discovery program. This initiative, designed to prevent summer learning loss and foster personal growth, served more than 16-thousand K-8 students across Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland counties.

Thanks to a nearly \$35 million grant from Ballmer Group, Summer Discovery provided free, high-quality educational and enrichment experiences at nearly 100 sites in 2024. The program is set to expand in 2025 with an even greater investment to serve up to 22,000 students.

"The Summer Discovery program has not only helped reduce summer learning loss for thousands of children but also fostered meaningful, enriching experiences for families throughout our region," says Dr. Darienne Hudson, president and CEO of United Way for Southeastern Michigan. "We are grateful to Ballmer Group for their visionary investment in our children's futures. Together, we are laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success."

The percentage of students who tested “proficient” in ELA and math increased by 18 points compared to pre-assessment. At least 88% of families and 89% of grantees felt that Summer Discovery prepared students for the upcoming school year, according to survey results.

"We are excited to support a second summer of Summer Discovery in Southeast Michigan," said Steve and Connie Ballmer. "The data on students' ability to start this year better prepared and without the learning loss kids experience over summer break is encouraging. We're proud of everyone who participated last year and are excited to see even more growth in 2025."

### **Applications for 2025 Now Open**

Building on the success of the 2024 program, enrollment for the 2025 Summer Discovery program is now open. Interested providers are encouraged to apply for this enriching opportunity.

In 2024, Summer Discovery offered full-day activities, including STEM projects, creative arts, outdoor adventures, and more, ensuring students remain engaged and excited about learning during the summer months. In 2025, the hope is to expand the number of sites, offerings, and impact.

For educators and community organizations interested in hosting a program site, applications are also available on the [Summer Discovery website](#).

### **About Ballmer Group**

*Ballmer Group is committed to improving economic mobility for children and families in the United States, funding leaders and organizations that have demonstrated the ability to reshape opportunity and reduce systemic inequities. They focus on multiple impact areas and systems that can impact economic mobility – such as early learning, K-12 education, college and career pathways, housing, behavioral health, and criminal justice – and they support leaders and organizations that focus on undoing systemic racism and the barriers it has created. Ballmer Group is both a national and regional funder – they have a presence and invest deeply in southeast Michigan, Washington state, and Los Angeles County. Ballmer Group was co-founded by philanthropist Connie Ballmer and her husband Steve Ballmer, former CEO of Microsoft, founder of USAFacts, and chairman of the Los Angeles Clippers. Learn more at [www.ballmergroup.org](http://www.ballmergroup.org).*

### **About United Way for Southeastern Michigan**

*United Way for Southeastern Michigan, a member of the United Way Worldwide network and an independently governed 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, works to help households become stable and ensure children have the support they need to thrive. For more than 100 years, United Way has been a leader in creating positive, measurable, and sustainable change in communities throughout southeast Michigan.*

*United Way works in partnership with donors, agencies, corporate and municipal partners to help families meet their basic needs of housing, food, health care and family finances, and ensure children start school ready to learn and graduate ready for life. To give, advocate, volunteer or learn more, visit [UnitedWaySEM.org](http://UnitedWaySEM.org).*

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### **Media Opportunities**

Media interested in learning more about the program or interviewing program participants, educators, and United Way representatives are encouraged to contact Jerome Espy at [jerome.espy@liveunitedSEM.org](mailto:jerome.espy@liveunitedSEM.org).