



OUR IMPACT

United Way of
South Central Michigan



Calhoun | Clinton | Eaton | Ingham | Jackson | Kalamazoo

How has United Way made an impact on your life?



"When I was out of work, and saw what the community had, I thought when I get back on my feet I'm going to make sure I give back. It was a blessing to get the appointment at United Way which allowed me the opportunity to connect with the community."
—Dean Poggiali, Walter A. Campbell Winner, Capital Area Volunteer of the Year Awards



"During COVID, United Way was able to provide financial assistance to us and members within our community. It really helped me see United Way's stance on what they are willing to do for its region. They didn't talk about what they were going to do, they went and did it. We are grateful for their partnership."
—Jose Luis Orozco Jr, VOCES Executive Director



"United Way's commitment to equity and inclusion has made a real difference in the lives of people in our community that have needed the help paying rent, access to affordable housing, health care, and other basic needs."
—Bobby Boyd, Community Leader



"I knew about United Way from a young age, since my dad was a loaned executive from his company. His example made me and my siblings want to follow suit and give to those who are struggling. Fast forward many years, and I have loved putting my shoulder to the wheel here in Jackson County to raise money to fund programs and help our friends and neighbors in need. It is a great reason to get up, go to work and to have that mission in front of me, to connect our community for the common good."
—Beth Shafer, longtime United Way staff member



"During COVID, we were shut down for around eight months, but our expenses continued. Due to those expenses, we weren't able to invest in our business for the last couple years. The Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grant will allow us to make all the walls in our pool room waterproof, which will save us money from having to clean and repair them so often. This investment will improve and strengthen our quality of service for years to come."
—Milliken Aquatics, Small Business Grant recipient

What's your United Way story? Scan here:



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Greater Impact TOGETHER: One Year into the Merger

Years of collaboration led three United Ways to merge as one: **United Way of South Central Michigan.**

Capital Area United Way, United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region, and United Way of Jackson County completed their merger on April 1, 2022. President & CEO Chris Sargent said the new UWSCMI would be able to “tap new sources of funding, create new partnerships, advocate for racial and economic equity more effectively, and take a bigger role in leading the impact that our individual United Ways can’t do by themselves.”

UWSCMI moved quickly on integration. Board members and executive leaders were announced on Day 1, with new chief equity and chief financial officers joining by summer. Within weeks, UWSCMI set its organizational structure, defined roles for staff and finalized titles, rolled out a common IT system, and set its first-year budget. UWSCMI teams began interacting immediately, sharing best practices and local insights while developing common ways to do the work—from fundraising to operations to engaging with local communities on key initiatives.

UWSCMI is building on its momentum thanks to the trust and support of donors and partners, Sargent said. “We’re making a difference thanks to your investment. We’re ensuring that children don’t go hungry, that families have a safe place to call home, that people have access to health care, and that seniors are supported in being independent.”



First-Year Achievements

- Created \$26 million in local & regional impact +
- Defined regional Vision, Mission and Values +
- Briefed White House on pandemic-related partnership +
- Earned MIBiz/Crain's Deal of the Year honors +
- Led two 21-Day Equity Challenges (Disability Equity, Racial Equity) +



OUR EQUITY WORK

From Our Chief Equity Officer

The United Way of South Central Michigan is determined to push back against the significant, ongoing harm caused by systemic racism and historical inequities in our communities. Throughout our history we have worked to solve some of the most pressing challenges facing our community, and that continues on today through our commitment to equity. Our community partners, regional and national data, and our own lived experiences have made clear that systems of oppression, especially racism, have made surviving and thriving in our communities more difficult for some than others.

Jen Hsu-Bishop



At UWSCMI, everything we do is guided by our equity values. We're engaging in our own ongoing learning, realigning our policies and practices, and coming alongside our community to take action toward a more equitable future. By centering people, communities, and organizations that are typically forced to the margins, we are creating a more rich, successful, and equitable community in South Central Michigan.

Our Work in Community

Thousands of community members have joined us in learning about racial and disability equity through our 21-Day Equity Challenges. To take a challenge yourself, go to unitedforscmi.org to explore the content or look for upcoming community challenges.



August 2022
1,496 participants

"This was a great series, and I learned a lot. I appreciated the written content, and the variety of mediums for continued learning."
—Participant



February 2023
943 participants

"The 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge was a great educational challenge for our entire team as it covered various topics. It truly helped us with our DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) initiatives in 2023."
—Audra L. Lindsey,
Kellogg Community Credit Union

Our Internal Work

During the merging of three legacy United Ways, UWSCMI contracted with Cross Movement Social Justice Consulting (CMSJC) to conduct a comprehensive equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) assessment during the calendar year 2022.

We learned that UWSCMI has built a strong foundation for continuous growth and improvement for embedding strategic EDI goals, activities, outcomes, practices, norms, and culture. We also understand there are many opportunities to explore areas for continuous improvement and learning.

Here are some of CMSJC's findings:

STRENGTHS

UWSCMI embeds EDI practices throughout its departments and is committed to continuous improvement through goal-setting and learning.

UWSCMI is developing monthly all-staff Learning Spaces designed for ongoing development and action within and across specific social identity groups.

UWSCMI has added a new EDI department and Chief Equity Officer role, a staff Culture Committee, and Board of Directors EDI Committee.

UWSCMI staff bring significant expertise and lived experience related to EDI, and are given opportunities to share feedback and ideas through surveys and Listening Tours.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

UWSCMI will continue to offer ongoing EDI learning opportunities for staff, work toward making facilities accessible and ensure EDI values are embedded in all policies, practices, and culture.

UWSCMI will work to eliminate barriers in the grantmaking process in ways that include streamlining processes, strategically funding organizations that serve marginalized populations, and diversifying committees.

Human Resources will continue to develop an intentional process to recruit, hire, retain, and develop staff with marginalized identities.

ALICE

Get To Know ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

United Ways across the nation build their impact work around the needs of households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) but cannot keep up with the rising cost of living in their county. Overlooked and underserved by traditional poverty measures, we refer to these essential community members as ALICE.

ALICE research raises awareness about a huge but hidden segment that cannot afford basic necessities. The success of a community is directly related to the financial stability of its members, yet ALICE families are making impossible decisions every day. Rent or utilities? Food or medicine?

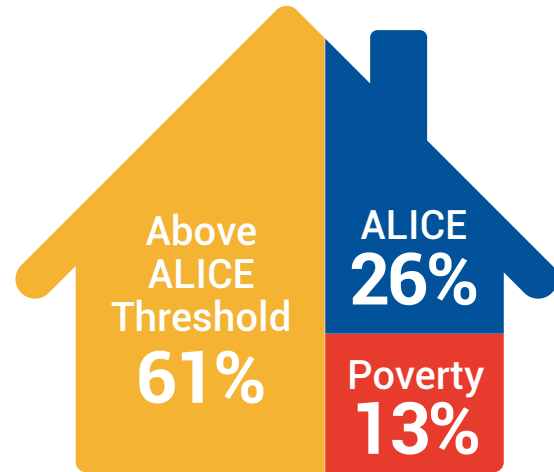
UWSCMI's impact work focuses on the needs of ALICE, especially racial and economic disparities. We believe that helping these working families find financial stability will benefit our local communities, our region and beyond. Discover more about ALICE by visiting our website, unitedforscmi.org/alice.

Data from the latest Michigan ALICE Report (April 2023), which is based on 2021 data.

ALICE in our Region

Households earning above the Federal Poverty Level yet unable to afford basic expenses.

26% of households in our six-county region are ALICE. **13%** live below the FPL. This means that **162,975 households (39%)** are living below the ALICE Threshold (AT), which is the income needed to afford the very basic necessities of survival.



REGIONAL ALICE SURVIVAL & STABILITY BUDGETS

Survival = Bare minimum cost of household basics (assumes affordable housing, health care, etc.)











Stability = Cost of household basics at a sustainable level, including savings

HOUSEHOLD	SURVIVAL	STABILITY
1 Single Adult		
Monthly Total Expenses	\$2,260	\$3,526
Annual Total Expenses	\$27,120	\$42,312
Full-time Wage Needed	\$13.56/hour	\$21.16/hour
2 Adults, 1 Infant, 1 Preschooler		
Monthly Total Expenses	\$5,066	\$7,825
Annual Total Expenses	\$60,792	\$93,900
Full-time Wage Needed	\$30.40/hour	\$46.95/hour

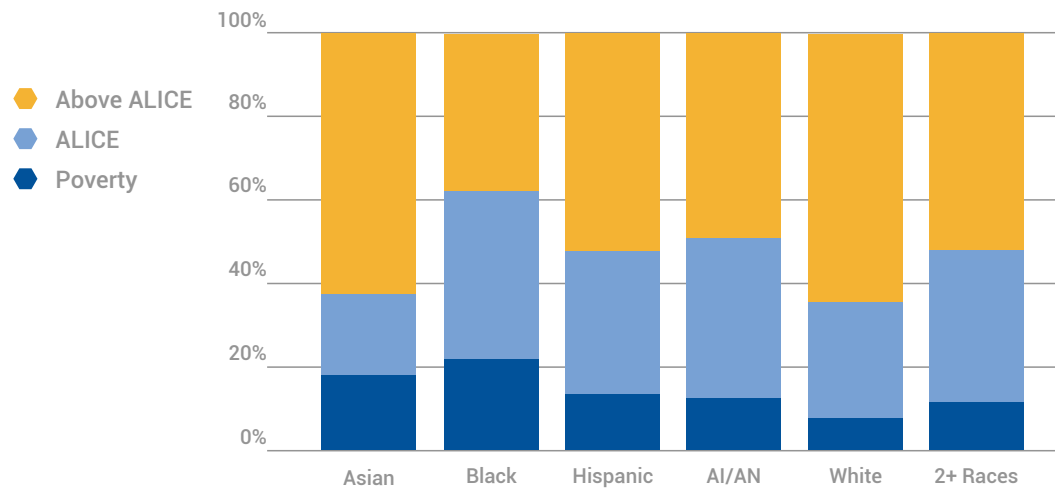
To get a more in-depth look into ALICE in Michigan and our region, scan here:



10 OCCUPATIONS IN MICHIGAN WITH HIGHEST % BELOW ALICE THRESHOLD

OCCUPATION	% BELOW AT	MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE
 Cashiers	47%	\$11.38
 Personal Care Aides	46%	\$13.53
 Fast Food/Counter Workers	42%	\$11.38
 Cooks	40%	\$13.77
 Laborers/Movers	34%	\$14.58
 Nursing Assistants	34%	\$17.11
 Wait Staff	34%	\$13.80
 Teaching Assistants	33%	\$15.41
 Retail Sales	30%	\$13.81
 Stockers/Order Fillers	30%	\$14.58

HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, REGIONAL, 2021



Source: ALICE In The Crosscurrents (2023), United For ALICE, United Way Worldwide, and Michigan Association of United Ways. Our thanks to Consumers Energy Foundation for funding this report.

ALICE Speaks: Bethany’s Story

As a 23-year-old single parent in 2011, Bethany Broom-Dombrowski worked full-time as a Michigan Head Start teacher. She made \$30,000 a year but couldn’t keep up with her monthly expenses. Her three-year-old daughter attended local daycare and preschool programs, which cost \$30 a day without meals. She also had to pay back her student loans. “I felt like I was on a never-ending marathon, living paycheck to paycheck,” she said.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) became a financial lifeline, allowing Broom-Dombrowski to pay child care expenses. Now financially stable, she used her story to successfully advocate for the Michigan Senate to raise the EITC in 2023. She also applies her experiences as ALICE as part of UWSCMI’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance team.



OUR PROGRAMS

Kalamazoo County



Continuum of Care (CoC)

Kalamazoo County

CoC works with partners to increase coordination and find solutions to the gaps, inequities, and challenges they experience when working to reduce homelessness.

In 2022, the CoC:

- Administered \$1,718,144 in federal funding and \$485,820 in state funding to prevent and address homelessness
- Provided \$53,500 dollars in mini-grants to local non-profits serving the unhoused
- Redesigned the RentAble program to better support ALICE households in securing or retaining their housing

"I found the experience to be completely life-changing. I visited places I never knew existed. One of the most significant learnings for me was the power we, as human beings, have. We are resourceful and resilient. To see how ingenious our residents are, was eye-opening yet disturbing. I saw individuals living in conditions that were not meant to be, yet they worked to make it home."

—Point-in-Time Count Volunteer

Program Assistance Center (PAC)

Statewide

PAC, a Michigan Energy Assistance Program, provides households with direct energy assistance to pay heat and electric bills, and completes a needs assessment for each client so they are connected with non-energy assistance services they need.

5,732 households received energy security/self-sufficiency programming or referrals

4,970 households were served using state funding and funding from Consumers Energy

A veteran was living in a home that was falling in on him. While refusing to move or receive service in his name due to astronomically high bills, he told the PAC Program Administrator he thought he would die in his house alone in the dark. With PAC's help, he was able to get the assistance he needed on his utility bill and secure safe, new housing.



Small Business Support

Kalamazoo County

The Kalamazoo Small Business Grant and Loan programs provide small business owners—particularly those who identify as women, BIPOC*, or who are located in SPK** neighborhoods—access to financial resources and capacity building supports.

2022 Highlight: UWSCMI secured federal funding from Kalamazoo County to expand Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grants countywide in 2023.

Kalamazoo Small Business Loan Fund: \$2,277,500 to 188 Businesses (May 2020–Dec. 2022)

61% BIPOC 66% BIPOC and/or female

Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grants: \$600,000 to 120 microbusinesses (Jan. 2022–Dec. 2022)

83% BIPOC 69% female

"This was my first time having this type of support, and I think it was great. I come from a background where we figure it out on our own. The funds allowed me to be able to secure event spaces and materials for events that reach and connect with community. This has been an amazing experience, one that I truly appreciate."

—Ed Genesis, Kalamazoo Micro-Enterprise Grant recipient

*BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, people of color

**SPK: Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo neighborhoods of Eastside, Edison, and Northside





JobSTAR

Support Talent And Retention - Jackson's Business Resource Network

JobSTAR

Jackson County

JobSTAR is a resource for employers to help their employees overcome obstacles that may impede their ability to work.

2022 Highlight: UWSCMI onboarded a new company into JobSTAR, the result of a focus on recruitment.

Referrals Provided: 803 referrals across 10 businesses (Oct. 1, 2021–Sep. 30, 2022)

An employee within the JobSTAR network began working with a Success Coach after hitting financial barriers and housing issues. They created a budget to ensure that the employee could maintain her household expenses. To help offset her expenses, she was also encouraged to apply for Food Assistance and Child Day Care through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. She was approved for both of those programs. She and her family are now living in a home that she owns, with a sustainable monthly budget.

—JobSTAR Success Coach

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ionia, Ingham, Kalamazoo, Montcalm, Shiawassee and Washtenaw Counties

The VITA program is an IRS program administered by partner organizations throughout the United States providing free, high-quality tax preparation services for low to moderate income households making \$57,000 or less.

2022 Highlight: UWSCMI's VITA program expanded to serve Kalamazoo in 2023. We also partner with agencies leading VITA programs in Calhoun and Jackson counties.

Households Served: 3,434

\$5,681,526 in federal and state tax refunds brought back into the community

"I like discovering credits for lower income people in our communities that they didn't know they had coming. Sometimes you can find a lot of money for people in need, and it's really quite satisfying. If you like helping people and playing with numbers, I'd highly suggest volunteering for VITA."

—VITA Volunteer



Capital Area College Access Network (CapCAN)

Eaton and Ingham Counties

CapCAN is a community collaborative focused on increasing post-secondary attainment as an achievable reality for all residents by fostering high educational aspirations through the alignment of our institutions and resources.

2022 Highlight: CapCAN staff launched the College Ambassador program in which they trained 13 rising seniors in the summer of 2022 to engage with their peers at school regarding the college process and help build a college going culture.

Students Served: 2,700

"During CapCAN's Summer College Ambassador program, we learned about all the colleges that were nearby in Michigan. I wasn't thinking about it, but my sister was. She graduated from high school previously, and she didn't know which school to go to. I toured Davenport University through the Ambassador Program and told her about all the opportunities. Now she's a student there, and she got a lot of scholarships."

—Ranim, Summer College Ambassador program participant

GRANTMAKING

Grantmaking at United Way

United Way of South Central Michigan is committed to building strong, caring communities by focusing on the needs of ALICE households as well as barriers such as racial and economic disparities. While we do this in many ways, community impact grantmaking has been foundational to our work for decades and remains a mainstay in the way we work alongside and support our partner organizations. It's also where community members can join the effort. Community impact grants—which in 2022-23 made up 21% of our total investment in our region—are funded by individual, employee and corporate donors.

And because the communities within our region have different needs, we continue to run separate grant processes in Jackson County, Capital Area, and Battle Creek/Kalamazoo, all while **keeping local dollars local**.

All data on this page is from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022



OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

\$5,440,489 invested in
124 programs at
94 agencies/collaboratives



JACKSON COUNTY

**\$494,825 invested in
18 programs at 16 agencies**

1,721,771: Meals served

1,157: Individuals who received counseling support improving behavior health and emotional wellness

238: People who received emergency shelter and had their basic needs met

165: Adults who attended financial literacy classes

27: Parents able to maintain employment due to having safe, reliable and affordable child care

17: Clients who purchased homes and received down payment assistance

100% Families served who reported their child being prepared for kindergarten

BATTLE CREEK AND KALAMAZOO AREA

**\$4,534,727 invested in
94 programs at 64 agencies**

6,012,685 lbs: Non-perishable and fresh food provided

513,187: Meals served

40,829: Nights of shelter

98% Households served that retained stable housing after receiving short-term housing assistance subsidies

88% Households served that retained stable housing after receiving legal assistance

84% Individuals served who gained employment as a result of attaining credentials for job readiness

84% Youth served who demonstrated improved academic performance

CAPITAL AREA

**\$410,937 invested in
12 programs at 10 agencies
and 4 collaboratives**

Collaborative Grants:
\$277,437 Invested
2,780: People Served

Access to Health Grants:
\$133,500 Invested
14,853: People Served

52: Families able to secure safe and stable housing

10: Schools that received Survival Kits twice per month for food insecure children

Collaboratives Funded
Families in Early Literacy, Project PEACE, Learning Lab, and Shared Housing Intervention Program. Three out of the four programs served greater than 100% of projected clients; the fourth served 91% of its projection.

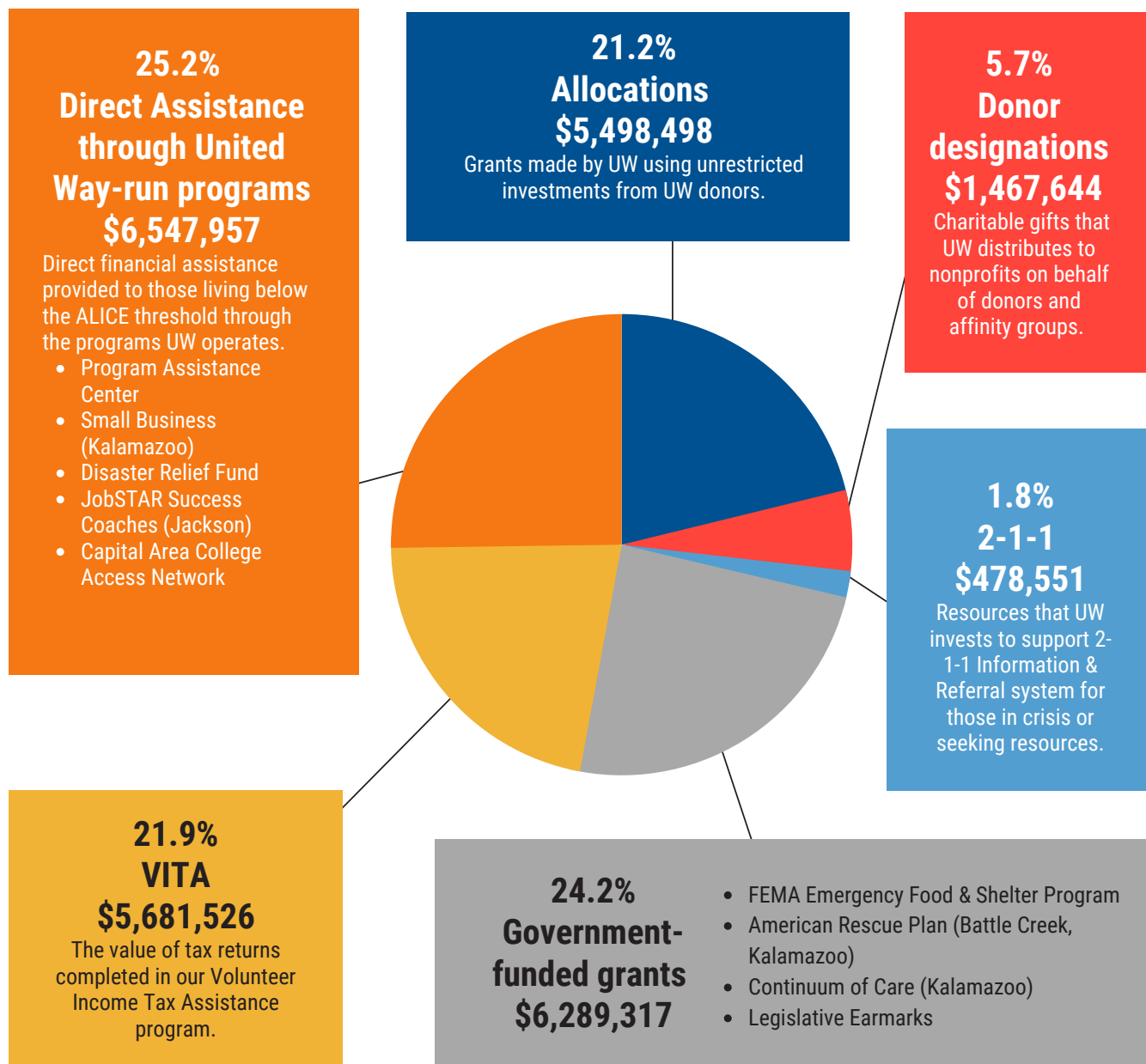
GREATER IMPACT TOGETHER

Dollars in Community

Total investment for April 1, 2022- March 31, 2023

\$25,963,493

For every donor dollar raised, UWSCMI brings an additional \$3.50 into our communities.



Your Role

The past few years have taken a toll on the people we serve through United Way programs and partnerships, and on the financial support that makes those things possible. In the wake of the pandemic, economic difficulties and social turmoil, the need truly has never been greater.

We're profoundly grateful for the many generous people who have supported our work, and we continue to depend on your voice, your engagement and your financial support to strengthen our work for ALICE families, to tackle economic and racial disparities in our region, and to advocate for marginalized people.

Now's the time to get involved!



DONATE

Show your support with a one-time or recurring financial gift to United Way. Give online or call 1-888-681-GIVE for additional options.



VOLUNTEER

Show your support through volunteerism. Find a one-time opportunity, or make a longer-term commitment with us or one of our partners.



ENGAGE

Show your support with engagement and advocacy. Explore one of our 21-Day Challenges to learn more about racial equity, disability equity, and more.



Looks like I get the last word, and I couldn't be happier about that.

You've just read a report that tells a powerful story. A story of impact. A story of lives changed in real, measurable, lasting ways. That's far more important than anything I might add—with one exception: **YOU**.

Because this story couldn't happen without you. Without your partnership, without your input, without your active involvement and generous support... well, there'd still be a story to tell, but one far different.

So let me leave you with two thoughts. First is gratitude—mine, the community's, and the thousands of people whose lives are on a better path because you cared enough to make a difference. Second is resolve—because there are still kids in our region without food, families without shelter, people without fair and equitable treatment, households without the income they need to survive.

The solutions are far bigger than any one person or organization. It takes all of us. That's what drove our merger and what drives our work every day—creating greater impact together.

I can't think of a better last word than that one: **TOGETHER**.

Chris Sargent



President & CEO

OUR VISION

Strong, caring communities where every person is valued, thriving, and connected for the common good.

OUR MISSION

We bring together the people, ideas and resources to lead with our communities and create a flourishing, equitable life for everyone.

OUR PATH

Our work lifts our local communities by reducing racial and economic disparities; addressing the needs of ALICE* households in financial stability, education, health, and basic needs; and creating opportunities for every person to reach their full potential.

*Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed



Our Values

COMMUNITY

Solving the toughest social issues that affect our local individuals and families, changing lives and strengthening our region in the process

INTEGRITY

Pursuing our work with transparency, accountability and dignity, constantly learning and adapting to the changing needs of our communities

EQUITY

Applying principles of diversity, inclusivity, justice, anti-racism, empathy and trust to every facet of our work and our culture, with a firm commitment to historically underrepresented and marginalized people

COLLABORATION

Working hand-in-hand with communities and partners to honor their voices, build trust, increase impact, and grow diversity in ideas and representation throughout our shared efforts

COMPASSION

Caring compassionately for the people we serve, the colleagues we work alongside, and the communities we strive to improve

RESULTS

Driving impact through innovation, creativity and leadership that brings new ideas, new resources, and equitable, lasting solutions

WHAT IS UNITED WAY ALL ABOUT?

United Way tackles the complex issues that no single organization can solve alone. We bring over a century of trust, know-how and partnership to change lives in meaningful, lasting ways—right here in our community!



**United Way of
South Central Michigan**

Calhoun | Clinton | Eaton
Ingham | Jackson | Kalamazoo

unitedforscmi.org

