

UNITED WAY OF KANKAKEE & IROQUIOS COUNTIES
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

TRANSFORMATION & IMPACT



**UNITED WAY FIGHTS FOR THE HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND FINANCIAL STABILITY
OF EVERY PERSON IN EVERY COMMUNITY.**

OUR VISION

UNITED WAY ENVISIONS A WORLD WHERE ALL INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES
ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL THROUGH EDUCATION, INCOME STABILITY
AND HEALTHY LIVES.

OUR MISSION

TO IMPROVE LIVES BY MOBILIZING THE CARING POWER OF OUR COMMUNITY
TO ADVANCE THE COMMON GOOD.

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

In the past year, United Way has experienced significant change and transformation. One thing remains true - through hardship, there is hope.

Our community looks different in 2020 than it did in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has, in many ways, transformed our lives. We've experienced unprecedented challenges in the face of this global health and economic crisis. Yet, in such a challenging time, the thing that gives us great hope and inspiration is seeing how quickly our community has come together.

Since United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley launched the Kankakee and Iroquois Counties COVID-19 Response Fund on March 28th, we have quickly deployed more than \$600,000 to the organizations on the frontlines, providing essentials to our neighbors hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

For more than a century, United Ways have demonstrated the ability to rise to the occasion - we were born out of a health and economic crisis in the late 1800s. By 1921, the United Way movement found its way to Kankakee County. Since then, we have helped our community withstand the effects of war abroad, unemployment and work shortages, civil disturbances, economic uncertainties like the 2008 economic recession and today, the COVID-19 crisis. This is what we were built for.

In 2019, United Way transformed in other ways, too. We introduced our new community impact strategy for Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. Focusing our efforts on bold goals in Education, Health and Financial Stability was a shift in perspective for many of our constituents. However, it wasn't a shift from our core mission-driven work. United Way remains committed to making positive, sustainable change in the community, helping residents learn more, earn more and lead safe and healthy lives.

We also welcomed three new employees. This small, but mighty team of game changers hit the ground running - connecting with donors, partners, families and business leaders to mobilize resources to help our community thrive.

As our local United Way enters a new chapter, we know there will be both challenges and successes along the way. We also know that we are stronger together. To live better, we must LIVE UNITED.

We need you as advocates for our community because, together, we CAN make a difference.

Without you, we simply wouldn't be where we are today - and for that, we thank you.

Sincerely,



KYLE BENOIT
Board President
United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties



KERSTIN RUST
Executive Director
United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties



591 S Elm Street, adjacent to East River Street in Kankakee is home to the first Strong Neighborhood project.

Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

Healthcare, childcare, housing, education and basic needs are all anchored in neighborhoods. Neighborhoods shape the outcomes of children and families, and strong neighborhoods matter. Through strong neighborhoods, we can support macro-economic vibrancy in our cities, our counties and our beautiful state of Illinois. The **City of Kankakee, Kankakee School District 111** and United Way opened the first Strong Neighborhood House at 591 S. Elm Avenue in Kankakee's 2nd Ward. Together, we aim to support health, education and financial stability through place-based strategies specific to neighborhood residents' needs and aspirations.

Pembroke Township: Access to Health

With the help of numerous community partners, United Way convened local community members to address needs related to healthcare access in Pembroke Township in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pembroke's trusted community nurse, Brenda Stewart, led the charge for community health education and PPE distribution to over 1,000 residents at the CITGO gas station. Pembroke Township also tackled food insecurity and unemployment by creating jobs to deliver emergency food and supplies to hundreds of immunocompromised individuals and seniors. Local leaders also developed the Farm Readiness and Community Resiliency Program to provide "Pembroke Pride Produce Boxes" full of healthy foods.



LASTING SOLUTIONS THROUGH POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Success By 6: Early Childhood Collaboration

As the African proverb states, "it takes a village to raise a child." And our entire community has come together to address a critical area of impact - early childhood development.

United Way and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley convened over 50 local partners to collaborate on solutions that support early childhood development through policy formation, environmental changes and direct services.

United Way partnered with the **Erikson Institute** to implement a second wave of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in four school districts within Kankakee County. The project leveraged **288** school district employee hours to survey **733** kindergarten students and provide neighborhood level data on early childhood development across the county.

At the same time, the Success By 6 coalition and our community partners celebrated many big wins this past year including:

- **Project SUN** secured a \$2.1 million grant to address childhood trauma and resources for families in Kankakee County,
- Kankakee County now has the most Theraplay-trained practitioners in the world, with over 100+ people certified,
- **Kankakee School District 111** hired a child psychologist to better address social-emotional issues in children,
- **Bourbonnais Elementary School District 53** introduced parent newsletters that provide caregivers with activities to support further development,
- **Bradley Elementary School District 61** teachers, staff and community members engaged in Project 375 to promote awareness of mental health,
- And local churches "adopted" Bradley Elementary classrooms to volunteer and donate essential items to families in need.



Project Full Circle: Recognizing Healthcare Workers & Supporting Small Business

Small businesses faced new and greater challenges in the face of COVID-19. United Way believes Giving Back Is Good Business. As a small business owner, you are in it for the long haul. Your business is rooted in the community. We are so grateful for our small business partners, and we can't imagine our community without them. Many are regular supports of United Way.

In April 2020, United Way launched Project Full Circle with **Senator Patrick Joyce** to recognize healthcare workers serving on the front lines of the pandemic and support small businesses. United Way reinvested \$3000 into small businesses **Creme of the Crop**, **Dress Well Boutique & EVOLVE Clothing Co.**, **Stefari Cafe** and **Yellow Elephant Gallery** and gifted 260 healthcare workers with a free meal.



Each year, United Way works with corporate partners to improve lives and strengthen communities. The 78 companies listed here are members of our Corporate Leadership program, with those in bold representing our newest partners. Combined, these companies and their employees contributed nearly \$450,000. We thank them for their passion for change and commitment to our shared purpose.

* Criteria for membership Corporate Leadership program includes (but is not exclusive to) running a workplace campaign, raising at least \$100 per year and contributing at least 50 percent of funds raised directly to United Way.

- Accenture
Advance Auto Parts
Ameren
AMITA St. Mary's Hospital
Aqua of Illinois
Arc of Iroquois County
Armstrong Flooring
AT&T
BASF Corporation
Bishop McNamara
Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School
Bradley Elementary School District #61
Carle Foundation Hospital
Catholic Charities
Cigna
CITGO Petroleum Corporation
City of Kankakee
CNO Financial Group
Comcast
ComEd/Exelon
Commscope
County of Kankakee
CSL Behring
Dow Chemical
Easterseals
Equian
Exxon Mobil Corporation
FedEx Corporation
- First Financial Bank
First Trust Bank of Illinois
Gardant Management Solutions
General Electric
Good Shepherd Manor
Grinnell Mutual & Grinnell Mutual Group
Harbor House
Helen Wheeler Center
Hospice of Kankakee Valley
Huber Group
IKO Sales
Iroquois Mental Health Center
Iroquois Federal
Illinois Tool Works Inc.
JCPenney
Kankakee Area Career Center
Kankakee Community College
Kankakee School District #111
KCCASA/ISAS
Lowes
LSC Communications
Manpower Inc.
Meijer
Midland States Bank
Nebraska Medicine
Nelnnet-Remote
Nicor Gas
Norfolk Southern Foundation
Olivet Nazarene University
Options CIL
- Peddinghaus Corporation
Peoples Bank of Kankakee County
PNC Bank
Prairie State Legal Services
Ricoh USA
Riverside Healthcare
State of Illinois
Security Lumber & Supply Co.
SKDO
Supervalu (Jewel Osco)
Target
Thrivent Financial
Union Pacific
UPS
US Bank
Village of Manteno
Walmart
Wells Fargo
YWCA
Zachry



Each year, United Way works with local nonprofit agencies to improve lives and strengthen communities. The agencies listed here received funding to support programs in education, financial stability and health during the FY 2019-2020 fiscal year.

EDUCATION

- Boy Scouts of America, Rainbow Council**
Comprehensive Youth Development
- Childcare Resource and Referral Network**
Social Emotional Learning Facilitation
- Girl Scouts of Central Illinois**
Leadership Experience
- KCC ALIVE**
Baby Talk
- Kankakee Area YMCA**
Childcare
JUMP Mentoring Program
- Kankakee YWCA**
Childcare

FINANCIAL STABILITY

- American Red Cross of Illinois River Valley**
Disaster Preparedness & Response
- Aunt Martha's**
Homeless Youth Services
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet**
Homeless Prevention Program
Money Management
Senior Case Management
Transitional Housing
- KCC ALIVE**
Adult Literacy
- Options Center for Independent Living**
Emergency Services
- Prairie State Legal Services**
Civil Legal Services

HEALTH

- Arc of Iroquois County**
Respite Program
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet**
Adult Protective Services
Hands of Hope Counseling
Senior Companion Program
- Center of Hope**
Food Pantry Protein Program
- Child Network**
CASA Program
Children's Advocacy Center
- Easterseals**
Pediatric Therapy
- Gigi's Playhouse**
Fantastic Friends
- Harbor House**
Prevention Services
Survivor Services
Youth Counseling
- Helen Wheeler Center**
Family & Child Services
Outpatient Case Management
- Iroquois Mental Health Center**
Psychiatric Services
- KC-CASA ISAS**
Advocacy
Counseling
Education
- Onarga Nexus Academy**
Sensory Rooms
- Volunteer Services**
Caregiver Services
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren



EVENT SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN UNITED



Women United is an annual United Way event that brings together women from across all walks of life for a time of inspiration, transformation and celebration. The event features dynamic women leaders and provides a space for participants to connect with each other and the community which we call home.

United Way made a quick pivot to a virtual web-series that launched in June 2020. With over 200 registered participants, Women United welcomed Tami Galbreath to share her insights on mindfulness and the importance of slowing down, practicing gratitude and living a life full of grace and faith.

Women United raised **\$19,000** towards United Way's investments in building stronger neighborhoods through health, education and financial stability. The event series will continue through Summer of 2020 featuring speakers: Dr. Debra Mayconich Baron and Jenny Schoenwetter alongside local nonprofit agencies.

Together, women in Kankakee and Iroquois counties ignite change. In each community we serve, we tackle issues that matter most to the people who call it home. We empower each other to leverage our ideas, expertise and resources to transform the very conditions in which people live.



Thank You Women United Committee Members

CHRISTINA CUSUMANO

United Way

BARBI BREWER-WATSON

City of Kankakee

SARAH MARION

Manteno Chamber of Commerce

MAUREEN POWELL

CSL Behring

LAUREN SHORT

Riverside Healthcare

MARY THOMSON

Hospice of Kankakee Valley

Presented by:

CSL Behring
Biotherapies for Life™



United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties

UNITED FOR ALICE: THE FIGHT FOR FAMILY- SUSTAINING INCOME

UnitedWay has a long history of bringing people together to ask tough questions about society's problems, and to act collectively to accelerate solutions. It's been our focus for almost 80 years, and it holds tremendous potential in today's challenging environment.

In 2020, United Way released its ALICE report to demonstrate that financial hardship doesn't stop at the poverty line. ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is a new way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget.

For far too many families, the cost of living outpaces what they earn. These households struggle to manage even their most basic needs - housing, food, transportation, childcare, healthcare, and necessary technology.

When funds run short, cash-strapped households are forced to make impossible choices, such as deciding between quality childcare or paying the rent, filling a prescription or fixing the car. These short-term decisions have long-term consequences not only for ALICE families, but for all of us.

The persistence of low wages, underemployment, and loss of employer-sponsored benefits have led to financial insecurity for many ALICE households. As a result, many of these families turn to programs funded by United Way to feed their families, access healthcare and medications or pay rent and other bills. Unfortunately, with **one-third of families struggling to afford basic needs in Kankakee and Iroquois Counties**, we are left with especially large unfilled gaps in assistance - 39% gap in housing, 49% gap in childcare and even 50% gap in transportation.

At United Way, we fight for the education, health and financial stability for all community members. We are working to remove barriers that prevent families from achieving financial stability, now and in the future. But we can only win this fight by living United.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

UNITING FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

At United Way, we step up whenever our communities need us. Never is this need greater than when a community is facing a disaster. And we faced unprecedented challenges in 2020.

Restoring Hope During a Pandemic

In times of past crisis, we've always risen to the challenge as a nation: growing victory gardens during WWII, raising flags after 9/11, stacking sandbags during floods or sending supplies to communities hit by disaster. In March of 2020, we were again faced with a crisis. The outbreak of COVID-19 in our community caused widespread health and economic impacts felt by many within our own community. More than one-third of Kankakee and Iroquois County residents were just one lost paycheck away from financial crisis *prior to the pandemic*.

As events were canceled, sales plummeted and businesses closed, many local households lost much-needed wages and tips. As schools closed, families adapted to remote-learning and were forced to seek emergency childcare or cut hours at work. And survivors of domestic violence faced even greater dangers as they were instructed to remain at home with their abusers.

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties partnered with the **Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley** to establish the Kankakee and Iroquois Counties Community Response Fund. Together, we raised **over \$600,000** to support local health and human service organizations serving neighbors and communities significantly impacted by the health and economic impacts of coronavirus.



Below is a list of local organizations awarded grants through the Kankakee and Iroquois Counties COVID-19 Community Response Fund. Funds distributed to these organizations helped increase organizational capacity to provide access to essential services such as emergency food and supplies, health services, financial assistance through direct cash transfers, as well as mortgage, rent and utility assistance.

AGAPE COMMUNITY OUTREACH MISSION, INC.
THE BABY FOLD
BOURBONNAIS ELEMETARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 53
THE BREAD BASKET OF WATSEKA
CATHOLIC CHARITIES DIOCESE OF JOLIET
COMPASSIONATE MINISTRIES CENTER OF HOPE
EASTERSEALS
FORTITUDE COMMUNITY OUTREACH
GOOD SHEPHERD MANOR
HARBOR HOUSE
HELEN WHEELER CENTER
IROQUOIS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
KANKAKEE AREA YMCA
KANKAKEE YWCA
KANKAKEE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES INC.

KANKAKEE COUNTY YOUTH INTERVENTION AGENCY
KANKAKEE SCHOOL DISTRICT 111
LIVING ALTERNATIVES PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTER
NEXUS INDIAN OAKS FAMILY HEALING
NEXUS ONARGA ACADEMY
NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK
PEMBROKE FARMING FAMILY ASSOCIATION
PEMBROKE PUBLIC LIBRARY
P-JAY'S HOUSE
SALVATION ARMY
SPANISH COMMUNITY CENTER
THRESHOLDS
VOLUNTEER SERVICES OF IROQUOIS COUNTY
YOUTH FOR CHRIST LIFE CENTER

UNITED WAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The United Way Board of Directors is charged with providing oversight, control and management of the affairs and property of United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. Its responsibilities include strategic leadership, resource and relationship management, reputation building, stewardship of assets and oversight of public policy agenda and advocacy.

BOARD PRESIDENT

KYLE BENOIT

Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer
Riverside Healthcare

VICE PRESIDENT

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

Commercial Relationship Manager
Midland States Bank

TREASURER

MILEEN JOINES

Certified Public Accountant
Geoffrey Johns & Associates

SECRETARY

KATHY PETERSON

Director of Community Development
AMITA St. Mary's Hospital

PAST PRESIDENT

ALAN SWINFORD

Chief of Police
Village of Manteno

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

DR. MICHAEL BOYD

President and CEO
Kankakee Community College

BARBI BREWER-WATSON

Executive Director
Economic and Community Development
Agency, City of Kankakee

LARRY BURTON

Financial Associate
Thrivent Financial

KEVIN HACK

Director of Ambulance/EMS System
Riverside Healthcare

KRISTEN HARMS

NA Supply Chain Manager
ITW Zip Pak

TIM JONES

Relationship Manager
Cigna

JOHN KEIGHER

CEO
Urban Farmer

SARAH MARION

President and CEO
Manteno Chamber of Commerce

AMANDA MARTINEZ

Business Development, Commercial Loan
Officer
Federated Bank

MAUREEN POWELL

Site Head of Communications
CSL Behring

DR. AMBER RESIDORI

Dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences
Olivet Nazarene University

DR. LAURA SZTUBA

Patient Safety Specialist
AMITA St. Mary's Hospital

DR. GENEVRA WALTERS

Superintendent
Kankakee School District 111

UNITED WAY STAFF

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties added several new staff members in 2019.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KERSTIN RUST

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

CHRISTINA CUSUMANO

COMMUNITY IMPACT COORDINATOR

KATE REED

DATABASE COORDINATOR

ANGELA BUZAS

* December 31, 2018

**United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties**

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CHANGE DOESN'T HAPPEN ALONE.



Help us to get the word out.

Please share how **YOU** plan to join the fight and transform your community with United Way.

Be sure to include **#LiveUnited**



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instagram.com/uw.kankakee.iroquois



linkedin.com/company/united-way-kankakee-iroquois