



United Way
of Chester County

2019-2020 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



Watch the video here: rb.gy/av7xnc

LIVE UNITED

As we've done for over 75 years, United Way of Chester County focuses on more than just a single issue or community. We invest in strategies and solutions that fight for the education, health and financial stability of every person in Chester County.

We do this through our Community Impact Fund. Each year, United Way grants funding for programs that advance our mission of building better lives and stronger communities. Agencies go through an extensive evaluation process to ensure the funded programs meet United Way standards for effectiveness and efficiency.





HEALTH

"I so enjoy coming to the West Chester Area Senior Center, they offer so much and truly care about the seniors health and wellbeing," said Carol, a senior who attends the center four days a week. "The classes, presentations, and speakers are always interesting and helpful - I feel fortunate to be a part of this community." Carol enjoys attending a variety of classes related to well-balanced nutrition such as: healthy food selection and cooking, understanding food labels, what to eat to promote good bone and heart health, how to prevent diabetes, and much more. She believes that these classes have made a tremendous difference in her approach to health and has resulted in keeping her blood pressure down, improved her stamina and strength. She is among many who share their experiences related to improved health whether it is news of reduction in medications, healthy weight loss, improved eating habits, better sleep, and/or feeling good in general.



EDUCATION

One of the 6th grade students began in the Charles A Melton Center's New Directions After-School Program when he was in 4th grade. Due to challenging circumstances within his family, he and his younger sister moved to Philadelphia for the 2018-2019 school year before returning to West Chester and the New Directions After-School Program in the fall of 2019. When the family returned to West Chester, the staff and coaches met with this student's grandmother at the beginning of the year and made a plan to support him for a successful school year. He attended the program every day, met with an Academic Coach for help with his homework, and was given leadership roles. In previous years, he had a difficult time choosing positive ways to express and cope with his emotions. This year, he showed increasing ability to express his emotions, communicate effectively, and resolve conflicts positively. He has developed strong study habits, and his reading skills, especially fluency and comprehension, have consistently improved. The program continued to support this student with virtual 1:1 tutoring and mentoring sessions throughout the spring school closures and summer, and he has continued to grow and develop as a student and leader.



FINANCIAL STABILITY

With the birth of her daughter in 2019, Lisa knew that she and her two kids had outgrown the one-bedroom apartment she had rented for the three previous years. The landlord was also delinquent in making needed repairs, leading to living conditions that were less than ideal. But there was a barrier to Lisa making a move—she only earned about \$1,300 a month in her supportive employment position, one that was created for individuals like her who have a serious and persistent mental illness that makes retaining traditional employment difficult. Lisa wasn't able to save up enough to put a down payment on a new rental. Open Hearth's Housing Program Coordinator, Annie, met with Lisa to determine her eligibility for assistance and to participate in the Financial Insight and Resource Management (FIRM) assessment. Annie worked with Lisa to help her develop a monthly spending plan that was a true reflection of all her expenses. Annie was also able to assist Lisa in creating a long-term financial goal plan that provided Lisa with a blueprint for her next steps. Lisa was found eligible for assistance with a security deposit and is now happily living along with her two children in a two-bedroom apartment that is more spacious and much better maintained.

COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND

United Way of Chester County launched the Chester County COVID-19 Response Fund allowing us to deploy resources to community-based organizations offering crucial support to families and individuals in need immediately during the Global Pandemic.

\$814,553

Total dollars contributed by **314**
individuals, corporations and foundations

109

109 grants were distributed to **87**
organizations in our community



- **\$292,000** granted towards **food insecurity**
- **\$155,500** granted towards **continuing services**
- **\$89,500** granted towards **homeless prevention**
- **\$71,000** granted towards **medical needs**
- **\$39,758** granted towards **mental health services**
- **\$166,795** remain for additional COVID-19 related response and recovery needs
- In partnership with Kimberly-Clark, we were able to donate **2,500 bottles of body wash, 5,000 toothbrushes** and **10,000 rolls of toilet paper**
- We distributed **3 pallets of Banana Republic clothing** valued at an estimated **\$10,000**



ALICE

Although Chester County is the wealthiest county in Pennsylvania, there is still a poverty rate of 7%. The real need in our community becomes clearer when we consider there is a 20% rate of ALICE households. That's 20% of our neighbors, friends and families going unable to afford basic necessities. We have seen the biggest impact from COVID-19 related causes on the ALICE population.

Who is ALICE?

ALICE stands for... **A**sset **L**imited. **I**ncome **C**onstrained. **E**mployed.

- **ALICE** has income above the FEDERAL poverty line, which makes ALICE ineligible for many state and federal programs
- **ALICE** cannot meet the basic needs required to live in Chester County without help
- **ALICE** is hard-working
- **ALICE** needs short-term help, not long term hand-outs
- **ALICE** is every gender, race, age and ethnicity
- **ALICE** contributes to your quality of life
- **ALICE** is your NEIGHBOR!

DID YOU KNOW...That supporting United Way of Chester County, you're supporting our neighbor ALICE?

For more information on the ALICE Report & ALICE in our community, visit www.ALICEChesterCounty.org.

MOBILE HOME PROJECT

Mobile homes depreciate over time, unlike other forms of real estate. Because the tax assessment system makes no provision for that reality, mobile home taxes are accurate only in the first years after purchase, and become increasingly inaccurate each year thereafter.

Ultimately, some of these homeowners end up with a tax liability several times higher than reasonably expected. Mobile homes are the only form of property that require periodic assessment appeals to maintain equitable agreement to actual value.

A small local reassessment project came to the attention of United Way of Chester County who, after learning more about the issue, were determined to help this population and focus the reassessments on two specific neighborhoods as a pilot endeavor. United Way of Chester County partnered with the Honey Brook Food Pantry and engaged Legal Aid of SEPA to assist with hearings and paperwork.

After a successful 2019-2020 pilot, United Way of Chester County has partnered with Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania to continue this important work and scale it to assist all mobile home owners in Chester County who may be in a similar situation.



2019-2020 Pilot Results:

- UWCC assisted in **177 appeals**
- Lowered their assessments by **70%**
- Average taxes will amount to **30%** of what they owed in the previous year



Before Jim learned about United Way of Chester County's Mobile Home Tax Reassessment Project, he was paying nearly \$1,200 a year in property taxes. As a retired man on a fixed income, that was a heavy burden on him, especially in the midst of a pandemic. His financial stress became heightened.

Once he learned about the Mobile Home Tax Reassessment Project, he figured it may help him save a little extra on taxes and will relieve some of his financial pressures. "The whole process was very simple and handled completely by the United Way, including any court cost," said Jim. "My time investment was approximately a half hour and my monetary cost was \$0!"

As a result of this project, United Way of Chester County was able to save Jim nearly \$800 a year in property taxes. "I am on a fixed retirement income and the extra \$70 per month will help a lot with my monthly expenses," said Jim.

After a successful year of assisting residents, United Way of Chester County, in partnership with Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania, will continue to offer assistance to mobile home owners in Chester County to file for property tax reassessment appeals in 2021. We will do all the work and pay the fees on behalf of the homeowners in the program.



Leadership Chester County's class of 2020 persevered through the pandemic and graduated without a hitch! As always, graduates bring back to their organizations valuable business, leadership and entrepreneurial skills, with new knowledge of the local economic landscape and new skills in management, planning and strategic thinking.

Since its first year 2001-2002, when it was known as "Chester County Leadership Connection":

- **482** individuals have graduated from the course
- **136** businesses, nonprofit organizations and municipal entities have sponsored this program
- **427** nonprofits have experienced the benefits



CORPORATE PARTNERS

United Way of Chester County gratefully acknowledges the corporate partners, nonprofit agencies, foundations and other organizations whose financial and in-kind support help us fight to improve lives in Chester County.

To view the entire list of Corporate Partners, visit
www.unitedwaychestercounty.org/corporate-partners

TOP 10 CAMPAIGNS 2019-2020



FINANCIALS



Total Contributions	\$3,617,099
Revenue Past Campaigns	\$55,686
In-Kind Contributions	\$40,259
Investment & Other Income	\$180,628
Uncollectible Pledges	(\$138,123)

Total Revenue & Support **\$3,755,549**



Community Investments (Program grants to agencies, special initiative funding and donor designations)	\$2,688,874
Fundraising	\$225,807
Management & General	\$152,630

Total Investments & Expenses **\$3,067,311**
Changes In *Net Assets **\$688,238**

* Change in net assets related to change in how grant funding accounted for under new investment model.

Source: Audited Financials 2019-2020



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