

Greater Twin Cities United Way

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2024 Results

Published 2025



Greater Twin Cities
UNITED WAY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter From Leadership	3
A Year of Impact	4
Our Cycle of Impact	6
211 and 988: Information & Referral Services	8
Stable Housing	10
Food Security	14
Early Childhood Education and Care	18
Career and Future Readiness	22
Economic Opportunity	24
Our Board of Directors	26



UNITED IS THE WAY

Dear friend,

In 2024, you helped make the Greater Twin Cities a better place to live, learn and work. Your support made it possible for Greater Twin Cities United Way to touch the lives of more than half a million people – connecting them to vital resources and supporting nonprofits doing the most impactful work to serve our community.

Though it sometimes feels like more divides us than unites us, as we reflect on the stories and data in this report, we remember what's possible when we unite as changemakers to address the challenges no one can solve alone.

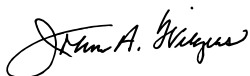
These are just a few of the many ways we united people and resources to meet urgent needs and make lasting change in 2024. Together, we:

- Responded to more than 241,000 requests via our 211 resource helpline, connecting people to resources to help pay their bills, find affordable housing, put food on the table and so much more.
- Answered nearly 33,000 calls to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, providing hope for a brighter tomorrow.
- Supported 170 local nonprofit partners in direct service, innovation and advocacy by providing unrestricted and targeted funding combined with over 200 hours of technical assistance to build nonprofits' capacity.
- Mobilized more than 11,000 volunteers to provide immediate support for individuals and families in our community through essential supply drives and community-wide volunteer events.

For more than a century, we've proven that whenever there's a need in our community, Greater Twin Cities United Way is ready – and now is no exception. Our community is stronger when every neighbor – regardless of income, race or place – has access to nutritious food, stable homes, a quality education, economic opportunity and a trusted partner to call. That's why, no matter the social, political or economic climate, we never stop fighting for the Greater Twin Cities.

United is the way to a prosperous hometown. Thank you for supporting our vision of a community where all people thrive.

With gratitude,



John A. Wilgers
President & CEO



Shannon Smith Jones
Senior Vice President, Community Impact



Al McFarlane
Chair, Board of Directors



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY

Unveiled our 2024 policy priorities and advocacy agenda – informed by the input of more than 100 nonprofit partners and stakeholders – focused on safe and affordable housing, educational success, economic opportunity and sustainable funding for our 211 resource helpline.

FEBRUARY

Celebrated 211 Day to raise awareness about the vital role our 211 resource helpline plays in connecting individuals and communities to essential resources, support and information.



MARCH

With the Start Early Funders Coalition, hosted Advocacy for Children Day at the Capitol, where more than 400 young children, parents and educators urged legislators to increase access to early child care and stabilize the workforce.

Angela Williams, president & CEO of United Way Worldwide, braved the cold to visit with Greater Twin Cities United Way staff, board members, corporate partners and donors and share her vision for the next 100 years of impact.

APRIL

Launched CareerAcademies.org to connect administrators, educators, employers and community organizations with resources to reshape how Minnesota prepares students for the future.

MAY

Celebrated 2024 Minnesota legislative wins, including increased funding to help more families stay stably housed, greater investment in affordable housing and more support for childhood literacy and pre-kindergarten programs.

JUNE

Celebrated Twin Cities Pride by walking in the parade, hosting our annual Arise + Shine watch party and staffing our first-ever festival booth, where we shared 211 resource helpline and 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline resources.

JULY

Selected by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families to administer the state's \$159 million Early Learning Scholarship program – improving access to quality early child care and education.

Together with the 3M Open, awarded the 2024 Social Justice Leadership Award to J. DeVon Nolen, founder and CEO of The Peoples' Market Minneapolis, for her work in food justice and equity in North Minneapolis.

AUGUST

Action Day united 5,000 volunteers, 34 corporate partners and more than 141 nonprofits to provide backpacks full of school supplies for 48,000+ young people.



SEPTEMBER

Hosted “Inspiring Minds” at the Science Museum of Minnesota, an immersive experience and conversation about the awesome power of brain development in early childhood and featuring partners in our early childhood initiatives including 80x3.

Partnered with the nationwide United for ALICE coalition to gain valuable data and insights into the experiences of Minnesotans who live paycheck to paycheck. Learn more about ALICE on page 25.

OCTOBER

Convened local faith leaders and community members for the first event in our Interfaith Series, exploring the role faith communities and religious organizations can play in criminal justice reform.

NOVEMBER

Hosted “Homecoming: A Path Forward” at Wells Fargo, a conversation about preventing homelessness featuring insights from young people with lived experience facing systemic barriers to stable housing.

DECEMBER

Provided 1,450 families moving into stable housing with welcome home bins filled with household essentials to ease the stress and financial burden of their transition.

Kicked off a dynamic new 988 awareness campaign featuring ads on social media, websites, digital billboards and more.



CYCLE OF IMPACT

We meet immediate community needs while working toward meaningful, lasting change in housing, food, education and jobs. Because of your support, we were here for our community every minute of 2024.

Meeting Urgent Needs Every Day

Community members reach out to our 211 resource helpline to find a warm, human voice and connect to local services. When challenges feel overwhelming, our 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline counselors help callers find hope. These connections give us a pulse on ever-changing community needs.

Our nonprofit partnerships support the most effective community organizations. In addition to flexible funding, we provide technical assistance tailored to each organization's strengths and needs (for example, consultation to expand their base of funders); convenings to strengthen the sector; and field-building investments, such as bringing hard-to-access trainings onsite for nonprofits.

Our volunteers provide local families with items to succeed at school and home through Action Day, Home For Good and Flavors of Our Community.

Every day, nonprofit leaders leveraged tailored consulting with Greater Twin Cities United Way to increase their capacity to meet always-changing community needs. (See stories of partnership throughout this report.)

Each week, business owners who were engaged with entrepreneurial supports from Greater Twin Cities United Way partners created 50 local jobs. (See pages 24-25.)

Last year, volunteers collectively gave twice as many hours of service as there are hours in a year, through Greater Twin Cities United Way engagements. (See pages 12, 16 and 20.)

EVERY 16 MINUTES,
a caller to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline connected with a Greater Twin Cities United Way crisis counselor to find hope for a brighter tomorrow. (See page 9.)

EVERY 2 MINUTES,
a 211 resource specialist helped a neighbor in the Greater Twin Cities find shelter, food, quality child care and more. (See page 8.)

ONCE A MINUTE,
a neighbor facing hunger received groceries or a hot meal from a Greater Twin Cities United Way partner who cares about them. (See pages 14-15.)

**ON AVERAGE,
THROUGHOUT 2024:**

Making Lasting Change, Together

Leveraging insights from 211, community data and nonprofit partners on the most pressing regional-scale challenges, Greater Twin Cities United Way leads innovation initiatives to invest deeply over multiple years in strategic, community-driven solutions.

When policy improvements and public investment are the best way to end statewide barriers to prosperity, we lead and support advocacy efforts to create a region where everyone can thrive.

Ultimately, together with partners, we create a future where income, race and place no longer predict a person's ability to thrive in the Greater Twin Cities – and where urgent needs are far less frequent.

Every year, our **advocacy** work advances cross-sector relationships that inform **public policies and investments**. See examples of our impact at the Capitol in advocacy spotlights throughout this report.

We continually share updated learnings and refine solutions with our nonprofit, public and private sectors through our **innovation initiatives**, including:

- **Career Academies**, to ensure all students have access to wealth-building career pathways (see pages 22-25).
- **80x3**, to create a trauma-informed region where children, families and child care providers can easily access what they need to be stable and thrive (see page 18).
- **Pathways Home**, to improve our foster care and legal systems so all youth exit to safe, stable housing (see page 10).
- **Full Lives**, to grow a thriving regional food system (see page 14).

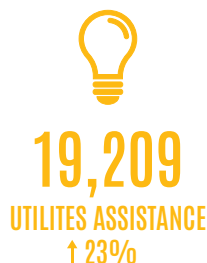
EVERY 19 MINUTES,
a youth or adult
started their career path
with education, job training or
entrepreneurship services from
a Greater Twin Cities United
Way partner who understands
their individual strengths.
(See pages 22-25.)

**EVERY 35
MINUTES,** a youth
or adult experiencing
homelessness secured
shelter and support from
a Greater Twin Cities United
Way partner invested in their
success. (See pages 10-13.)

EVERY 3 HOURS,
a parent found high-
quality child care
in their community,
supported by Greater
Twin Cities United Way.
(See pages 18-19.)

OUR LOCAL 211 RESOURCE HELPLINE

In 2024, Greater Twin Cities United Way's 211 resource helpline responded to 241,157 requests – one request every two minutes – for housing, food, utility assistance and more. Because of your support, 211 remains the good neighbor who always answers the call – confidentially and in multiple languages. Although the total number of requests did not rise vs. 2023, each of the top five service areas saw an increase, highlighting the growing need for safety net services. Insights like these from 211 are valuable to service providers, philanthropists and public agencies as they prioritize investments based on community needs.



Hope in a Scary Situation

A Spanish-speaking Scott County resident called 211 after receiving an eviction notice. One of our Spanish-fluent 211 community resource specialists listened, acknowledged that this is a scary situation, and encouraged the caller to make Scott County Emergency Assistance her next call. The program helps with rent and utilities, and other programs are designed to supplement county assistance. The specialist informed the caller that the county opened at 8 a.m. and meanwhile provided educational resources on eviction, legal aid and additional utility assistance. The caller was taking notes, but the specialist offered to email or text the resources for convenience. The caller expressed gratitude and said she felt more hopeful with so many options she'd been unaware of.

County-Sized Impact

When counties prioritize homelessness prevention, Ashraf Ashkar is ready to partner with them. A United Way 211 program officer, Ashkar is engaged in strategic planning with both Hennepin and Ramsey counties to help them identify their top system gaps and opportunities. In 2024, Ashkar provided data from United Way's 211,



Pathways Home and United for ALICE initiatives revealing county-level trends in housing needs such as emergency shelter. Further, Ashkar conducted a survey of Hennepin housing providers. It revealed a strong desire for coordinated access.

"I learned that providers use 18 different ways to find info and access resources. If providers feel that burden, we know it's even more daunting for community members," he said. Through Ashkar, providers also said they want more training on complex eligibility criteria (to better support, for example, a single parent whose child has a disability) and more prevention resources for individuals exiting foster care or incarceration. Insights like these, made possible by generous funding from the Pohlad Family Foundation, help our partners make data-informed decisions.



LEARN MORE

Scan here to see
our new PSA-style
video to help raise
awareness about 211.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

In 2024, nearly 33,000 local callers connected with a Greater Twin Cities United Way crisis counselor to build hope for a brighter tomorrow through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

This free, confidential 24/7 support is the result of our partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health. Since our January 2021 launch to 2024, our team grew dramatically to include 31 trained, empathetic call specialists to meet public demand. Now, 90% of local callers receive a local response. In 2024, we celebrated a renewal of our partnership to continue this work through 2029.

Our local 988 and 211 services complement each other. As 988 crisis counselors assess each caller's complex set of stressors and work with them to build a safety plan, they sometimes find opportunities to alleviate a concrete need using their access to the 211 resource database. "We partner with 211 to offer a more holistic response to our callers in crisis by connecting them with the most up-to-date local resources – such as housing, food, or financial assistance – which helps relieve immediate stressors and supports long-term stability," said Carolina De Los Rios, associate director for mental health and suicide prevention at Greater Twin Cities United Way.

Preliminary 2023 data released in 2024 from the Minnesota Department of Health revealed a decline in deaths by suicide. While it's too soon to say that data point is a trend, we are doing all we can to continue supporting positive change – because even one death by suicide is too many.



In 2024, recognition for Greater Twin Cities United Way's 988 response included this Minnesota Public Radio report.

SCAN TO READ OR LISTEN



37%
INCREASE

Total 988 Calls Answered

24,101

2023

32,955

2024

988 is here for everyone. If you or someone you know needs support, please call or text 988, or visit 988lifeline.org for free, confidential help 24/7.

STABLE HOUSING

Everyone deserves a safe, stable and affordable place to call home. That's why Greater Twin Cities United Way works to ensure homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring. Amid a continuing regional housing crisis and a challenging political landscape, in 2024 this work was more important than ever.

Through our multiyear Community Investments partnerships, we provided vital support to meet the current housing needs of individuals across the nine-county metro. United Way's funding and capacity-building services supported nonprofits providing critical housing resources, including emergency shelter, permanent housing and connections to supportive housing services.

We further supported these efforts through our Pathways Home innovation initiative, which partnered with organizations working with young people transitioning out of foster care and/or incarceration. Our mission: Transform the housing system to prevent homelessness before it happens.

Last fall, volunteers came together through our Home For Good initiative to pack welcome home bins – filled with household essentials like towels, kitchen utensils, cleaning supplies, hygiene necessities, blankets and more – for families moving into stable housing.



Homeless Day on the Hill

Innovation Spotlight: Pathways Home

In 2024, Pathways Home completed its 18-month initial phase with a cohort including 10 housing organizations partnered to prevent homelessness for youth transitioning out of foster care and/or incarceration. Our investments enabled partners to establish new resources – including dedicated staff positions and upgraded technical infrastructure – to support the goal of preventing homelessness before it starts. We were deeply inspired by not only our partners' creativity and passion, but also their commitment to listening and collaboration with the young people they support. A recurring theme was the need for earlier intervention and engagement with young people, embedded into the systems that are already working to support them.

In 2025, Pathways Home will leverage this progress with new funded partnership opportunities and closer collaboration with our state's juvenile justice and foster care systems to close systemic gaps – ensuring young people receive support to prevent homelessness before they face it.



LEARN MORE
about United
Way's investment
in homelessness
prevention.

Advocacy Spotlight: New Housing Investments

Housing was the No. 1 area of need among callers to our 211 resource helpline last year. As many of our neighbors continue to struggle to pay rent and utilities, our advocacy team worked to secure vital state funding to meet the challenge head-on. That's why we were pleased to support the 2024 passage of expanded funding for the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program and Housing Infrastructure Bonds.

Together, these new investments – more than \$100 million – will help develop new affordable housing and provide support for families to stay in their homes, preventing homelessness. These new funds are an important step toward ensuring that all Minnesotans have access to stable and affordable housing.



United Way staff discusses housing with Minnesota Sen. John Hoffman.

Partner Spotlight: Al-Maa'uun

Based out of North Minneapolis, Al-Maa'uun (Arabic for "The Neighborly Needs") offers services and programs to address substance use disorders. For Al-Maa'uun, stable housing is a fundamental part of setting people up for success in their recovery. The organization provides rental assistance and access to sober housing for clients, while simultaneously working with Northside developers to promote and encourage new affordable housing development. In 2024, United Way's Community Investments funding and assistance supported Al-Maa'uun's core work to meet urgent needs while also strengthening the organization's technical infrastructure. Our Pathways Home partnership allowed Al-Maa'uun to implement a new client management system to better coordinate services and deepen insights about their impact. Together, we're ensuring Al-Maa'uun has the resources it needs to help individuals and families thrive.

1,450

individuals and families received Welcome Home bins packed by Home For Good volunteers.

185

young people at risk of homelessness maintained stable housing for at least 12 months through Pathways Home.

14,971

people served by outreach, shelter and permanent housing programs supported by United Way, 93 percent of whom obtained or maintained stable housing.

Home For Good

Each year, thousands of households in the Greater Twin Cities transition from homelessness to stable housing, demonstrating resilience and building the foundation for success. As they settle into their new homes, everyday essentials become key to making a house a home. Through our annual Home For Good initiative, volunteers pack bins filled with household necessities – like towels, kitchen utensils, hygiene items, blankets and more – to help ease the financial cost and stress of starting fresh. Together, we ensure our neighbors are truly welcomed home for good.

Our 2024 Home For Good initiative provided 1,450 welcome home bins (locally and through regional partnerships) to families entering stable housing.

“We have a client that has been living outside for a few years now. Today he signed a lease and moved into his own place. Outreach staff gave him a welcome home bin, and he was moved to tears. He expressed his gratitude and commented on the thoughtfulness that went into making the bins.”

– Home For Good nonprofit partner

“Foster care is a whole different ballgame. [I felt] I’d been homeless my whole life, because when you’re in foster care, you don’t have a home. The shelter kicked me out on my 18th birthday. The social worker goes away – all those support people go away. I was working and going to college. But I was too young to sign a lease, so I was on the street.”

– Housing advocate Aleesha German, speaking on a Pathways Home panel.

Thanks to Bremer Bank
for sponsoring Home For
Good 2024.



Partnership is at the heart of YouthLink's work with young people experiencing homelessness and with peer community organizations. In 2024 this approach inspired YouthLink to refresh its communications plan to engage volunteers, donors and advocates in stories of collaboration. Development Director Heather Haynes reached out to United Way's own Jay Wagner for input early on because, "We're not competing with other organizations. We're collaborating, and Greater Twin Cities United Way is the epitome of a partnership organization." Since launching the new plan with regular blog, social, newsletter and mail updates, YouthLink has seen increased engagement and healthy donor retention and acquisition.



READ

YouthLink's blog post highlighting our partnership.



Jay Wagner, left, Greater Twin Cities United Way's associate director of holistic grantmaking and Shennika Sudduth, YouthLink's senior director of programs

FOOD SECURITY

No one should have to choose between putting food on the table and paying bills. In 2024, Greater Twin Cities United Way continued to advance our long-term vision of a community where all people have access to food that is nutritious, culturally relevant and affordable.

Our multiyear Community Investments partnerships provided vital support to organizations across the nine-county metro supporting individuals in meeting their nutritional needs. Funding and capacity-building services from United Way strengthened organizations to deliver emergency food services and connect individuals and families to public benefits.

We expanded our network of partnerships in 2024 by relaunching our Full Lives innovation initiative. The expanded program supports four creative partnerships among local food and economic development organizations – representing 19 organizations in total – to create a thriving, equitable Twin Cities food system where all communities have physical and economic access to food that meets their cultural and nutritional needs.

And we further supported community food security through our Flavors of Our Community initiative – bringing together individual and group volunteers to increase access to culturally specific foods, flavors and spices at Twin Cities food shelves.

Innovation Spotlight: Full Lives

In July 2024, we relaunched our Full Lives initiative, providing targeted funding and capacity-building services for four collaborative initiatives working to strengthen our regional food system. Based on learnings from our previous neighborhood-scale effort, the expanded Full Lives focuses on food systems regionally – allowing for wider impact and more coordination among nonprofit partners.

Our Full Lives partners are supporting local farmers, incubating new food-related businesses and advocating for policies that ensure all families can put good food on the table. We look forward to sharing more as this exciting work takes root.



LEARN MORE

about the relaunched
Full Lives and our
partner collaborations.



56%

of food program participants reported increased food security thanks to short- and long-term programs supported by United Way.

32

food organizations supported through multiyear Community Investments grants and Full Lives.

**MORE THAN
600,000**

people served by short-term food assistance programs supported by United Way, such as food shelves and meal programs.

Advocacy Spotlight: Food Systems

The food on your plate is the product of a system that weaves together the many ways food is produced, distributed, consumed and disposed of. All these efforts add up to a regional food system, which is at the center of our efforts promoting food security. Better understanding this system allows us to target our dollars where they will make the most impact – and to identify new opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

Last year Greater Twin Cities United Way supported capacity-building and advocacy efforts led by organizations at the forefront of building our regional food system. Targeted funds fueled our partners to advocate for policies that would expand access to fresh produce and increase state support of local farmers – integrating fresh foods into our health care and child care systems. These ongoing efforts will expand our economy while ensuring children and elders have the nutritious food they need to thrive.

Partner Spotlight: CAPI USA

Located in Brooklyn Center, CAPI USA works with immigrants, refugees and others to help them meet their basic needs and achieve stability.

Founded in 1982 to support Southeast Asian refugees settling in Minnesota, today CAPI embraces new refugees and immigrants from all over the world – connecting them with the resources and services to thrive. Food security is a core goal of CAPI's work, including a food shelf that was one of the first in Minnesota to prioritize access to fresh and culturally specific foods.

United Way is a long-standing supporter of CAPI's food efforts. In 2024, our Community Investments partnership provided flexible operating funds and technical assistance for CAPI's food shelf, community gardening program and other vital food security resources. We built on that partnership through Flavors of Our Community – CAPI is one of 21 local nonprofits distributing culturally specific meal packs assembled by volunteers, ensuring the organization can continue to meet the needs and tastes of the communities it serves.

FLAVORS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Food is culture. Like cherished memories, we pass beloved recipes from one generation to the next. These familiar flavors bring us comfort and connect us to our community through shared heritage and experiences. Our annual Flavors of Our Community initiative goes beyond food access. Together with nonprofits across the Twin Cities, we've developed 11 cultural food packs filled with pantry staples and spices – things like beans, noodles, sauces, and baking supplies – that when paired with fresh ingredients, create nutritious and familiar meals. Flavors of Our Community ensures that everyone has access to foods they know and love, because no matter where we live, when we taste the flavors of our community, we are home.

In 2024, more than 1,500 volunteers came together to pack 16,700 food packs for local food shelves. Families shared nearly 39,000 meals made with these items.

Thanks to Post Consumer Brands for its Flavors of Our Community partnership. 

“Flavors of Our Community has strengthened our ability to provide culturally relevant resources that resonate with the communities we serve, fostering a deeper sense of connection and trust. For families and individuals, the initiative has gone beyond addressing food insecurity – it has empowered them to prepare meals that honor their cultural heritage, preserve traditions, and bring a sense of dignity and joy to their dining tables.”

– Staff member at CLUES, a Flavors of Our Community partner



Inspired Partnerships **3M**

Recognizing a need for sustained, community-led investment in the company's hometown of St. Paul, 3M partnered with Greater Twin Cities United Way to invest \$8.4 million over four years in nonprofit organizations leading transformational change in east metro communities. "We relied on United Way's deep understanding of community needs and ability to convene a variety of local stakeholders with unique perspectives to inform the investment strategy," said Michael Stroik, vice president of 3Mgives. To maximize the transformational impact, the strategy included funding multiyear partnerships for 56 nonprofits serving east-metro families, growing volunteer engagement opportunities and supporting innovation initiatives and advocacy efforts led by United Way.

"Greater Twin Cities United Way has been key to lifting up our community and helping meet basic needs to stabilize lives. Because of their relationships with so many organizations that serve our region, they have their finger on the pulse of community needs. They do a very good job of providing flexible funding that helps organizations meet annual needs while responding to emergency needs as they arise."

– Lauri Roberts, Tocqueville Society cabinet member and Greater Twin Cities United Way board member, who supports our mission with her husband, Jim Roberts.



EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS

Every child deserves a great start. That's why Greater Twin Cities United Way works to ensure families and caregivers are equipped to nurture children to be successful learners, and that children enter kindergarten ready to thrive. In 2024, our multiyear Community Investments grants provided vital funding and support for nonprofits offering direct child care and education services. These organizations deeply reflect the communities they serve and are working to ensure that entire families, not just children, can thrive.

Our 80x3: Resilient from the Start initiative continued to expand trauma-sensitive care through partnerships, advocacy and training with child care organizations and community allies. By equipping early childhood educators with new tools and resources to support them in the classroom, we ensured that more of our state's littlest learners had the support they needed to overcome adverse childhood experiences.

We supplemented these efforts with deep engagement in policy and advocacy – working alongside lawmakers, government agencies and our partners at the Start Early Funders Coalition. Our efforts led to significant shifts in state policies related to trauma-sensitive care and opened the door for a major new early-learning scholarship partnership with the State of Minnesota.



Innovation Spotlight: 80x3

Our 80x3 initiative made significant strides in 2024. We continued to advance trauma-sensitive care by partnering with early child care organizations and leaders while enlisting new allies in the movement across Minnesota.

We also launched a new trauma-sensitive community toolkit to provide education and resources for families and child care providers to foster awareness in their own communities.



One of the fundamental truths of 80x3 is that children thrive when their caregivers are also supported. In 2024, we partnered with Creative Kuponya to expand access to mental health services for child care providers in our 80x3 cohort. For many providers, past experiences had created uncertainty around the benefits of mental health services. Working with Creative Kuponya, educators overcame stigma and built trust to leverage mental health resources to strengthen their resilience and succeed. Organizations reported the transformative impact this had on their educators and leaders, one calling it “the greatest gift ever.”



LEARN MORE

about 80x3's
community tool kit
for families and child
care providers.

Advocacy Spotlight: Early Childhood Education Policy

Every year, thousands of Minnesota families rely on Early Learning Scholarships (ELS) to access child care. In 2024, Greater Twin Cities United Way helped expand ELS eligibility – making child care more affordable and accessible for families impacted by substance use, incarceration and domestic violence.

United Way's advocacy also played an important role in improvements to the state's Parent Aware quality ratings system. Early childhood educators can now receive professional development credit for trauma-sensitive trainings – providing new incentives for educators to engage in this important work.

These accomplishments were strengthened by our new partnership with the State of Minnesota to administer the ELS program statewide, under which we paid out \$65 million in scholarship funds from our July 1, 2024 launch through March 2025. This major investment has already streamlined billing processes for child care providers statewide, allowing them to focus less on administrative tasks and more on delivering the quality child care that matters most.



LEARN MORE
about United
Way's impact on
early learning
scholarships.

Partner Spotlight: Wilder Child Development Center

The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation is a long-standing early childhood education partner of Greater Twin Cities United Way. The organization supports children and families through advocacy, research and direct service – including the Wilder Child Development Center, a full-time early learning program for children ages 16 months to 5 years. United Way supports Wilder's growth through our multiyear Community Investments funding as well as our 80x3 partnership.

In 2024, 80x3 made possible the development of a new family resource at the Wilder Center. Based on input from Wilder's community, The Den is a new space designed solely for caregivers and families. For some parents, it is a quiet space where they can take a sensitive phone call or print an important document. For others, it is a sanctuary to decompress and recharge before picking up their child. These kinds of simple but transformative shifts are only possible through holistic partnerships like the relationship between United Way and Wilder. Together, we're ensuring that adults have the resources to be present and supportive for the children in their lives.



LEARN MORE
about our
partnership with
Wilder.

2,934

children received culturally specific and trauma-sensitive child care through programs and services supported by United Way.

29

early childhood care and education organizations supported through Community Investments, 80x3 and the Start Early Funders Coalition.

169

early childhood educators and leaders received training and support through 80x3 to integrate trauma-sensitive practices in their classrooms and programs.

ACTION DAY

Every young person deserves the opportunity to realize their full potential, starting with a great education. When students have what they need to succeed, their confidence grows, and they build meaningful relationships that set them up for future success. Our annual Action Day initiative channels the generosity and care of our community to support learners. By packing backpacks filled with essential supplies, we do more than provide school materials – we show young people that their dreams matter and that their community supports them.

In 2024, more than 5,000 volunteers packed over 47,000 backpacks – an estimated \$2 million retail value – including 25,200 backpacks filled at Target Center in a single day. Over 130 nonprofits and district partners distributed backpacks to students across the metro.

A record 43 supporting partners joined Action Day, including all eight Minnesota professional sports teams and 34 corporate partners, reflecting the Twin Cities' deep commitment to young learners.

“We let the children pick out their backpacks, and seeing those smiles makes all our work worth it. We know that they have the supplies and tools needed for success. The best statement came from a thoughtful second grader: ‘This is my backpack, but is it all mine? I will share if you want me to.’”
– Action Day nonprofit partner

Thanks to our 2024 Action Day sponsors:



“We wanted to focus our charitable giving on quality educational experiences from early childhood through secondary schooling because we feel it’s a key component for building a more equitable future for the next generation. Greater Twin Cities United Way makes it easy for us to align our philanthropic strategy with that goal while supporting the community in which we live and work through corporate gifts, employee giving campaigns and volunteer engagement opportunities.”

– Scott Pilkington, Vice President of Human Resources, Emerson

Mortenson Family Foundation

As part of its goal to expand opportunities for children and families in our region, the Mortenson Family Foundation invested in Greater Twin Cities United Way's 80x3: Resilient from the Start initiative. "80x3 falls into our systems change and early childhood education work. It was funded specifically for thinking about equitable outcomes for young learners and getting at a trauma-informed way of providing these services," said Rabya Hassen, community relationship officer for Mortenson Family Foundation. "By centering community voice in our grantmaking process, we continually heard that academics, social emotional learning and mental health are all interconnected and essential to achieving better academic outcomes."

"We see ourselves as a piece of the puzzle to help solve challenges our community faces. We want to make our community as strong as possible, and supporting the Greater Twin Cities United Way with our time and resources is a wonderful and effective way to create a brighter future for all."

– Jen Bratton, Greater Twin Cities United Way board member. Bratton supports our mission alongside her husband, Keith Waxelman, Greater Twin Cities United Way Tocqueville Society cabinet member, pictured here with their children.



CAREER AND FUTURE READINESS

All young people deserve the opportunity to realize their full potential. In 2024, Greater Twin Cities United Way invested to ensure that all young people have the skills, relationships and mindsets to direct their own futures and achieve lasting success.

Through our multiyear Community Investments partnerships, we provided vital support for organizations offering out-of-school programming for youth. Young people themselves drove much of this work, including a renewed focus on listening and collaboration to ensure respect for the voices of young people in the design and delivery of programming.

Also in 2024, our Career Academies initiative celebrated a decade of impact, reinforcing our commitment to ensuring our education and workforce systems are preparing students for high-wage, high-demand careers – building a future where opportunity and success are within reach for all.

We paired these critical partnerships with hands-on community engagement through Action Day.



Innovation Spotlight: 10 Years Of Career Academies

Launched in 2015, 2024 represented the tenth year of our Career Academies initiative – a driving force in uniting public education, post-secondary and employment systems so that all Minnesota students have pathways to wealth-building and purpose-driven careers. Last year, we continued funding career pathways programs in St. Paul Public Schools and Robbinsdale Area Schools while launching new grants to strengthen collaboration among school districts, youth-serving nonprofits and employers across Minnesota. Since 2015, Career Academies has connected more than 25,000 students across Minnesota with opportunities to build skills and experiences for the success they want.



Over the last decade, Career Academies has become a national model, inspiring leaders from across the country. The initiative played a major role in bringing the nationwide Jobs for the Future Conference to Minnesota in April 2024 – providing a national stage for leaders from around the United States to learn from and build on Career Academies' success.





Advocacy Spotlight: Career Academies Toolkit

Changing systems requires a broad movement. For our Career Academies initiative, 2024 saw the launch of CareerAcademies.org – a new online toolkit for school districts, employers and other potential partners looking to replicate the Career Academies approach in their own community. Our goal: Help communities build pathways to meaningful, wealth-building careers by sharing the lessons we’ve learned over the last 10 years. Since launch, more than 2,600 users have accessed resources, including curriculum guides, policy papers and workplace mentoring tools.



LEARN MORE
and access the Career Academies toolkit.

Partner Spotlight: Division of Indian Work

For more than 70 years, the Division of Indian Work (DIW) has supported the Native community in the Twin Cities through culturally based education, leadership development and traditional healing approaches. The organization’s multigenerational programs uplift children, elders and families of all kinds. United Way is a long-standing supporter of DIW’s youth development programs, providing flexible funding and technical assistance through our multiyear Community Investments portfolio.

DIW’s approach integrates Native value systems and practices in youth development – helping young people not only grow skills for a successful future but also connect more deeply with their culture and history. Based in Minneapolis, the organization uses traditional Native practices like smudging to spark important conversations with young people around healing and wellness. And by weaving a multigenerational approach through its work, DIW connects young people with community elders to pass on important cultural heritage. United Way is proud to support DIW in helping young people look to the future with respect and appreciation for their cultural traditions.

9,571

young people participated in youth programs and activities led by United Way partners; more than 80 percent reported growth in critical life skills.

10,000+

high school students participated in career pathways programs made possible by Career Academies.

70

youth-serving organizations supported through multiyear Community Investments grants and Career Academies.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Everyone deserves the opportunity to use their talents and ambitions to build a secure future. Greater Twin Cities United Way ensures adults enter the workforce prepared for skilled employment and increased wealth – while simultaneously supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs to create new jobs and expand opportunities to thrive.

In 2024, we partnered with community organizations to help individuals and families in the nine-county metro create pathways to financial security through job training and financial accessibility services. We also provided funding and capacity-building support to partners fostering entrepreneurship and driving local economic development.

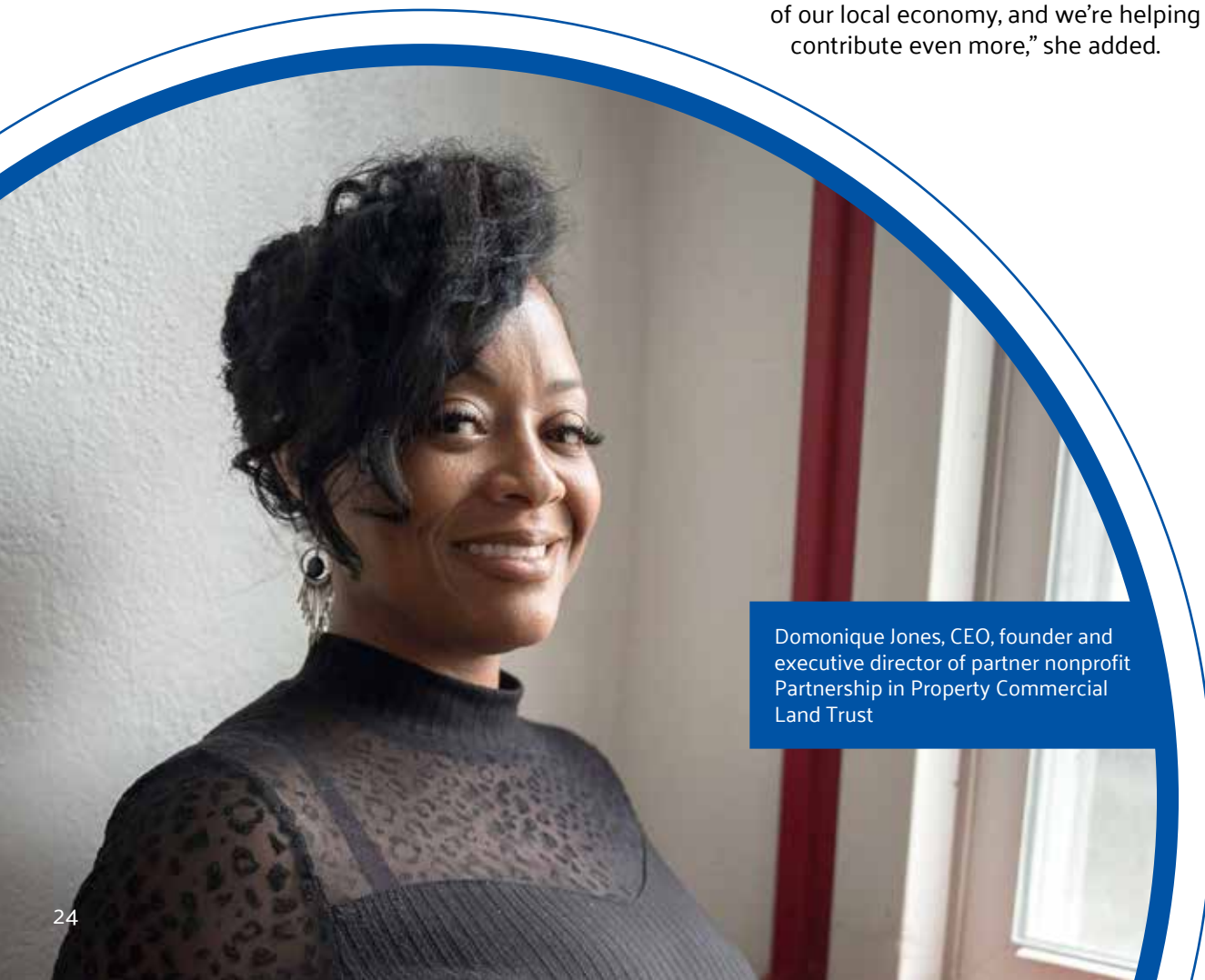
We supplemented these efforts through innovation, expanding impact with our Career Academies and Full Lives initiatives. Since 2015, Career Academies has catalyzed new school-business partnerships to fill gaps in our education system, so all students have access to wealth-building, purpose-driven careers. Targeted grants from Career Academies helped bring new partners to the table in 2024, including

chambers of commerce and youth employment organizations from across the state.

Newly relaunched in 2024, Full Lives cultivated economic opportunity by supporting local farmers and small businesses – building wealth within communities and promoting resilient local economies (see page 14 for more).

Partners in Growth

When Caitlin Skinner of Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) shared an aspiration with Greater Twin Cities United Way Program Officer Daisuke Kawashi, he became a champion for the cause. With deep experience developing financial products for small businesses, LEDC sought to grow its capacity to leverage green funding opportunities. Kawashi connected Skinner with targeted field-building funds available to Greater Twin Cities United Way's multiyear Community Investments partners, and LEDC used the grant to gain valuable knowledge and contacts at national and local trainings. "Our team now includes the lens of greenhouse-gas reduction in the assistance we offer," Skinner said. This positions more entrepreneurs to grow, for example by investing in efficient delivery vehicles or upgrading HVAC. "Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy, and we're helping them contribute even more," she added.



Domonique Jones, CEO, founder and executive director of partner nonprofit Partnership in Property Commercial Land Trust

Innovation Spotlight: Career Academies Initiatives

In 2024, we deepened Career Academies' impact by launching new targeted grants to close gaps between public school districts, youth-serving nonprofits and employers. Our Future Ready Workforce Fund invested in 13 local chambers of commerce, expanding availability of high-quality work experiences for young people throughout Minnesota. This unique partnership leveraged a \$1 million appropriation to Career Academies from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development in the 2023 legislative session.

We also launched our Building a Movement Fund – offering targeted micro-grants to advance promising career pathways strategies in nonprofit organizations, school districts, charter schools and post-secondary institutions. Across its first two rounds, we invested \$210,650 in 19 partner organizations.

Advocacy Spotlight: ALICE

In 2024, United Ways around the country rallied to Unite for ALICE. But who is ALICE? ALICE stands for “**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed.” In short, ALICE is anyone who earns more than the federal poverty line but still struggles to make ends meet. As essential costs like food and housing continue to grow faster than families' wages, in 2024, 36 percent of Minnesotans were ALICE – working even harder, and stretching their paychecks further.

In September 2024, we joined other United Ways of Minnesota at the state capitol to share these and other findings in our new report, “ALICE in Minnesota: A Study in Financial Hardship.” Greater Twin Cities United Way will continue using ALICE data to inform our grantmaking priorities and to raise awareness of the challenges facing Minnesota families.



LEARN MORE

about United Way's work
with ALICE in Minnesota



Partner Spotlight: Ujamaa Place

Since 2010, Ujamaa Place has supported young men transitioning out of incarceration, providing resources and spaces to help them achieve brotherhood, stability and personal success. Ujamaa Place helps individuals meet their immediate needs around stable housing, food security and mental health, while supporting them with goal setting, job skills training and other steps to lay the foundation for a prosperous future. United Way's partnership has strengthened Ujamaa Place's work, providing flexible funding and technical assistance to help the organization continue to expand its transformative impact.

In late 2024, Ujamaa Place faced the unexpected passing of its CEO, Chris Crutchfield. Ujamaa found itself navigating a major leadership transition – already a challenge for many organizations – while also grieving the loss of a friend and longtime advocate. United Way offered support and stability to Ujamaa as it navigated, and continues to navigate, this emotional transition. Whatever challenges our nonprofit partners face, United Way is here to help.

**\$18
MILLION**

in grants and loans to
entrepreneurs by programs
supported by United Way,
resulting in the creation of
2,686 new jobs.

29

economic opportunity-
focused organizations
supported through
Community Investments
funding.

2,736

people secured a job through
United Way-supported
employment and training
programs; nearly 70%
maintained their employment
for at least a year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers and Committee Chairs

Al McFarlane

Chair
CEO, McFarlane Media Interests, Inc.

Stacy Bogart

Vice Chair
SVP, Chief Legal Officer, Corporate Secretary and Corporate Responsibility, Winnebago

Diego Arias Garcia

Treasurer and Finance & Human Capital Committee Chair
Global Quality Director - Industrial & Adhesive Tape Division, 3M

Lamar Anderson

Community Impact Committee Chair
SVP & General Manager, Andersen Corporation

Miquel McMoore

Governance Committee Chair
Founder & President, kpCompanies

Anu Pal

Data & Digital Transformation Committee Chair
SVP, Data Analytics Director (CPTS), U.S. Bancorp

Heather Williamson

Audit Committee Chair
Community Leader

Chris Dolan

Secretary
Partner, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Cheryl Hadaway

Advancement Committee Chair
CEO, Hadaway Partners, LLC

Members

Nisha Botchwey

Dean of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota

Shirley Boyd

Community Leader

Jen Bratton

Community Leader

Collin Brinkman

Managing Director, Life Sciences Portfolio Lead, Accenture

Jared Brown

Managing Director, Norwest Equity Partners

Justin Butler

Community Leader

Erick Chi

National Sales Vice President, Life Insurance Distribution, Securian

Louis Clark, IV

Assistant Dean for Advancement, CLA, University of Minnesota

Patricia Correa

SVP, Chief Human Resources Officer, Xcel Energy

Derek Cunz

President, Mortenson

Amy Dahl

VP, International, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, The Toro Company

Latanya Daniels

Superintendent, Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191

David Fiocco

Senior Partner, McKinsey

MayKao Fredericks

Chief Humanities Officer, Minnesota Humanities Center

Peter Frosch

President and CEO, GREATER MSP

Kerri Gordon

SVP, Chief Marketing Communications and Public Affairs Officer, Allina Health

Robin Hickman-Winfield

CEO and Executive Producer of SoulTouch Productions

Dominic Iannazzo

Office Managing Partner, EY

Scott Janckila

VP of Supply Chain, Post Consumer Brands

Olivia Jefferson

VP, Social Impact, Best Buy Co. and Executive Director, Best Buy Foundation

Mary Kaul-Hottinger

EVP, Chief Human Resources Officer, CHS, Inc.

Pam Kermisch

Chief Customer Growth Officer, Polaris

John Lindahl

Community Leader

Laura Lohmann

Vice President Finance, Schwan's Food Service, Inc.

Matt Marsh

Managing Partner, Deloitte

Erin Horne McKinney

National Executive Director, Howard University & PNC National Center for Entrepreneurship

Chris Murphy

Managing Director, Minnesota/ North Dakota Market Leader, Wells Fargo

Kera Peterson

President, St. Paul Regional Labor Federation

John Potter
Partner, US Deals Clients and
Markets Leader, PwC

Courtney Richardson
SVP, Pay and Benefits, Target

Lauri Roberts
Community Leader

Dan Rodriguez
Executive Director,
Merrick Community Services

Carrie Scatena
VP of Retail, Minneapolis North
District Manager, Huntington
National Bank

Haley Taylor Schlitz
Assistant Attorney General, State
of Minnesota

Courtney Schroeder
Head of Diversity, Inclusion and
Belonging, General Mills

Summra Shariff
Executive Director, Twin Cities
Diversity in Practice

Shane Shipman
CEO, Leleune Steel Company

Luchelle Stevens
Community Leader

Sharon Kennedy Vickers
CEO, Software for Good

Rob Vischer
President, University of St. Thomas

Kelli Williams
Founder & CEO, Legacy Rising

Heather Williamson
Community Leader

Asad Zaman
Executive Director, Muslim
American Society of Minnesota

Troy Zierden
CIO, Ryan Companies

“What separates Greater Twin Cities United Way is they know how to get to the root cause of a challenge and then partner with community organizations to address it. GTCUW’s role is to support local nonprofits doing the most impactful work and make sure they have what they need to succeed, whether it’s training, funding, bringing them together, or connecting them to other resources.”

– Lamar Anderson, Greater Twin Cities United Way Board Member, and TiAnna Anderson, Tocqueville Society Cabinet Member





UNITED IS THE WAY

Our Mission

We unite changemakers, advocate for social good and develop solutions to the challenges no one can solve alone.

gtcuw.org