

Greater Twin Cities United Way

# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Our 2025 Results Together

Published 2026



Greater Twin Cities  
**UNITED WAY**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Letter from leadership             | 3  |
| Our impact at scale                | 4  |
| A year of change                   | 6  |
| We're here for one another         | 8  |
| 211 resource helpline              | 10 |
| 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline      | 11 |
| Stable housing                     | 12 |
| Food security                      | 14 |
| Educational success                | 16 |
| Economic opportunity               | 18 |
| Together we're making a difference | 20 |
| Board of directors                 | 22 |

## FORWARD TOGETHER

**We must re-imagine how we care for one another.** 2025 brought federal policy changes in food, housing, education and other essential services that eliminated decades-long funding practices, and at a scale that no public or philanthropic organization is built to replace. Additionally, real and perceived fraud in healthcare and other social services has undermined public trust in legitimate nonprofits – forcing our already-strained partners to manage their work in new and sometimes costly ways. Our nonprofits are facing new fundraising and security realities while stretching to meet surging demand. Our families and businesses are navigating an impossible landscape of rising costs, less money and more uncertainty. Our community is hurting.

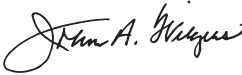
**We're here for this.** Greater Twin Cities United Way has been building relationships among nonprofits, volunteers, donors and employers to support our community for 110 years. We've stuck together through wars, pandemics and changing political landscapes. What comes next will look different from what we're used to, and we will build it together.

**United, we've already begun.** In 2025, our trusted partnerships across sectors were a conduit to quickly move funds, information and people to do the most good:

- **We responded.** To help families struggling with the results of policy decisions including SNAP changes, we made emergency food grants, answered a surge in 211 resource helpline calls, and organized an emergency volunteer response that generated thousands of meals.
- **We stabilized.** In April 2025, we launched Community Investments partnerships with 98 nonprofits doing the best work to meet urgent needs in housing, food, education and economic opportunity. Partners tell us that our multiyear flexible funding, free consulting services and personal relationships provide a rare source of reliability in the turmoil.
- **We kept investing in a thriving future.** In 2025, working toward equity at a regional scale meant training more educators in the trauma-sensitive practices that nurture childhood brain development, investing in homelessness prevention for foster youth, and continuing to engage with lawmakers across the political spectrum.

**Our shared vision of a community where all people thrive regardless of income, race or place matters now more than ever.** Thank you for supporting us to enter 2026 stronger than before.

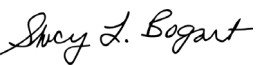
With gratitude,



**John A. Wilgers**  
President & CEO



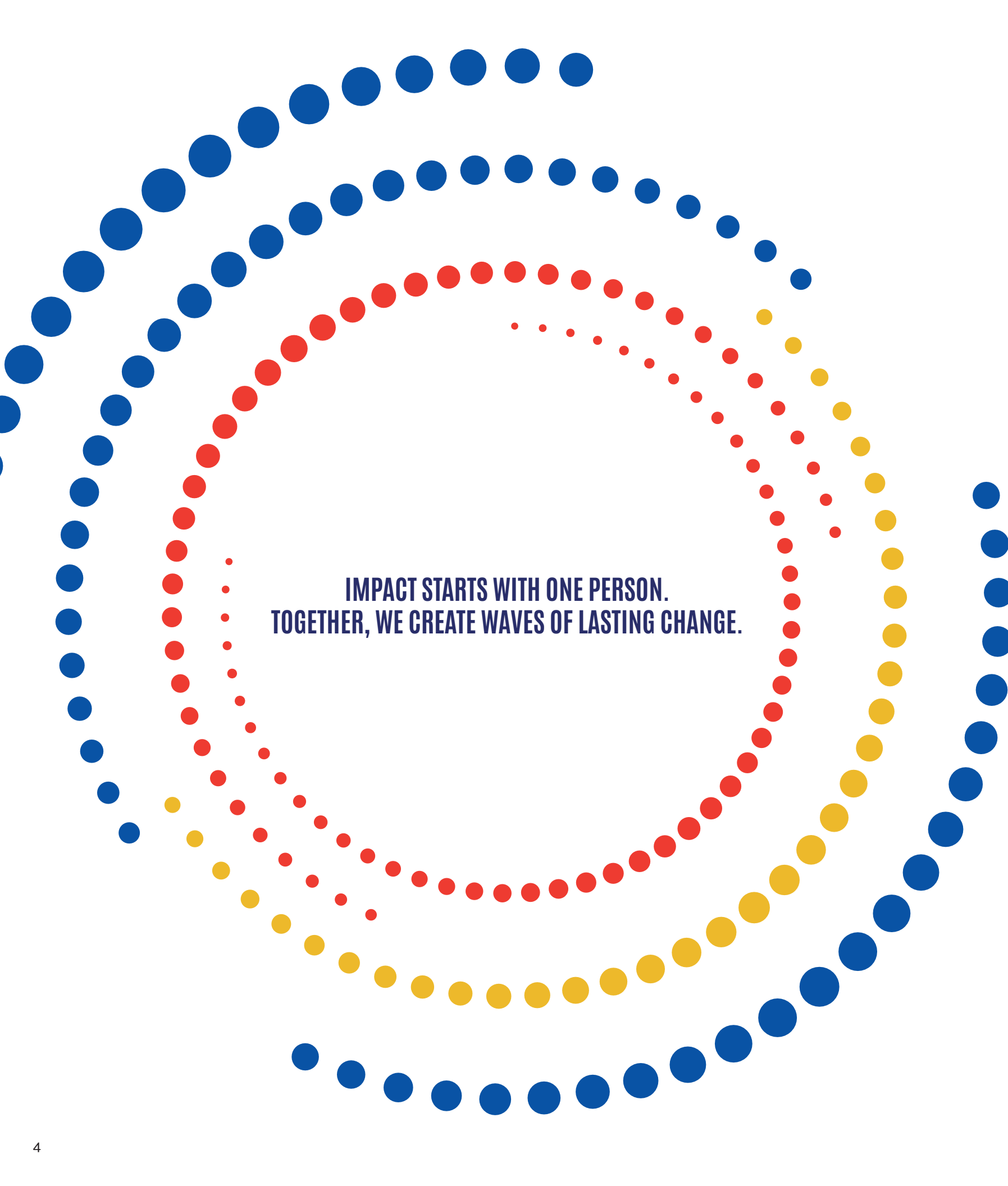
**Shannon Smith Jones**  
Chief Impact Officer



**Stacy Bogart**  
Chair, Board of Directors



**Learn more:** Read recent insights from Shannon Smith Jones on fraud in the healthcare and social service sectors, and how United Way advances trust and accountability in our nonprofit partnerships.



IMPACT STARTS WITH ONE PERSON.  
TOGETHER, WE CREATE WAVES OF LASTING CHANGE.

## RESPOND

**One person reaches out with an urgent need.** It's a teen texting our 211 resource helpline to find shelter for the night, an elder seeking food and utility assistance to make ends meet, or a parent finding childcare so they can take their next career step. Or it's a neighbor on the worst day of their life, finding safety and hope from a counselor at the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

### Thousands of volunteers show up.

Twin Cities neighbors care for one another. Throughout the seasons, we listen to what's needed and organize volunteers to deliver. Whether it's backpacks full of supplies for K-12 students, welcome home bins with the basics to make a house a home, or ingredients to make meals as a family. And when emergencies happen, our trusted network acts fast to meet the most pressing needs.

## STABILIZE

**Dozens of nonprofits join forces.** We partner with community organizations doing the best work to provide stable housing, nutritious food, early childhood education, youth development and economic opportunity for adults. Our partners tell us that as they navigate a persistently tumultuous landscape, the flexible funding and free consulting we provide is crucial for their organizational stability. We funded 331 partners across all grants large and small in 2025. And we collaborated with many organizations beyond funded partnerships.

## INVEST IN A THRIVING FUTURE

**Sectors unite where it matters most.** Informed by the strengths and needs we see in our everyday work, our innovation

# OUR IMPACT AT SCALE

and advocacy teams engage employers, philanthropists, nonprofits, public agencies and elected officials to seize regional-scale opportunities. Together, we're eliminating persistent barriers to early childhood development, stable housing, food getting where it needs to go, and wealth-building careers.

**We never stop investing in a thriving future where all families can meet their needs.**

Together, we're building a community where every child grows up in a stable home with good food in the fridge; all parents can provide for their families; and each of us can handle life's emergencies and save for tomorrow.

# A YEAR OF CHANGE

WHAT HAPPENED

HOW WE RESPONDED

## JANUARY - MAY

### MINNESOTA'S LEGISLATIVE SEASON

2025 includes dramatic power-sharing negotiations.

## JANUARY - MAY

### WORKING WITH LAWMAKERS

We share insights from community relationships on how we can:

- Permanently support 211 resource helpline services.
- Prevent homelessness for families and for young people exiting foster care.
- Increase access to high-quality childcare.
- Support a thriving food system.

## FEBRUARY

### ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN DAY

We celebrate young children at the Minnesota Capitol, alongside families, nonprofits and legislators rallying for early childhood success.

## FEBRUARY - DECEMBER

### A WAVE OF CHANGES

Community members and nonprofits share impacts of federal executive orders and changes to funding and policies.

## APRIL

### STABILIZING PARTNERSHIPS

Following the most competitive application process to date, United Way launches multiyear partnerships with 98 nonprofits doing the best work in housing, food, education and jobs. Our support includes \$9.8 million in flexible funding and free consulting that will prove critical to navigating sweeping changes.

## MAY

### FUNDERS JOIN FORCES

United Way joins 10 fellow funders to launch the MN Forward Pooled Fund to help stabilize small nonprofits impacted by federal shifts. The fund disburses \$1.35 million to 27 groups.

## MAY

### PROGRESS AND RESULTS

We deepen relationships with lawmakers across the political spectrum and successfully advocate to:

- Maintain state funds for food shelves and family homelessness prevention.
- Establish a new legislative task force on nonprofit practices, for nonprofits and lawmakers to ensure effective use of state dollars.
- Make it easier for Minnesotans who qualify for assistance to enroll in reduced-fare public transportation.

## MAY

### HARDSHIP IS COMMON

New data shows Minnesota's most common jobs often don't cover basic expenses.

## MAY

### DATA BRINGS INSIGHT

As part of United Ways of Minnesota, we release "The State of ALICE in Minnesota" report. It includes county-by-county insights into barriers for the 35% of Minnesotans who don't make enough to cover the basics. We reveal how workers in crucial roles struggle to make ends meet, and how we can all benefit from closing gaps.

## JUNE

### RESPONSIVE GRANTS EASE PAIN

We begin making additional responsive grants to organizations impacted by federal funding cuts and uncertainty. Funds and free consulting help our partners manage emergencies ranging from a broken freezer to budget forecasting to keeping community members housed, fed and cared for. United Way's responsive grants total \$230,000 in 2025.

## JUNE 14

### BRUTAL ASSASSINATION

Minnesota lawmakers and their families are targeted in a shocking act of violence.

## JUNE

### MOURNING AND HOPE

Together we mourn Melissa and Mark Hortman and share a message of hope with John and Yvette Hoffman. Our advocacy team quickly adapts to new security measures, impacting how we plan events and safely engage with lawmakers and their staff members. Strong relationships with lawmakers help us continue to bridge differences despite an increasingly polarized political climate.

## JULY

### "PRESS 3" OPTION ENDS

Federal funding ceases for the Trevor Project's dedicated national call center for LGBTQ+ individuals.

## JULY

### 988 IS HERE

Our local 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline continues to provide free, confidential support to all, including callers who may have chosen a dedicated LGBTQ+ response in the past.

## AUGUST 27

### UNBEARABLE VIOLENCE

Two children lose their lives and 21 people are injured in a tragic shooting at Church of the Annunciation.

## AUGUST

### GRIEVING TOGETHER

As our community grieves together, we give responsive grants for mental health supports for the teachers at Annunciation Catholic School.

## SEPTEMBER

### PLAIN TALK ON CHILDCARE

With our coalition partners, we host the free Early Childhood Legislative Debrief with policy experts and state leaders to understand how federal funding and policy changes impact Minnesota families.

## OCTOBER

### FOOD NEEDS SKYROCKET

The federal government shutdown and changes to SNAP benefits lead to a surge in need for emergency food services atop years of steady increase.

## OCTOBER

### GETTING FOOD TO FAMILIES

We launch the Emergency Food Relief Campaign to provide immediate support to families facing hunger. Nonprofits and neighbors care for one another by donating, volunteering and hosting food drives (see page 14).

## OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

### 211 PICKS UP

Our 211 resource helpline responds to a spike in calls for food services, including a 232% increase in late October and early November.

## OCTOBER

### HOUSEHOLDS ARE STRAINED

Tight budgets and changes to services continue to challenge local families.

## OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

### VOLUNTEERS HELP OUT

Hundreds of volunteers participate in Home For Good, assembling 1,535 welcome home bins with household essentials for families achieving and maintaining stable housing.

## OCTOBER

### TOCQUEVILLE TURNS 20

Our local chapter of the Alexis de Tocqueville Society celebrates two decades.

## OCTOBER

### WE HONOR GENEROSITY

We recognize this group of generous donors with reflections on their evolving philanthropic leadership. And together, we look forward to the next 20 years.

## NOVEMBER

### HUD FUNDING CUTS

Changes to longstanding federal housing policies and funding create critical budget gaps for housing programs and uncertainty for people facing homelessness.

## DECEMBER

### ICE PRESSURES RISE

Partners tell us that increased ICE activity is causing families to shelter in place, creating the immediate challenge of how to get food.

## DECEMBER

### PARTNERS ADAPT

Nonprofits leverage our flexible funding to expand services and meet quickly changing needs, including delivering food to families.

WE'RE HERE FOR ONE ANOTHER

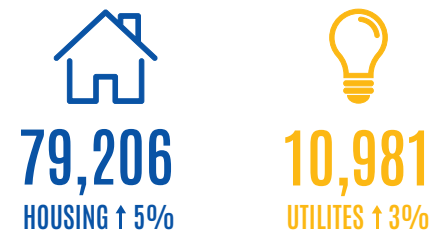


Winter, spring, summer and fall. Our volunteers, partners and families showed up throughout 2025 to make sure we all have good food, household essentials and opportunities to learn.

211 RESOURCE HELPLINE

We all need help sometimes. In any given year, life brings personal and household emergencies. And in 2025, local families experienced greater uncertainty. Our 211 resource specialists provided 223,912 referrals in 2025 – about one every two minutes on average, day and night.

Housing remained by far the most common reason local people reach out. Requests for housing increased 5% vs. 2024. Utilities – an important element of stable housing – were the second-most common request and increased 3%.



First-hand insights

211 is often the way community members tell us how policy decisions are affecting them. From Oct. 19 to Nov. 9, our 211 resource helpline saw a 232% increase in requests for food.

One of these calls came from a parent seeking help for herself and her children. Her food assistance had not arrived that month due to the government shutdown. She didn’t have enough food to make it through the next day. Our 211 community resource specialist located a food shelf that was open to anyone until 7 p.m. However, the caller did not have



transportation. Through a partnership with Lyft, which we refreshed in 2025, the specialist was able to schedule a ride for the caller to get to the food shelf and return home safely.

Another call came from an essential government worker. She had been working without pay for more than a month. Her family’s sole earner, she had depleted her savings and received an eviction notice.

The caller had already applied for rental assistance in her county, but was told she did not qualify because she did not have any income, which is a requirement. Our 211 specialist identified a community organization that could provide rent assistance and additional resources that could help with utility payments and food, including Thanksgiving meals.

Greater transparency

211 data is one important way we gain real-time insights that support community organizations, policymakers and funders in their decision making. Recently, we led a comprehensive refinement of how we track and share 211 data. **Scan here to explore our new 211 dashboard.**



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

The trained specialists at our 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline call center answered 44,018 calls in 2025 – 34% more calls than in 2024. That’s one caller finding hope for a brighter tomorrow every 12 minutes on average, day and night.

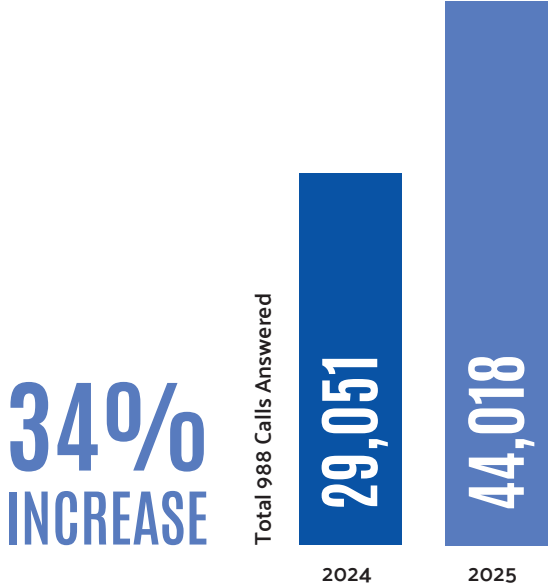
Surrounded with care

A parent reached out to 988 because their child’s social worker had shared that their child was having strong feelings of not wanting to be alive. The child’s therapist was unavailable, so the parent was directed to call 988 together with their child. Our suicide prevention call specialist was able to speak with the child to provide emotional support and understand the reasons behind their feelings. The child shared that the main contributor was being bullied at school. The 988 specialist collaborated with the child on a safety plan, including activities they enjoy and people they could go to. The child was able to identify having strong supports in their friends, family and professionals. By providing support and discussing what they enjoy, our specialist helped this child feel more positive in the moment. The specialist also spoke directly with the parent to ease their stress and provided resources and guidance on how to proceed.

A trusted resource

Across communities, from rural to urban, when someone calls 911, the person who picks up is staffing a public safety answering point. Our 988 team partners with several local answering points. In 2025, our 988 call center received 377 transfers from these teams due to our strong coordination. Transfers came from the county level including Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota; the city of Minneapolis; and other communities. This demonstrates that our 988 call center is a trusted resource for mental health and crisis calls.

**988 is here for everyone. If you or someone you know needs support, please call or text 988, or visit [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org) for free, confidential help 24/7.**



“We’ve seen growing reliance on 988 as a critical alternative to 911 for behavioral health needs,” said 988 director Carolina De Los Rios. “These transfers are part of our progress in building integrated crisis response pathways.”

STABLE HOUSING

**Our Goal:** Episodes of homelessness are rare, brief and nonrecurring.

Initiatives that support this goal:

- 211
- Home For Good
- Holistic Grantmaking
- Pathways Home
- Advocacy

“Working with our [United Way] program officer is a fantastic thing, because she brings a lot of knowledge and background that a small organization like ours can really lean on. This is somebody that we can come to and have a discussion about whatever we need.” – David Frei, Executive Director, Family Promise in Anoka County

“Our [United Way] program officer connected us with an organization called Canine Inspired Change. As a result of that connection, we are very soon going to start having emotional support dogs at our North Minneapolis location. In 2026, we’re going to be opening eight affordable apartments to young people – so youth will be able to rent apartments from us. We want them to be able to have pets in their apartments, but we know that they’re going to probably need some education around pet ownership first, and Canine Inspired Change is going to provide that education as well. So that small connection is going to make a huge difference in the lives of our young people.”

– Katherine Meerse, Executive Director, Avenues for Youth

180

Through Pathways Home, 180 young people at risk of homelessness maintained stable housing for at least 12 months.

1,535

Home For Good volunteers packed 1,535 welcome home bins to support families transitioning into stable housing.

Thank you to our 2025 Home For Good sponsor:



Through United Way:

6,224

people received support that helped them obtain and maintain stable housing.

FOOD SECURITY

Our Goal: All people have food that is nutritious, culturally relevant and affordable, sustaining their long-term food security.

Initiatives that support this goal:

- 211
- Emergency Food Relief Campaign
- Flavors of Our Community
- Holistic Grantmaking
- Full Lives
- Advocacy

“Access to food is a basic human need. When our neighbors can’t get the food they need, it harms the community. We were compelled to support Greater Twin Cities United Way’s Emergency Food Relief campaign to ensure everyone is fed. We value the organization’s longstanding partnerships with local nonprofits and trust that they will use the funds responsibly and get resources quickly to those who need them most.”

– Mike and Paulette Vande Logt

“Our food shelf is culturally specific and focused, and with that, it adds an extra cost. The support that we receive from Greater Twin Cities United Way allows us to be able to provide that food. It also helps us to be able to pay staff to run the food shelf. We serve a lot of Hmong elders who don’t speak English; it’s really key for us to have that language access piece. A lot of food shelf related grants often don’t pay for employees to actually provide the service. [Partnering with United Way] has filled a major gap for CAPI and for our ability to run our programming effectively for the community.”

– Mary Niedermeyer, CEO, CAPI USA



Thank you to our 2025 Flavors of Our Community sponsors:



62,475

Action Day volunteers packed 62,475 backpacks with school supplies to prepare kids for a successful school year.

1,640

infants, toddlers and preschoolers received trauma-sensitive care from leaders, educators and childcare centers supported by 80x3.

“The value of multiyear unrestricted funds for an organization of our size cannot be overstated. Fundraising is often the biggest barrier to making our work happen. So unrestricted funds, like those provided by United Way, help us do things like buy snacks for students coming in after school. They help us pilot programs that we aren’t sure if they’ll be successful. Not having to worry about where our next check is going to come from, because we can rely on United Way’s support consistently, helps us be able to make those decisions to expand our programming.”

– Katie Fitzpatrick, Vice President, American Indian OIC

## EDUCATION

**Our Goal:** Families and caregivers are equipped to support children in becoming successful learners; children enter kindergarten ready to learn and thrive; and all youth have the skills, relationships and mindsets to choose and direct their own future success.

### Initiatives that support this goal:

- 211
- Action Day
- Holistic Grantmaking
- 80x3: Resilient from the Start
- Advocacy

“Our partnership with Greater Twin Cities United Way is an excellent partnership. We’ve brought on a mental health therapist and a family therapist, which is really important to the young men that we serve. Often there’s a lot of stigma in the African American community when it comes to mental health and seeing a therapist. We have one of the great therapists in the country – Dr. Charles Morgan – who’s an African American man who comes in to speak with these young men. And the connections that they’ve made, in the way he’s allowed them to open up and be able to express themselves and work through their issues, has been tremendous. I credit that to United Way, for the funding that they have been able to provide us to expand our staff.”

– Korey Dean, Founder and Executive Director, The Man Up Club

200+

children, families and community allies attended Advocacy for Children Day at the Minnesota State Capitol, urging lawmakers to invest in our youngest Minnesotans.

8,036

young people participated in youth programs and strengthened their social-emotional learning skills, giving them new tools to achieve a successful future.



Volunteers, partner organizations and students gear up for learning at Action Day packing and backpack distribution events.



## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

**Our Goal:** All adults enter the workforce prepared for skilled employment and increased wealth.

### Initiatives that support this goal:

- 211
- Holistic Grantmaking
- Career Academies
- Advocacy

“Greater Twin Cities United Way has this amazing opportunity to interact with other foundations, but also with the corporate world, with our biggest companies. Twin Cities RISE needs those companies to see the value in hiring our Risers. I see United Way and Twin Cities RISE, and organizations like us, working together so that we can influence companies in Minnesota – showing the part that we play in building and keeping Minnesota’s economy strong into the next 30 years.”

– Emma Corrie, President & CEO, Twin Cities RISE pictured at left.

“Learning about ALICE data and seeing how much it really costs to meet basic needs in our community was eye-opening. Since housing often takes up the largest portion of an ALICE household’s budget, the financial struggles many of our neighbors face impact the entire community. Through our nonprofit, Results Foundation, we’ve seen firsthand how critical stable housing and community support are to helping families thrive.”

– Brenda Tushaus, CEO REMAX Results



Greater Twin Cities United Way nonprofit partners and staff connect at a fall 2025 convening.

“United Way has really helped with our Economic Empowerment Series – our one-off workshops, and our small business incubator for Muslim women – investing and giving us opportunities to meet with other partner organizations that are doing similar work. It’s also given us the opportunity to be able to connect with other funders by building these relationships.”

– Malika Dahir, Executive Director, Reviving Sisterhood

**3,184**

adults obtained employment via job training and placement services supported by United Way, and 74% maintained employment for at least 12 months.

**486**

Through partnerships led by Career Academies, 486 young adults achieved industry-recognized certifications preparing them for skilled employment.

**297**

community members participated in financial literacy workshops and other economic empowerment programs supported by United Way.

# TOGETHER WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE



“Being part of Action Day is always an uplifting experience. And being able to volunteer alongside my children and know we are helping students just like them start the school year with the tools and confidence they need to be successful learners is a full circle moment.”

– Kristina Zander, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community



“Being part of the tenth anniversary of Action Day was incredibly meaningful. Seeing thousands of volunteers, local companies and families come together to support students as they prepare for a new school year was inspiring. It’s the kind of collective effort that reminds me what’s so special about the Greater Twin Cities community—the magic that happens when people unite in service of something bigger than themselves. Sharing that experience with my family and fellow Target team members made it even more memorable.”

– Courtney Richardson, Target



Volunteers, including then-St. Paul mayor Melvin Carter (bottom photo), prepare backpacks full of supplies for Action Day.

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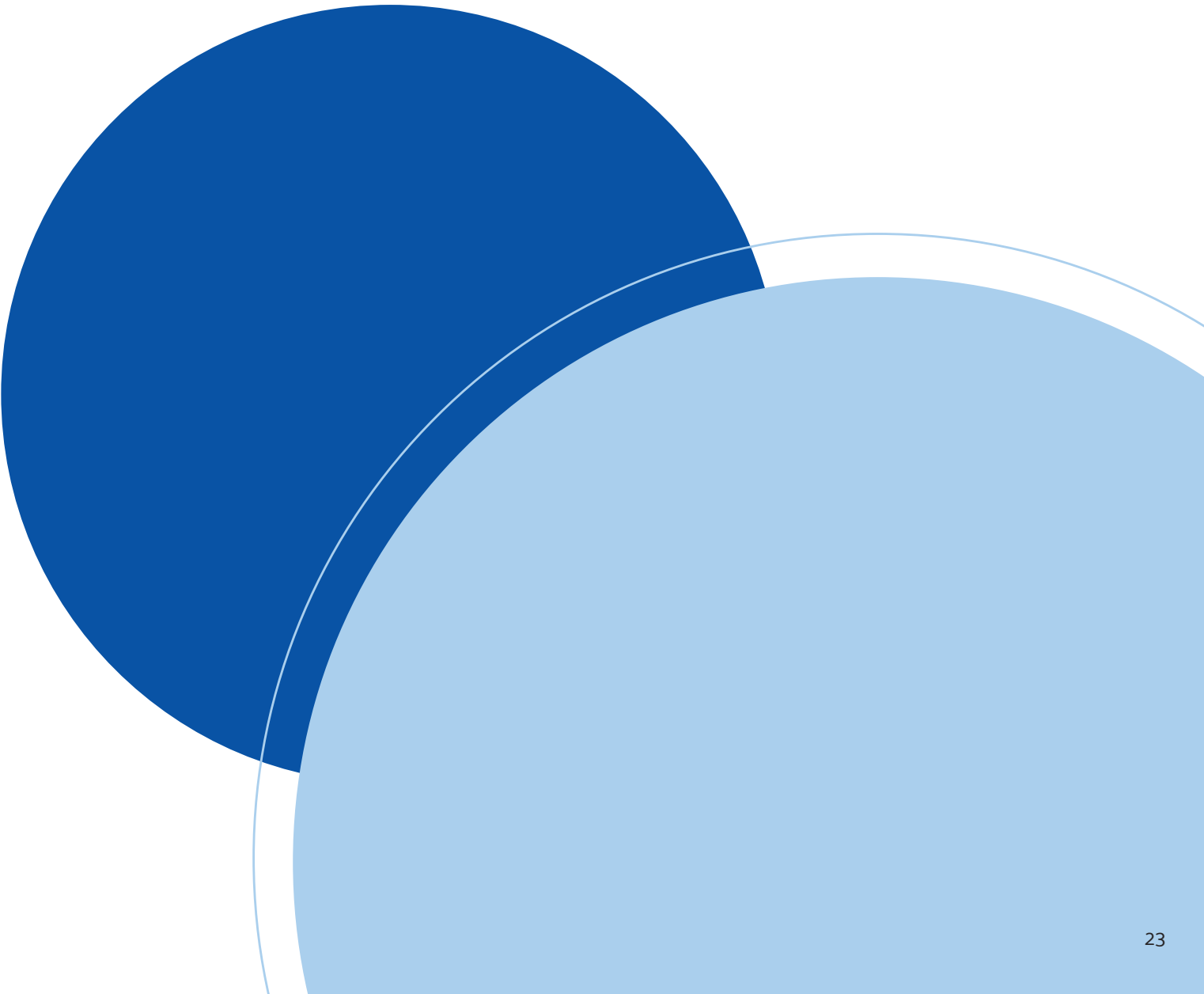
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**Asad Zaman**  
Executive Director, Muslim  
American Society of Minnesota





# 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](http://gtcuw.org)