



Allegan County United Way
and Volunteer Center

2021 IMPACT REPORT

ALLEGAN COUNTY

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR

United Way fights for the education, health, and financial stability of every person in every community. To live better we must **#Live United**

United Way's **VISION** is that all individuals in Allegan County achieve their full human potential.

Using data to drive efficient and effective decisions, United Way operates an **IMPACT AGENDA** that supports, develops and implements a range of impact solutions that improves lives and creates stronger communities.

Change doesn't happen alone. Hope is not a strategy. United Way's **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** process provides meaningful and impactful opportunities to engage in creating stronger communities. We mobilize over 8,000 donors, advocates, and volunteers every year to meet the ever-changing needs of our residents.



33 GRANTS

from the Feed the Need Coalition awarded to local agencies responding to the needs of individuals and families, covering PPE, food, mental health, and more.



\$50,000

raised by United Way for the Feed the Need Coalition Fund.



50 VOLUNTEERS

mobilized in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center, agencies, and DHHS.



50+ TONS

of food distributed through the United Way's Goods Donation Center.



COVID-19 RELIEF

When disaster struck, we were there, **together, United**. Creating a COVID-19 Emergency Response, we worked with our closest partners to solve hourly, daily and weekly problems as they arose.



EDUCATION

Success in life begins with a quality education. And yet, millions of children and youth lack the support they need to strengthen their literacy, stay on track in school, graduate high school and find a career. Our goal is that **kids enter school ready to learn** and are **supported for successful school progression**.

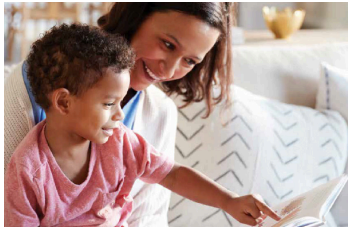
IN THE EDUCATION IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

4

Programs

2

Collective Impact
Collaborations



**36,124
BOOKS**

*mailed to children ages 0-5
across Allegan County in 2020
through the United Way
Imagination Library program.*



HEALTH

When it comes to accessing health services, a person's zip code or income should never be a barrier to improved health. Yet for many, that's a daily reality. Our goal is that individuals have **access to healthcare and improve their health**.

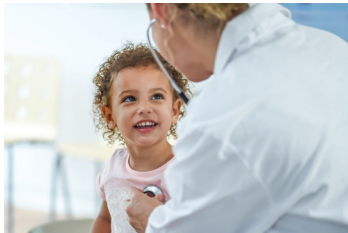
IN THE HEALTH IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

9

Programs

1

Collective Impact
Collaboration



\$14,091.44

*amount saved by 255 people in
Allegan County on prescriptions
through United Way's FamilyWize
program in 2020.*



FINANCIAL STABILITY

A better future begins with financial stability - We give people the resources and opportunities they need to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Our goal is to have **financial supports and resources for all ALICE Households** and that everyone has **access to post-secondary experiences and workforce development opportunities** that lead to a family sustaining jobs.

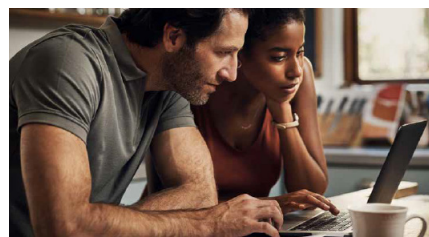
IN THE FINANCIAL STABILITY IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

9

Programs

4

Collective Impact
Collaborations



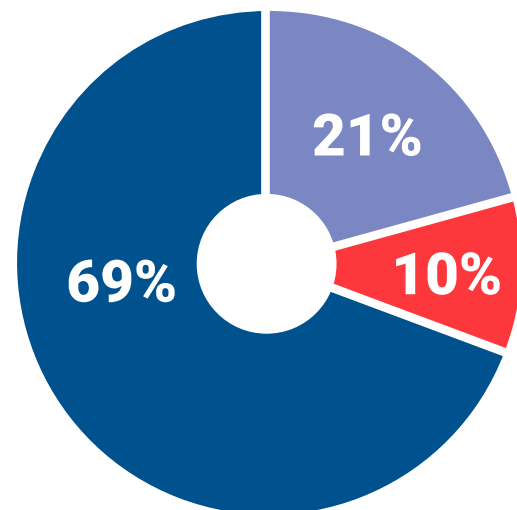
**myfree
taxes.com**

*Due to the COVID extension on
tax season final numbers for this
program will be available online
at a later date. As of 4/1/2021,
the average MFT family was
receiving **\$2,206** back to provide
for their Alice Essentials.*

ALICE IN ALLEGAN COUNTY

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). While conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the cost of household essentials (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan).

Of Allegan's **43,667** households **4,366** (10%) earned below the federal poverty level and another **9,170** (21%) were ALICE.



- Poverty
- ALICE
- Above ALICE Threshold

WE ARE ALICE



ALICE is your child care worker, the cashier at your supermarket, the salesperson at your big box store, your waitress, a home health aide, your neighbor. The COVID-19 pandemic caused many more families in Allegan County to cross over the ALICE threshold and the programs funded by Allegan County United Way became more essential than ever to protect the health and financial stability of our community. These true stories of impact are only a few examples of the support provided to local families through United Way funding.

A woman came to a United Way funded partner requesting assistance for her and her three kids. Her youngest was a toddler and she knew he needed more help than she could give him. She knew her son could benefit from more social interaction and structure. Searching for options, she called around and discovered our agency partner allowed her to send her son to their Head Start program for free. She started volunteering in the classroom and found that she loved it. She knew she wanted to get more involved in her community and better herself so she decided to return to school, get her GED, and then her secondary education. Our agency partner was able to provide the support and assistance to give her a path to her education, and eventually, to full-time employment with a sustainable, living wage.

Two elderly couples (in their 80's) became homeless during the pandemic. A United Way funded partner worked with both of these couples for many months to find them suitable housing, all while working to keep them out of the elements by finding motel funding and delivering food to them, sometimes on a weekly basis. Both couples now have a warm, safe roof over their heads. Had our agency partner not had access to the funds provided by United Way, both of these couples would likely still be homeless and struggling to find a place to stay each and every night.

Matt's mom reached out to a United Way funded partner and shared her concerns about the hybrid/remote learning that her son was receiving. Matt, had some behavioral, emotional, and attention concerns that were being addressed with a 504 plan, but his mother didn't feel like this was meeting his needs due to his failing grades and missing assignments. In addition, their family had very limited access to internet services at home, which was impacting Matt's access to instruction on remote days. Our advocate was able to help Matt and his family evaluate their current 504 plan, discuss their options, and meet together with the school's evaluation team to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for Matt that set goals to address his academic, social, and emotional needs. Matt was able to sign up for additional times in the school building where he could use the internet and catch up on online activities as well as ask questions about other school work. In just a short time Matt began to have less missing assignments and his grades began to improve.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

United Way provides meaningful and impactful opportunities to engage in building a stronger community through **Volunteerism**, **Advocacy**, and **Giving opportunities**.

VOLUNTEER

United Way's Volunteer Center mobilizes the caring power of community every day through events like Stuff the Bus and Adopt-a-Highway, and through our interactive, live, online volunteer portal.

Allegan County United Way's online volunteer portal provides, agencies, businesses and individuals with a one-stop shop for volunteerism. Last year, **59** agencies, numerous businesses and over **477** volunteers used United Ways online Volunteer Center to make a difference in our community.



TOTAL ANNUAL VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION IN ALLEGAN COUNTY

644 Volunteers

2,025 Volunteer Hours

\$55,080 Value of Volunteer Hours

ADVOCATE

We're improving education, financial stability and health for individuals and communities. But we don't do it alone. And donations and volunteers don't solve every problem. We provide a platform for you to make a bigger, deeper difference. Join us today. Change doesn't happen without you.



TAKE THE MAKING ENDS MEET CHALLENGE

Thousands of families across Allegan County have to make tough decisions about where to spend their money from week to week. See if you can get through the month with our new app, Making Ends Meet. Take the challenge at: www.acuw.org/making-ends-meet.



UNITED WAY GOODS DONATION CENTER

The Covid pandemic has changed both the needs in the community and the way we fill those needs. United Way's New Goods Donation Center offers simple workplace and home based opportunities to provide the resources struggling families need in our community. Visit our website to check out this expanding list of ways you can help!



#UNITEDFOREQUITY

TAKE THE EQUITY CHALLENGE

In 2020, Allegan County United Way launched a 21-Day Equity Challenge. To date, almost 1,000 people in Allegan County have already participated, and we want to keep it going! Take a 5 or 21-day personal guided challenge on how we can be champions of equity in our personal and professional lives. The entire Challenge is catalogued with all the content for your continued use at: www.acuw.org/equity-welcome.

United Way's legislative platform works on behalf of ALICE Families on the local, state and Federal levels. Learn more by scanning this code.



TEXT ALERTS TO 50503

To receive advocacy alerts from United Way



GIVE

Every year, thousands of generous donors support our work. Through payroll deduction campaigns, on-line gifts, special events and more, these contributions enable us to keep fighting for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community.

TOTAL PARTICIPATION IN CAMPAIGN GIVING IN ALLEGAN COUNTY

31 Companies

656 Donors

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For every \$1 we raise through campaigns we create **\$2.05** in community benefit. United Way's total community benefit for 2019/2020 fiscal years was **\$1,034,631**. This community benefit positively impacted the lives of more than **6,817** Allegan County residents.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN **GIVE**, **ADVOCATE** AND **VOLUNTEER** AT WWW.AC UW.ORG

FOLLOW US     



Allegan County United Way and Volunteer Center