

100 YEARS OF IMPACT



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UWM: THEN AND NOW

In 1923, extraordinary local citizens banded together for a common cause and formed what is now United Way of the Midlands (UWM). In the earliest days of the organization, funds were raised from across the community and allocated to 32 nonprofit organizations. The Community Chest was designed to pool community resources and invest in critical health and human service organizations that directly support local needs.

While much has changed, much remains the same. UWM continues to be a trusted steward for donor dollars and an agent of change. We have focused our resources and expanded the network of organizations we support, and have also mobilized people and resources in times of economic crisis, health emergencies and natural disasters. And we have stepped up to fill gaps through our direct services.

When organizations like ours achieve 100 years of making a positive impact, it is easy to look back and marvel at what has been accomplished. But instead of doing that, UWM is using this milestone as an opportunity to look forward and see how our organization can make an even more meaningful contribution to our community over the next 100 years.

And as we look toward tomorrow, we are also acutely aware of today's challenges. The purpose of this report is to share the trends we are seeing and hearing in our community, and to highlight our work to coordinate efforts and deploy resources where they are needed most. Because as we've shown time and time again, as community needs change and evolve, United Way of the Midlands will be here.

— PHILANTHROPY THEN AND NOW —



United Way's relationships with the business community remain one of our most unique characteristics – with more than 600 organizations hosting campaigns, sponsoring events, partnering on community projects and choosing to invest through United Way. Business executives across the metro invite UWM into the workplace to provide their employees with an opportunity to give. This leadership-inspired philanthropy and giving from workplace campaigns provides the basis for community investments.

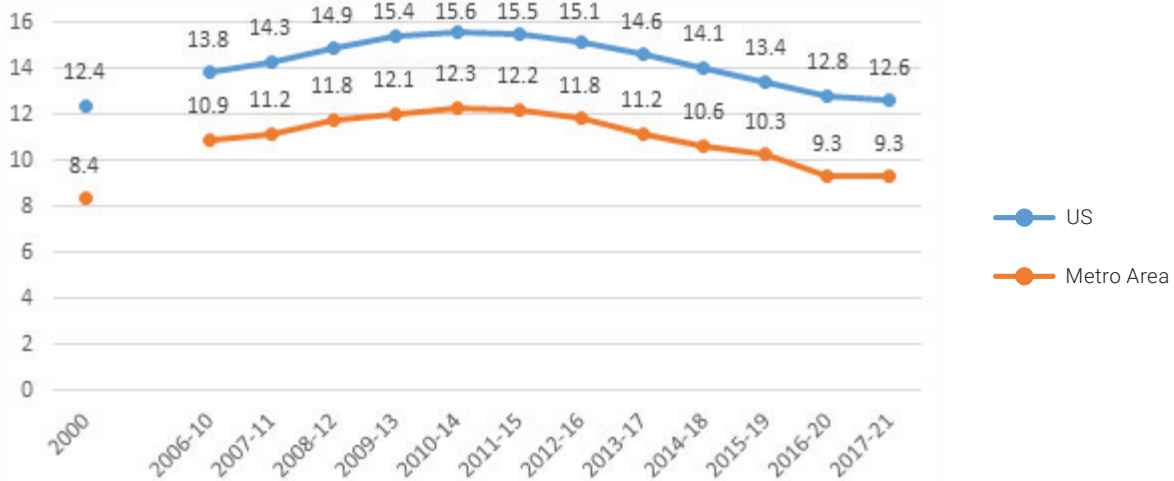
We continue to be humbled by the families in our community who give their time and treasure to advance our work. Our campaign chairs and board of directors power United Way to new heights and challenge us to think bigger – particularly with Tocqueville membership. Thanks to the generosity of our community, UWM achieved 402 Tocqueville Society members, surpassing our goal for the third year in a row. As a result of this achievement, Mr. Warren Buffett will generously increase his match of the total campaign dollars raised, meaning additional money will be invested back into our community.

We make it easy to host a campaign – visit our website UnitedWayMidlands.org for campaign information and resources.

POVERTY IS DECREASING, BUT 1 IN 3 PEOPLE IN THE METRO STILL STRUGGLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET – AND WE HAVE AMONG THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF WORKING POOR IN THE COUNTRY.

High quality of life in the metro area is often reflected through community indicators, including our low unemployment and poverty rates. In the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area, our poverty rate of 9.3% is well below the U.S. poverty rate of 12.6% and is on a steady decline. For instance, in 2013 the poverty rate in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro was 12.1% or roughly three percentage points higher than it is today.

**Percentage of Individuals Living in Poverty Over Time
Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Area (Orange) vs. United States (Blue)**

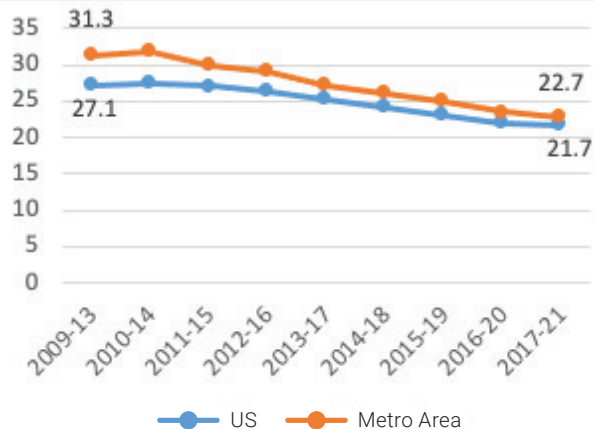


Source: American Community Survey, 5-year tables 2010-2021 and 2000 Census

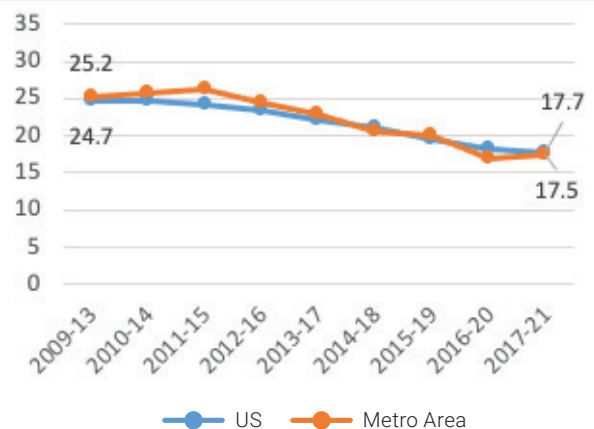
Poverty rates among the area’s Black and Hispanic populations have seen even steeper declines. As shown below, these poverty rates have significantly declined over the last 10 years and are relatively consistent with the U.S. average.

**Poverty in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Area Compared to the U.S. Over Time
For Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino Populations**

Poverty Among Black and African American Metro vs. U.S.



Poverty Among Hispanic/Latino Metro vs. U.S.



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Series compiled by UWM in partnership with UNO’s Center for Public Affairs Research

These decreases are positive signals about the strength of our economy, as well as the intentional efforts from local organizations to reduce disparities among Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). However, disparities remain. Poverty among our BIPOC populations is nearly twice the local average. For instance, whereas the overall poverty rate in our metro is 9.3% the poverty rate among African Americans is 22.7% and among Hispanics is 17.5%.

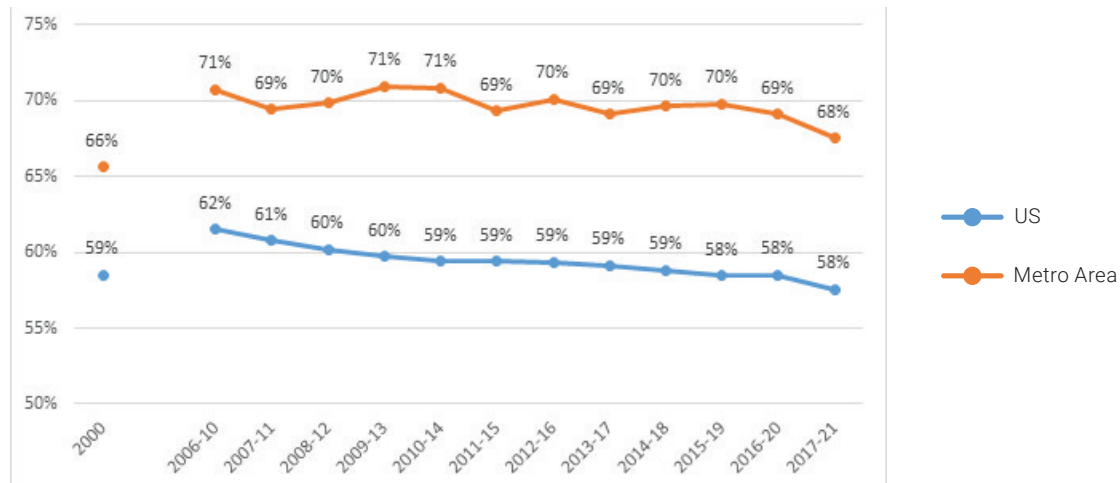
But focusing on poverty alone misses a broader truth about our community. While we have relatively low poverty rates, our percentage of working poor is among the worst in the country. Data from the U.S. Census shows nearly 70% of households in poverty in our metro include at least one worker. In other words, we have more working families living in poverty than almost anywhere else in the country – and these levels have remained consistent for nearly 20 years.

WORKING POOR IN THE TOP 100 METRO AREAS

Provo-Orem, UT Metro Area	79.50%
Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA Metro Area	69.55%
Ogden-Clearfield, UT Metro Area	68.47%
Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA Metro Area	67.51%
Madison, WI Metro Area	67.32%
Raleigh-Cary, NC Metro Area	66.83%
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX Metro Area	65.38%
Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin, TN Metro Area	65.37%
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO Metro Area	65.33%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI Metro Area	64.95%
United States	57.55%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-year tables 2017-2021

Working Poor In Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Compared to U.S. Over Time Omaha-Council Bluffs Metro Area vs. United States



Source: American Community Survey, 5-year tables 2017-2021

Furthermore, we know that financial instability extends beyond the poverty line. A family of four living just above the current federal poverty line of \$30,000 can hardly be considered financially secure. Based on the cost of living in our metro, we estimate 1 in 3 families in our area struggle to make ends meet.

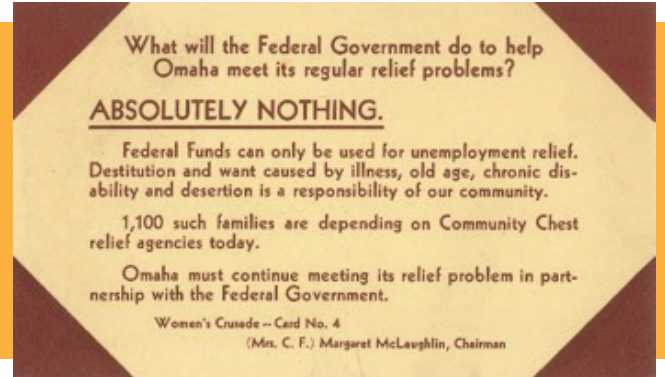
The region's high levels of working poor show that there is an opportunity to capitalize on high labor force participation and low unemployment. By investing in programs that reskill and upskill low-income families into living wage jobs, we can meet employer demands for high-skilled labor and create conditions for families to thrive.

THE CLIFF EFFECT: THEN AND NOW

With the introduction of federal relief programs in 1933, the Community Chest changed its focus to serving individuals who were unable to receive government relief. This focus reflects the reality that programs often have narrow purposes, and eligibility requirements often miss populations who could benefit from federal and state programs.

Today, family budget calculators like the one developed at MIT show a family of four requires income well above the poverty line and above what is required for most eligibility programs. As families seek to earn more to supply their basic needs, they begin to lose access to important benefits that are often needed along the way.

The Cliff Effect occurs when wages from a new employment opportunity do not make up for a family's loss of benefits, putting the family in a worse financial situation. It is a key contributor to multi-generational poverty and a systemic barrier that keeps hardworking families from gaining financial independence. The nonprofit sector in our community creates an important safety net that helps our community stand strong.

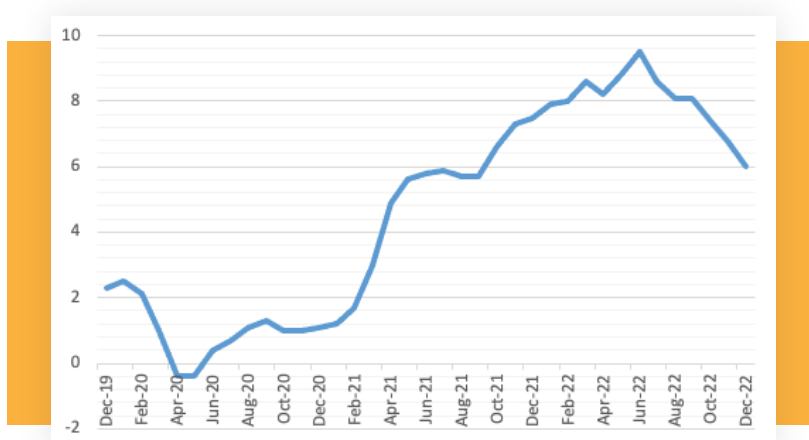


INFLATION INCREASES THE STRESS ON FAMILIES AND OUR NONPROFIT SYSTEM

It was another extremely difficult year as economic recovery has been complicated by the highest inflation we've seen in decades. While inflation is showing some signs of relief from the highs over the summer, it is still running at a 13-year high, and the cost of basics have been hit the hardest. For instance, grocery prices rose 11% over the last 12 months compared to overall inflation at 6%. Prices for essential items rise faster than other items — and when that happens, families with limited budgets use less, borrow or do without. We continue to see an uptick in clients who are seeking help for the first time across many of our basic needs programs.

It is often assumed that inflation affects all households in the same way. But this assumption fails to capture the diverse experience of inflation. The truth is, social and economic disparities pervade all facets of the economy and low-income families are hit hardest by soaring prices on necessities. In other words, rising inflation can further entrap lower-income households in poverty.

INFLATION



Inflation of All Items Over Time

Some additional examples...

- Cereals and bakery products up 17% since last year
- Household energy up 11% since last year

Source: Consumer Price Index, Midwest Region - December 2022

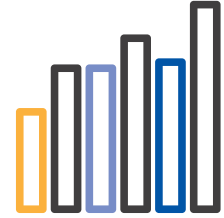
Inflation also put stress on our nonprofit system and its capacity to provide supports to families. More families are seeking help, and the costs of providing support are increasing. For instance, pantries reported a 50% increase in clients and food costs are up 30%. Food delivery organizations report challenges with affordability and supply chain issues – particularly for protein, dairy and healthy options. For nonprofits, the rising costs of goods means donations cannot stretch as far. Inflation also presents challenges with retaining skilled staff, who are fundamental to delivering services. This type of inflation impact is not completely unique to the nonprofit sector. Businesses are also noticing increases in labor and supply expenses.



Increased stresses on low-income families mean increased demands and more complex cases



More expensive to provide goods and services to people in need



Nonprofit income does not keep up with inflation

And with these rising costs, nonprofit income is unlikely to keep up with inflation. The cost of living squeeze resulting from inflation may affect charitable donations, and some research predicts charities are likely to see a reduction in income due to uncertainty and high inflation. Inflation can also gradually erode the value of a gift. Donors often give in round amounts and at consistent levels each year, so it is unlikely donations will keep pace with changes in inflation. And while many organizations have reserves that can be critical to sustain operations, a nonprofit's reserves have typically been generating an interest below that of inflation for over five years. With higher inflation, a nonprofit suffers even more significant depletion of cash value in real terms. Increased demand on services, increased costs to provide services and fundraising limitations all impact the bottom line.

INFLATION: THEN AND NOW

... IN SPITE OF INFLATION
 YOU CAN **STILL** BUY A BIG SHARE OF HAPPINESS
 FOR ONLY 45 MINUTES A MONTH

Because of inflation, you are making more money today. Because of inflation, you pay more for what you buy. A Share of Happiness should represent more dollars, too. Today's dollar is worth 48¢, compared to 1939's dollar.

Back in 1939, office workers in one Red Feather agency earned \$60 a month. Today \$60 a week would be closer to an office worker's salary.

All Red Feather-Red Cross services must pay more for personnel and supplies. It takes dollars to support their vital work.

But a BIG Share need not take a larger percentage of your earnings. You can **STILL** buy a big Share of Happiness for only 45 minutes a month.

YOUR ONE BIG SHARE OF HAPPINESS CAN DO UP TO 10 JOBS
 53 vital community services are listed in this campaign. Whether you want your Share invested in all 53 or in some special one, make sure your Share is big enough!

Source: One hundred years of price change: the Consumer Price Index and the American inflation experience

Inflation was also a key barrier in UWM's earliest days. In fact, sharp inflation marked the World War I era. While we now measure gas, energy and a variety of household goods – the Consumer Price Index at the time was focused on the most basic need of food, with increases of about 3.5% annually.

Despite the challenges of rising inflation, UWM continues to operate from a position of strength. We have worked hard to create diverse revenue streams, build a healthy reserve and continue strong governance practices. At the same time, demand continues to surge and we receive grant requests well over the dollars available for funding. Our ability to discern community needs, and respond wisely is as important as ever. We leverage the expertise of our staff, community thought leaders and collaborative partners to invest wisely through a review process that utilizes best practices – and continues to evoke trust.

IN ADDITION TO INCREASED DEMAND, CHILDREN, ADULTS AND FAMILIES ARE ALSO PRESENTING MORE COMPLEX CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE INTERCONNECTED SUPPORTS AND MORE INTENSE CARE COORDINATION

Our world is becoming more complex every day. We find that some barriers are entrenched and continue to persist, even as new challenges emerge. The reality is that barriers are often interconnected and multi-directional. For instance, food security is impacted by employment, and is directly related to our physical health, as well. When families struggle in one area, there is often a cascading or domino effect that permeates multiple facets of everyday life.

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT: THEN AND NOW



As we've seen throughout our history, a strong network of human services is essential to address these interconnected needs. In 1923, we called the members of this network red feather agencies. The red feather was part of fundraising and campaign efforts, and organizations receiving UWM funding proudly displayed a red feather as a symbol of this partnership. Today, the 150+ programs receiving UWM investment are part of a Circle of Support - removing barriers, creating opportunity and strengthening the systems that people rely on in times of need. Receiving UWM funding remains a source of pride, as it represents the endorsement from 40,000 donors and the broader community.

In our most recent grant application cycle, UWM received 38 requests totaling \$4 million for care coordination supports. When programs provide care coordination, they are organizing client care across multiple providers or supports. This often involves an assessment of needs and goals, as well as coordinated referrals to supportive organizations. Follow-up and monitoring involved mean this is staff-intensive work, and requires a trauma-informed approach. When a barrier arises, case managers help clients find manageable and sustainable solutions.

Low-income families often lack many of the protective factors traditionally associated with resilience; they are also some of the hardest working people in our community. A national study shows low-income families exhibit remarkable and unique strengths in the face of tough circumstances. This resilience stems from a sense of togetherness and confidence in problem-solving skills. When problems arise, they pull together and rely on each other. Social support connections also help low-income families buffer economic distress. Far from helpless, these families respond to adversity with grit.

POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS: THEN AND NOW



UWM is proud to serve as a trusted agent for change, supported by volunteers who help fundraise and also direct dollars where they are needed most. In fact, the community has the loudest and strongest voice in our processes – a major reason why so many people across the metro area invest in United Way. More than 100 volunteers participated in the Community Investment Review Team process this year, and they reviewed a record 273 applications totaling more than \$30 million in requests. Hear more about this effort by listening to our podcast at UnitedWayMidlands.org/CIRTpodcast.

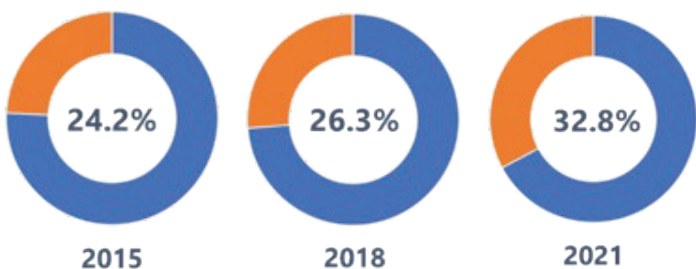
INCREASED STRESS ON FAMILIES AND ACCESS CHALLENGES ARE CREATING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS – ESPECIALLY AMONG YOUTH.

Even before the pandemic, thought leaders in our region identified mental health as one of our region’s greatest needs. The pandemic unleashed additional stressors, adding pressure on our mental health system and impacting our community’s capacity to provide care.

Data from the Community Health Needs Assessment in our area reveals mental health indicators continue to worsen over time. For instance, 1 in 3 in our area are now experiencing symptoms of chronic depression. Programs continue to report challenges recruiting mental health professionals, and access challenges have doubled across income categories. In fact, Nebraska ranks 33rd and Iowa 18th in terms of access.

CHRONIC DEPRESSION OVER TIME

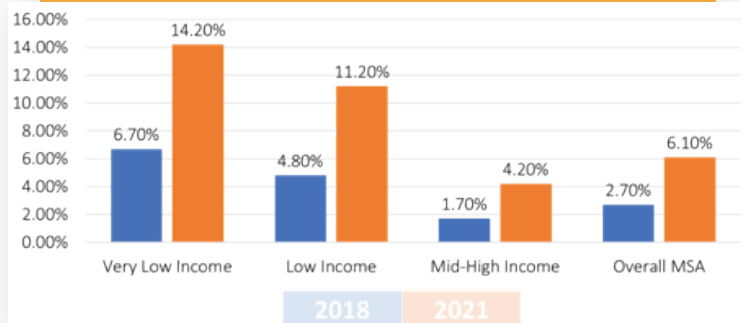
1 in 3 people in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro have experienced symptoms of chronic depression



Source: Community Health Needs Assessment

ACCESS CHALLENGES OVER TIME

Percent Reporting Difficulty Obtaining Mental Health Services



Source: Community Health Needs Assessment

Perhaps most alarming is the rise of mental health emergencies among youth. We are now seeing increased anxiety, stress, isolation and bullying play out through behavior in schools. Mental health continues to emerge outside of clinical settings, with youth out of school time providers, mentoring organizations and more recognizing the complex mental health situations of the youth they serve. Nationally, emergency visits among youth are up 31% - and this is especially true for adolescents aged 12 to 17, and girls. One local program serving youth is reporting record levels of demand, providing more youth and families with mental health interventions than at any other point in our history. The team continues to see kids facing challenges with navigating their social emotional learning growth, but there are signs that UWM investments are making a difference.

UWM has prioritized mental health initiatives through increased investments providing trauma-informed care and targeting low-income populations; 62% of people served through our mental health investments earn less than \$15,000. We now invest more than \$1 million to provide mental health supports to individuals and youth across the metro. Further, our investments focus on integrated health services that combine mental and physical health treatment, mobile services or care that is connected to shelter or after-school programming.

Thanks to an additional infusion of funds, programs are now able to provide mental health services at multiple sites, year round. Some sites have reported a decrease in emergency calls, which is a welcome sign of progress. Overall, UWM investments prioritize trauma-informed care. In addition to direct investments in mental health, UWM funds programs that work to strengthen family support and reduce parenting stressors.

Women United has also made mental health the focus of their work, and they are sponsoring free Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training in Omaha to address this challenge (see below). Additionally - in collaboration with OBI Creative - we launched a new awareness campaign across the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro that focuses on reducing the stigma in asking for help, and encouraging people to sign up for Mental Health First Aid training.

WOMEN UNITED AT WORK: THEN AND NOW



Women of the metro area have played an important role in UWM since our inception - raising funds and identifying issues for our collective attention. We applaud their leadership and dedication of time, talent and treasure to advance key community efforts. As we've seen throughout UWM history, when Women United put their energy behind something, amazing things happen.

In more recent years, Women United advanced training for youth workers, expanded efforts to support disconnected youth and launched a Mental Health First Aid initiative in partnership with Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare. This initiative teaches skills to respond to mental health and substance use challenges. By the end of this year, we will provide training to 600 people.

THE NUMBER OF DISCONNECTED YOUTH IN THE METRO HAS INCREASED FROM 8,900 TO APPROXIMATELY 12,000.

As we keep our fingers on the pulse of our community needs, we recognize how economic pressures have impacted youth and young adults. There might be a false sense that nothing bad has happened to children when in fact the pandemic increased awareness of familial adversity, by exposing children to increased parental anxieties, especially those associated with job loss, food insecurity and housing insecurity. As inflation continues to stress budgets, children have become less isolated from the realities of economic struggle and understand how this affects daily life.

SHINE BRIGHT: THEN AND NOW

When families struggle to make ends meet, more students come to school hungry or without essentials.

“Shine Bright” boxes for local Kindergarten, sixth- and ninth-grade students contain hygiene items students need to feel good and be ready to succeed in the classroom and in life. And twice this year, our community stepped up to help assemble thousands of “Shine Bright” boxes.

- March 23-25 – Nearly 400 volunteers representing 38 companies assembled 4,000 “Shine Bright” boxes for students in the OPS and Council Bluffs school districts. The event was made possible thanks to the support of Women United, Baker’s, Bridges Trust, CHI Health, Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce, Firefighters on the Move, Lozier, Mariner Wealth Advisors, Medica, Mid-America Center, Nebraska Total Care, Turner Construction, Veridian Credit Union and Werner Enterprises.
- August 10-12 – More than 400 community members from 40 companies assembled 5,000 “Shine Bright” boxes for students in the OPS and Council Bluffs school districts, and for JAG Nebraska students across the state to start the school year. Thank you to our event sponsors American Enterprise Group, Werner Enterprises, Turner Construction, The Waldinger Corporation, Penske and Weiner’s LTD.



A variety of factors influence youth. Measure of America, using data from the American Community Survey, determined that residential environment, race and income influence youth connection to work and school. Disconnected youth are disproportionately youth of color, live in low-income neighborhoods and face important barriers to job access such as disconnections and labor market discrimination. In our metro area, the number of disconnected youth has increased from 8,900 to approximately 12,000.

As educators and academic support systems work to reconnect youth and make up for learning loss, student non-attendance remains a complicating factor. Many of the students served through UWM investments enter support programs missing 40% or more of school. In Nebraska, nearly one in five students missed at least 10% of days during the 2022 school year – a percentage that defines these students as “chronically absent” and at risk of falling behind academically and socially. This reality is especially disturbing for low-income students and students of color. More than half of Native American students were chronically absent in 2021-2022, along with 40% of Black students and 29% of Hispanic students across the state. As a result of this reality, the student waitlist for local advocacy services has expanded with a 55% increase in referrals to attendance support programs.

In addition to impacting families, inflation has impacted educational systems. Teachers and other school workers feel the pinch of increased costs, and are demanding higher wages. Educational budgets are also stretched thin and shift to accommodate rising costs and supply chain challenges.

In our most recently completed investment cycle, UWM investments supported 18,000 youth – an increase from the previous year reflecting increased demand for services.

United Way's Emerging Leaders have stepped up to champion the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Nebraska program. Thanks to our partnership with the Nebraska Department of Labor and the support of Governor Jim Pillen, JAG Nebraska helps students overcome challenges and develop skills needed to succeed in school and in life. During class, students build relationships with local employers, engage in project-based learning, and do career research to lay the foundation for future work.

In the last year, JAG doubled the number of students served, achieved a 99% graduation rate and exceeded all five national JAG standards. Our team of incredible in-school specialists now operate 24 programs statewide, and we are working to ensure JAG is available to any student in need across the state. We have seen JAG Nebraska change lives as students become the first in their family to attend college and get living-wage jobs.

UWM INVESTMENTS SUPPORTED 18,000 YOUTH

WHAT YOUR DOLLARS CAN DO: THEN AND NOW

Philanthropy is alive – and it's also changing.

Donors continue to demand more information about the impact of their investments and the stewardship of their dollars. As giving becomes more accessible, this demand has only increased. UWM continues to prioritize operational efficiency, results-based accountability and accessible giving options to meet donor interests and address the key issues facing our region.

We've focused investments to achieve clear goals, addressing critical issues and magnifying donations by investing in 150+ impactful programs. And thanks to the leadership of our board and our staff's can-do spirit, we are proud to invest more than 95 cents of every dollar raised back into the community. This means donors can give confidently, knowing that every dollar has tremendous impact across the metro area.

Do Your Part! SHARE!

Lead a better life by giving your money to the United Way. Your gift will help the people who need it most. You can give your money in many ways. You can give your money in cash or by check. You can give your money in a lump sum or in small amounts. You can give your money in a one-time gift or in a regular gift. Your gift will help the people who need it most. You can give your money in many ways. You can give your money in cash or by check. You can give your money in a lump sum or in small amounts. You can give your money in a one-time gift or in a regular gift.

HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS

A FEW DOLLARS MAKES A BIG IMPACT!

When you make a monthly gift to United Way of the Midlands, you join thousands of other donors to help our neighbors in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area. That means, with a donation of any size, you help create a circle of support around our community.

- \$10 A MONTH =** ONE MONTH OF DIAPERS FOR TWO NEWBORN BABIES.
- \$20 A MONTH =** HYGIENE PRODUCTS FOR SINGLE WOMEN, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN.
- \$50 A MONTH =** COURSEWORK FOR ONE YOUNG PERSON TO BECOME A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AND GAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY.
- \$100 A MONTH =** 1000+ MEALS FOR FAMILIES IN NEED.

Visit UnitedWayMidlands.org to learn more.

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS IS REAL, WIDESPREAD AND CONTINUES TO PERSIST. BECAUSE THE CHALLENGE IS ALSO NATION-WIDE, IT IS EASY TO BECOME DESENSITIZED AND FORGET HOW URGENT THE PROBLEM REALLY IS.

Access to safe, quality, affordable housing constitutes one of the most basic and powerful social determinants of health. UWM investments support housing interventions ranging from emergency shelter and homeless prevention to direct assistance and transitional supports. Overall, the goal with these investments is to minimize the time spent in shelters, prevent eviction, support healthy transitions and ultimately, ensure families have safe and secure housing.

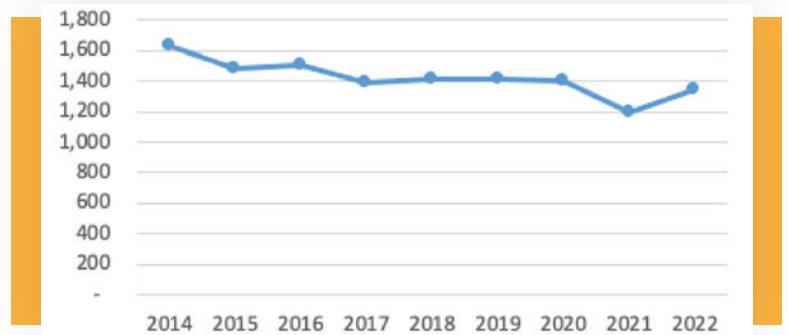
Too many families in our area face housing instability because they have trouble paying rent, face overcrowding or frequent moves or spend the bulk of their income on rent. In our metro area, more than 53,000 households pay too much in rent; this number has remained steady with a slight increase in the most recently released data. These cost-burdened households have little left over each month to spend on other necessities such as food, clothing, utilities and health care. In fact, housing and utilities represent the highest caller needs among 211 requests. With the support of MAACH, MUD, OPPD, Goodfellows donors and our fabulous partner the Omaha-World Herald, UWM provided more than \$18 million last year in rental, mortgage and utility assistance to help eligible Nebraskans stay in their homes.

In addition to affordable rental units, home buying continues to be out of reach and lower-cost housing options are quickly disappearing from the market. An assessment of housing affordability for the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area reveals that we do not have enough quality affordable housing to meet the need. Currently, 98,500 households need affordable housing of some kind, but there are fewer than 20,000 dedicated units – creating a gap of almost 80,000 units. And that gap is growing. If new tools are not created, the assessment estimates the gap will grow to over 100,000 units.

Housing instability may impact some populations more than others. Black and Hispanic households are almost twice as likely as White households to be cost burdened. Additionally, housing instability has been tied to educational outcomes for children. Moving three or more times in one year, often called “multiple moves,” has also been associated with negative health outcomes in children. In local schools, about 5% of students are considered highly mobile and this number has been slightly increasing for the last five years. Through UWM’s partnership with the Siemer Institute and investments in Family Housing Advisory Services, we continue to prevent disruptive moves for youth and their families. In fact, our outcomes are among the best in the country with 96% of families having avoided disrupted moves last year.

Our community has invested in homeless prevention efforts including direct assistance, transitional housing and subsidies because we know that once an individual or family becomes homeless, there are increased barriers to stability. Reintegration into stable housing is difficult and often compounded by secondary factors related to finding employment, family and mental health. For instance, 43% of our area’s homeless population suffers from mental health challenges and 36% have substance abuse challenges. On average, people experiencing homelessness receive referrals to at least four additional supports.

HOMELESSNESS



Source: Point-in-time study by Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless

Homelessness is housing deprivation in its most severe form. On any given night, approximately 1,400 people are homeless in the metro area. While this has remained relatively stable with a slight decrease over time, it is important to note that approximately 30% are chronically homeless – meaning they have experienced homelessness for at least a year.



As we strive to address these issues with perseverance, innovative solutions and a deep passion for every corner of our community – it is essential that our metro has a strong network of organizations to tackle these challenges and address widening social and economic disparities.

We are honored to serve the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro and work with so many amazing nonprofits who are working hard to help those who need assistance every single day.

Looking toward the next 100 years, we are grateful for our donors, corporate partners and so many others who support our work and believe in our mission. Together, we can create a stronger tomorrow for our community for generations to come.

United Way of the Midlands
UNITES our community's
CARING SPIRIT to build a
STRONGER tomorrow.

ABOUT

PROVIDING A CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

United Way of the Midlands invests in more than 140 local nonprofit programs and direct services alongside thousands of other donors. Together, these programs and direct services address social and economic disparities and meeting families' essential needs such as healthy food, safe and stable housing, physical and mental health services, career preparation and job training.



2022-2024 PERFORMANCE GOALS

To ensure we are driving impact and change in the most efficient and effective way possible, UWM has established important goals. By strengthening current partnerships and forging new ones, we will provide approximately 8 million services over the 2022 - 2024 investment period. And because we are committed to holding ourselves and our partner agencies accountable, we will collect program outcomes, measure impact and share the results.

- 4 million meals by investing in food distribution, meal services, pantries, backpack programs and more.
- 500,000 health services by investing in high-quality physical, mental and social services for different ages.
- 500,000 shelter nights and other housing services by investing in safe shelter, transitional housing, rent and utility assistance, supportive referrals and case management.
- 3 million services to remove barriers and create opportunities by facilitating access to resources and training to support job placement, academic attainment, financial empowerment and other essential skills.

JAG NEBRASKA

Through a partnership with the Nebraska Department of Labor, school systems and private funders – and utilizing a model developed by the national Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) organization – JAG Nebraska is dedicated to empowering students with personal and professional development training and support to succeed in high school, further education and employment following graduation.

Since starting with three schools in 2019, JAG Nebraska has grown to serve over 1,200 students at 24 middle and high school programs across the state. By 2023-24, JAG Nebraska's goal is to provide services through 50 programs statewide and increase capacity to serve up to 2,500 students.



A certified JAG Career Specialist in each school provides individual attention and support to students through a program that equips students for success through hands-on instruction and realistic learning experiences where they master a minimum of 37 and up to 87 core competencies identified by business and industry as essential to successful employment and positive outcomes in life.



GOODFELLOWS

UWM is honored to partner with the Omaha World-Herald to administer the Goodfellows program, which was established in 1890 to help those in the community who have fallen on hard times. For the 2021-22 Goodfellows campaign, nearly \$980,000 was donated to the program. These funds are invested in emergency services and for the last campaign they: helped more than 2,865 families with utilities aid and housing support; provided 1,400 holiday meals for local families and 60,000 meals for individuals in need; purchased more than 71,000 diapers to provide a monthly supplement to 1,100 children; and provided shoes, coats and clothing for more than 300 school-age children.



SHINE BRIGHT

“Shine Bright” is part of United Way’s Good on the Go program. Thanks to the support of local sponsors and school districts, UWM will distribute more than 6,000 “Shine Bright” boxes to Kindergarten, sixth- and ninth-grade students in Omaha Public Schools, Council Bluffs Community Schools, Papillion La Vista Schools and to Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG Nebraska) sites across Nebraska. Currently, thousands of students across the metro are lacking essential hygiene items like soap, shampoo, conditioner, clean clothes and dental products – impacting their health, academics and confidence. Each “Shine Bright” box contains the full-sized hygiene items these students need to feel good about themselves and succeed in the classroom and in life.



KARNETT TRUST

The Karnett Trust was created in 1969 by Ellen C. Karnett and entrusted to UWM in 2012. United Way directs Karnett Trust funding to local programs that focus on the care, education and training of children up to age 21 with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caregivers. Karnett Trust partners include: Autism Action Partnership, Easterseals Nebraska, Goodwill, HETRA (Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy), Legal Aid of Nebraska, Ollie Webb Center and Sheltering Tree.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Fund supports racial equity and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations based on socioeconomic and health outcomes that are widely disproportional by race. Determined by experts and community volunteers, funding will advance racial equity by supporting BIPOC-led nonprofits that are empowering BIPOC community members such as low-income, women, refugees and immigrants through the following funding categories: Workforce Development, Entrepreneurship, Employment and Financial Empowerment.

The 211 Helpline is an essential service offered to the entire state of Nebraska – all 93 counties – as well as western Iowa. It provides free information and referral services to people who may not know how to find or access local programs to address their needs.

In 2022 alone, the 211 Helpline recorded more than 364,000 contacts – a nearly 40% increase from 2021 – with callers’ top five needs being: housing, utility assistance, employment, healthcare and food.



Connected to more than 13,000 programs and services across Nebraska and Iowa, the 211 Helpline provides multiple points of access for those looking to receive assistance easily and confidentially. Via ne211.org, Nebraskans can access an online database of local health and human service programs, community services, governmental programs and more. Iowans can find assistance via the existing 211iowa.org site. Individuals can also access similar information via the 211 Nebraska/SW Iowa app – or by texting their ZIP code to 898211 or dialing 2-1-1 to communicate directly with a trained 211 Community Resource Specialist. Assistance is available 24/7, 365 days a year, in over 240 languages using the tele-interpreter service and bilingual staff.



HELP ME GROW NEBRASKA

Help Me Grow Nebraska nurtures every child on the path to success by promoting early identification of development, behavioral or education concerns. They help families, caregivers, healthcare and service providers find community-based services and supports to help children grow and develop. By supporting our young children today, they promote healthier and more prosperous communities tomorrow.

NEBRASKA CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION (NCWDE)

United Way of the Midlands has had a longstanding partnership with the Omaha Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO) – built upon a mutual desire to create a better, stronger and more vibrant community. The Nebraska Center for Workforce Development and Education (NCWDE) is focused on increasing the qualified workforce in Nebraska by creating opportunities for Omaha’s young people to gain exposure to and pursue careers in the trades, while also developing the skills to support the infrastructure of Nebraska.

COURT REFERRAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM (CRCSP)

With support from Douglas County, UWM’s Court Referral Community Service Program (CRCSP) refers criminal offenders to agencies for completion of judge-ordered community service hours, verifies they complete the allotted hours and delivers reports to the offenders’ probation officers. The CRCSP assists approximately 300 clients annually – representing more than 2,500 service hours for our community.

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- 2024-2025 Randy and Candace Wood, Lindsay Corporation
- 2025-2026 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska
- 2026-2027 Paul and Julie Maass, Scoular

TOP 100 CAMPAIGNS



COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS



VOLUNTEER

United Way of the Midlands works with nonprofit agencies across the metro to organize meaningful volunteer opportunities for companies and individuals. This means less time looking for or organizing a volunteer project and more time helping those who need it most.

UWM SIGNATURE EVENTS

Shine Bright - August 7-11, 2023

As part of its Good on the Go program, UWM partners with local school districts to raise funds for the purchase and assembly of “Shine Bright” boxes for local Kindergarten, sixth- and ninth-grade students. Each “Shine Bright” box contains full-size hygiene items that kids need to feel good and succeed in the classroom and in life. Individuals and corporate teams can sign up for volunteer projects that will take place during Shine Bright at UnitedWayMidlands.org/ShineBright.

Day of Caring - September 15, 2023

This community-wide day of service in September makes a big impact across Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie counties! Corporate teams and individuals can sign up for one of the many pre-arranged volunteer projects available on this day across the metro at UnitedWayMidlands.org/Volunteer.

CUSTOMIZED EVENTS

For companies who are looking for a team-building volunteer project – UWM has customized volunteer projects available. For a nominal fee, the UWM team will organize a project that fits your needs and we'll handle all the logistics from start to finish.

Good on the Go

During a Good on the Go project, your team will put together kits for people in need at your office or another site of your choosing. Kits can include toiletry items for someone experiencing homelessness, supplies for a new mom or cleaning items for someone transitioning into permanent housing. UWM handles the ordering and shipping of needed supplies, event coordinating and overseeing the delivery of the kits to an agency in need.

Agency-Site Volunteer Projects

No matter your team's size, we can organize a volunteer project for you at a local nonprofit agency. Projects range from painting or reading with children to yard work, stocking food pantry shelves, wrapping diapers and more.

For more information on customizing an event for your team, contact UWM's Volunteer Engagement Team at Volunteer@UWMidlands.org or visit UnitedWayMidlands.org/Volunteer.

UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS EVENTS

100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CONCERT

Thursday, May 18, 2023 | 6 – 10 p.m.
Gene Leahy Mall, Downtown Omaha

Celebrate the start of summer and UWM's 100th Anniversary with this free event featuring live performances by The Travis Band and The Shenanigans, family-friendly activities, food trucks, fun giveaways and more!

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

Come out with your neighbors, family and friends for one of our free 100th Anniversary Celebrations and enjoy family-friendly activities, food, drinks, fun giveaways, a community village and more!

- June 17, 2023 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Hitchcock Park | 4220 Q St.
- June 24, 2023 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Fontenelle Park | 4405 Fontenelle Blvd.
- July 15, 2023 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
River's Edge Pavilion | 4250 River's Edge Parkway, Council Bluffs, IA
- July 22, 2023 | 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Werner Baseball Park | 12356 Ballpark Way, Papillion



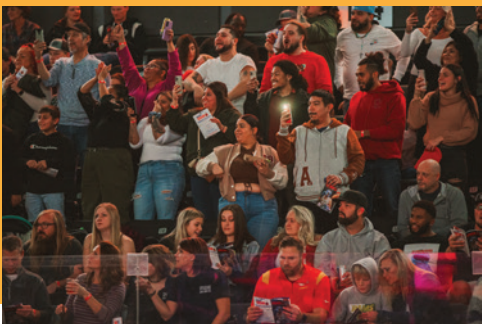
ANNUAL MEETING - OCTOBER 20, 2023

Save the date for our Annual Meeting, during which we'll recognize our community for their generosity and caring spirit! We'll also share an update on the important work you have helped us accomplish and honor this year's Campaign Award winners and our "Citizen of the Year."



BLUE COLLAR BOXING - NOVEMBER 22, 2023

Blue Collar Boxing is a competitive boxing event featuring local union members in the ring for charity. Proceeds from Blue Collar Boxing are donated to UWM and the Nebraska Center for Workforce Development and Education.



SOURCES

- *American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Data*
- *2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines, published by HHS:*
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>
- *While a single poverty measure has the benefit of a shared framework, it fails to capture the income a family actually needs. Reputable research institutions across the U.S. have created family budget calculators to understand the income required to provide for basic needs in certain geographies. These include the Economic Policy Institute, MIT, Voices for Children and more. Adjusting for inflation, an average of these calculators show a family of four would need annual income of about \$75,000 to fulfill a basic needs budget in our area.*
- *What if Inflation Isn't 'Transitory'? New York Times, July 2021*
- *Consumer Price Index, Midwest Region - December 2022*
- *U.C. Davis Office Of Research, The Impact of Inflation and Recession on Poverty and Low-Income Households; United States Congress Joint Economic Committee, How Inflation is Weakening the Recovery and Harming Low-Income Americans the Most and Brookings, Inflation could wreak vengeance on the world's poor*
- *Orthner, D. K., Jones-Sanpei, H., & Williamson, S. (2004). The Resilience and Strengths of Low-Income Families. Family Relations, 53(2), 159-167. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3700259>*
- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Emergency Department Visits for Suspected Suicide Attempts Among Persons Aged 12-25 Years Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–May 2021*
- *Prevalence of Opportunity Youth;*
<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/opportunity-youth/prevalence#:~:text=Measure%20of%20America%2C%20using%20data,race%2Fethnicity%2C%20and%20income.>
- *Sol Price Center for Social Innovation: Opportunity Youth in the City of Los Angeles.*
https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Opportunity-Youth-in-the-City-of-Los-Angeles_5.4.17.pdf
- *Housing is the Best Medicine: Supportive Housing and the Social Determinants of Health, 2014.*
https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/SocialDeterminantsofHealth_2014.pdf
- *American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Data*
- *Housing Affordability in the Omaha and Council Bluffs Area: An Assessment of Housing Affordability, Needs, & Priorities, April 2021*
- *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Healthy People 2030*
- *UWM Analysis of highly mobile data from the Nebraska Department of Education*
- *Point-in-time study by Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless*



As United Way of the Midlands celebrates a century of helping others and supporting our metro community – you can join in the celebration by attending one, or all, of our free 100th anniversary special events!

MAY 18, 2023

CELEBRATION CONCERT

PERFORMANCES BY THE TRAVIS BAND & THE SHENANIGANS

6-10 p.m. | Gene Leahy Mall, Downtown Omaha

**ALL
EVENTS
ARE FREE
AND OPEN
TO THE
PUBLIC**

JUNE 17, 2023



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Hitchcock Park
4220 Q Street, Omaha, Nebraska

JUNE 24, 2023



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Fontenelle Park
4407 Fontenelle Blvd., Omaha, Nebraska

JULY 15, 2023



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. | River's Edge Pavilion
4250 River's Edge Parkway, Council Bluffs, Iowa

JULY 22, 2023



COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. | Werner Baseball Park
12356 Ballpark Way, Papillion, Nebraska

*Kids will be able to run the bases
from 10 a.m. - noon!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS WHO HAVE MADE THESE EVENTS POSSIBLE.

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