

The **POWER** of a Community

# UNITED

20  
24

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

IMPACT  
REPORT

**United Way**  
Greater Knoxville



The **POWER** of a Community **UNITED**

# GRAINGER KNOX JEFFERSON



## A Letter From Our 2024 Campaign Chairs

Throughout Knoxville, there is more momentum than ever. Every time we look around, we see new businesses opening, vibrant residents moving to the area and creative ideas being launched. However, in the same glance, we witness immense challenges in our area as many of our neighbors are unable to afford basic needs including food, housing, and childcare coupled with a general sense that it's just too hard to get ahead.



That's what drove us to get involved with United Way of Greater Knoxville. As we became more attuned to Knoxville's needs, we experienced how the United Way modeled the most efficient way to impact the causes and opportunities we cared about in Knoxville. More importantly, we saw a renewed sense of innovation and transformation, as the United Way set out to propel the organizations meeting the most pressing need forward. The United Way provides a laboratory for its agencies to learn about and develop cutting-edge best practices to care for our community at scale with an eye toward continuous improvement. We feel like the return on our giving in the community is being enhanced through the ideas and action of the United Way every day.

For example, United Way's Community Schools initiative is reimagining the way services are delivered by recognizing the importance of the school itself as a central place to build relationships and provide help. Also, United Way's leadership of the East Tennessee Collaborative is redefining the word partnership as it brings together a dozen providers to coordinate services and provide coaching and resources to help lift up community members.

The United Way is the place where the big ideas around philanthropy and Knoxville's needs are not only discussed, but also tested, piloted and put into practice. It serves as the engine that will help our whole community rise.

So, will you join us this year? If you're interested in seeing our community thrive, your contribution to United Way will serve as a catalyst for innovation and excellence as we continue to seek a city where needs go answered, neighbors care for each other and new possibilities are hatched every day.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lee Ann and John Tolsma".

Lee Ann and John Tolsma • 2024 Campaign Chairs



# CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

For over 100 years, United Way of Greater Knoxville (UWGK) has been a driving force for positive change. We connect businesses, individuals and organizations with a shared vision for a strong, vibrant community to support our neighbors in need.

We are striving for a future where everyone's basic needs are met, no one lives in poverty, all kids learn and succeed, and every person, family and child flourishes. Lasting change is not the work of one nonprofit, one company or one volunteer. Each of us has an important role to play in building a thriving community.

**UNITED, we are changing the lives of many for generations to come.**

Join us in building a community where everyone thrives.

## IN 2023 WE BROUGHT TOGETHER

**4,546** INDIVIDUAL AND WORKPLACE DONORS ALONG WITH

**220** CORPORATE PARTNERS COMBINED TO RAISE OVER

**\$8M** TO HELP SUPPORT

**268,252** INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

# UNITED

WE ARE MAKING OPPORTUNITIES ACCESSIBLE.

WE ARE PAVING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS.

WE ARE FOSTERING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS.



# MEET ALICE

**ALICE** is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed.

ALICE households earn just above the Federal Poverty Level but less than what it costs to make ends meet. These struggling households are forced to make impossible choices each day between the basics of housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare and more.

# 39%

of Knox County residents are under the ALICE threshold. They are struggling with regular financial crises without the resources they need to succeed. **With your support, we can help these families reach financial stability.**

## ALICE IN OUR COMMUNITY



Wages for common jobs often don't cover basics.

### 33,156

Workers Make Under \$15 Per Hour On Average

### \$18.77

Average Full-Time Wage For Knoxville, TN



High rents and barriers to homeownership can undermine stability.

### 30%

All Renters Spend a Third or More of Their Income on Rent

### 71%

ALICE Renters are Rent Burdened or Severely Rent Burdened



Community resources can support overall well-being and ability to work.

### 39%

ALICE Households Do Not Have Access to High-Speed Internet

### 73%

ALICE Children Are Not Enrolled in preschool



Learn more about ALICE.



# ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Supporting Families on Their Journey to Financial Independence

**A thriving community is where everyone can earn a livable wage, grow their savings and achieve economic mobility.**

United Way of Greater Knoxville (UWGK) is helping families overcome hurdles to reach financial independence and break the cycle of poverty through our East Tennessee Collaborative (ETC) program.

ETC empowers parents and caregivers to achieve their goals and create a brighter future for their family. It is a collective effort of local organizations committed

to supporting people on their journey to financial freedom. Through ETC, participants have access to resources such as mentoring, career planning, basic needs assistance and skill enhancement. Whether people want to get out of debt, become homeowners, buy a car, pursue higher education or change their career path, ETC is there to help.

Partnerships are the key to ETC's success. Our nine ETC partners each host one or more mentors on their staff to work with families. By spreading the work across organizations, families can find individualized support that fits their needs. Together, we are building a network of resources to lift up our community.



## COMMUNITY NEEDS SNAPSHOT

**90%** of people born into poverty will remain in poverty

**\$121,000** in income is needed to purchase a home in Knox County. The median household income is **\$68,580**

**More than 50%** of our Knox County neighbors are cost burdened, meaning they spend a third or more of their income on rent

## DID YOU KNOW?

**21%** of people in Knoxville are living in poverty. This is almost double the national average of **11%**.



## IMPACT STORY

Ronnisha has been resilient through life's challenges. As a single mom, she has worked diligently to care for her family and has pushed through hard circumstances to achieve many milestones for herself and her children. Ronnisha joined ETC to get help finding housing. After getting settled into her new home, she now works with her mentor on long-term goals. Alongside her mentor, Ronnisha is pursuing her master's degree, working through chronic health issues and learning to celebrate small wins along the way.

**UNITE**  
FOR ECONOMIC  
MOBILITY  
Read the full story.





# EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Paving Pathways to Success

**A thriving community is where families have access to high-quality, affordable childcare to ensure every child enters school ready to learn.**

When families have access to high-quality childcare, it provides a foundation for success and creates a ripple effect of support. United Way of Greater Knoxville (UWGK) is leading efforts in Early Care and Education systems to ensure all children receive the resources needed for lifelong success.

Through our All Corps Tutoring program, we are serving 867 elementary students through four partners. Students receive support in reading, writing, math and more.

Increasing capacity in high-quality, affordable learning environments throughout our community and especially in underserved neighborhoods is central to our work. Through funding, support and initiatives like micro-centers, we are creating more available spots for families in need of childcare.

Our Knox Area Afterschool Network (KAAN) ensures childcare providers have access to resources and support. With monthly meetings, afterschool professionals gain insight from education leaders, professional development opportunities, training, data and more. By equipping leaders with the resources they need to feel confident in their work, we are creating more options for positive learning environments for children.



## COMMUNITY NEEDS SNAPSHOT

**Less than 40%** of Knox county students are performing on grade level

**More than 80%** of economically disadvantaged students are behind in reading and math

On average, **50% of parents** are paying more than a third of their income on childcare costs

## DID YOU KNOW?

**With over 18 million children too young to start kindergarten, childcare centers are essential for working parents.**



## IMPACT STORY

UWGK convened with Knox County Schools (KCS) and the YMCA of East Tennessee to pilot a “micro-center” to address childcare needs for KCS faculty and staff. The first micro-center is now open and serving local families in need of childcare. Teacher and mom, Devon said, “Having an opportunity to have childcare that’s also affordable is a big deal for me... They follow a curriculum, and they’re learning skills to become little students and then little adults.”



## UNITE FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Learn more about opportunities to support caregivers in your workforce.



# COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Supporting Neighborhoods and Families Through Schools

**A thriving community is where families, schools and neighborhoods work together to strengthen student learning and healthy development.**

In 2023, Community Schools joined United Way of Greater Knoxville (UWGK) to create greater opportunities for community impact. Since joining, the team has grown to include full-time coordinators at all 16 school sites and four site supervisors.

Through Community Schools, we are developing support “hubs” across neighborhoods in Knox County. By stationing a full-time coordinator at each Community School, we ensure services reach people and make a meaningful difference where it matters most.

Our team is assessing needs across sites to effectively distribute resources. We are actively engaging with community partners, supporting and enhancing school activities, providing direct services to families and more.

Together, we have drastically increased our capacity, improved processes and developed a four-pillar model of supporting students, families, schools and neighborhoods. These pillars include Shared Collaborative Leadership and Practices, Active Family and Community Engagement, Expanded Enrichment Opportunities and Integrated Student Supports. Our approach will maximize Community Schools’ impact, going beyond the basic needs of students to prepare them for long-term success.



## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SNAPSHOT

**\$538,459.71**

In-Kind Dollars leveraged

**2,892 Students** Received Basic Needs Support

**1,150 Students** Received Health Screenings or Student Resources



Over the holidays, UWGK’s Community Schools team partnered with Cedar Springs Presbyterian, Knox County Parks and Recreation, the Knox County Mayor’s Office and other partners to provide Thanksgiving meals to local families. Collectively, we gathered donations, boxed and distributed Thanksgiving meal boxes to over 800 families across our Community Schools sites.

## UNITE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Become a Community Schools Partner!

Contact Community Schools by emailing: [communityschools@unitedwayknox.org](mailto:communityschools@unitedwayknox.org)



# HEALTH

Ensuring Access to Resources for our Neighbors

**A thriving community is where everyone has access to nutritious foods and quality, affordable healthcare.**

The quality, availability and affordability of food in our community has a significant impact on people's lives. We promote better health outcomes by working alongside our donors and supporters to create a just, equitable food system rooted in community.

Understanding the interconnected factors that lead to food insecurity and promoting equity in the food system is essential for developing policies and initiatives that strengthen our food system, promote health and well-being and address food access, nutrition and health.

Alongside our partners, we created and distributed a Community Food Assessment to help us better understand the needs of our neighbors. With these results, we are creating solutions rooted in social and economic empowerment to build sustainable, resilient and self-sufficient communities.



## COMMUNITY NEEDS SNAPSHOT

**48,410** Knoxvilleans are food insecure

**More than 25%** of our neighbors report they have experienced hunger in the last 30 days

**47% of people surveyed** in our community report they would need to walk **30 minutes or more** to the nearest grocery store

## DID YOU KNOW?

Knox County residents living below the Federal Poverty Level experience eight times greater odds of being food insecure.



## IMPACT STORY

In the wake of freezing temperatures and winter storms, many of our neighbors were left without adequate food, clothing and shelter in January 2024. United Way of Greater Knoxville coordinated with city and county employees, emergency responders, nonprofit organizations, churches, grocery stores and community volunteers to help meet the needs. Together, we were able to collect and distribute three truckloads of donated fresh produce, emergency food boxes, fresh baked goods, 160 hot meals, new clothing and supplies to four warming centers.

**UNITE**  
FOR HEALTHY  
COMMUNITIES

Read the full story.







# NONPROFIT SUPPORT

Creating a Strong Network of Support for Our Community



**A thriving community is where people, nonprofits, businesses and local leaders unite for change and lift up our neighbors.**

We champion the work of other nonprofits by offering grant opportunities, trainings, resources and more. By working collectively, we are building a more robust system of support and fostering a stronger, more resilient community.

Our community investment funding is dedicated to supporting local nonprofits and lifting up our neighbors. Grants are awarded to organizations whose work aligns with our mission and impact priorities: Early Care and Education, Economic Mobility and Healthy Communities.

In 2023, we hosted the UpWard Summit and gathered over 350 nonprofit professionals from all over East Tennessee for a day of connection, collaboration and action. Nonprofit leaders left inspired and ready to build thriving communities together.



## NONPROFIT SNAPSHOT

**97** funded agencies

**268,252 individuals** benefitting from funded programs



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## IMPACT STORY

United Way of Greater Knoxville created a funding opportunity focused on building trust and partnerships. Fifteen organizations were selected to receive this unrestricted funding and join a cohort for continued learning and collaboration. Throughout the cohort, grant recipient BeYond the Cover, built a relationship with the Boys & Girls Clubs of East Tennessee through their shared work providing enrichment and support for kids. They decided to join forces and make BeYond the Cover a program of the Boys & Girls Clubs, rather than its own separate nonprofit. They went from serving 15 students to serving 51 students and cutting down costs, which freed up funding for more trainings, supplies and scholarships for students. This partnership allows BeYond the Cover to work toward their mission more effectively, helping children become self-sufficient, positive leaders in the community.

**UNITE**  
FOR NONPROFITS  
Sponsor The Upward Summit!



2023 FUNDED PARTNERS

Contact our Resource Development Team by emailing: [rd@unitedwayknox.org](mailto:rd@unitedwayknox.org)



# VOLUNTEERISM AND CSR (CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY)

Connecting Passionate Individuals and Organizations with the Causes They Care About

Volunteering is at the heart of what we do at United Way of Greater Knoxville (UWGK). Our volunteer center serves as a matchmaker between community volunteers and nonprofit organizations. Our platform has options for individuals seeking a fulfilling opportunity, families teaching their children the importance of giving back and groups hoping to gather friends for a fun way to make an impact.

UWGK's newest initiative, Company Cares, creates simple and effective corporate social responsibility (CSR) opportunities for companies. We offer a suite of services designed for companies to address

community needs that align with their core values. With a variety of services such as service projects, to-go projects, board training and community insights and learning, there are options for all levels of engagement and CSR investment.



## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SNAPSHOT

**89%** of working Americans believe companies that sponsor volunteer activities offer a better work environment

**70%** of employees say they would not work for a company without a strong purpose

**80%** of employees would donate, advocate or volunteer more if their employer offered them an easy way to give back



## IMPACT STORY

Kelley and Stella are regular volunteers at Community Schools site, Dogwood Elementary School. Kelley is on the school's steering committee, outdoor coalition and Community Schools' event planning committee. She and her daughter participate in almost every event Community Schools hosts, and they are never hesitant to lend a helping hand when last minute needs arise. Their dedication to staying involved and giving back is what United Way of Greater Knoxville is all about.



**UNITE**  
FOR VOLUNTEERISM  
AND CSR

Get started with  
Company Cares!



# YOUR CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP

Give back to the community where your customers do business, where your employees reside and where your children go to school.

Workplace campaigns represent collective action in giving, volunteering and community engagement. By joining the current movement of over 200 corporate partners, you are joining a group of business leaders committed to building a thriving community.

Workplace campaigns are about more than raising money for your community. It is also a great way to strengthen employee and community connections. Partnering with United Way of Greater Knoxville to facilitate a workplace giving campaign demonstrates a collective commitment to giving back. It allows your team to give to the causes they are most passionate about.

Let us help create a fun and easy way to meet your corporate social responsibility goals while building stronger teams, creating a deeper connection to the community and being recognized for your impact. United, we can ensure everyone who calls Greater Knoxville home has access to the resources they need to thrive.

## TOP 50 CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS



- 21st Mortgage Corporation
- BarberMcMurry Architects
- Bertelkamp Automation, Inc.
- Beverage Control, Inc.
- Cannon and Cannon, Inc.
- Clayton Homes, Inc.
- Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC
- Covenant Health
- Denark Construction, Inc.
- East Tennessee Children's Hospital
- EdFinancial Services, LLC
- First Horizon Bank
- Food City
- Grayson Auto Group
- Harper Auto Square
- Home Federal Bank
- House-Hasson Hardware Company
- Kimberly-Clark Corporation Knoxville
- Knoxville City Government
- Knoxville Utilities Board
- Food City
- Lawler-Wood, LLC
- Learfield IMG College
- Messer Construction Company
- Mortgage Investors Group, Inc.

- Northwestern Mutual
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Pilot Company
- Pinnacle Financial Partners
- Principle, Inc.
- Publix Charities / Publix Super Markets, Inc.
- PYA, P.C.
- Raymond James Financial
- Realty Trust Group
- Regions Financial Corporation
- Shafer Insurance Agency, Inc.
- South College
- Stowers Machinery Corporation
- TeamHealth
- Tennova Healthcare
- The Trust Company of Tennessee
- The University of Tennessee Knoxville
- TIS Insurance Services, Inc.
- Truist Financial
- United Way of Greater Knoxville
- University of Tennessee Medical Center
- US Bank Foundation
- WBIR-TV
- White Realty and Service Corporation
- William S. Trimble Company

# JOIN AN ENGAGEMENT GROUP

At United Way of Greater Knoxville, we are passionate about bringing people together as changemakers. Our engagement groups create spaces for like-minded individuals to get involved, get together, and share their passion for giving back and making a difference. These volunteers and donors inspire their peers, and they use their professional networks to create positive change.

**HASLAM SOCIETY**  
\$25,000 or more annually

**ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY**  
\$10,000 or more annually

**1922 SOCIETY**  
\$2,000 - \$10,000 Step-Up Program

If you would like additional information about joining one of these societies, please contact our **Resource Development Team** by emailing [rd@unitedwayknox.org](mailto:rd@unitedwayknox.org).



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## A THRIVING COMMUNITY IS WHERE...

Everyone can earn a livable wage, grow their savings and achieve economic mobility.

Families have access to high-quality, affordable childcare to ensure every child enters school ready to learn.

Families, schools and neighborhoods work together to strengthen student learning and healthy development.

Everyone has access to nutritious foods and quality, affordable healthcare.

People, nonprofits, businesses and local leaders unite for change and lift up our neighbors.

### OUR MISSION

Uniting people and resources to strengthen communities and solve systemic issues.

### OUR VISION

Creating an equitable community through partnerships, impact and commitment to transformation.



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