

UNITED WAY OF KANKAKEE AND IROQUOIS COUNTIES
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

TRANSFORMATION & IMPACT



**UNITED WAY FIGHTS FOR THE HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND FINANCIAL STABILITY
OF EVERY PERSON IN EVERY COMMUNITY.**

OUR VISION

UNITED WAY ENVISIONS A WORLD WHERE ALL INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES
ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL THROUGH EDUCATION, INCOME STABILITY
AND HEALTHY LIVES.

OUR MISSION

TO IMPROVE LIVES BY MOBILIZING THE CARING POWER OF OUR COMMUNITY
TO ADVANCE THE COMMON GOOD.

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADER

In the past year, United Way was well prepared to see our community through unprecedented change because of you - our donors and partners.

We have helped thousands of families recover and rebound from the pandemic and remain steadfast in creating partnerships that fight for the health, education and financial stability of our neighbors. In the following pages, we tell stories about a community coming together - how we responded to its unique needs during a time that challenged every individual and every organization beyond our wildest imagination and how we will continue the work of serving people's needs and stabilizing families as we recover in the months and years to come.

Since United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley launched the Kankakee and Iroquois Counties COVID-19 Response Fund in March 2020, we have deployed more than \$600,000 to the organizations on the frontlines, providing essentials to our neighbors hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

Additionally, we joined together with United Ways across the state to launch the Illinois ALICE research report at the State Capitol. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - families who are working hard but still struggle to survive. It was so exciting to share the data and advocate for working families with our State Legislators and the Governor's office. This research will help United Way as we address systemic community problems impacting so many families.

Last year, United Way transformed in other ways, too. We launched our new affinity group: Women United. This inspiring group welcomed 40 founding members dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls in Kankakee and Iroquois counties through fundraisers, service projects and social events.

At the start of 2021, we launched a 21-Week Equity Challenge. We know that systemic racism has played and continues to play a role in the plight of a disproportionate number of families of color who are struggling in our community. Nearly 300 community members responded to our call to action with a renewed commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. It's time for change, and we're ready.

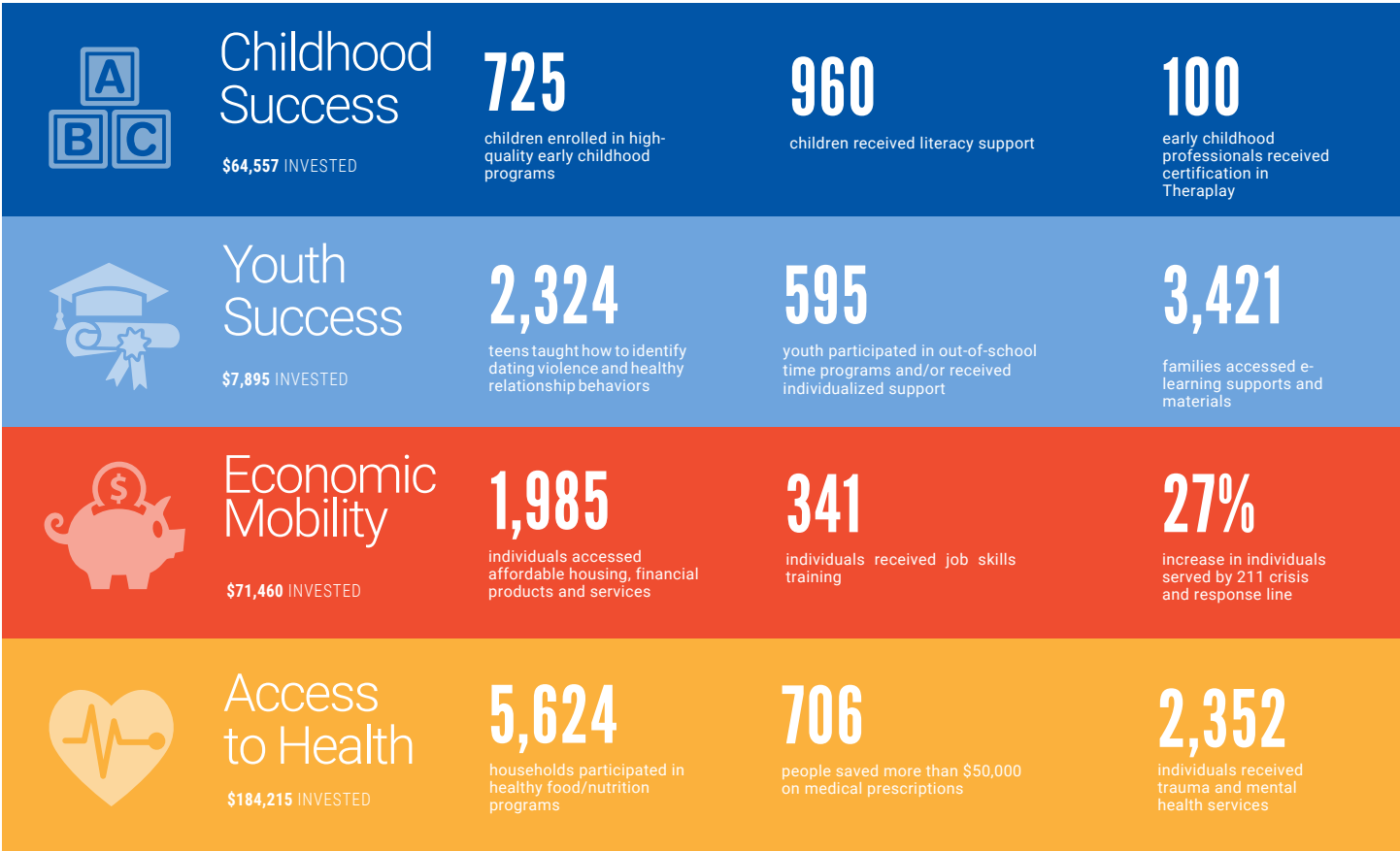
I would like to take a moment to thank our outgoing board chair, Kyle Benoit, who steps down this year after a two-year term and hands the gavel to Mike O'Brien. Kyle has led United Way through a period of monumental change - from an executive transition to the COVID-19 crisis. I'd like to thank Kyle for his commitment and dedication to United Way - not only as board chair but also as a long-time donor, volunteer, supporter and community leader.

Through all the messages we've conveyed this year, one thing will always be clear: United Way is here to fight for the education, financial stability and health of every person in our community, no matter the circumstances. Thank you for being with us, staying with us, and working with us to make our community a place where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Sincerely,



KERSTIN RUST
Executive Director
United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties



591 S Elm Street, adjacent to East River Street in Kankakee is home to the first Strong Neighborhood project.

Strong Neighborhoods: Elm House

Healthcare, childcare, housing, education and basic needs are all anchored in neighborhoods. Neighborhoods shape the outcomes of children and families, and strong neighborhoods matter. Through strong neighborhoods, we can support macro-economic vibrancy in our cities, our counties and our beautiful state of Illinois. The City of Kankakee, Kankakee School District 111 and United Way opened the first Strong Neighborhood House at 591 S. Elm Avenue in Kankakee's 2nd Ward. Together, we aim to support health, education and financial stability through place-based strategies specific to neighborhood residents' needs and aspirations.

21-Week Equity Challenge

Following a year of difficult conversations and self-reflection as a nation, United Ways across the State of Illinois launched a 21-Week Equity Challenge. This free, online learning program provided lessons and resources for Illinoisans to learn about racial issues and systemic inequalities.

The Challenge encouraged individuals, families, friends and co-workers to have racial equity conversations to gain a deeper understanding of the impact systemic racism and inequality have on our state and in our local communities.

Nearly 300 community members participated in weekly learning assignments about equity, racism, bias and more.

WE ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE.

WILL YOU?

UnitedWayIllinois.org/EQUITY-CHALLENGE



LASTING SOLUTIONS THROUGH POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Bright by Text: Improving caregiver confidence and building nurturing relationships for young children

In 2021, United Way teamed up with **Bright by Text**, a national parent texting program, to put expert tips, games and child development information directly into the hands of parents and caregivers. Bright by Text partners with experts like PBS, Vroom, Sesame Street, CDC and others to develop content for families with children aged prenatal to age eight.

Bright by Text helps parents and caregivers make the most out of time at home with their children by illustrating fun and easy activities, providing positive parenting tips and resources, and even video content to guide a child's development. The program is proven to build nurturing caregiver-child relationships, and positively impact a child's healthy development and school readiness.

The resource is available free of charge to local families with young children and complements United Way's ongoing work through the Success By 6 early childhood community collaborative. This service will help provide equitable solutions to early education.

Parents and caregivers can feel assured that they are receiving important local announcements and information thanks to United Way and the following sponsors: **AMITA St. Mary's Hospital, Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, Easterseals of Joliet, Harbor House and Riverside Healthcare.**

To sign up, parents and caregivers with children under 8 can text the word UWKIC to 274448. Users will receive two to five text messages per week, and each message includes a link to a landing page with more detail, short modeling videos, and links to related resources.



Operation Celebration Provides Birthday Cakes

In the Spring of 2021, United Way piloted a new program, "Operation Celebration", to help families who may not have the extra cash on hand, celebrate their child's birthday. The program was developed by students in **Olivet Nazarene University's Enactus Club.**

Two Whisks Bakery provided birthday cakes at no cost for families to celebrate their young ones. Cakes were delivered by Enactus Club students and community volunteers. With the help of these partners and community volunteers, children living in foster care, group homes, transitional and low-income housing and domestic violence shelters were able to celebrate with their loved ones.



Each year, United Way works with corporate partners to improve lives and strengthen communities. The 82 companies listed here are members of our Corporate Leadership program, with those in bold representing our newest partners. Combined, these companies and their employees contributed nearly \$450,000. We thank them for their passion for change and commitment to our shared purpose.

* Criteria for membership Corporate Leadership program includes (but is not exclusive to) running a workplace campaign, raising at least \$100 per year and contributing at least 50 percent of funds raised directly to United Way.

AbbVie
 Accenture
 Ameren
 AMITA St. Mary's Hospital
 Aqua of Illinois
 Arc of Iroquois County
 AT&T
 BASF Corporation
 Bishop McNamara
 Bradley Bourbonnais Community High School
 Bradley Elementary School District #61
 Carle Foundation Hospital
 Caterpillar Foundation
 Catholic Charities
 Cigna
 CITGO Petroleum Corporation
 City of Kankakee
 Clove Alliance
 CNG
 CNO Financial Group
 Comcast
 ComEd/Exelon
 Commscope
 County of Kankakee
 CSL Behring
 Dow Chemical
 Easterseals
 Exxon Mobil Corporation
 FedEx Corporation

First Financial Bank
 First Midwest Bank
 First Trust Bank of Illinois
 Gardant Management Solutions
 Good Shepherd Manor
Google
 Grinnell Mutual
 Harbor House
 Helen Wheeler Center
 Hubergroup
 Iroquois Federal
 Iroquois Mental Health Center
 ITW Bernard Welding
 ITW Zip Pak
 JC Penney
 Kankakee Area Career Center
 Kankakee Community College
 Kankakee School District #111
 Kankakee Valley Construction Company
 KCCSI
 Kellogg's
 Lowe's
 Manpower Inc.
 Meijer
 Midland States Bank
 Midwest Transit Equipment
Minut Mart
 Nelnet
 Nicor Gas
 Olivet Nazarene University

O'Reilly Auto Parts
 Peddinghaus Corporation
 Peoples Bank of Kankakee County
 PNC Bank
 Prairie State Legal Services
 Riverside Healthcare
 Robert Baird Company
 Security Lumber & Supply Co.
 SKDO
 State of Illinois
 Supervalu (Jewel Osco)
 Target
T.C. Energy
 Thrivent Financial
 Union Pacific
 Uplifted Care
 UPS
 US Bank
 Village of Manteno
 Walmart Foundation
 Wells Fargo
 YWCA
 Zachry



Each year, United Way works with local nonprofit agencies to improve lives and strengthen communities. The agencies listed here have been awarded funding to support programs in education, financial stability and health during the FY 2021-2022 fiscal year.

EDUCATION

- A More Excellent Way Ministries**
The Bridge Family Enrichment Program
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet**
Back to School Fair
- Garden of Prayer Youth Center**
S.A.F.E. Summer Program
- Girl Scouts of Central Illinois**
Leadership Experience
- KCC ALIVE**
Baby Talk
- Kankakee Area YMCA**
Full-Time Preschool
School Age Childcare
Teen Leadership Engagement

FINANCIAL STABILITY

- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet**
Homeless Prevention
Money Management Program
Transitional Housing
- KCC ALIVE**
Adult Literacy
- Prairie State Legal Services**
Civil Legal Aid

HEALTH

- Bread Basket of Watseka**
Food Pantry
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet**
Adult Protective Services
Healthy Aging Program
Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Center of Hope**
Food Security Program
- Child Network**
Court Appointed Special Advocates
Children's Advocacy Center
- Clove Alliance**
Advocacy
Case Management
Counseling
Prevention
- Easterseals of Joliet**
Pediatric Therapy
- Fortitude Community Outreach**
Street Outreach & Case Management
- Harbor House**
Prevention Services
Youth Counseling
- Helen Wheeler Center**
Family & Child Services
Outpatient Management
- Iroquois Mental Health Center**
Psychiatric Services



- Iroquois Memorial Hospital Foundation**
Food Security Program
- Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center**
Medical Services
- Northern Illinois Food Bank**
Hospital Based Food Pantry
- Options Center for Independent Living**
Emergency Services & Technology Assistance
- Kankakee Area YMCA**
Aquatics
SPLASH



UNITED WAY WOMEN UNITED

Women United harnesses the power and dedication of women leaders to transform local communities. Since 2016, United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties has celebrated local female leaders at the annual Women United breakfast. With steady growth and increased interest among local women, Women United evolved into a network offering varied engagement opportunities throughout the year.

Since January 2021, Women United has grown into a diverse and vibrant community of 40 members bound together by a powerful sense of belonging - to each other, to our mission, and to the communities we call home.

Together, Women United members have raised \$20,000 towards United Way's investments in programs serving women and girls. Additionally, founding members helped local moms and babies start strong in 2021 by collecting over \$5,500 in diaper donations and other goods for Kankakee YWCA and Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center.



FOUNDING MEMBERS

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| AMANDA HOGAN | LAURA SZTUBA |
| AMBER TURNER | LORI LATHAM |
| AMY KEMP | MAGGIE KUCKIE |
| ASHLEY THOMAS | MARGARET FROGGE |
| BARBI BREWER-WATSON | MARY O'BRIEN |
| BRANDI KANER | MARY THOMSON |
| BRITTNEY DAVIS | MAUREEN POWELL |
| DEBRA BARON | MELISSA TANNER |
| JACKIE HAAS | MELODY GRIMM |
| JANET GLAZAR | NICOLE BURGESS |
| JANICE KRIZIK SCHMIDT | NOEL BURASH |
| JASMINE HUMBLE | PRISCILLA DWYER |
| JENNY SCHOENWETTER | RACHEL MILES |
| JESS BARTELS | RHONDA PENCE |
| JESSICA DAVIS | ROBIN SAVAGE |
| JILL RIEKEN | SARAH MARION |
| KATHY PETERSON | SARAH MEMENGA |
| KATHY SCHROEDER | SARAH POWERS |
| KATI MORRIS | SARAH VIALI |
| KERSTIN RUST | TAMI GALBREATH |
| KRIS HARMS | VERONICA FEATHERSTON |

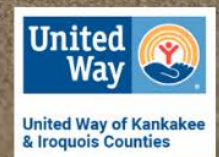
ANNUAL SPONSORS

CSL Behring
Biotherapies for Life™

AMITA HEALTH™
ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL
KANKAKEE

UNITED WAY ANY-K

Bike, walk or run for your community.



This spring, United Way launched a new fundraising challenge in response to the ongoing inequities and challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. While vaccine distribution kept us hopeful, the challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, like homelessness and hunger, remained a top priority.

United Way's ANY K was a fun opportunity for our community to get outside and get active while raising money for critical services in Kankakee and Iroquois counties.

Fifty-one people signed up to bike, walk, run, swim, rollerblade and row. Together, they raised over **\$3,000** for our neighbors.



Thank You To Our ANY-K Teams and Participants

AMITA ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL
\$1299

PJ'S PLACE
\$410

LAST MINUTE LADIES
\$400

TEAM UNITED
\$265

THE VAILS
\$205

THE HELEN WHEELER CENTER
\$155

CLOVE ALLIANCE
\$75

VILLAGE OF MANTENO
\$75

THRIVENT
\$25



In 2018, even before the pandemic, 42% of U.S. households were unable to afford the cost of household basics in the counties where they live. This included households below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and households that are **ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**.

With income above the FPL, ALICE households earn too much to qualify as "poor" but are still unable to cover the basics of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. They often work as cashiers, nursing assistants, office clerks, servers, laborers, and security guards. These types of jobs are vital to keeping our economy running smoothly, but they do not provide adequate wages to support ALICE workers and their families.

The consequences of insufficient income are far-reaching and interconnected. When households can't afford the basics, they are forced to make impossible choices, like living in substandard housing with greater exposure to environmental hazards, delaying or avoiding medical care, or eating less nutritious food. These decisions have ripple effects over all aspects of a family's life - and across our wider community.

one third
of households in Kankakee and Iroquois
counties **cannot afford basic needs**

In Illinois, where the cost of living varies by region, it is especially important to have a current and realistic standard that reflects the true cost of economic survival and compares it to household income across each county. The ALICE Threshold is a realistic standard developed from the Household Survival Budget, a measure that estimates the minimal cost of the six basic household necessities - housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan.

ALICE Household Survival Budget, Selected Counties, Illinois, 2018				
	Single Adult	One Adult, One Child	One Adult, One In Child Care	Single Senior
Housing	\$586	\$669	\$669	\$586
Child Care	\$0	\$211	\$630	\$0
Food	\$246	\$425	\$355	\$210
Transportation	\$333	\$490	\$489	\$287
Health Care	\$208	\$439	\$439	\$483
Technology	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55
Miscellaneous	\$166	\$254	\$300	\$187
Taxes	\$236	\$253	\$361	\$244
Monthly Total	\$1,830	\$2,796	\$3,298	\$2,052
Annual Total	\$21,960	\$33,552	\$39,576	\$24,624
Hourly Wage	\$10.98	\$16.78	\$19.79	\$12.31
	Two Adults	Two Adults Two Children	Two Adults, Two In Child Care	Two Seniors
Housing	\$669	\$851	\$851	\$669
Child Care	\$0	\$423	\$1,194	\$0
Food	\$511	\$854	\$746	\$436
Transportation	\$504	\$798	\$797	\$412
Health Care	\$439	\$745	\$745	\$966
Technology	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75
Miscellaneous	\$254	\$415	\$502	\$290
Taxes	\$337	\$402	\$612	\$344
Monthly Total	\$2,789	\$4,563	\$5,522	\$3,192
Annual Total	\$33,468	\$54,756	\$66,264	\$38,304
Hourly Wage	\$16.73	\$27.38	\$33.13	\$19.15

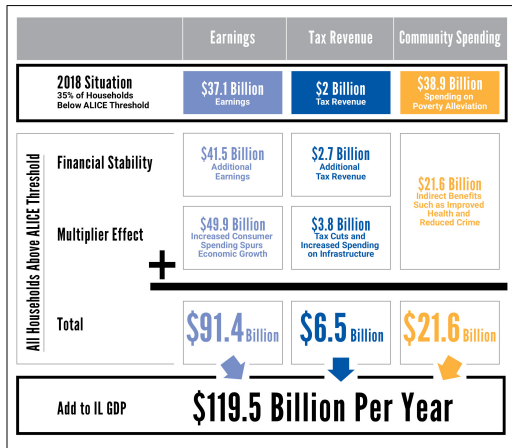
The Household Survival Budget reflects the bare minimum that a household needs to live and work today. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college. In 2018, costs were well above the Federal Poverty Level of \$12,060 for a single adult and \$24,600 for a family of four.

A family of four would need to earn \$66,264 to survive in Kankakee and/ or Iroquois county. That's an hourly wage of \$33.13 for one working adult (\$16.56/hour if both adults are working).

The strength and vitality of our state is inextricably tied to the financial stability of its residents. The more people who participate in a state's economy, the stronger it will be.

Based on 2018 data, the economic benefit to all Illinois of bringing all households to the ALICE Threshold would be approximately \$119.5 billion, meaning that **the state GDP would grow by 14%.**

Economic Benefits of Raising All Households to the ALICE Threshold, Illinois, 2018



Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2018; American Community Survey, 2018; Internal Revenue Service—1040, 2018; Internal Revenue Service—EITC, 2018; Internal Revenue Service—ICA, 2018; McKinley, 2018; National Association of State Budget Officers, 2019; Office of Management and Budget, 2018; Scarborough, 2018; U.S. Department of Agriculture—SNAP, 2018; Urban Institute, 2012; Walczak, 2019**

The benefits of sufficient income are also far-reaching, but to opposite effect. Greater financial stability and having basic needs met improves the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Financial stability can also reduce the anxiety that comes from struggling to survive, or not having a cushion for emergencies. It leaves more time to spend with loved ones and to participate in the community - all of which contribute to happiness and improved life satisfaction.

Having money saves money: Having enough income means that households can build their credit scores and avoid late fees, predatory lending, and higher interest rates. That, in turn, means that ALICE families have more resources to use to reduce risks, stay healthy, or save and invest in education or assets that could grow over time. Instead of a downward cycle of accumulating fees, debt, and stress, families can have an upward cycle of savings and security for the future.

For communities, this leads to greater economic activity, greater tax revenue, lower levels of crime, and fewer demands on the social safety net, allowing more investment in vital infrastructure, schools, and health care.

Strengthening communities by strengthening ALICE families means a higher quality of life for all.

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties works with local social service providers, businesses, faith leaders, and our partners in state and local government to address the needs of ALICE. An investment of time, energy, and resources in ALICE is an investment in our communities. As part of a network of 44 local United Way across the state, we are uniquely situated to take the detailed, local data in this report and translate it into action that will engage stakeholders at every level. Human service providers, philanthropists, business owners, elected officials, government agencies, and faith leaders all have a role to play in addressing ALICE's struggles.

ALICE is your child care worker, the cashier at your supermarket, the gas attendant, the salesperson at your big box store, your server, a home health aide, an office clerk. ALICE cannot always pay the bills, has little or nothing in savings, and is forced to make tough choices such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent.

The future success of our communities is directly tied to the financial stability of these fragile ALICE households.

Read the entire ALICE Research Report at www.unitedforalice.org/Illinois

The Benefits of Sufficient Income

If households have sufficient income for...	Impact on ALICE	Impact on the Community
Safe, Affordable Housing	Improved health through safer environments and decreased stress, improved educational performance and outcomes for children, greater stability for household members, a means to build wealth for homeowners	Less traffic, lower health care costs, better maintained housing stock, lower crime rates, less spending on homelessness/social services
Quality Child Care and Education	Improved academic performance, higher lifetime earnings, higher graduation rates, improved job stability/access for parents, better health	Decreased racial/ethnic and socioeconomic performance gaps, decreased income disparities, high return on investment (especially for early childhood education)
Adequate Food	Decreased food insecurity, improved health (especially for children and seniors), decreased likelihood of developmental delays and behavioral problems in school	Lower health care costs, improved workplace productivity, less spending on emergency food services
Reliable Transportation	Improved access to job opportunities, school and child care, health care, retail markets, social services, and support systems (friends, family, faith communities)	Fewer high-emissions vehicles on the road, more diverse labor market, decreased income disparities
Quality Health Care	Better mental and physical health (including increased life expectancy), improved access to preventative care, fewer missed days of work/school, decreased need for emergency services	Decreased health care spending, fewer communicable diseases, improved workplace productivity, decreased wealth-health gap
Reliable Technology	Improved access to job opportunities, expanded access to health information and tele-health services, increased job and academic performance	Decreased "digital divide" in access to technology by income, increased opportunities for civic participation
Savings	Ability to withstand emergencies without impacting long-term financial stability and greater asset accumulation over time (e.g., interest on savings; ability to invest in education, property, or finance a secure retirement)	Greater charitable contributions; less spending on emergency health, food, and senior services

Note: For sources, see Figure 12: Sources, following the Endnotes for this Report

UNITED WAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The United Way Board of Directors is charged with providing oversight, control and management of the affairs and property of United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. Its responsibilities include strategic leadership, resource and relationship management, reputation building, stewardship of assets and oversight of public policy agenda and advocacy. Thank you to our FY 20-21 board members.

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Senior Vice President, COO
Riverside Healthcare

VICE PRESIDENT

MICHAEL O'BRIEN
Commercial Relationship Manager
Midland States Bank

TREASURER

MILEEN JOINES
Certified Public Accountant
Geoffrey Johns & Associates

SECRETARY

KATHY PETERSON
Executive Director of Program and
Community Development
AMITA St. Mary's Hospital

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Village of Manteno

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TIM JONES
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Urban Farmer

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CSL Behring

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Dean, College of Professional Studies
Olivet Nazarene University

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Vice President of Student Affairs
Kankakee Community College

DR. LAURA SZTUBA
Patient Safety Specialist
AMITA St. Mary's Hospital

DR. GENEVRA WALTERS
Superintendent
Kankakee School District 111

LINH WILLIAMS
Executive Assistant to the Mayor
City of Kankakee

UNITED WAY STAFF

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties added several new staff members in 2021.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KERSTIN RUST

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

MARIAH VAIL

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

MELINA PIZANO

COMMUNITY IMPACT MANAGER

FIANA COMER

**United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties**

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815.932.7476
info@myunitedway.org




CHANGE DOESN'T HAPPEN ALONE.



Help us to get the word out.

Please share how **YOU** plan to join the fight and transform your community with United Way.

Be sure to include **#LiveUnited**

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-  instagram.com/uw.kankakee.iroquois
-  linkedin.com/company/united-way-kankakee-iroquois