



Greater Ottawa County  
United Way

# 2020 IMPACT REPORT

## OTTAWA COUNTY

### WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR

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

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

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

Change doesn't happen alone. Hope is not a strategy. United Way's **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** process provides meaningful and impactful opportunities to engage in creating stronger communities. We mobilize over 14,000 donors, advocates, and volunteers every year to meet the ever-changing needs of our residents.

### COVID-19 RELIEF

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

## 36 HOURS



Within 36 hours, launched the Care Ottawa County Coalition with our local community foundations and deployed an emergency response website, **careottawacounty.com**, to help people find help and give help.



## 104 GRANTS

totaling \$873,310, from the Emergency Human Needs Fund, awarded to local agencies responding to the needs of individuals and families.



## 360+ VOLUNTEERS

mobilized to shop for seniors, pack food boxes, sew masks and so much more. Want to help? Visit **careottawacounty.com**.



## \$300,000+

raised by United Way for the coalition Emergency Human Needs Fund.



## HELP

These grants addressed immediate needs such as housing, food, prescriptions, mental health, and more.



## IMPACT AGENDA

Every three years, United Way conducts two major studies to assess the pressing and prevalent issues faced by families and individuals. The **COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT** and **ALICE REPORT** supports data driven decision making to drive measurable lasting change in the programs, initiatives and collaborations that are part of our Impact Agenda.



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## EDUCATION

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

### IN THE EDUCATION IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

**11**  
Programs

**3**  
Collective Impact  
Collaborations

**4,855 +**

people in Ottawa County  
were impacted by our funded  
Education programs



Yadah V. Ramirez started out as a youth program participant at a United Way supported program at Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP). Because of her experiences there, she went on to the University of Michigan and achieved a Bachelor's Degree in Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience. Yadah returned home as a college advisor at Holland High School then onto the Programs Director position at LAUP, where she continues to help students in our community become career and college ready.

## FINANCIAL STABILITY

A better future begins with financial stability - We give people the resources and opportunities they need to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Our goal is that there is **accessible, affordable and quality housing for all**, and that people have access to all available **income supports and resources**.

### IN THE FINANCIAL STABILITY IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

**19**  
Programs

**3**  
Collective Impact  
Collaborations

**myfree  
taxes.com**

**\$362,480 +**  
in refunds received by  
Ottawa County residents  
with MyFreeTaxes in 2019.

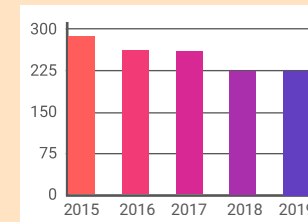


### LAKESHORE HOUSING ALLIANCE

A Program of Greater Ottawa County United Way

**\$1.3 MILLION** in state & federal grants for homeless services received by Ottawa County and distributed through the Lakeshore Housing Alliance

The Point in Time count takes place annually on the last Wednesday of January. This year's PIT count was held on January 30, 2019 and counted 225 people who were literally homeless: staying in emergency shelter, transitional housing or in a place not meant for human habitation.



## CARES Act

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act

The COVID pandemic only increased the need for the funds and services provided by United Way's Lakeshore Housing Alliance. The CARES Act provided \$438,000 in additional funding, and the Lakeshore Housing Alliance in partnership with Good Samaritan Ministries, used those funds to assist in preventing eviction caused by COVID unemployment, and for moving people as quickly as possible from homelessness to permanent housing.

## HEALTH

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

### IN THE HEALTH IMPACT AREA UNITED WAY SUPPORTS:

**19**  
Programs

**5**  
Collective Impact  
Collaborations

**familywize®**

**\$364,078 +**  
amount saved by **5,482** people in  
Ottawa County on prescriptions  
through FamilyWize in 2019.

Total saved since inception of program  
= **\$2,302,243**



Each morning, Mr. R. helps his wife of many years prepare for the day. Mrs. R. relies on at least six medications to relieve her Alzheimer's, Diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol. These life-sustaining medications cost almost \$3,000 for a 3-month supply, which is a cost that she and her husband cannot afford. Through United Way prescription and program supports, she is able to get her prescription medications from drug companies for free or at a reduced cost, and Mr. R. doesn't have to choose between food or medicine. Mr. R. shares that his wife owes her life to this support **"There is no way we could afford her medications even with insurance."**



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

## VOLUNTEER

United Way's Volunteer Center mobilizes the caring power of community every day through events like Rake a difference and Junior Day of Caring, and through our interactive, live, online Volunteer Portal.

Due to changes caused by the pandemic, our largest single day volunteer event, Day of Caring, became **Week of Caring**, to help build a stronger community, together.

United Way's Online Volunteer portal provides, agencies, businesses and individuals with a one-stop shop for volunteerism. Last year, over **133** agencies, numerous businesses and over **6,500** volunteers used United Ways online Volunteer Center to make a difference in our community.

United Way's Students **LIVE UNITED** program provides high school students in Ottawa County with the tools and support to locate volunteer opportunities, track their hours and earn recognition for their investment in our community.

**400+** students were involved in SLU this year, and **10** seniors received awards.

### TOTAL ANNUAL VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION IN OTTAWA COUNTY

**8,776** Volunteers

**120,719** Volunteer Hours

**\$3,069,884** Value of Volunteer Hours

## ADVOCATE

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

## #UNITEDFOREQUITY

Over **800** people accepted the challenge and participated in a county Wide United Way 21-day equity challenge. These individuals committed to deepening their understanding of, and willingness to confront racism for twenty-one consecutive days.



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

## TEXT ALERTS TO 50503

To receive advocacy alerts from United Way



## GIVE

Every year, thousands of generous donors support our work. Through payroll deductions, online gifts, special events, and more, these contributions enable us to keep fighting for the **HEALTH, EDUCATION, and FINANCIAL STABILITY** of every person in Ottawa County.



## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**185** Companies

**5,359** Donors

**\$1 = \$4.37** Community Benefit  
(\$8.2 million total community benefit for 2019/2020).

**74,000+** Lives changed



Misty Burlingame is one of UW's newest volunteer success stories! Misty began her journey as a United Way COVID-19 Response Team Volunteer helping seniors receive food and supplies in their time of need. She has since migrated to volunteering in UW's signature events such as Week of Caring, preparing food boxes for people in need.

LEARN MORE ABOUT  
HOW YOU CAN  
**GIVE, ADVOCATE**  
AND **VOLUNTEER AT**  
**OTTAWAUNITEDWAY.ORG**

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