



JOIN THE FIGHT

2019–2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR COMMUNITY
www.uwbec.org



United Way
of Buffalo & Erie County

Welcome to this year's Community Impact Report. I hope it finds you, your families, and your colleagues well and holding up during this unprecedented time. The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenging circumstances for virtually every community around the globe and I want to extend my wishes to you for good health and safety.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also been a catalyst for innovation and is helping us redefine our partnerships and how we drive impact in our community. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis in March, United Way of Buffalo & Erie County has been working earnestly to address the impact of the pandemic on individuals and families most at risk. Almost immediately, it became clear the impact of the virus and the resulting economic shutdown, both locally and nationally, would be disproportionately severe for people in communities of color. As a result, we have engaged in a number of equity-focused activities and initiatives to foster community education and conversation.

Earlier this year we were fortunate to complete our 2020 Strategic Plan which positions us well to support our community as the long-term effects of COVID-19 continue to affect our community. A high-level overview of the Plan is included in the Report and we have articulated a new Mission for the organization: **to bring people, organizations and resources together to create systemic community change**. We believe that systemic change is critical to achieving our Vision: **an equitable, thriving and united community achieved through collaborative leadership**. We are now in the process of rolling out our new Plan in such a way that it is aligned with meaningful impact in response to COVID-19 with a focus on racial equity.

As supporters of our work in the community, it is well known we have had a long history of responding to local needs and society's most pressing problems for over 100 years. United Way of Buffalo & Erie County is unparalleled in its power to convene partners, providers, and resources to address the needs of communities in crisis and this has never been more important than right now.

As you review the activities and accomplishments we have highlighted in this Community Impact Report, our hope is that you will feel inspired to Join the Fight to rebuild an equitable and more resilient Buffalo & Erie County. We are truly a better and more equitable community when we Live United and your engagement and support has never been more important than now.



Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Michael Weiner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Weiner
President & CEO

UNITED WE FIGHT. UNITED WE WIN.

UPDATED

MISSION: WE BRING PEOPLE, ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES TOGETHER TO CREATE SYSTEMIC COMMUNITY CHANGE.

NEW

VISION: WE ENVISION AN EQUITABLE, THRIVING AND UNITED COMMUNITY ACHIEVED THROUGH COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP.



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2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

In September of 2019, we began a collaborative process to update our Strategic Plan. We sought feedback from current and former donors, community leaders, and nonprofit partners about our role in the community and how we can best meet the challenges of a dynamic and changing future. We took the feedback we heard and the data we collected and charted a new course for the organization moving forward.

We want to express our profound gratitude to each and every member of our community who had a hand in creating this plan. Your input will shape our future for years to come as we work to achieve our new Mission: to bring people, organizations, and resources together to create systemic community change.

VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY

We meet our commitments and deliver high-quality, high-value results.

AGILITY

We foster a culture of responsiveness and flexibility conducive to innovation in every area of the business.

COLLABORATION

We actively include and engage all members of the community so that our work can be informed and enriched by diverse experiences and perspectives.



EQUITY

We ensure that our policies, practices, and distribution of resources prioritize historically marginalized communities so that all members of our community thrive.

INTEGRITY

We are transparent, honest, dependable and trustworthy in every interaction and as stewards of resources.

SERVICE

We ensure that all of our work is for the good of others, both within the organization and in the community.



STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

The strategic organizational goals outlined below require an intentional transformation of culture, structure, and resources toward a more nimble organization that thoughtfully engages the entire community in developing strategic, iterative solutions that lead to systemic community change.

Why we exist has not changed. What has changed is the environment in which we exist. We are committed to achieving these strategic priorities and demonstrating our updated values so that we can one day say that we brought the people, organizations, and resources needed together to create the systemic change that has made Buffalo & Erie County an equitable, thriving and united community.



To read our full Strategic Plan please visit uwbec.org/strategicplan.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

MARCH 16, 2020 - AUGUST 31, 2020

Thanks to the contributions from donors, volunteers, and partnerships we have across the community, United Way of Buffalo & Erie County, as a designated essential service organization, has been able to nimbly and decisively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and address the new and urgent needs of our community.



WNY COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND

United Way is a member of the WNY Philanthropic Response Coordinating Workgroup. This group mobilized the generosity and wisdom of the philanthropic community to provide a coordinated and collaborative response targeting basic needs.

This work group created the WNY COVID-19 Community Response Fund. This collaborative philanthropic effort was led by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, Health Foundation for Western & Central New York, The John R. Oishei Foundation, and United Way of Buffalo & Erie County.

Over \$7.5 million was raised from local foundations, private sector companies, community leaders and individuals. Of that over \$750,000 was generated from 1,800 donors through an online portal managed by United Way.

NONPROFIT RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

United Way of Buffalo & Erie County collaborated with community partners to establish resources and support for the nonprofit community, including:



The administration of a regional nonprofit survey on behalf of the philanthropic community within WNY. This survey provided vital data to help us identify the needs of service providers and ways in which we might respond;



Partnered with the WNY Nonprofit Support Group in assembling a comprehensive list of resources to help nonprofits navigate the COVID-19 pandemic;



Conducting listening sessions with our funded program partners to learn more about nonprofit needs and long-term challenges they may face in light of COVID-19.



FUNDING

The WNY COVID-19 Community Response Fund distributed over \$6.5 million in emergency funds through 156 grants made to nonprofits throughout WNY.

In addition, Erie County was selected to receive over \$553,000 in federal funds for Phase CARES (COVID-19 supplemental funds) through the Emergency Food and Shelter Grant program. United Way managed the release of these funds to seven local organizations on the front line of the pandemic.

ADVOCACY

United Way actively engaged in advocacy efforts to include critical federal public policy funding in the March 2020 CARES ACT as well as future relief bills, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) emergency funding, funding to help child care centers remain open, continuation of 211 funding, creating a permanent charitable deduction, and funding for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

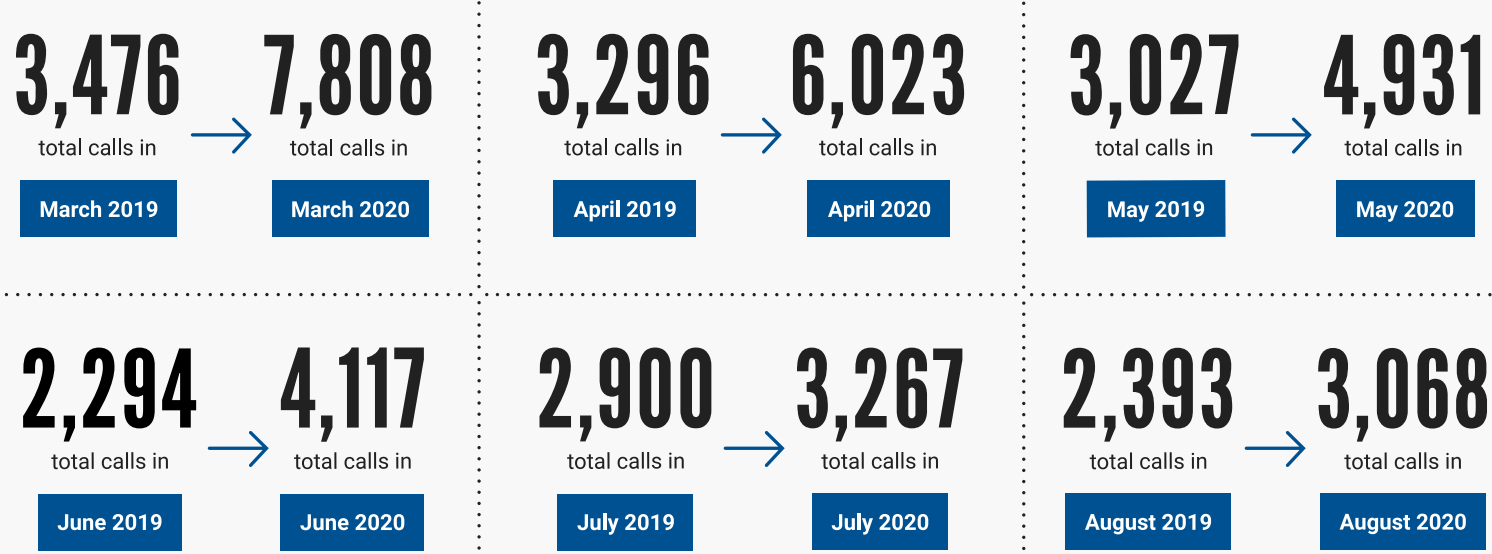
211WNY

211 is a free, confidential, 24/7/365 resource for all of WNY.

Dial 211 or 888-696-9211.
Text your zip code to 898-211.
Learn more at [211wny.org](https://www.211wny.org).



As a result of COVID-19, calls to 211 more than doubled in the first two months of the pandemic and they continue to outpace last year. The top three service request categories were **Low-Cost Housing & Shelter** assistance, locating **Free Tax Preparation Services**, and connecting individuals to **Government Services**. 211WNY and National Grid Consumer Advocates worked together to respond to calls from customers needing specific utility assistance.



VOLUNTEERING

VolunteerWNY is your one-stop shop for anything and everything related to volunteerism in Western New York. Visit [volunteerwny.org](https://www.volunteerwny.org) to get started.



In partnership with **VolunteerWNY.org**, we worked with nonprofit partners to identify on-site/remote volunteer opportunities (compliant with CDC social distancing guidelines) and quickly made modifications to the website to accommodate the new volunteer demand and promote safe volunteering.



Coordinated the donation of over **2,710** homemade masks to local nonprofits to distribute to their staff and clients.



2,100 volunteers were connected to nonprofit organizations through VolunteerWNY.org in response to COVID-19.

361



community members sent virtual thank you cards to essential workers with personalized notes through United Way's website. Submit yours today at [uwbec.org/thankyou](https://www.uwbec.org/thankyou).

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HEALTH & WELLNESS

LOW INCOME MOMS

saved over
\$50,000
to meet their transportation and housing needs and
206
NEWBORNS
were delivered at a healthy term.

302
MOTHERS

initiated first-trimester care.

173
MOTHERS

initiated breast-feeding.

21,000
CHILDREN

were served by Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH), an evidence-based nutrition and physical activity initiative.

2,247
PEOPLE

became more physically active.

EDUCATION

CHARACTER PLAYBOOK,

a digital learning initiative focused on youth character development and healthy relationships, saw

5,333
COMPLETED MODULES

by
1,474
STUDENTS

across
17
SCHOOLS.

11,062
CHILDREN

demonstrated a grade-appropriate understanding of reading and math.

1,529
PARENTS

benefited from participation in a parental support program.

2
NEW BORN LEARNING TRAILS

located in Buffalo provided families interactive space to promote healthy early learning and childhood development.

THE FULL SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROGRAMMING

in Buffalo reached

4,445
STUDENTS, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY MEMBERS.

WNY GIRLS IN SPORTS

averaged

219
ELEMENTARY AGE PARTICIPANTS

per event; an increase of

11%
over the previous year.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

THRIVE BUFFALO

served unemployed/ underemployed City of Buffalo residents and achieved

167
JOB PLACEMENTS

and

31
ENROLLMENTS

in educational/training programs.

1,481
PEOPLE

secured employment.

THE AMERICAN APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE

helped

241
PEOPLE

receive training to become journeyworkers in high-demand trades in manufacturing.

9,124
PEOPLE

received free tax prep services through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program.

WORK/LIFE SOLUTIONS

served over

330
EMPLOYEES

including the distribution of

212
LOANS

to individuals to cover emergency expenses.

2,480
INDIVIDUALS

created a money management plan.



Volunteer engagement opportunities managed by the United Way totaled

5,127
VOLUNTEERS

for

45,000
HOURS

with a value of

\$1.1M.



The annual United Way Campaign raised

\$16,833,322.

In partnership with statewide local UW's, secured

\$1.25M
IN NYS FUNDING

for the continued support of 211 Information & Referral Call Center services.



Maintained a

4-STAR
RATING

with Charity Navigator.



INVESTMENTS

With the help of over 60 community investment volunteers, United Way announced \$4.5 million would be invested in 99 programs across 62 nonprofits for the first year of funding (July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020) in the 2019–2021 investment cycle.

- Total Invested in Education: **\$1,883,113**
- Total Invested in Financial Stability: **\$1,472,220**
- Total Invested in Health: **\$917,280**
- Total Invested in Supportive Initiatives: **\$227,387**

2019–2021 UNITED WAY PROGRAM PARTNERS

- African American Cultural Center
 - Algonquin Sports Inc.
 - Baker Victory Services
 - Belmont Housing Resources for WNY
 - BestSelf Behavioral Health
 - Big Brothers Big Sisters of Erie, Niagara, and the Southern Tier Be-A-Friend Program, Inc.
 - Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo
 - Boys & Girls Clubs of the Northtowns
 - Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology
 - Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers
 - Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center
 - Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network
 - Buffalo Promise Neighborhood
 - Buffalo Urban League
 - Center for Employment Opportunities
 - Child & Family Services of Erie County
 - Child Care Resource Network
 - Compass House
 - Compeer of Greater Buffalo
 - Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Buffalo
 - Cradle Beach
 - EPIC – Every Person Influences Children, Inc.
 - Family Help Center
 - Family Justice Center of Erie County
 - Gerard Place HDLC, Inc.
 - Girl Scouts of Western New York
 - Goodwill Industries of WNY, Inc.
 - Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo, Inc.
 - Hearts and Hands: Faith in Action
 - Horizon Health Services
 - International Institute of Buffalo
 - Jericho Road Community Health Center
- Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo
 - Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County
 - Junior Achievement of WNY
 - King Urban Life Center Inc.
 - Literacy New York Buffalo-Niagara, Inc.
 - Lt. Colonel Matt Urban Human Services Center of W.N.Y.
 - Magic Penny Early Literacy Institute, Inc.
 - Massachusetts Avenue Project
 - Mental Health Association of Erie County, Inc.
 - Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.
 - Northwest Buffalo Community Center
 - Olmsted Center for Sight
 - Parent Network of WNY
 - Peace of the City Ministries
 - Read to Succeed Buffalo
 - Rural Outreach Center
 - The Salvation Army
 - The Service Collaborative of Western New York
 - Trocaire College
 - True Community Development Corporation
 - Valley Community Association
 - Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY Inc.
 - Western New York Independent Living, Inc.
 - Western New York Law Center Inc.
 - Westminster Economic Development Initiative
 - WNY United Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Inc.
 - WNY Women's Foundation
 - Young Audiences of Western NY, Inc.
 - YWCA of WNY

Supportive Initiatives:

 - American Red Cross
 - Visually Impaired Advancement (VIA) - 211WNY
 - WNY Holiday Partnership

GRANTS

Campaign is not the only source of revenue for United Way’s work in the community. We receive millions of dollars in grants each year that support our efforts and those of our agency partners in education, financial stability, and health & wellness. Last year we received over \$4.8 million in grant funding. Below is a sample of the programs supported by this funding.

FEDERAL

- C.A.S.H. VITA Grant
- Go Buffalo Mom NFTA Federal
- Closing the Gap Federal
- Targeted Food Stamp Outreach
- DOL American Apprenticeship



STATE & LOCAL

- 211 Project
- Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative
- Erie County United Way Works



CAMPAIGN

Sometimes you don't have to look far to find partners in the fight for the health, education, and financial stability of the community.

It could be someone right there in the next office, or cubicle, or work station. United Way's workplace campaign brings together people who already know how to work together to effect meaningful change in Buffalo & Erie County.

Every company has a mission statement. Working with United Way helps impact that mission. Small businesses. Major corporations. Non-profits. So many different types of organizations support the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County through workplace giving.

Provided food and voucher assistance through the UW Labor Fund for over

280
GENERAL MOTORS EMPLOYEES
totaling approximately
\$40,000
during the 6 week strike at the
Tonawanda Plant



CORPORATE LOANED EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

4%
INCREASE IN DONORS
2%
INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE GIVING



MILLION DOLLAR CAMPAIGNS



VOLUNTEER

In partnership with **VolunteerWNY.org**, we worked with nonprofit partners to identify on-site/remove volunteer opportunities (compliant with CDC social distancing guidelines) and quickly made modifications to the website to accommodate the new volunteer demand and promote safe volunteering.

Coordinated the donation of over
2,710
HOMEMADE MASKS
to local nonprofits to distribute to their staff and clients.

361
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
sent virtual thank you cards to essential workers with
personalized notes through United Way's website.
Submit yours today at uwbec.org/thankyou.

BUSINESS MEETS COMMUNITY

We help businesses of all sizes connect employees with
rewarding volunteer opportunities that fit their needs.

COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

In 2020, we pivoted our community baby shower to
a virtual event and had so much success in helping
at-risk mothers and their babies.

TOTAL PROJECTS
199

TOTAL RAISED
\$13,000
BABY BUNDLES
1,000+

SERVICE-TO-GO

Service-to-Go projects are designed to be completed in the office.
Participants bring the supplies and United Way will connect them to
the agencies who need it the most.

- PROJECT TYPES:**
- The Sandwich Project
 - T-Shirt Bags
 - Birthday-in-a-Bag
 - Handmade Greeting Cards
 - The Healthy Snack Pack Project

VOLUNTEERS 602	PROJECTS 35	COMPANIES WHO PARTICIPATED 29
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GIVING COMMUNITIES

LEADERSHIP SOCIETY

Members play an essential role in addressing our community’s most pressing needs through philanthropy, leadership, and volunteerism.

During Family Volunteer Day, Leadership Society members prepared 2,200 personal hygiene kits for the unsheltered homeless.



WOMEN UNITED

Women United is made up of Buffalo & Erie County’s most inspiring and proactive female leaders who are dedicated to making a positive local impact.

In June, Women United partnered with the WNY Professional Golf Association (PGA) and hosted Suzy Whaley, President of the PGA of America, for a virtual clubhouse event. Women United and the WNY PGA also launched the 6-Foot Putting Challenge, encouraging members of our community to putt 6 feet, challenge 6 people, and chip in 6 dollars.



NEXT GENERATION UNITED

Next Generation United engages the knowledge, skills, and creative energy of the next generation to identify, launch, and foster innovative projects that elevate our community.

For Every Little Handprint, the winner of \$10,000 awarded by NGU at last year’s Pitch 10 event, received 170 items from NGU’s school supply drive in the fall of 2020.



Michael Weiner
President & CEO



“ United Way's focus is to respond, recover, reimagine, and rebuild our community in the wake of a global unrest unprecedented in our lifetime. United Way's mission—to bring people, organizations, and resources together to create systemic community change—has never been more relevant.

“ I was raised to believe it's my duty. It's my duty to do whatever I can to uplift the place where I live and work and I believe it's your duty as well.



Dr. Thomasina R. Stenhouse
Campaign Co-Chair

Reverend Rachelle Robinson
Campaign Co-Chair



“ We are challenged to expand services to people who may have thought they would never need them, but they do. Thank you for being present in our community and meeting the needs of our community. We appreciate you.

William and Patricia Fredrickson's modest and selfless commitment to our community is why we are proud to name them as the 2020 Philanthropists of the Year.



William & Patricia Frederick
2020 Philanthropists of the Year

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Community Volunteer

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Community Volunteer

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Merchants Insurance Group

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Community Volunteer

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Community Volunteer and Retired PwC Partner

Dennis Elsenbeck

Phillips Lytle LLP

Michael Keating

Wegmans

Jim Tilley

Community Volunteer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

March 31, 2020

Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$3,573,093
Investments	3,764,918
Endowment Investments	11,468,593
Annual Campaign Pledges Receivable, Net	6,663,784
Other Assets	2,120,230
Property and Equipment, Net	2,174,867
Total Assets	\$29,765,485

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities	
Designations Payable	\$4,258,789
Allocations Payable	1,484,652
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	1,701,729
Other Liabilities	2,275,340
Total Liabilities	\$9,720,510

Net Assets	\$20,044,975
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$29,765,485

Statement of Activities

Year Ended March 31, 2020

Operating Activity	
Revenue, Gains, and Other Support	
Campaign Results	
Current Year Campaign Results	\$13,165,200
Endowment and Other Campaigns	173,476
Total Campaign	13,338,676
Less: Donor Designations	(4,250,206)
Less: Estimated Uncollectible Pledges	(350,000)
Net Campaign Results	8,738,470
Other Revenue	
Grant and Other Revenue	4,821,767
Investment Income (Loss)	(1,138,177)
Total Other Revenue	3,683,590
Total Revenue	\$12,422,060

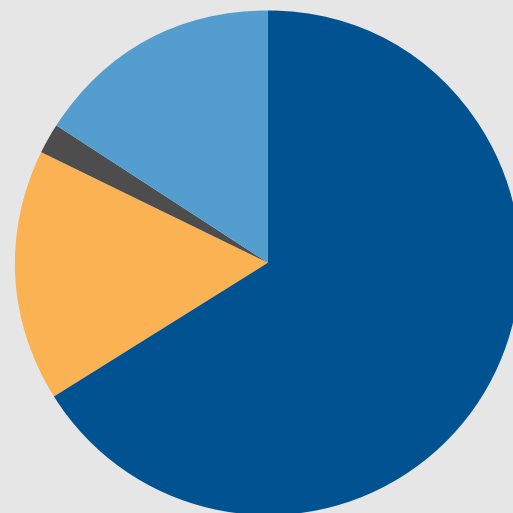
Expenses	
Community Investments	
Gross Funds Awarded to Agencies	\$12,607,266
Other Programs and Program Support Services	3,087,360
Total Program Services Including Designations	15,694,626
Donor Designations	(4,250,206)
Total Program Services, Net	\$11,444,420

Supporting Services

Management and General	\$1,273,338
Fundraising	1,706,335
Total Supporting Services	2,979,673
Total Expenses	\$14,424,093

Decrease in Net Assets From Operations	(2,002,033)
Pension Plan SFAS 158 Adjustment to Net Assets	(208,828)
Net Assets—Beginning	22,255,836
Net Assets—Ending	\$20,044,975

WHERE THE MONEY GOES



- Grant Awards & Investments in Community Activities **66%**
- Direct Work of United Way **16%**
- Donor Pledge Loss **2%**
- General & Fundraising **16%**

**United Way
of Buffalo & Erie County**
742 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209

www.uwbec.org

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*Please note, all group pictures in this report were taken prior to COVID-19.