



United Way
of East Central Iowa

WE FIGHT FOR *our neighbors*

A Note From Our CEO



This past year has been full of learning lessons for all of us. Was it challenging? Absolutely. But it was also full of opportunities. During both the pandemic and in the aftermath of the derecho, United Way of East Central Iowa (UWECI)'s value to our communities was on full display.

In our work with the PATCH (Providing Assistance to Community Homeowners) program, we listened and observed, identifying our neighbors' need for assistance in repairing their homes from the derecho. Behind the scenes to get PATCH organized, we categorized which partners brought the needed services and then determined how the new program could work across the county. Next, we brought these organizations around the table in collaboration to solve the problem of shoring up the damaged homes for winter. The final step involved presenting the collective idea to other area funders we are in close contact with. In the end, it created a program that has many players, yet is still effective in reaching a solution.

This is the same process you'll be seeing us go through in the coming months as we look to start a Community Impact Assessment. Along with the survey, this course of action will have us listen to and observe our community for the complex problems we collectively need to come together to address. UWECI will then take the time to sit down with our area's experts to design ways we can start to address the identified complex problems and move forward to create a collective impact for our community.

We're excited to take this very deep dive into our community's needs and see where UWECI can act as a collaborator and convenor for East Central Iowa's success. We invite you to come alongside us in this work. We'll be reaching out through emails, phone calls, focus groups and surveys. We ask you to take the time to share your thoughts and connect with us. It's your chance to play a significant role in where we focus next in our communities.

Thank you for your continued support of our work and our communities. Together, we are providing the building blocks of education, financial stability and health for our neighbors to thrive. We're grateful for you joining us in these efforts.

Kristin Roberts
President, CEO

Annual Report

Our FY20 Annual Report is here! Many will use the words unprecedented or unparalleled to describe this past year, but it has also been an opportunity for us to demonstrate the incredible value United Way of East Central Iowa brings to our community. Read more about our connections, investment, and impact last year at [UWECI.ORG/FY20](https://www.uweci.org/fy20).

Putting "Unity" in "Community"

Thanks to an anonymous donation, United Way of East Central Iowa is starting 2021 better positioned to create even more impact for vulnerable populations in our community. Learn more about this gift at [BLOG.UWECI.ORG](https://www.blog.uweci.org).

COVID-19 Impact Survey

This year, United Ways of Iowa partnered with ResearchIQ at the University of Northern Iowa to commission a survey about the financial impacts of COVID-19 on Iowa households. Between September 28 and November 2, the survey asked households about their financial status before, during and since COVID shutdowns. While the study identified some major themes, it really came down to this: low-income families have suffered and struggled to pay for essentials—and they need our help now more than ever.

Read more about the results of this survey at [BLOG.UWECI.ORG/COVIDSURVEY](https://www.blog.uweci.org).

DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

Disaster Update

United Way was built to lead communities through challenging and changing times and is connecting those in need to life-changing resources as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and August's derecho. With the support of numerous donors, volunteers, and partners from across Eastern Iowa, the Midwest, and the nation, UWECI has helped our neighbors in need by:

- Delivering over 500 boxes of food to homebound residents and the refugee and immigrant communities.
- Launching Project ReConnect, which has expanded to support the Derecho Recovery Homeowner Program
- Connecting with rural counties to support farmers through storm and recovery education and support.

Read more about our work during disaster by visiting [UWECI.ORG/COVIDRESPONSE](https://www.uweci.org/COVIDRESPONSE) and [UWECI.ORG/DERECHORESPONSE](https://www.uweci.org/DERECHORESPONSE).

Event Save the Dates

With the new year upon us, we are getting ready to spread our work and mission through upcoming events!* Save the dates for the following events in 2021:

- **Time for Art: A Celebration of Volunteers** will be held on Friday, April 16, 2021 at The Olympic South Side Theatre.
- **Day of Caring** will be held on Thursday, May 13, 2021.
- **Women United Virtual Luncheon** will be held on Wednesday, May 26, 2021.
- **Game Changers: A Year in Review** will be held on Thursday, June 17, 2021.

*Due to COVID-19, event plans—including the decision for in-person and virtual events—are being made in accordance with CDC and local guidelines, as well as taking the safety of our supporters into account.



Campaign Progress

Workplace campaign season is in full swing in Eastern Iowa! Due to the pandemic and derecho, many campaigns had a late start, with some pushing into early 2021. Despite these challenges, our partner companies have stepped up to increase participation and show their support during a difficult year. We're so thankful for the extra effort and impressed with the companies and their campaign coordinators getting creative with virtual campaigns, such as using Zoom breakout rooms, and encouraging contests between coworkers that raise dollars for our mission.

We look forward to sharing our progress and results for the extraordinary 2020 campaign in the coming months. Learn more about this year's campaign by visiting [UWECI.ORG/CONNECTING](https://www.uweci.org/CONNECTING).

