

BUILDING ABETTER COMMUNITY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



United Way of East Central Iowa

A MESSAGE FROM US

United Way's vision is ambitious. Building a better community, creating solutions for our focus areas, and changing systems so people can succeed are big goals!

But, by identifying key building blocks and focusing on one at a time, we can succeed. At United Way of East Central Iowa (UWECI), our most recent building blocks include:

- Conducting a Community Impact Assessment in 2021
- Creating solutions for our community's top needs, including our Unite to Inspire strategies in 2022
- Utilizing that information to prioritize where we invest our time and our resources in 2023 and beyond

You may have noticed over the last few years that UWECI has refined our focus to identify where we can make the greatest impact in our community. We know education, financial stability, and health comprise the foundation of success, and we are honing each of those pillars to tackle our community's biggest challenges.

We accomplish this in a variety of ways, and our Unite to

Childhood **Economic Mobility Success** Inspire strategy guided our decision-making process this Access to **Safety Net** Healthcare **Services**

past year. UWECI is instrumental in envisioning new ideas to keep up with our community's biggest needs. We use those ideas to build a stronger community, creating and implementing sustainable change so our neighbors and

friends can be successful. Those building blocks are incredibly valuable and influential for the future of the place we call home.

And you recognize this. It's one of the many reasons we are grateful for you. You see the building blocks we bring that form the foundation to make Eastern Iowa a place where everyone can flourish, setting the stage for us to create new solutions.

We have large aspirations because we know that together we can achieve them. Thank you for playing a vital role in our ability to invest in our community, and just as importantly, discover and construct building blocks that create visible and meaningful change.

2021

Community **Impact Assessment**

Development of Unite to Inspire strategies

2023

investment in Unite to Inspire strategies for long term success



Kristin Roberts President & CEO



OUR NEXT CHAPTER

After dedicating the last few years to researching our communities' greatest needs and developing strategies to meet those needs, we wanted to continue that momentum, so we asked ourselves, "What is next?"

We aligned our investment process in funding area nonprofits with the key focus areas we developed to fully support our neighbors in Eastern Iowa. Building economic mobility, fostering childhood success, improving access to healthcare, and supporting safety net services are foundational to providing cutting edge solutions. Those focus areas influenced our decisions for our next funding cycle.

We started brainstorming conversations with partners to integrate our strategies with a concentration on vulnerable populations and racial equity. For the next three-year cycle, we will distribute \$2.85 million in funds annually to 32 agencies and 50 programs to support a network of services for community members.



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS: MIKE & JO CAMBRIDGE

We are continuously inspired by our network of dedicated donors. These individuals play a critical role in supporting our community during challenging times and inspiring others to become future advocates and donors, making a stronger impact than ever before.

Mike and Jo Cambridge of Cedar Rapids are excellent examples of those who demonstrate philanthropic values. Empowered by years of running a successful business, Mike and Jo have been influential supporters for years and knew their community needed additional services with our ever-changing economy.

They chose to give to UWECI because of a history of trusted partnership and our ability to both identify and create solutions for our community's top issues.

"Our business blessed us more than we could have imagined, and we firmly believe in giving back," said Jo Cambridge. "We believe that we came into this world with nothing, and we'll leave with nothing."

It's this mindset of giving back and inspiring others with the ability to give that sets Mike and Jo apart and builds a strong network of community champions for Eastern Iowa. With their dedication and commitment to the nonprofit community, both Mike and Jo serve as great models of what it means to create a lasting impact.

"Our business blessed us more than we could have imagined, and we firmly believe in giving back. We believe that we came into this world with nothing, and we'll leave with nothing."

- Jo Cambridge

CREATING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

There are several building blocks that have helped us continue creating a stronger community.

VOLUNTEERISM IN EASTERN IOWA

Volunteerism is a key component to creating a strong community, as it often serves as an entry point for involvement and connection. UWECI has developed several initiatives that allow us to connect community members to the volunteer opportunities you are most passionate about.

BECOMING BOLD

This past year, we added the Collegiate BOLD (Board Orientation and Leadership Development) program to area colleges and universities to encourage youth to engage more in the community. Our BOLD program continues to equip emerging leaders with the fundamental skills necessary to serve on non-profit boards of directors and create positive change within the service area of UWECI.

INCREASING OUR IMPACT IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

We have been working to expand our reach in our rural counties. Under the United Way umbrella, we can further support the community with our combined resources and services, including our Assisted Transportation Program that we have in Jones and Benton counties.

VITA

Our free VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program reached community members and helped provide stability by putting substantial money back into families' pockets. Thanks to you, our amazing volunteers logged more than 5,000 hours and filed over 1,700 returns, creating \$2.4 million in state and federal returns. This service spans not only Linn County but Jones and Cedar counties as well, further impacting more individuals and families in our service area.

Explore all the available volunteer opportunities on our website at uweci.org/volunteer.



ADVOCACY IN EASTERN IOWA

We make a difference as a community by using our voices to amplify others. Your voice impacted Eastern Iowa in many ways this past year.

CREATING IMPACT WITH WOMEN UNITED

Women United supporters continue to unite resources, voices, and action to ensure the health and well-being of all women in our community. Women United took the lead providing voting registration resources with the United We Vote campaign. In addition, they raised more than \$32,000 for Women United's mission at the annual Power of the Purse event, making it the most successful Power of the Purse in UWECI's history.

ENGAGING WITH EMERGING LEADERS UNITED

This past year, Young Leaders Society rebranded to become Emerging Leaders United (ELU), forming a group of individuals who support growth in leadership, no matter the stage of life. Through engaging events that bring insight into our community's top issues, ELU continues empowering individuals to create lasting change. This coming year, they will focus their funding on our *Unite to Inspire* focus areas to address the most critical needs in Eastern lowa.

EXPANDING OUR INFLUENCE THROUGH COLLABORATIONS

Our recent collaborative work is bringing more opportunities to those in Eastern lowa. Through the Alliance for Equitable Housing, we're taking steps as a community around homelessness and working together to develop goals and action steps to solve housing issues for the long term. In efforts to continue building economic mobility, we are growing connections through The Opportunity Center at Ladd Library to help individuals navigate resources for employment.

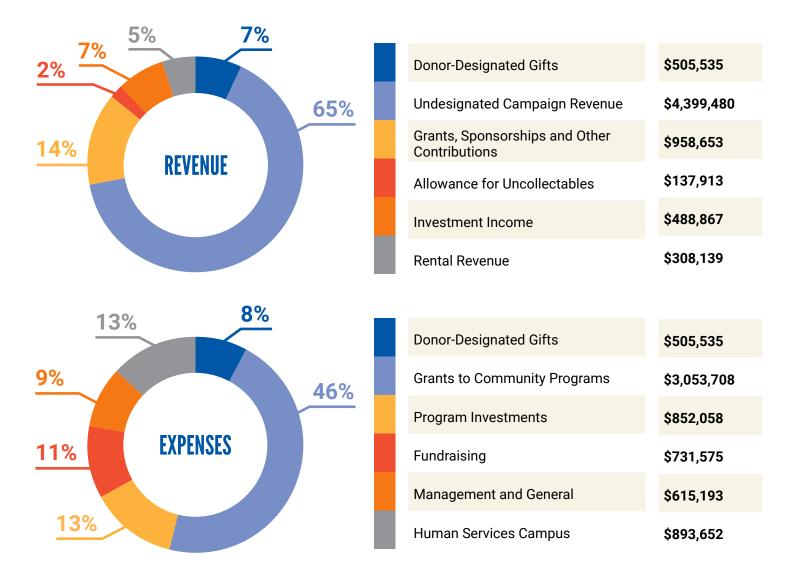






Ready to make an impact in Eastern lowa? Visit <u>uweci.org</u>.

FINANCIALS





THANK YOU

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In Memoriam:

Jared Hills, Divine Engineering

FY23 FUNDED PARTNERS

Aging Services, Inc.
Area Substance Abuse Council (ASAC)
Benton County Volunteer Program
Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Cedar Rapids
and East Central lowa, Inc.
Boys and Girls Club of Cedar Rapids
Catherine McAuley Center
Community Health Free Clinic
Eastern Iowa Health Center
Foundation 2 Crisis Services
Goodwill Industries of the Heartland
Hawkeye Area Community Action Program

(HACAP)
Horizons: A Family Service Alliance
lowa Legal Aid
Four Oaks at Jane Boyd Community House

Kids First Law Center

Kids on Course/Zach Johnson Foundation Rural Employment Alternatives, Inc. Southeast Linn Community Center Corporation

St. Luke's Health Care Foundation – The Dr. Rhys B. Jones Dental Health Center The Arc of East Central Iowa Volunteer Services of Cedar County Waypoint Services for Women, Children, and Families

Willis Dady Emergency Shelter Inc. Young Parents Network Inc. Youthport

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Toby Olsen, OPN Architects
Alejandro Pino, YPN
Gary Streit, Shuttleworth & Ingersoll PLC

In Memoriam:

Noreen Bush, Cedar Rapids Community School District



United Way of East Central Iowa