To say the past year has been tough would be an understatement.

Too many of our neighbors have been hurt by the pandemic and its aftermath – including some who were still struggling to recover from Hurricane Harvey. Too many lost jobs, support systems, and heartbreakingly, their lives. As a community, we grappled with school and business closures, an economic crisis, isolation, and grief.

Then, in the midst of COVID-19, devastating events brought to the forefront systemic inequalities and racial injustice in our country. Winter Storm Uri followed, leaving much of our community without power and water, and damaging thousands of homes.

So much of what happened in the past year raised our awareness regarding the differences and disparities that allow some to thrive and keep others in a state of struggle.

And even so, bright beacons of hope shone through – inspiring acts of kindness and deep generosity in food shared with those who didn’t have enough, errands run for elderly neighbors, underrepresented voices uplifted, and sacrifices made to keep our friends, families, and community safe.

When COVID-19 hit, this community came together to raise more than $18 million to help those who lost jobs, fell ill, and had to figure out how to rebuild their lives in the wake of crisis.

When the discrimination and racial injustice so many face every day became sharply clearer to one and all, this community committed not just to listening and learning but also to fighting for opportunity and equity.

When Winter Storm Uri kicked us when we were down, we got back up as a community and raised more than $17 million for home repairs and emergency financial assistance.

And when we said we needed you to dig deep and help the more than 47% of our neighbors who are struggling just to make ends meet, this community stepped up. You found creative ways to connect, to run virtual campaigns, to engage with and share the work you make possible, and to ensure that your United Way remains strong and ready to serve.

While much of the past year was about overcoming crises, it has also been about building the foundation for our Second Century Vision, which will launch in the spring of 2022.

As part of our Second Century Vision, we are proud to announce a more equitable investment strategy, one that will intentionally lift up those who have been marginalized and bring new and different partners into the fold so that, as we step into our second century of service, we better represent, serve, and celebrate our diverse community.

While the past year has challenged us in ways we never imagined, it also underscored the importance of our mission and our work to bring people and partners together, collaborate, and leverage resources to create opportunities for people to thrive and to build a stronger, more equitable community for all.

We cannot do this work alone, and we are so grateful to you – our donors, partners, colleagues, and neighbors – for your steadfast support.
More than 47% of families in our community are working hard but can’t make ends meet. These families struggle to take care of the basics, like food, housing, and health care. COVID-19, the economic fallout, and the recent winter storm have increased the number of people who need help and have made life tougher for those who were already struggling.

United Way of Greater Houston helps people break down the barriers that keep them in a state of struggle and prevent them from becoming financially stable. With your help, we provide a safety net to help people meet their immediate basic needs and we help our neighbors achieve long-term financial stability and success.

We work to create opportunities for people in our community to thrive by:

- Creating a pathway to self-sufficiency and success by providing tools, resources, and educational support to help hardworking individuals and families obtain financial stability and quality of life
- Helping young people achieve academic success through quality out-of-school programs, including early childhood education, before and after school programs and school break programming
- Providing safety net programs that help people take care of their basic and immediate needs, like food, shelter, health care, and escape from violence
- Operating the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, staffed with specialists accessing our community’s largest, most up-to-date database of social services, 24/7/365 days a year to connect those in need with help and hope
- Leading disaster recovery by convening our community, providing help through 211, and investing in critical services in times of crisis, whether a pandemic or a storm
- Working to address the opportunity gap, attitudes, and conditions that create inequities and make it difficult for some to thrive
Your support makes everything we do possible.

HERE IS A SNAPSHOT OF HOW WE INVESTED IN OUR COMMUNITY THIS PAST YEAR:

![Circle chart showing 37% for Children & Youth, 25% for Rebuilding, 29% for Families & Neighborhoods, and 9% for Seniors.]

ANOTHER WAY WE INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITY IS THROUGH SPECIAL GRANTS FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, AND NEEDS.

**Mission United Grants**

United Way Mission United supports our veterans and their families with a coordinated network to help with job readiness; financial education, coaching, and counseling; health care; basic needs assistance; and more. We invest in those services for veterans, military personnel, and their families through specific grants. This past year, volunteers awarded grants totaling $175,000 to eight organizations serving veterans.

**Basic Needs Initiative Grants**

Basic Needs Initiative Grants are part of our efforts to monitor and address changing community needs. Based on the volume of referrals from the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, we invite community assistance ministries to apply for grants. In 2020-2021, United Way invested $735,000 in 16 community assistance ministries to support families with food, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, medical/prescription assistance, and transportation assistance.

*Percentages denote United Way’s community investment by goal area.*
OUR RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In early March 2020, it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic had reached our area. Having led long-term recovery for nearly every major disaster our community has faced, United Way of Greater Houston quickly began preparing to serve our neighbors through a new type of crisis. Even as we canceled events and prepared our staff to work remotely, we were busy working behind the scenes to convene our partners, assess needs, determine the social services sector's capacity to serve, and stand up our response effort to help those in need.

Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund

In March 2020, United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation established the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund to help meet the most critical needs of our neighbors related to the COVID-19 outbreak and the sudden, severe financial hardships many in our community faced as a result of the pandemic. The joint fund provided urgently needed necessities such as food, health care, shelter, and utility assistance to vulnerable individuals and families.

The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund was chaired by Jamey Rootes, board member, United Way of Greater Houston and former president of the Houston Texans, and by Tony Chase, board member, Greater Houston Community Foundation and chairman and CEO of ChaseSource, LP.

The fund was overseen by a volunteer Task Force, which provided oversight and approval of the grant-making strategy and grant recommendations made by the Grants Committee.

Advisory Task Force

Tony Chase
ChaseSource, LP

Irma Diaz-Gonzales
Employment & Training Centers, Inc.

Lynn Elsenhans
Sunoco (retired)

Bob Harvey
Greater Houston Partnership

Laura Jaramillo
Wells Fargo

Nancy McGregor
Greater Houston Community Foundation
Board Member

Y. Ping Sun
Rice University and Yetter Coleman LLP

Grants Committee

Stephanie Blair
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Chris Hensman
Arnold Ventures

Annie Hurwitz
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Elizabeth Love
Houston Endowment Inc.

Curtis McMinn
United Way of Greater Houston

Margaret Oser
United Way of Greater Houston

Mary Vazquez
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Renee Wizig-Barrios
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Diana Zarzuelo
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Subcommittee Members

Shauna Harris
United Way of Greater Houston

Rebecca Hove
Greater Houston Community Foundation

Traci Jack
United Way of Greater Houston

Jennifer Touchet
Greater Houston Community Foundation
The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund raised and deployed more than $18 million to help the most vulnerable of our neighbors in Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery, and Waller counties. These investments were made to trusted nonprofit partners who have proven experience and systems in place in serving the community during times of disaster.

**More than $18 million in grants was deployed to 86 local organizations through seven rounds of grants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>290,802</th>
<th>221,216</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>individuals living in 100,578 households served</td>
<td>received food assistance</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>30,482</th>
<th>12,990</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>received flexible emergency financial assistance</td>
<td>received emergency housing assistance</td>
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**211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE**

In times of disaster and every day, the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is our community’s go-to resource.

During the first year of the pandemic, 211 answered more than 260,000 COVID-19-related calls from individuals seeking assistance as it became known as the number to call for COVID-19 information and to get information on testing sites. 211 continues to connect our neighbors with basic needs assistance, such as food, rent and utility assistance, and health care resources that many families need to fully recover.

**COVID-19 and ALICE**

We see at both a national and local level that ALICE is hardest hit by economic fallout from COVID-19.

A poll conducted by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (conducted July – August 2020) reinforces that ALICE is less prepared to withstand financial shock. The poll highlights that 63% of Houston households report facing serious financial problems during the coronavirus outbreak. Economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19 has been K-shaped, with some emerging relatively unscathed or easily able to recover (the upper part of the K), while others, including ALICE, minority groups, and those in industries, like hospitality and travel, have been devastated by shutdowns and job loss (the lower part of the K).

The number of ALICE households in our community is likely to increase due to COVID-19. Why?

- Rising unemployment
- Closed businesses
- Halted production of goods/services
- Inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic

**WE THANK THE MANY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE GENEROUS SUPPORT MADE THIS POSSIBLE.**

Special thanks to the following organizations and individuals who made lead gifts to launch this effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houston Endowment, Inc.</th>
<th>$2,000,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David and Bonnie Weekley</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells Fargo Foundation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Texans Foundation</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPMorgan Chase &amp; Co</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Instruments</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also thank those who made major gifts to support this effort.

| Arnold Ventures | $1,000,000 |
| The Brown Foundation | $1,000,000 |
| Phillips 66 | $1,000,000 |
| The Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation & Westlake Chemical Corporation | $1,000,000 |
| Randa and K.C. Weiner | $975,000 |
| Mr. Charles Butt | $750,000 |
| Huffington Foundation | $750,000 |
| The Powell Foundation | $500,000 |
| Enbridge Inc. | $300,000 |
| The Humana Foundation | $300,000 |
| BHP | $250,000 |
| Mike and Vanessa Manners/The Manners/Coole Foundation | $250,000 |
| Motiva Enterprises | $250,000 |
| Calpine Corporation | $200,000 |
| Chevron | $200,000 |
| ConocoPhillips | $200,000 |

See all of the major donors at greaterhoustonrecovery.org.
Our heroic 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE team worked tirelessly throughout the storm, answering more than 19,000 storm-related calls to connect people with critical resources and information.

We convened partners in Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller counties to assess needs in those communities and to develop collective responses through Fort Bend Recovers, MCCARES, and the Waller County Long-Term Recovery Committee.

In Harris County, we worked with the City of Houston, Harris County, and the Greater Houston Community Foundation to raise and deploy resources through the Houston Harris County Winter Storm Relief Fund.

The Fund, established by Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, and jointly administered by the Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston, is focused on grant making to local nonprofits addressing the unmet needs of families that need additional help to recover, including financial assistance, help with plumbing and home repairs, temporary housing, and other basic needs relief. Given United Way’s leadership role in times of disaster, it has been very important to us to support this effort and play a strong role alongside the Greater Houston Community Foundation in ensuring a transparent and effective fund that can quickly deploy assistance to those who need it most.

Responding to the urgent needs created by the winter storm, corporations, foundations, and individuals contributed more than $17 million to the Houston Harris County Winter Storm Relief Fund, which has in turn deployed $13.1 million in grants (as of May 12, 2021) to area nonprofits.
ALICE works educate our children, keep us healthy, and make our quality of life possible, yet do not earn enough to support their own families. ALICE households are forced to make tough choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent, which have long-term consequences not only for ALICE, but for us all.

In 2018, 47% of Greater Houston’s two million households struggled to make ends meet. While 14% of these households were living below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), another 33% — twice as many — were ALICE. These households earned above the FPL, but not enough to afford basic household necessities.

We know the COVID-19 pandemic and hardships it has created have caused more families to become ALICE and have made life even tougher for those who were already ALICE.

ALICE in Our Four-County Service Area:
Population: 6,127,389

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Households: 2,063,371</th>
<th>ALICE Households: 671,904</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households in Poverty: 279,550</td>
<td>ALICE and Poverty Households: 951,454</td>
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</table>

Some of the Challenges ALICE Faces

ALICE households have few means to change the educational trajectory that places low-income students in poorer quality schools and increases their risk for not graduating high school or attending college.

Having enough food is a basic challenge for ALICE households. Chronic food insecurity leads to less healthy eating and increased stress, both of which contribute to poor health.

ALICE families face circumstances that make it difficult for them to achieve and maintain good health. When health issues go untreated, they become more serious and more costly, and lead to other poor outcomes.

COVID-19 and the recent economic crisis have increased the number of households that are ALICE and made life even tougher for those who are already ALICE.

ALICE households struggle to afford day-to-day expenses, making it nearly impossible to save for emergencies or future financial goals. Without savings, ALICE is vulnerable to unexpected emergencies and ongoing financial hardships.
SECOND CENTURY VISION

SECOND CENTURY VISION – TAKING OUR COMMUNITY FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING

Second Century Vision is the strategic plan that will guide our work and investments going forward, beginning with the investments we make in April 2022.

Our vision for our second century of service is to create the opportunity for individuals and families in the Greater Houston community to thrive. We will do this by leading, serving, influencing, and convening the nonprofit social services sector to deliver quality services with exceptional outcomes.

Guided by research and data, United Way will focus on and invest in high-quality programs focused on serving ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and those living below the Federal Poverty Level, a group which collectively makes up 47% of our population in the Greater Houston Area in 2018, an increase from 40% in 2016.

Our strategy aims to provide families the opportunity to attain a sustainable quality of living through:

- Financial stability
- Early childhood and youth development through out-of-school educational opportunities
- Access to health care with a focus on behavioral health
- Safety net services, which includes things like food, housing, and other critical needs such as refugee assistance, and freedom from violent situations, like domestic abuse and human trafficking

A critical success factor for our Second Century Vision will be an integrated client journey that allows clients to create their own customized pathway based on their goals and needs. Rather than working separately to address individual needs, programs will be coordinated to make it easy for clients to engage across services as needed.

The integrated client journey will operate across 13 priority regions within Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery, and Waller counties. The regions have been determined based on the density of the population living below the ALICE threshold and the density of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, who have been historically disproportionately impacted.

We will evaluate all potential investments moving forward on how they incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging into policies, practices, and client service delivery.
SECOND CENTURY VISION IS:

Financial stability programs + early childhood and youth development programs + health care programs

All supported by a foundation of safety net programs, which includes basic needs and escape from violence

Clients are helped to build their own path and navigate that path by a Navigator

INTEGRATED CLIENT JOURNEY

SAFETY NET PROGRAMMING

Basic Needs:
• Services such as rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, technology access, food, shelter, and transportation assistance

Escape from Violence:
• Immediate, short-term services focused on safety for those fleeing domestic violence, human trafficking, or vulnerable populations such as refugees

INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

Financial Stability Programs:
• Vocational training and employment coaching
• Financial coaching and training
• Safe, affordable financial products and services

Early Childhood and Youth Development Programs:
• Early childhood education/child care
• Out-of-school time programming
• College and career readiness programming
• Parent engagement

Health Care Programs:
• Primary and specialty health care services
• Behavioral health care services
**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING**

United Way of Greater Houston is committed to building stronger communities by creating the opportunity for individuals and families in Greater Houston to thrive through the creation and funding of programs to address the economic, educational, and assistance disparities caused by generations of systemic institutional racism and other barriers, and to do so in an equitable, reflective manner, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, culture, age, physical ability, or lived experience.

**OUR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**Be a Culture Champion**
Nurture and fiercely defend an organization-wide culture:

- of participation and representation, where all staff feel free and safe to be their authentic selves and to engage fully in critically analyzing every aspect of their work so that the organization can strive toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging,
- where the diversity of cultures, skills, lived experiences, and perspectives will be honored and considered critical to do our best work,
- married to a process of constant improvement, learning and exposure, leading us to new levels of cultural understanding and empathy.

**Be Ready to Learn and Grow**

- Embrace the expectation and establish a curriculum of constant education and training, including implicit bias training, cultural intelligence and competence, listening, and other forms of broadening the horizons of understanding and engagement across all levels of the organization in order to enable lasting change from within.

**Be Reflective**

- Strive to create and maintain an organization whose composition (staff, leadership, board, volunteers, donors) reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve and represent.
- Reimagine and align our fundraising and grant making to be diverse, and reflective of Greater Houston itself, while incorporating our community-centric fundraising principles, aiming to better resource communities that have been disadvantaged and affected negatively by systemic racism.
- Leverage our organization’s resources to have a greater impact on our communities by committing to expanding its network of providers and volunteers to reflect the area’s diversity. This will amplify our success in providing the services and support that help all families and individuals achieve greater financial stability, security, and success.

**Be Proudly Intentional**

- Commit to being deliberate, intentional, and thorough when selecting/recruiting organizations with diverse leadership to partner with and fund.
- Be intentional and clear regarding our focus on matters of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging when speaking to and working with civic and business leaders, elected officials, and other organizations.
- Actively engage in efforts to achieve systemic change.

**Be Accountable**

- Be data and fact-driven in the areas of funding, investments, and recruitment.
- Set and communicate benchmarks and key performance metrics.
- Measure the change and celebrate the impact!
OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ACHIEVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Value the visible and invisible qualities that make each of us who we are as well as the differences that make each of us unique.

Welcome and honor the varied life experiences and perspectives that advance our mission and work to create opportunities for people in our community to thrive.

Believe that each community member, donor, volunteer, advocate, and employee must have a voice in solving community problems and advancing our quest for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Commit to intentionally and continuously include diversity and inclusion practices at the center of our daily work, powering our mission of impacting lives across our region.

Recognize that structural racism, ethnic discrimination, and other barriers have existed and contributed to persistent disparities which United Way of Greater Houston seeks to dismantle.

Acknowledge that these inequities are the result of policies and practices that work to marginalize entire populations of people.

Denounce any form of racism or discrimination, as it actively undermines the well-being and vitality of our communities.

Listen, learn from, and actively engage our community members and leaders, especially those whose voices have been historically marginalized.

Work with residents as well as public and private partners to co-create solutions that ensure everyone has the resources, support, opportunities, and networks they need to thrive.

Reflect and mirror the very communities we are attempting to positively impact, making United Way of Greater Houston culturally competent and relevant for generations to come.

INVESTING WITH A FOCUS ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Our new investment process, from which the first investments will be made in early 2022, considers how the organizations and services we will invest in serve Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, groups that have historically been held back by unjust systems, policies, and attitudes. Our investments will also consider how the organizations we invest in promote and prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

ALICE AND BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR

The racial and ethnic disparities in hardship are growing, not shrinking. ALICE research documents the persistent and widening disparities in income and wealth between Black households and households of other races and ethnicities.

60% of Black households and 58% of Hispanic households in Greater Houston are unable to afford basic household essentials in their communities.

The Kinder Institute for Urban Research found that where you live determines to a great extent how much access you have to quality education, health care, housing, public services, and more. One-third of the Black population and almost one-third of the Hispanic population of Texas live in an economically distressed community.
United Way THRIVE is a collaborative of nonprofit partners plus government agencies, community colleges, employers, and other partners that work together to provide comprehensive services to support hardworking, lower-income families in their efforts to achieve financial stability.

United Way THRIVE helps families achieve financial stability by focusing on three key goals:

**INCREASING INCOME** includes job training and education, finding higher paying jobs, and free income tax preparation.

**BUILDING SAVINGS** involves developing better financial habits through financial education and coaching, reducing debt, and starting a savings plan.

**ACQUIRING ASSETS** means saving for a car, a home, higher education, or a business through savings match programs and access to safe and affordable loans.

**UNITED WAY THRIVE SUPPORTS FAMILIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE FINANCIAL STABILITY**

United Way THRIVE gives families the tools, resources and support to attain what every family wants: good jobs with good wages, safe and affordable housing, financial security, and success for their children.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF UNITED WAY THRIVE’S 12TH YEAR:**

25,364 tax returns completed with more than $45.8 million in refunds

49,650 families helped on the pathway to financial stability

1,792 clients placed into new or better jobs, for an average wage of $14.75/hour

13,059 families received financial education and coaching, with coaching clients collectively increasing their savings by $1 million

2,118 individuals increased their credit score

15,113 individuals received workforce development services

Nearly 130 loans were dispersed, providing over $1 million in safe and affordable loans

85 families purchased a home

85 families purchased a home
Capital Good Fund

In partnership with Capital Good Fund, THRIVE launched a small dollar crisis relief loan to help those impacted by the pandemic and the winter storm. These loans range from $300-$1,500 at a 5% APR and can be used for anything from medical expenses to rent, or to support paying off a payday loan. Safe and affordable loans are critical to helping people through times of financial uncertainty.

Houston Saves

In partnership with JPMorgan Chase and Saver Life, United Way THRIVE launched Houston Saves, a savings initiative that helped Greater Houston Area residents build a savings cushion to prepare for future disasters and to rebuild their savings post-Hurricane Harvey. Of the 252 individuals who began saving through the program, 65% increased their savings by an average of $712.

Helping through COVID-19

THRIVE partner organizations immediately responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by helping individuals and families who had lost employment stabilize themselves through access to key community resources, ongoing coaching, and help getting back into the workforce.

THRIVE partners also supported clients with access to technology and digital tools, and help developing the skills needed to transition to a virtual environment.

THRIVE led two cohorts of financial coaches through a new virtual 16-hour training curriculum. Financial coaches received ongoing support on how to coach during a pandemic through Coaching Huddles and webinars.

UNITED WAY THRIVE AND ALICE

Low incomes limit a family’s ability to:
• Live in a safe, prosperous neighborhood
• Afford a reliable car or healthy food
• Access quality child care, education, and health care

What does it mean when ALICE has savings?
• Ability to withstand emergencies without impacting long-term financial stability
• 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 community spending on emergency health, food, and senior services
A free, confidential social services helpline operated by United Way of Greater Houston, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is the largest helpline of its kind in the country and one of our community’s most valuable resources.

With dedicated United Way THRIVE, seniors, and veterans specialists on staff, 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE connects families and veterans with resources to meet their unique needs. 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is also the information resource before, during, and after disasters, connecting people in need with up-to-the-minute information and critical services.

IN 2020:

- **227,134** people connected with utility assistance
- **211,134** people connected with food assistance
- **207,440** people connected with rent or mortgage assistance
- **148,407** people connected with health care
- **63,451** people connected with housing or shelter

The number to call in times of disaster

Throughout the pandemic, the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE has provided reliable and up-to-date resources for our neighbors in need, connecting more than 260,000 people with assistance. The governor of Texas named 211 the number to call for COVID-19-related needs, including testing, basic needs assistance, and assistance related to furloughs, layoffs, and Stay at Home orders.

As our community grappled with freezing temperatures, power and water outages, and other hardships during the February 2021 winter storm, our 211 HELPLINE added a new text feature that allowed callers to request texts letting them know of winter storm resources. More than 400,000 texts were sent to 20,000 individuals through this feature.

In August of 2020, our 211/Texas United Way HELPLINE connected more than 21,000 people with help related to Hurricane Laura while also helping to answer 211 calls for our affected neighbors in Louisiana.
**Expanding Ride United**

For several years, United Way has partnered with Lyft to provide free rides to veterans and to people with specific health care, employment, and disaster relief needs. As part of the program, our 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE has connected hundreds of callers in our community with free rides to help them access these much-needed services.

In 2020, a grant from United Way Worldwide expanded the Ride United initiative to include delivery of food and supplies by DoorDash, in addition to providing essential transportation. This partnership enables us to work with local social service organizations to reach people in need by using DoorDash to make deliveries to at-risk and food-insecure homes. To date, more than 6,100 local deliveries of food and essential items have been completed by Dashers supporting Ride United’s Last Mile Delivery program.

**Serving those who serve through Mission United**

With United Way Mission United, all it takes is one call to 211 for veterans, active duty military members, and their families to be connected with a dedicated case coordinator who will guide them from beginning to end, helping them find and access resources to meet their unique needs, including employment assistance, food, housing, health care, financial services, and legal assistance.

United Way invests in those services through grants to organizations that provide specific services to veterans. Last year, United Way awarded grants totaling $175,000 to eight organizations serving veterans.

United Way of Greater Houston regularly brings together organizations that serve veterans to exchange information, collaborate, and solve issues facing veterans.

**Making 211 data available to the community**

In September of 2020, the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE published dynamic dashboards of connection activity online. Interactive filters allow for a deeper look into the data and a separate COVID-19-related dashboard provides a look at needs related to the pandemic. While United Way has long used 211 data to track needs and inform investments, these dashboards represent the first time that 211 activity is available for study by the community and stakeholders. Explore the data at [https://www.unitedwayhouston.org/work/211/211-data-dashboard/](https://www.unitedwayhouston.org/work/211/211-data-dashboard/).

**ALICE AND 211**

This map shows the concentration of ALICE households across our area in shades of blue overlaid with the number of calls to 211 for utility assistance, food assistance, rent or mortgage assistance, health care, and housing or shelter.
United Way Bright Beginnings
This innovative early childhood education program is supported by ExxonMobil and designed to help children from vulnerable families achieve social, emotional, physical, and cognitive milestones and enter school ready to succeed.

This past year, 36 United Way Bright Beginnings Centers provided 1,188 children with quality early childhood education.

United Way Bright Beginnings alumni are less likely than their peers to drop out of school (49% v. 72%), consistently have higher rates of attendance, and are less likely to be chronically absent.

Summer Grants
Summer learning looked radically different because of COVID-19, but United Way-supported summer learning projects continued with partners pivoting to virtual and hybrid models. This past summer, 14 grant-funded projects kept nearly 800 young people engaged, learning, and safe during the summer months.

Out 2 Learn
Out 2 Learn, a partnership between United Way of Greater Houston, Houston Endowment, the City of Houston, and the Harris County Department of Education’s CASE for Kids, improves the quality of and access to out-of-school programs. This year, Out 2 Learn funded 18 projects to help remove barriers, including language, technology, and cost barriers, that stop youth and families from participating in out-of-school programming. These projects touched the lives of 1,388 youth and 385 parents and caregivers.

United Way M.A.T.H.
We found creative ways to keep learning alive this past summer, including a partnership with YMCA of Greater Houston - Texans Site to bring United Way M.A.T.H. Camp to 30 students. M.A.T.H. Camp helped students sharpen their skills and avoid the learning loss many experience while out of school. Each child in the program walked away with a brand-new iPad and keyboard to aid in their learning and help close the digital divide exacerbated by the pandemic.

Math in a Flash
In partnership with ConocoPhillips and Houston Public Media, we continued this series of animated math problems that air during PBS Kids programs. This year, a new Problem Solvers component featured ConocoPhillips employees explaining key concepts and how they use math in their jobs.

Parent and Family Engagement
Parents and family members play an important role in kids’ success, so we partnered with ALAR Institute, Children’s Museum Houston, Houston Area Urban League, and St. James to support 8,000 students and family members in Aldine, Alief, Houston, and Spring Branch ISDs with ESL classes, STEM and reading support, nutritional needs, and other resources.

Youth Success and ALICE
What does it mean for young people when ALICE has sufficient income?

• 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
United Way Centers house a wide variety of health and human service providers that help with basic needs, counseling, services for children and youth, employment services and other critical needs. Within our four Centers, community members can access a variety of agencies and programs, plus United Way THRIVE services, information and referral, and meeting space.

United Way THRIVE at our Centers

Each of our Centers houses a United Way THRIVE Center, a community-based one-stop shop providing individuals and families with services to support them in their efforts to achieve financial stability. At each center, clients can access bundled services like employment, financial, and resource support coaching, and vocational training.

This past year, 399 new and 1,277 active THRIVE clients received critical services and support at our United Way Centers.

Client Journey Pilot

The THRIVE Center at Bay Area launched a pilot program this past year that has been critical to informing and building United Way’s Second Century Vision integrated client journey.

As part of this pilot, we:

• Successfully conducted a 14-month tracking of 1,098 clients, of which 268 took advantage of the integrated client journey and 830 of which received one-time assistance
• Partnered with 12 nonprofit agencies to provide services and participate in monthly learning circles
• Collected learnings and best practices to develop additional pilots, implement in other THRIVE Centers, and inform the navigation piece of our Second Century Vision
• Conducted 567 assessments to track clients’ progress throughout their journey
• The majority of clients in the pilot increased their self-sufficiency by 83% from intake to the six-month mark, and 74% of participants increased their self-sufficiency from intake to the 12-month mark

Women Who Rock Child Care Scholarship

Our eighth annual and first-ever virtual Women Who Rock event, a signature Montgomery County event that supports the Women Who Rock Child Care Scholarship, inspired attendees to rock out virtually, and raised nearly $100,000 to provide child care scholarships and other support to young parents pursuing post-secondary education. To date, 16 young parents have received their degrees or certifications thanks to the scholarship and the generous donors who support it.
United Way Nonprofit Connection continues to be Houston’s primary resource for nonprofit management and leadership development.

This year, Nonprofit Connection offerings went virtual, providing our region’s nonprofits with critical and accessible resources in a rapidly-changing environment.

**Power Tools for Nonprofits**
The first-ever virtual Power Tools for Nonprofits Conference was held in November 2020, drawing 600+ attendees. The program included 24 sessions on topics of vital interest to nonprofit staff and board members, including sustaining the viability of nonprofits in tough economic climates and increasing staff and volunteer morale, productivity, and creativity. A new diversity, equity, and inclusion track featured keynoters Dr. Jean Latting, president, Leading Consciously, and Dr. Charles Shaw, global director, Learning for Diversity/Inclusion at Facebook.

**Project Blueprint**
United Way Project Blueprint prepares emerging and current leaders in our multicultural community for leadership on nonprofit and public sector boards. Participants take part in an extensive curriculum that prepares them to become successful board members. Members of Project Blueprint Class XXXVIII graduated in October of 2020 and were connected with board service opportunities aligned with their individual community service passions and preferences.

“The need for Project Blueprint was apparent to Dorothy Caram and other founders 30 some years ago when Houston was less diverse. Although Houston is now considered the most diverse city in America, the boards of most area nonprofits do not reflect the demographics of those served. We need to go beyond statements on Diversity and Inclusion and have real representation on our boards to provide all of our constituents a voice.”

David Ruiz  
Community Relations Manager,  
Bank of America, Project Blueprint Alum

**Nonprofit Law Institute**
Nonprofit Connection hosted the annual Nonprofit Law Institute with Houston Young Lawyers/Houston Bar Association, providing vital legal information at no cost to nonprofits that often lack ready access to legal counsel. Topics covered at the Institute included human resources, compliance, fundraising, and the impact of the pandemic on nonprofits.

**Nonprofit Business Roundtable**
Nonprofit Connection, in partnership with Silver Fox Advisors and corporate retirees who serve as advisors, coaches, and consultants to small businesses formed a special Nonprofit Business Roundtable for nonprofits, providing facilitators to lead timely discussions on challenges faced during the pandemic and beyond.

“Silver Fox Advisors, an association of deeply experienced former Houston-area business leaders, are thrilled to be able to collaborate with the United Way and a dozen local nonprofit organizations working to support, bolster, and advance our community through the Silver Fox Advisors-United Way CEO Nonprofit Round Table.”

Gerald Merfish  
Silver Fox Advisors
Client to Consultant Bridge
This year, Nonprofit Connection joined forces with Client to Consultant Bridge (C2CB), a group of compassionate pro bono consultants formed to help nonprofits and small businesses get through the COVID-19 crisis and prepare for whatever comes next. Their two-part webinar series on scenario planning introduced nonprofits to a new approach to planning used by the corporate sector to avoid the pitfalls inherent in strategy development.

“We have been teaching participants “how to fish” and learn to develop their own questions and find the answers to successfully navigate the turbulent shoals of today’s environment. Through C2CB, our pro-bono group, we have focused our energies on helping organizations deal with and even thrive in these COVID times. Our work with not-for-profits this year has shown us that these organizations have the personnel and the mission + vision to survive in these times but need to focus their resources and attention on the key areas that drive growth and their reason for being.”

Lin Giralt
CMC™, Academic Fellow ICMCI,
IMGB Innovation Management Green Belt™
Director, Lambda International Consultants, LLC

Nonprofit Connection presented the 2021 Bank of America Speaker series featuring nationally recognized speaker Drew Dudley, the bestselling author of This is Day One: A Practical Guide to Leadership That Matters.

Partnership with Rice University
In partnership with Rice University’s Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, Nonprofit Connection launched a series of webinars on timely topics designed to support area nonprofits as they navigated the challenges of 2020. This partnership greatly expanded audience reach for both the Rice Center and for Nonprofit Connection.

Ink on the Page
Nonprofit Connection presented the annual Ink on the Page event featuring philanthropic funders including The Robert and Janice McNair Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, and Houston Methodist. The interactive session targeted grant writers eager to gain insight from panel members about their grantmaking priorities.

As one of the most diverse regions in the country, it’s vital that Greater Houston’s nonprofit and public sector boards reflect our rich diversity. Graduates of Project Blueprint Class XXXVIII join a network of 900+ program alumni serving their communities.

Reimagining Your Nonprofit
In collaboration with the National Association of Corporate Directors, Dini Spheris, the Robert and Janice McNair Foundation, and the Rice Center on Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, Nonprofit Connection presented Reimagining Your Nonprofit, a panel discussion around how nonprofits can navigate continuous change and evolving needs.

Nonprofit Connection Virtual Resources
Nonprofit Connection inaugurated its own webinar platform to ensure that area nonprofits would have access to regular leadership and professional development opportunities. Content included cybersecurity, fundraising best practices, data visualization, digital marketing, understanding racial trauma, volunteer management, and grant writing.

Nonprofit Connection also secured remote access to the Candid (formerly Foundation Collection) searchable foundation database, making it possible for nonprofit clients to conduct their grant writing research virtually.
Notes of Encouragement
More than 1,400 people used our virtual portal to write notes of encouragement to doctors, nurses, delivery workers, grocery store employees, and homebound seniors, letting them know their community was thinking about them and cheering them on throughout the pandemic.

Give Back Bingo
257 United Way volunteers played Give Back Bingo, completing a variety of volunteer projects, acts of kindness, and a special bingo card during this year’s United Way campaign.

Read Across America
While volunteers couldn’t go into school buildings to read with students, we found new ways to celebrate Read Across America this year! 70 volunteers joined classrooms via Zoom and Microsoft Teams to read to nearly 1,500 students.

Stay United to the Work
Stay United members participated in a donation and card drive to assist the residents of Fort Bend Gardens, a high-rise affordable apartment community for seniors 62 and older, and for people with disabilities. These seniors were affected by both COVID-19 and the Texas Severe Winter Storm, and Stay United members helped replace important items they had lost.

Days of Action
In June, September, and November of 2020, United Way hosted virtual and remote Days of Action that brought together 1,339 volunteers who made breakfast bags, learning kits, donated socks and underwear, designed care cards, created Thanksgiving Meal Kits, and completed other projects to help make life a little easier for those affected by the pandemic.

Volunteers are at the Heart of Our Work
Though our world looked different this year, thousands of caring volunteers stepped up, got creative, and shared their time and talent to help our neighbors and our community through an especially tough time. This past year, more than 6,000 volunteers contributed 10,244 hours to United Way of Greater Houston. The time they have so generously given is valued at $278,600— but to United Way and the people we serve, it is truly priceless!
Women’s Initiative Virtual Wrap and Wine Volunteer Project

Women’s Initiative members held a holiday book drive and collected more than 800 books to support United Way Bright Beginnings students. Gathering virtually, members wrapped books and caught up with friends. After a successful drive through drop-off, Women’s Initiative members were able to help make the holidays brighter for 450 students at five United Way agencies.

Project Undercover

This year, nine companies and 435 individuals donated nearly 18,000 items to this annual socks and underwear drive, providing a week’s worth of socks and underwear for 2,000 Greater Houston Area students. Having these essentials allows students to start school focused on learning rather than necessities.

LINC Wi-Fi Drive

In December, LINC members hosted a unique virtual event that raised money to support 33 families with home internet to help close the digital divide and provide students with the connection they needed to successfully complete the school year.

LINC Study Snack Packs and Book Buddies

More than 80 LINC members, along with their friends and families, came together to make 1,160 after-school snack packs and 116 book buddies to support students. Volunteers created, decorated, and delivered these study snack packs to students at three of our partner agencies!

Loaned Executives

We thank the 11 Loaned Executives who helped share the United Way message and support the Community Campaign this year. Thank you to ExxonMobil and Hanover Company for lending employees.

MLK Day of Service Book Drive

In partnership with Houston ISD, United Way hosted a book drive for MLK Day of Service and Black History Month, collecting and putting into the hands of young people more than 550 books written by diverse authors and featuring diverse characters. Thanks to United Way Young Leaders, who made a special effort to collect and donate books for this drive.
Million Dollar Corporate Donor Circle
This year, 11 companies contributed one million dollars or more to the annual campaign. ExxonMobil topped the list with $11.3 million, followed by ConocoPhillips with $3.8 million and Phillips 66 with $2.5 million. Rounding out the million dollar circle: H-E-B ($1.9 million); CenterPoint Energy ($1.6 million); Enbridge ($1.2 million); TechnipFMC ($1.2 million); Williams ($1.1 million); BHP ($1.1 million); Service Corporation International ($1 million); and Memorial Hermann Health System ($1 million).

Campaign Co-Chairs
Claudia Aguirre
Decie Autin
Kedrin Bell
Cody Brackeen
Jason Canter
Jay Fairley
Caroline Fant
Martyn E. Goossen
Lauren Ivers
Gary Justice
Chris LaFollette
Bonita Lockings
Scott McLean
Tara Nutik
Sue E. Payne
Jan-Claire Phillips
Judson Robinson III
Kelly Rose

Alexis de Tocqueville Society
Led by Decie Autin, Marty Goossen, and Sue Payne, the Alexis de Tocqueville Society contributed more than $15.6 million this year, with 601 members, including 83 new members contributing $1.2 million.

Alexis de Tocqueville Society Major Donors
Major Donors ($25,000-plus) are a powerful force for good in our community. This year, we salute the 145 Major Donors who impact our United Way and our community in a major way, collectively giving more than $10.3 million. We also thank the 14 donors who used the Challenge Match to be recognized as Major Donors, bringing the group’s total membership to 159 donors collectively giving $10.6 million.
Forty-Three Families Contributed $100,000 or More

Our Luminaries ($1,000,000-plus), Visionaries ($200,000-$999,999), and Benefactors ($100,000-$199,999) are extraordinary leaders whose generosity ensures United Way has a strong foundation for the future. This incredible group has grown to 43 families contributing more than $6.6 million. We proudly recognize and thank our Luminaries, Visionaries, and Benefactors.

Luminaries

Charles Butt
Nancy and Rich Kinder
(Founding Luminaries)

Visionaries

Morgan and Chris Brown
Janet and John Carrig
Steve and Pat Chazen
John B. Hess
Mrs. Janice McNair

Benefactors

Dorothy and Mickey Ables
Joan and Stanford Alexander
Skip and Shirley Allen
Mo and Ric Campo
Ann and Clarence Cazalot
Linda and Willie Chiang
Nancy and Charles Davidson
Anne and Charles W. Duncan, Jr.
The Elkins Foundation
Lynn and John Elsenhans
Patti and Richard Everett
Jana and Richard Fant
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Friedkin
Greg and Gail Garland
Wendy and Jeff Hines
Walter Johnson and Yvonne Johnson
Sandy and Kent Ketchum
Rochelle and Max Levit

Women’s Initiative

The United Way Women’s Initiative, led by Jay Fairley of Enbridge and Tara Nutik of Deloitte Houston, raised $4.4 million in 2020-2021, with 620 members. Throughout the year, members had unique opportunities to network, learn, and serve, including hosting a book drive and wrapping event, learning about the murals of Hannah Hall at Texas Southern University, and partnering with the Houston Women’s Chamber on professional development conferences.

Young Leaders

Nearly 1,500 United Way Young Leaders, led by Lauren Ivers of Deloitte and Cody Brackeen of Comerica Bank, contributed more than $2.8 million to support United Way’s work during 2020-2021. This year, in addition to networking and opportunities to hear and learn from business and community leaders, Young Leaders contributed books to the MLK Jr. Book Drive and created mentoring videos for students at our partner agencies.

Law Initiative

The United Way Law Initiative, led by Christine B. LaFollette of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP and Kelly Rose of ConocoPhillips, and supported by a strong committee, raised more than $1.2 million this year with support from 30 law firms. Known as the “Dream Team,” the co-chairs and their committee met their goal of increasing leadership donors and the number of campaigns in the legal community.

Planned Giving

Long-term planning became a priority for many during the pandemic, and United Way of Greater Houston made progress in developing a planned giving program, including launching a planned giving website and newsletter. Ten new charitable bequests were disclosed this year, bringing the total of documented planned gifts to more than $4.7 million. In addition, more than $216,000 in realized estate gifts was received this year.

We are so thankful to the foundations that invested in our work this year.

Bank of America Foundation
Bayou Charitable Trust
The Brown Foundation
The Cullen Foundation
The Elkins Foundation
Harris County Albert and Ethel Herzstein Foundation
John P. McGovern Foundation

The Robert and Janice McNair Foundation
Fred and Mabel Park Foundation
PNC Foundation
The Powell Foundation
Charlotte B. Proehl Foundation
Strake Foundation
Wells Fargo Foundation
The Wortham Foundation
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In addition to the Community Impact Committee, Stephen has served as a board member and on the board’s Executive Committee, the Executive Compensation Committee, and the Strategic Thinking Executive Committee.

Stephen is known for his steady leadership, his thoughtful and supportive nature, and a sense of humor that puts people at ease.

He is strategic and level-headed, always keeping United Way's mission and promise of good stewardship at the forefront. He is down-to-earth and compassionate; he is a hardworking small business owner, a committed community volunteer, and a proud husband and father.

Stephen's father once gave him a piece of advice: to do things for the right reasons without expecting anything in return. It is evident in who he is and all he does that Stephen has taken that advice to heart.

Thank you, Stephen, for all you do for United Way and our community.
In addition to championing their own company campaigns, Caring Champions generously sponsor campaign activities and visibility efforts throughout the year.

We thank our media partners for their generous support:

Brivic Media
Carbonara Group
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DenaJoy Communications
Concierge
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Houston Public Media
KHOU

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H-E-B Houston

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Angel Harris
Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer
Wendy Johnson
Vice President, Human Resources, and Chief Administrative Officer

Lynne Cook
Vice President, Communications, and Chief Brand Officer
Margaret Oser
Vice President, Mission and Strategy

Mary Vazquez
Vice President, Community Outreach

For a complete 2020-2021 financial summary, visit unitedwayhouston.org.