

2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



UNITED WAY
Racine County

OUR PROMISE

United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive.

OUR MISSION

Mobilizing the caring power of Racine County to improve lives and transform our community.

OUR VISION

United Way envisions a community where individuals and families achieve their potential through healthy lives, education and financial stability.



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I’m so pleased to present United Way of Racine County’s first-ever Annual Impact Report. This new report reflects our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, a central pillar of our 2024-2026 strategic plan. Each year, we will continue to provide a traditional annual report with financial information, but we felt it was equally important to highlight impact in a dedicated way. Measuring outcomes is essential to understanding whether our work truly strengthens student success, family stability, and overall community well-being.

In these pages, you’ll see data and stories that underscore the difference our collective efforts are making for Racine County residents. Every data point represents not just outputs – numbers served, or hours invested – but also outcomes: lives changed, and futures strengthened.

Our 2025 trust and perception survey showed us that United Way of Racine County is seen as a critical leader and collaborator. That trust is not something we take lightly. It is the foundation of all we do.

Our role is more than raising and distributing funds. We are committed to strengthening the nonprofit sector in Racine County – equipping local leaders through our United Horizons program, fostering collaboration among organizations, and building the capacity our community needs to tackle challenges together.

Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in what we can achieve together. This report is not only a reflection of progress made – it is a promise of the thriving community we are working to build for every person in Racine County.

With gratitude,

Ali Haigh

Ali Haigh
President & CEO
United Way of Racine County



Scan the QR code to view our Annual Reports.

A Community Partnership That Changes Lives at Knapp

At Knapp Community School, the difference good partnerships can make is written in the lives of its students. Principal Rich Wytonick recalls one student in particular – an older child who, for years, was the “perfect student.” Quiet, focused and dependable, he came to school each day ready to learn. But one year, things changed.

“He started struggling in ways we hadn’t seen before,” Wytonick said. “There was anger, frustration – signs something deeper was going on.” After reaching out to the family, the school connected him with a school-based mental health therapist provided through Children’s Wisconsin, one of Knapp’s community partners supported by United Way of Racine County.

“Within six weeks, he had turned a complete 180,” Wytonick said. “It was like a weight had been lifted. That kind of support simply wouldn’t have been possible without the community school model.”

That student’s story illustrates how United Way of Racine County’s LIFT strategy investment extends beyond academics. Nearly 90 percent of Knapp’s students come from families that are below poverty level, which means challenges like food insecurity, unstable housing, and stress at home can make it difficult for children to focus in class.

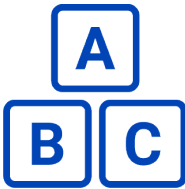


Through its community school partnership, Knapp is more able to meet those needs with after-school programs, monthly community nights, leadership development opportunities, and access to critical family resources.

The results speak for themselves. A decade ago, Knapp was one of the lowest-performing schools in the state. Student turnover and absenteeism were high, and staff morale was low. Today, test scores and attendance are climbing, discipline issues are down, and teachers and staff enroll their own children and grandchildren at Knapp.

Wytonick said United Way of Racine County is the backbone of this progress. “I’ve been in education for over 28 years, and I’ve never seen another organization have this kind of impact,” he said. “They’ve helped us rebuild trust with families, given kids opportunities they wouldn’t otherwise have, and truly transformed this school.”

And for families at Knapp, that transformation is more than numbers on a report card – it’s a chance for their children to thrive.



56% increase in participation at family engagement events at Knapp Community School over the past three school years



24% decrease in chronic absenteeism rate from 2022 to 2024 at three UWRC community schools



5% increase in attendance rate from 2022 to 2024 at three UWRC community schools



State report card improvement since becoming a UWRC community school:
Knapp: 4.9 points
Julian Thomas: 9.2 points
Mitchell: 4.9 points

Data courtesy of Racine Unified School District



A Friendship That Began With Grief: UWRC and BSAC Help Two Widows Rebuild Their Lives After Loss

When Kay and Sharon each lost their husbands within a month of one another, both were left searching for a way forward. What they found at the Burlington Senior Activity Center (BSAC) not only helped them navigate their grief but also sparked a friendship that has since taken them around the world.



“I didn’t even know the Burlington Senior Center existed until a friend told me about a grief share class,” Kay said. “That’s how we met two and a half years ago now and something between us just clicked.”

For Sharon, who started attending the class at her daughter’s urging, Kay’s arrival marked a turning point. “She was very quiet at first because she was so down,” Sharon said. “And then all of a sudden, she just perked right up. The class is amazing – it really got us through some difficult times.”

Both women endured painful journeys as caregivers before their husbands died. Kay was married nearly 53 years, caring for her husband at home through Alzheimer’s until the final weeks of his life. Sharon watched her husband of 42 years deteriorate from progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare neurological disease.

For seniors, social isolation can mean more than just feeling lonely. It can significantly increase the risk of serious health problems, including dementia, heart disease and stroke. The risk is comparable to smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, according to National Institutes of Health studies. Just one hour of socialization a week can help decrease risks of dementia and depression.

Despite the heaviness of their losses, the friendship Sharon and Kay formed through BSAC has opened doors to joy and adventure. The two now regularly attend the center’s outings, supper clubs, and trips – finding comfort in companionship at

mealtimes especially. “It’s lonely to eat supper alone every night,” Kay said. “The supper clubs are a godsend.”

United Way of Racine County’s support of BSAC’s Supper Club and Connect and Thrive program provides connection, purpose and hope for older adults who may feel isolated. An estimated one-third of Racine County seniors live alone. BSAC staff are licensed social workers and are on the lookout for attendees showing signs of depression and illness.

Sharon and Kay both credit BSAC staff for creating a welcoming environment that made such a friendship possible. “When I first came in, I broke down in Patty’s office,” Kay said. “She told me, ‘You’re not going home. You’re staying for bingo.’ That was the start of everything.”

For Sharon, the support is vital. “The most important thing the Senior Center offers is the chance to talk to people who are going through the same thing,” she said. “You realize you’re not alone. And Patty and Kim are always there with a smile and a hug.”

Now, instead of facing loss in isolation, Kay and Sharon have built a shared life filled with laughter, travel, and community. “Oh, I would be lost without her,” Kay said softly. “I really would.”



8,998 medical and dental appointments were provided to program participants to help manage acute and chronic conditions



7,046 individuals connected to support systems through United Way-funded health programs are now able to identify healthy coping skills and make healthy choices



From Survivor to Advocate: One Woman’s Journey

At just 17 years old, Christina Trinidad found herself amid the unthinkable – navigating the aftermath of telling her grandmother about the years of abuse she suffered at the hands of her father.

It was at that fragile moment that she met Rachel, a representative from BeLEAF Survivors, a United Way of Racine County impact partner. That introduction would mark the beginning of a healing journey that has since transformed her life – and is helping to transform the lives of other survivors.

BeLEAF Survivors is the sexual assault service provider for Racine County, addressing the needs of victims with 24-hour hospital response for victims, a 24-hour helpline, therapy, support groups, advocacy and education and awareness efforts. From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, BeLEAF’s crisis hotline fielded 401 calls.

Christina, now 36 and the mother of five, said she remembers the feeling she got when she first walked into a counselor’s office at BeLEAF Survivors. “My counselor’s demeanor made feel like I was in a safe place. And she told me I didn’t have to talk about it. She said ‘Just take your time. There’s no rush.’ That made me feel like I was in a safe place, like I was going to be heard and not judged.”

Healing did not happen overnight. Christina struggled being consistent with therapy, dealt with flashbacks and nightmares, and the silence of a family that avoided talking about the abuse. BeLEAF offered something she desperately needed: a safe place to



98% of participants in United Way of Racine County-supported parenting programs reported increased positive engagements with their children



92% of middle and high school participants in a United Way-supported program reduced or avoided risky behavior surrounding tobacco, drugs and alcohol

be herself. A support group proved especially pivotal. “Hearing the people in the support group share their emotions, the mistakes they made in their lives, and so much anger and hate they had toward their abuser, I realized I’m not alone. I’m not crazy. I’m not the only person going through these things. My story matters, my voice matters.”

Over time, her connection with BeLEAF grew deeper. What began as a client seeking refuge turned into a calling. First, she became a volunteer advocate, supporting others through hospital visits and crisis line calls. Eventually, she joined the board of directors and now serves as its vice president.

Her motivation is simple but powerful: “I know what it’s like be without support after a traumatic experience. I didn’t want anyone else to feel like that because I know how hard it is.”

Christina is working toward a degree in counseling and continues to use her lived experience to guide others toward healing. Though the trauma will never fully disappear, her strength is undeniable.

“My healing journey has been like building a brick wall,” she said. “Each milestone, each piece of support, was another brick. Now, I hope I can be that person for other survivors.”



86% of more than 2,400 program participants reported improved mental health, leading to increased ability to maintain employment and care for themselves and their families



87% of callers to 211 seeking help with substance use disorder issues reported their needs were met



**Building Boards, Building Community:
Tony Simpson's United Horizons Story**

For Tony Simpson, joining United Horizons board training program was about curiosity and preparation. “It was a two-part thing,” he said. “One, I was very curious. I’m a continuous learner, so I wanted to learn more about board structures. But I met a gentleman at the Racine YMCA named Brian Lee who referred me to it and said this would be a good program to learn more about serving on the board.”

The six-week program from United Way of Racine County gave Tony a strong foundation for nonprofit board service. United Way of Racine County was one of three United Ways in Wisconsin to receive funding for a training program from Serve Wisconsin and AmeriCorps.

“A lot of the skills have been transferable,” he said. “We had a class on governance. Another one was how to look at the books and financing.”

Today, Tony puts those lessons into practice as a member of two local nonprofit boards – the Racine YMCA and the Racine Symphony Orchestra. His connection to the Y runs deep. “I grew up going there. I come from a very large family, and the YMCA has subsidized programs to allow families that couldn’t necessarily afford membership to be able to be there. I spent some of my summers there, playing sports. I was always passionate about the YMCA.”

After attending a couple of the Racine Symphony Orchestra’s performances, he found that board to be a good fit, as well.



**United
HORIZONS**



**88% of 2025 trust and perception
survey respondents consider
UWRC a community leader**



**98% of respondents agree or
strongly agree that UWRC has a
significant impact in Racine County**



**90% of respondents consider
UWRC’s partnership critical to their
organization’s success**

“I had a really good time and I really meshed with their people,” he said. “I decided to help them out as well.”

Tony’s board service also complements his professional role at CNH, where he manages community and government relations. “I see the community focus that CNH has, and (board service) meshes exactly with what I’m doing professionally; to be more involved in the community,” he said.

Tony is one of 51 graduates from three cohorts of United Horizons. An additional 29 people participated in the organization

track, representing 17 nonprofits. More than 700 hours of instruction was completed by all participants.

“I think it takes everyone to make a community really thrive. And that’s what United Horizons kind of showed me – that there is a need out there for people to volunteer to help these nonprofits.”

The skills Tony and his classmates gained will help strengthen Racine County’s nonprofit sector. “It gave me a lot of insight into the community, things I didn’t even know after living here most of my life.” he said.



Interested in joining this rewarding training program? United Horizons will be launching additional cohorts soon! Visit UnitedWayRacine.org/UH to learn more.





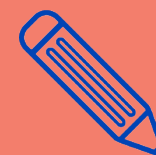
3,238 students, family members and community served at three UWRC community schools



71,192 books delivered to 7,346 Racine County children through Imagination Library



948 federal tax returns filed for VITA clients, bringing \$1.48 million in credits and refunds back to Racine County



2,497 students participated in United Way-supported extended learning programs and 90% increased career-ready skills like communication and critical thinking



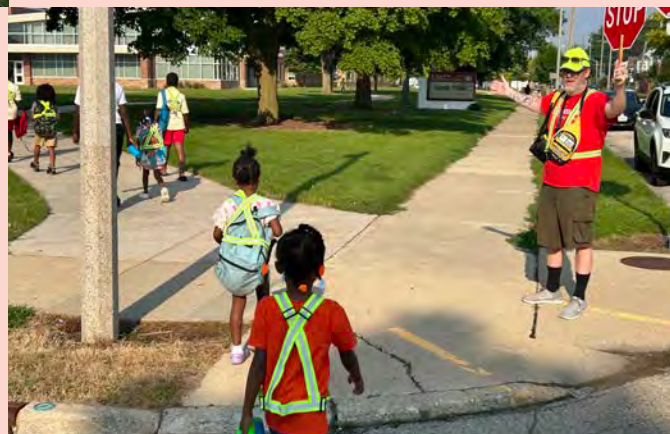
76% of participants in United Way-supported financial stability programs obtained employment



85% of participants in United Way-supported financial stability programs earned high school credentials, expanding the job opportunities available to them



1,010.9 miles walked in 2,404 trips by Walking School Bus students at two UWRC community schools



43,438 Racine County residents served through Equity Innovation Fund projects



United Way-Led Programs



Born Learning
Trails



LIFT | Community Schools **Schools of Hope** **United HORIZONS**

**VOLUNTEER
ADVISORY
TEAMS**

VITA

**Walking
School Bus**

**WOMEN
UNITED®**

YAR
Youth As Resources

United Way-Supported Programs

BeLEAF Survivors

- Sexual Assault Services
- Stop Child Abuse & Neglect (SCAN)

Burlington Senior Activity Center

- Connect & Thrive
- Supper Club

Children's Wisconsin - Children's Service Society of Wisconsin

- Child and Family Counseling
- School Based Mental Health

Focus on Community

- Advancing Family Assets
- FAST (Families and Schools Together)
- Opportunities Club
- Substance Abuse Prevention Program

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast

- Racine Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Health Care Network

- Health Care Services

Hospitality Center

- Daytime Meal Program

Housing Resources, Inc.

- Homebuyer Education & Counseling
- Racine Financial Empowerment Center

John 23 Educational Center

- Afterschool Programs

Lovingkindness Transitional Services

- Paths to Empowerment

NAMI Racine County

- NAMI Racine County

Racine County Food Bank

- Emergency Food Distribution

Racine County Public Health Division

- Hello Baby Racine County

Racine Family YMCA

- The School Achievers Program

Racine Friendship Clubhouse

- Work-Ordered Day

Racine Literacy Council

- Family Literacy

Racine Video Production Workshop

- Racine Video Production Workshop

Racine Vocational Ministry

- RVM Jobs Program

Racine Zoo

- Zoo Afterschool Program (ZAP)

SAFE Haven of Racine

- Girls Inc.
- Youth Shelter and Outreach Program

Scouting America Three Harbors Council

- Scout Reach

Sonnenberg Schools

- Applied Academic Skills

The Arc of Racine County, Inc.

- Building Skills toward Independence

The Homeless Assistance Leadership Organization (HALO)

- Shelter Program

Transitional Living Center

- Transitional Living Center

Union Grove High School

- School Based Mental Health

UW-Madison Extension Racine County

- Early Learning and School Readiness Project

UW-Parkside Continuing Education

- Nonprofit Fund Development Certificate

- 2025 Nonprofit Conference

Volunteer Center of Racine County

- Youth Volunteer Corps

Women's Resource Center

- Bethany Apartments
- WRC Empowerment Program

Youth For Christ - Southeastern Wisconsin

- Parent Life



Help Build Us Build a Thriving Community



Give to create lasting change for neighbors across Racine County.



Volunteer and turn small moments into lasting impact.



Connect with us on social media to stay informed and see the difference we're making together.



Scan the QR code to get involved and support your community.



Sources: 2024-25 indicator data, 2024-25 essential services outputs, 2024-25 complete disaggregated demographics, CI database, unless otherwise indicated

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