2026 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, youth opportunity and financial security.



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

What a year of impact it has been for Racine County.

People across our community came together to help their neighbors thrive and together, we made a meaningful difference. Children gained opportunities to learn and grow. Families accessed nutritious food, safe shelter and financial resources. People found support for their mental health and well-being. Local nonprofits strengthened their ability to respond to the needs of our community.

These accomplishments are connected. A child who has consistent access to food is better positioned to learn. A family with greater financial stability has more opportunity to build a secure future. A person who finds the right mental health support can strengthen their support systems and participate more fully in their community. When we invest in one part of a person's life, we can create positive momentum in others.

That is the heart of our Community Impact Agenda and the work you will see throughout this report. Across our focus areas of Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security and Community Resiliency, United Way of Racine County and our partners are creating meaningful change; not in isolation, but as part of a larger effort to help Racine County thrive.

None of this impact happens without our donors, volunteers and supporters. Generosity, partnership, volunteerism and belief in our community make this work possible. Together, we are not simply addressing individual challenges; we are creating stronger pathways for people and a stronger community for everyone.

We invite you to meet some of the people whose lives have been touched by programs supported by United Way of Racine County, and to see how, together, we are creating stronger pathways for people and a stronger community for everyone.

With gratitude,

Ali Haigh
President & CEO
United Way of Racine County



Scan the QR code to view our Community Impact Agenda & Annual Reports.

A Little Support Can Make a Big Difference

Sometimes, babies just cry.

For new parents, though, an unexplained crying spell can feel like a reason to worry. When Jordan Murphy's newborn son, Brooks, reached a stage when he cried without an obvious reason, Jordan remembered something she had learned during a Hello Baby visit: newborns can go through periods of "purple crying."

Knowing that helped her stay calm. Instead of wondering whether something was wrong, she remembered that there are times that babies simply cry, even though they are not hungry, tired or in need of a diaper change.

Jordan and her husband, Collin, were first-time parents, and they had plenty of questions when they brought Brooks home from the hospital. "You have all that help in the hospital, and then you get home and it kind of feels like you're on your own," Jordan said.

They were introduced to Hello Baby, a program of Racine County Public Health Division, while still in the hospital. The day after Brooks was born, a Hello Baby representative stopped by and offered an in-home visit with a nurse.

During the visit, nurse Wendi checked Brooks' height and weight, answered Jordan's questions and checked in on Jordan's mental health and anxiety. She also connected the family with local resources, including information about finding and evaluating childcare.

"I had a lot of anxiety about different things," Jordan said. "And I know people deal with a range of emotions afterwards, and having that additional support, whether you have a good support system or not at home, is really important."

The information about purple crying was one small piece of the visit, but it became useful a few weeks later when Jordan needed it. And Wendi's support didn't end when she left the house. Jordan continued to reach out with questions, including when Brooks was fussy and Jordan wasn't sure what he needed.

Wendi also helped Jordan adjust some of her expectations around caring for a newborn.

"Babies aren't that rigid. They're not robots," Jordan recalled Wendi telling her. "So, just feed when they need."

That combination of practical information and reassurance helped Jordan feel more confident as a new parent.



95% of participants in United Way of Racine County-supported parenting programs reported increased positive engagements with their children.

“When Wendi showed up, I was just very unsure about everything that I was doing,” Jordan said. “But she was very reassuring when she got there.”

Hello Baby made 337 visits to Racine County families during the 2025–2026 program year, connecting new parents with information, resources and support when they need it most.

For Jordan, that support made the transition into parenthood feel a little less overwhelming – and helped her know what to do when the baby cried and she wasn’t sure why.

Her recommendation for other parents is simple: “Take advantage of the program. It’s great.”



7,246 people connected to support networks through United Way-funded programs to help them better navigate life’s challenges.



Growing Into Leaders



When Koryna Franco's children joined the YMCA's Young Leaders Academy (YLA) at Julian Thomas Elementary School, she saw the program first as a parent.

Her twin daughters joined after-school YLA when they were in elementary school. Her son joined a year later, after Koryna noticed he was struggling with behavior at school.

"At first he didn't want to, but then he loved it," Koryna said. She said she appreciated the partnership with YLA leaders.

"There was somebody else in the school that I could talk to, and supported me and supported the teacher, and it was just great."

YLA gave her children more than something to do after school. The program combines homework support, leadership development, activities and opportunities to connect with trusted adults. Students learn about leadership traits such as courage, integrity, judgment and responsibility. It also focuses on what those qualities look like in everyday life; in school, at home and in the community.

"They know what it means," Koryna said. "And sometimes they don't have the support at home, so it helps to have somebody that they're like, 'Oh, she really does care.' "

2,711 students participated in United Way-supported extended learning opportunities, helping them build academic skills, confidence and connections to support success in school.

3,238 students, family members and community members were linked to family and individual resources and opportunities at United Way of Racine County's three community schools.

Koryna said she saw the difference in her own children. Her son found another adult who could reinforce expectations and encourage him. Her daughters learned to think about how their actions affected others and what it meant to be a leader.

One daughter, for example, became a steady friend and advocate for a classmate with autism, helping him navigate school and continuing to look out for him even after they went to different schools.

"I think it does have to do with just every day being told to be a leader," Koryna said. "That repetition – keeping that information in front of the kids. It means something."

Koryna became a YLA coordinator herself, first working with the program during its summer session before taking a position at Julian Thomas Elementary School.

Today, YLA serves students at Julian Thomas and Knapp elementary schools, two of United Way of Racine County's three community schools. During 2025–26, YLA served 77 students, providing a consistent after-school environment where young people can get help with homework, build relationships, explore new interests and practice leadership.

YLA's goal is for young people to leave with stronger relationships, practical leadership skills and a belief that they can make a positive difference in their communities. Program staff have seen former YLA participants go on to become police officers, social workers, educators and elected officials in Racine County.

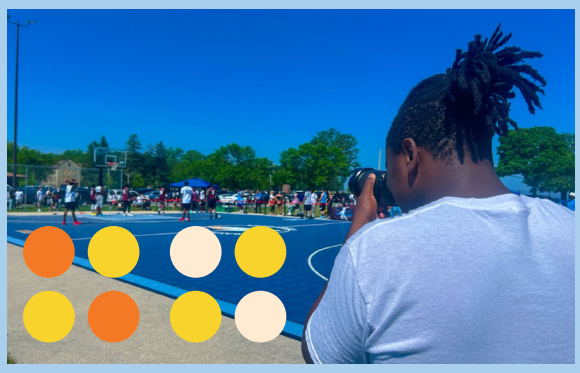
Tamarra Coleman, Racine Family YMCA CEO, said leadership development benefits not only the students who participate, but the community they will eventually help shape. "Engaged youth bring fresh ideas, energy and firsthand understanding of the challenges facing their schools, families and neighborhoods," she said. "Investing in youth leadership today helps build safer, more connected and more resilient communities tomorrow."

YLA LEADERSHIP TRAITS

- **Bearing:** The way you carry yourself
- **Courage:** The ability to face problems
- **Decisiveness:** The ability to make a decision
- **Enthusiasm:** To be excited
- **Initiative:** Ready to take the lead
- **Integrity:** To tell the truth
- **Judgment:** To make the right decision
- **Knowledge:** What you know
- **Loyalty:** To be faithful
- **Perseverance:** To never give up
- **Responsibility:** To be in charge of your actions
- **Unselfishness:** To think of others first

From High School Club to Creative Career





When Zuriel Lott joined Racine Video Production Workshop, he was a high school sophomore with an interest in video production and a curiosity about what a career in the industry might look like.

What he found was an opportunity to learn by doing.

After transferring to Case High School, Zuriel learned about Racine Video Production Workhop's after-school club for Racine County high schoolers and its internship program. He reached out through the RVPW's YouTube channel, interviewed and joined the program. During his internship, he helped cover community events and organizations, including the Juneteenth parade, local public safety departments and Habitat for Humanity.



His work included filming, developing concepts, organizing footage and editing videos.

Some of the most valuable lessons happened outside the editing room. Through RVPW, Zuriel met professional photographers, videographers and other people working in creative fields. Those connections helped him see what a career could look like and eventually helped him begin one of his own.

"It wasn't just (the technical knowledge), it was the people and the network of people that we were meeting in the community," Zuriel said. "We met people who are great examples of what our careers could look like."



After his RVPW internship, one of those connections gave Zuriel a camera. Within the same week, he was hired to photograph an event. By late 2023, he had left his job and begun working as a freelance photographer.

Today, Zuriel is studying film at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and runs his own photography business, Lott Photos, specializing in photographing nightlife events.

He credits RVPW with giving him something that can be difficult to gain in a classroom: real-world experience working as part of a production team.

More than 1,200 students participated in United Way-funded programs to develop career-ready soft skills like communication, critical thinking and emotional intelligence. 96% demonstrated increased abilities in those skills.



Finding His Place at the Clubhouse

For Tamron Crawford, walking into Racine Friendship Clubhouse for the first time was a little intimidating.



A lifelong Racine resident, Tamron had seen the Clubhouse building for years but didn't know much about what happened inside. About 10 years ago, a worker from Behavioral Health Services encouraged him to give it a try. Tamron is autistic and has a traumatic brain injury, and struggled finding his place in classrooms and in society.

"I was very, very nervous, because I'd never been in this situation," Tamron said. "At first, I didn't think that I fit in. But after a while I started actually talking with different participants. That is when I knew that I found my niche."

Today, the 46-year-old is an active member of the Clubhouse community. Over the years, he served as a member representative on the Clubhouse board for two and a half years and has developed his own version of a mental health Jeopardy-style game, which he uses to help and connect with fellow members. He also has developed a mental health "Friendly Feud" game that he will share with fellow Clubhouse members.

For Tamron, the Clubhouse has provided more than activities. It has given him opportunities to build confidence, practice social skills and contribute to a community where he feels understood. "Being a member of the Friendship Clubhouse, it gave me more confidence," he said.

That confidence extends beyond the Clubhouse. Tamron said he once struggled to speak with cashiers at the grocery store or customer service representatives. Now, he said he feels more comfortable communicating with others and setting boundaries.

Racine Friendship Clubhouse helped 49 members during the 2025–26 program year, providing a supportive community for people living with mental health conditions. Members can participate at their own pace while developing skills, pursuing interests and building connections.

For Clubhouse staff, that sense of belonging is a key part of the work. Members often gain confidence, self-awareness and a stronger sense of community as they become more involved. The Clubhouse also provides opportunities for members to rediscover hobbies and contribute their talents.

Tamron knows firsthand how important that can be.

“When you come here, and you start meeting individuals that might have problems or mental health issues, it’s good to come to the Clubhouse,” he said. “You won’t be like, ‘Oh, it’s just me.’ ”

For Tamron, finding the Clubhouse meant finding a place where he could grow, help others and feel less alone. “All in all, I would have to say that Clubhouse is a place that needs to be here,” he said. “There should always be a place for when somebody needs that helping hand.”





775 individuals, many of them school-aged children, received behavioral and mental health services that helped them learn and practice self-regulation, manage stress and navigate challenges in healthy ways.

80% of individuals in United Way-funded programs reported improved mental health, leading to increased ability to maintain employment and participate in the community.



749,615 meals provided, helping Racine County families put food on the table while stretching limited resources to cover other essentials.

9,487 medical and dental appointments provided to program participants to help manage acute and chronic conditions.





1,006 federal tax returns filed for VITA clients, bringing $1.9 million in refunds and credits back to Racine County.

40,164 emergency shelter nights provided, giving 966 Racine County residents experiencing housing instability a safe place to stay while they worked toward stability.





89% of more than 9,400 program participants demonstrated healthy coping skills or choices, helping prevent problems before they even start.

United Horizons nonprofit board training and staff development programs have trained 93 current and potential board members, and 37 nonprofit professionals representing 20 organizations.





76,709 books mailed to 7,841 Racine County children through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, fostering an early love of reading.

5,620 volunteer hours invested in supporting our community through the annual Days of Caring event and programs like Schools of Hope and VITA. The value of that time totals more than $200,000.



United Way-Led Programs

211 SE Wisconsin Powered by IMPACT

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

LIFT | Community Schools

Schools of Hope

United HORIZONS

VOLUNTEER ADVISORY TEAMS

VITA

WOMEN UNITED

YAR Youth As Resources

Born Learning Trails

United Way-Supported Programs

United Way of Racine County supported 40 organizations and 65 programs through 70 grants totaling more than $1.8 million from one or more of our six funds: Annual Investment, Thriving Community Fund, Equity Through Technology, Brighter Future Fund, Youth as Resources and Essential Support.

Academies of Racine at Gifford School
- Bleed Shamelessly
- Breast Cancer Awareness
- Care Baskets
- HALO Blankets
- HOPE Safehouse
- Humane Society
- Knitted Toys
- Por La Gente Adopt-a-Family
- Tie Blankets
- Veterans Outreach

Academies of Racine at Jerstad-Agerholm School
- Bed Building Project
- Classroom Economy

Academies of Racine at Mitchell Community School
- Financial Literacy for 6th Grade Scholars
- Food Drive

Awesome Young Authors Awards and Community
- Racine Early Readers Program

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

Black Arts Council
- Brush to Business

Burlington Senior Center
- A Day at the Movies!
- Connect & Thrive Program
- Supper Club

Children's Wisconsin
- Child and Family Counseling Program
- School Based Mental Health

Courage + Inc.
- + You LGBT+Youth Groups

DeKoven Center
- Building Foundations Teaching Kitchen

Faith Hope & Love
- Camp Hope Career Readiness

Focus on Community
- FAST (Families and Schools Together)
- Opportunities Club
- Substance Abuse Prevention Program

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast
- Racine Girl Scout Leadership Experience

HALO, Inc.
- HALO Emergency Shelter Program
- Shelter Stability

Health Care Network

Hospitality Center
- Daytime Meal Program

Housing Resources, Inc.
- Homebuyer Education & Counseling
- Racine Financial Empowerment Center

John 23 Educational Center
- After School Learning & Enrichment Program

Lovingkindness Transitional Services Inc.
- Paths to Empowerment

NAMI Racine County

Payne Consulting
- Next Level Mentoring Program

Racine County Food Bank

Racine County Public Health Division
- Hello Baby Racine County

Racine Family YMCA
- School Achievers Program

Racine Friendship Clubhouse
- Work-Ordered Day Program

Racine Literacy Council
- Family Literacy Program

Racine Video Production Workshop

Racine Vocational Ministry
- RVM Jobs Program

Racine Zoo
- Community Outreach Zoo Initiative (COZI)
- Zoo Afterschool Program (ZAP)

River Bend Nature Center
- Chickadee Story Trail Enhancement

SAFE Haven of Racine
- Digicorp Migration
- Girls Inc. of SE Wisconsin
- Preschool at the Academy
- Youth Shelter and Outreach Program

Scouting America Three Harbors Council
- Scout Reach

Shepherd's College
- Work that Builds Confidence

Sonnenberg Schools
- Applied Academic Skills (AAS)

The Arc of Racine County
- Building Skills Toward Independence

Transitional Living Center (TLC)

Union Grove Union High School
- School-Based Mental Health

Union Grove Youth Baseball Association
- Small Diamond Renovation Project

UW-Madison Extension Racine County
- The Early Learning and School Readiness Project

Women's Resource Center of Racine
- Bethany Apartments
- Survivor Safety Through Technology
- WRC Empowerment Program







Help 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 our community.

Sources: 2025-26 indicator data, 2025-26 essential services outputs, 2025-26 complete disaggregated demographics, CI database

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