

United
Way



United Way for
Greater Austin



IMPACT REPORT

JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

OUR MISSION

United Way for Greater Austin brings people, ideas, and resources together to fight poverty in our community



MESSAGE FROM CEO DAVID C. SMITH

While the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all, families with low income continue to be hit the hardest. The world, and our Greater Austin community, is experiencing a "K-shaped recovery": Those who were already doing well are doing even better – while those who were already struggling are struggling more than ever. The pandemic has also disproportionately impacted women, who often carry more of the burden related to child care, making our efforts to ensure child care is available, affordable, and high-quality even more important.

The effects of the pandemic are not over, and recovery is ongoing. Let's dig deep and commit ourselves to everything it's going to take – to build a community where everyone has a chance to thrive. Despite the unprecedented level of need in our community, here's one thing we know:

When we come together to make sure everyone in our community has a chance to reach their full potential, we make a huge impact. Thanks to your support, this report is full of examples of thousands of our neighbors who are beating the odds and thriving. Let's continue to dig deep for the work that remains.

Throughout the pandemic, we have leaned into innovation. As we reevaluate our strategies, pivot our programs to meet emerging needs, and respond to a series of "new normals," we continue to be inspired by people like you who ask, "How can I help?" As you read this report, know that you can make a difference. Even better: We can make a difference together.

United Way for Greater Austin will continue to be here, like we've been here for almost 100 years. Join us as a donor, advocate, or volunteer to build a community where everyone can reach their full potential. Join us and Live United.



OUR IMPACT

WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO

Invested \$16,360,916

into our local community, of which \$12,428,522 supported COVID-19 relief efforts

Impacted 33,935 children, families, and individuals through our strategic work in education, health, and financial stability

Impacted almost 600,000 people through our COVID-19 relief efforts

Received 945,325 calls for help through our Navigation Center. A 55% increase in calls to our Navigation Center from the previous year.



Mobilized 1,109 volunteers to connect with our community, virtually
2,396 volunteer hours
\$68,396 value of volunteer time

Collaborated with 19 local grassroots organizations to host 50 COVID-19 vaccine clinics, getting 15,600 vaccines into the arms of Central Texans (and counting!)

In 5 years, increased school readiness from 29% to 38% for children from families with low income

Leveraged over \$2,590,870 in state funding through Pre-K Partnerships, a collaboration with Austin ISD

Partnered with 30,798 donors and hundreds of corporate partners to fight poverty



Launched the Greater Austin Reading Coalition, engaging 68 organizations and stakeholders to increase the number of children reading on grade level by Grade 4



Supported 811 families with newborns with a Family Connects visit. 100% of those visits were virtual because of COVID-19.

Engaged 144 organizations and 485 stakeholders through the Success By 6 Coalition

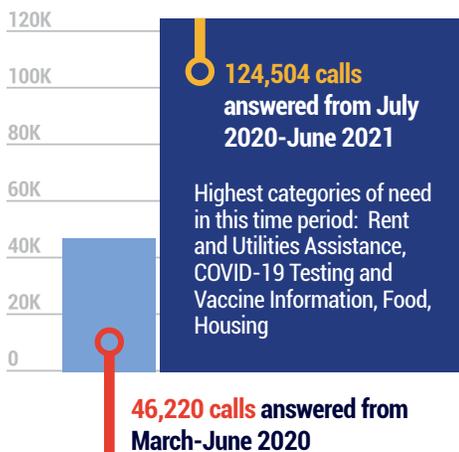
Engaged 119 organizations and 281 stakeholders through the 2-Gen Coalition

Collaborated with 115 companies to evaluate, expand, and improve family-friendly practices and policies

OUR ONGOING RESPONSE TO COVID-19

2-1-1

When COVID-19 hit Central Texas in March 2020, the team here at United Way for Greater Austin responded quickly. The Governor designated our 2-1-1 helpline as THE place to go for information on COVID-19. Since then, we have continued to answer the call, helping thousands in our community connect to the help they need.



ConnectATX

ConnectATX quickly pivoted after its launch in March 2020 to serve as the community's access point for new services related to COVID-19 and the resulting economic downturn.

From July 2020-June 2021, ConnectATX responded to 2,162 requests for help.

In that same time period, ConnectATX scheduled 1,642 free Lyft rides for individuals needing rides to job interviews, job training, college classes, and vaccine appointments to address transportation inequity.

All Together ATX

COVID-19 relief fund created in partnership with Austin Community Foundation

All Together ATX provided flexible resources to nonprofit organizations working with communities who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the economic consequences of the outbreak.

From March-December 2020, we raised and awarded approximately \$7.7 million from 3,149 donors to 210 local nonprofits.



Vaccine Equity

As COVID-19 vaccines have become more widely available, some communities face barriers to access, including fewer vaccination clinics located near populations most impacted by the pandemic, digital inequity, and language barriers among others. Additionally, some communities are hesitant to get vaccinated for varying reasons, such as lack of factual information, historical mistrust of the healthcare system, and politicization of the pandemic.



To support vaccine confidence and equitable access in our five-county region, United Way awarded \$415,000 to 19 local grassroots organizations in partnership with St. David's Foundation and Austin Community Foundation. We also created a community where grantees can share best practices and learn with each other.

Impact: By the numbers

15,600 shots in the arms of Central Texans... and counting!

50 clinics and outreach events

39,500 people reached by blockwalking, canvassing, and phone banking

"Vaccines save lives. People of color and people with low income have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, and these same communities now face challenges in accessing the vaccine due to barriers like language, technology, transportation, and more. We're honored to partner with 19 community-based organizations to improve vaccine access, provide culturally relevant outreach to address hesitancy, and get our community closer to herd immunity."

—Stephanie Cerda, Vaccine Equity Program Manager at United Way for Greater Austin

Advocacy highlight

Here at United Way, we believe advocacy is critical, not just to further the impact of our work, but to create lasting systemic change. It takes all of us — using our collective voice — to advocate for a Greater Austin that works for everyone. This is why we are so excited to share and celebrate with you a few major advocacy wins we made possible this past year.

City of Austin SAVES Resolution

- Total funding: \$5 million from the City of Austin
- Grants were awarded to 127 child care providers, serving 1,932 children from families receiving child care subsidies. These grants provided immediate financial assistance to child care centers and home-based child care providers. Funding could be used for payroll, rent relief, operational costs, and COVID-19 related expenses.

American Rescue Plan

- Total funding: \$13.5 million from the City of Austin and Travis County
- This funding will strengthen our local education, health, and workforce systems. Funding decisions were driven by testimony and recommendations put forth by United Way and our coalition partners.
- This significant one-time investment of federal dollars will not only drive Greater Austin's post COVID-19 economic recovery, but help address some of the root causes of poverty in our community.
- We are so thankful to the City and County officials for their investment in systemic change that will create more opportunity for local children and families!





RESPONDING TO WINTER STORM URI

To us at United Way, fighting poverty means fighting to change broken systems, and when Winter Storm Uri hit, every member of our community felt the weight of broken systems. No one in Texas was safe from the power grid failure that caused millions of Texans to be without electricity, heat, clean drinking water, and access to food and resources when needed. Through it all, our 2-1-1 and ConnectATX teams were there.

- During Winter Storm Uri, 2-1-1 calls increased by 41%.
- During the days of the winter storm, disaster services, food, and housing/shelter were the top needs.
- The need for housing, food, and water was highest in East Austin.
- Northeast and South Central Austin had the greatest call volume for overall disaster services per capita.
- We partnered with the City of Austin to promote ConnectATX as the go-to resource for information related to food, water, and other points of distribution.
- At the height of Winter Storm Uri, ConnectATX had a nearly 500% increase in usage, compared to the week before the storm.

705 search sessions
the week of
Feb 14

3,500 search sessions
the week of
Feb 21

Our community has faced unprecedented challenges since March 2020. From COVID-19 leading to a rapid increase in basic needs requests from first-time callers to Winter Storm Uri making it nearly impossible for many Central Texans to access food and water, our Navigation Center has rapidly pivoted time and time again to meet the needs of our community.

STORIES FROM THE FRONT LINES

CHILD CARE IN CRISIS

Child care is a critical piece of our economic infrastructure - allowing parents to work while providing enriching experiences for young children - and COVID-19 put a heavy burden on child care providers, many of which were already operating on razor thin margins. Throughout the pandemic, United Way for Greater Austin has worked urgently to support local child care providers. One of those providers is Rosario Teran, Director at Growing Imaginations Learning Center.

Growing Imaginations is a bilingual school serving 41 children, 40% of whom live in families with low income. Rosario faced several challenges due to the pandemic:

- A financial burden due to low enrollment and increased costs of safely operating
- Safety concerns for children and staff, as COVID-19 continued to spread
- Families enrolled at her center were experiencing other needs, like food insecurity

But, thanks to support like this from United Way, Rosario was able to keep Growing Imaginations' doors open:

- Through a United Way scholarship, a pre-K teacher at Growing Imaginations is receiving her teaching certification through Austin Community College
- United Way partner Bookspring donated age-appropriate books, giving the children access to their very own library
- United Way partner JE Dunn Construction completed a volunteer project at Growing Imaginations, transforming their muddy playground into a safe place for kids to play
- Thanks to a United Way donor and Austin Ed Fund, Rosario was able to secure gift cards from H-E-B and Visa to help enrolled families experiencing food insecurity

United Way will continue to support Rosario and other local child care providers. At the same time, we are actively engaged in local and state advocacy to support the long-term sustainability of the child care sector.



MEET MARIE

When Winter Storm Uri hit Central Texas, United Way saw a 41% increase in the number of calls to our 2-1-1 helpline. Meet one of those callers, Marie.*

Marie called looking for drinking water for her mother, who is almost 90 years old. Marie lives with and cares for her mother, and they had stocked up on bottled water before the storm — but were quickly running out.

When Marie called, we didn't have any resources to share. But we let Marie know that we would search for some nearby places giving away clean water and follow up with her soon.

As soon as we hung up, we started searching — and found several options for Marie. Just a few hours later, we called Marie back and shared the information we had collected.

Marie was extremely grateful, and thanks to our 2-1-1 team, was able to get clean drinking water for her mom.

**Name has been changed to protect privacy*

JOIN US AND LIVE UNITED

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

GIVE

Every dollar counts. Your donation helps build a thriving community for all.



"To build a better Austin, we should each individually and collectively (through organizations like United Way) act to impact. How do we build a better Austin? Get all Austinites to take a step towards greatness — whether that be donating time and money, standing up for those who can't, or hating less by loving more."

- **Newton Wong**,
Tocqueville United Co-Chair

ADVOCATE

Your voice matters. Speak out for change.



"United Way is simply the best vehicle for progress you can back. They are equipped to succeed by their strong, humble, diverse, and compassionate leadership; their outstanding, dedicated staff; and their relationships in the nonprofit, business, and government sectors. Together with advocates like me, United Way levels the playing field for hard-working families who simply don't have the same opportunities many of us do."

- **Allison Dwyer**, Board member
and Women United member

VOLUNTEER

Use your time and talent to create social change, all while you connect to your community.



IBMers built a new website for a UT project supporting undocumented immigrants, an important part of United Way's 2-Gen Strategic Plan

"As IBMers, our team was empowered by the company's purpose that brought us together - to be essential; we were all driven by a shared passion for doing something meaningful for our community. It was an incredible weekend, full of energy and dedication. Our team is looking forward to contributing next year again."

- IBM Volunteers

OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS LIVE UNITED

United Way for Greater Austin partners with hundreds of businesses to amplify their impact in our community—and we've been doing it for over 95 years. Thank you to our corporate partners below for supporting our fight against poverty, and helping us build our metro area into a community that works for everyone.

MISSION \$100,000+



UNITE \$50,000+



TRANSFORM \$25,000+



THRIVE \$10,000+



Support - \$5,000+

- Atlassian
- Electronic Arts
- QuikTrip
- State Auto Insurance
- Workplace Resource

Premier Event Sponsors



Media Partners



MANY THANKS FOR SUPPORT FROM:



Thank you to the thousands of donors, advocates, and volunteers who make this impact possible.



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