



Heart of West Michigan  
United Way



# A COMMUNITY UNITED IN ACTION

2020-21 IMPACT REPORT

# WORK THIS IMPORTANT IS NEVER DONE ALONE.



## Coronavirus Response Fund

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- Collaborative effort
- Assisted nonprofits serving vulnerable populations
- Raised more than \$3.5 million



## Kent County CARES Act

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- Kent County and United Way
- \$8.8 million to nonprofits
- 186 grants
- 138,823 individuals served
- 56,491 families served



## United Way's 2-1-1

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- Michigan's COVID hotline
- Coordinated testing and vaccines
- 119,000 vaccine calls
- 173,000 total calls in the first half of 2021



## COVID Emergency Rental Assistance

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- Michigan State Housing Development Authority and collaborative partners
- More than \$39 million in emergency rental assistance
- Served as fiduciary

Dear Friends,

The power of caring and connection has never been greater.

For more than a century, United Way has been proud to serve as the steward of our community's collective generosity and bring a voice to Kent County's most critical needs. Even while lending a hand during a time of crisis, the work United Way does with our agency partners continues to empower our neighbors to meet basic needs and build brighter futures.

Through our Community Grant Fund, we supported 48 programs at 40 nonprofits that provide access to nutritious food, secure housing, quality education, mental health services, job training and employment, and more. Together, we helped more than 67,000 people in Kent County.

No one could do this important work alone. It is because of you that we are able to create a more resilient and equitable community. With your support, we can change outcomes and improve lives, so everyone in West Michigan can thrive.

Michelle Van Dyke  
President & CEO



# FAMILY STABILITY

## ENSURING MORE FAMILIES ARE STRONG AND SECURE.

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Community Rebuilders is breaking down the stigma surrounding homelessness.

“We commonly hear people say that if somebody is experiencing homelessness, they need to get a job. While there’s a critical need for employment and financial resources to obtain and maintain housing, many families we work with have employment,” clarified Maranda VanZegeren, Divisional Director at Community Rebuilders.

This was the case with a recent client, Miranda Marie. “I came to Community Rebuilders to avoid eviction. I worked in a school, and my hours had been cut drastically during COVID, so I fell behind on rent.”

Through their HOME program, Community Rebuilders assists residents with securing and maintaining housing. As leaseholders, participants receive short-term rental assistance for 6–12 months. Afterwards, tenants maintain their housing without any type of assistance.

“I worked with my Housing Resource Specialist, and she was such a great support. The whole process, from paperwork to working with my landlord, was completely seamless. They made a difficult time in my life much easier to handle, and I could tell that I wasn’t just a number to them,” said Miranda Marie.

HOME offers voluntary, housing-focused supportive services based on each household’s wants and needs. Staff partner with clients to achieve their goals to maintain long-term housing once they exit the program. Together, they find solutions that meet each client’s needs, including making referrals to other community partners to promote housing stability. By connecting with local

resources, clients improve their access to healthcare, nutrition, education, and economic stability.

“United Way supports case management services for Kent County residents facing homelessness or at risk of homelessness,” explained Samantha Elliot-Mosley, Community Rebuilders’ Director of Advancement and Communication. “It’s really helpful because it gives us flexibility to provide supportive services. We’re able to use this funding to address the need for safe, decent, and quality housing for low-income households.”

Thanks to the assistance she received through HOME, Miranda Marie is thriving once again.

“Now, almost a full year later, I’m still in my home, and I’m back to working full time. The program gave me the chance to stabilize in a way that I wouldn’t have been able to without support, and I’m so appreciative for everything they’ve done for me.”

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**Community Rebuilders  
Program: HOME**



Memo No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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# Rent Relief





# FAMILY STABILITY

## OUR GOAL

Kent County residents will have access to:

- Stable, affordable, and safe housing
- Safe, affordable, and nutritiously diverse food
- Quality mental health services
- Family violence prevention, diversion, and intervention services

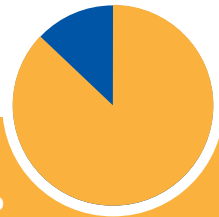
For a complete list of funded agencies, visit [hwmw.org](http://hwmw.org)



## OUR IMPACT

**16,084** individuals and/or households served through housing programs

**94%** reported an increased understanding of social-emotional interventions for their child and/or prevention of child neglect/abuse



**87%** maintained stable, permanent housing for 12+ months

**5,155** served through mental and behavioral health programs

**1,066** youth received mental and behavioral health support

**1,577** individuals enrolled in legal, therapy, or domestic violence intervention services

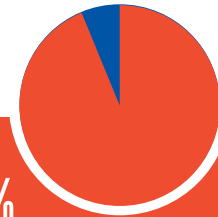


**56** returned home or found a stable, permanent place to live

**34,118** individuals served through food security programs

**596,870** meals provided to seniors

**81%** of individuals and families reported sufficient, equitable access to safe, affordable, and nutritiously diverse food



**94%** reported increased access to affordable food



# FINANCIAL SECURITY

**ENSURING MORE  
ADULTS BUILD A  
BRIGHTER FUTURE.**

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## OUR GOAL

Kent County residents who seek employment, educational training, and job transportation will have opportunities to improve economic stability.

Two years after graduation, Lisa felt discouraged when she couldn't find a job in her field. But that changed when she found the Empower program.

"Every time I attend a Women's Resource Center event, my confidence improves," said Lisa, who came to WRC for help securing a job after college. "I still struggle at times, but my Career Coach is such a great mentor. She makes me believe in myself and that I can do this."

WRC's Empower program offers career coaching to help women move toward economic independence and provides both career and life skill development. Career Coaches also work to address each participant's personal and unique needs.

"The beauty of the program is that it serves a wide range of women," said Michelle Bryk, Program Director at WRC. "Many women come to us after living in generational poverty, and they realize they want to make a change."

Lisa's Career Coach led her through mock interviews and helped her gain confidence in the interview process. She learned how to build a resume and write a cover

letter, and eventually felt empowered to take on a one-year certificate program at Michigan State University. Lisa is now a social worker who specializes in working with combat veterans.

Michelle Bryk explained, "Without United Way funding, we couldn't be doing the programming we have. What we do is people intensive, and we need to have the staff and resources available at the center."

Lisa felt a sense of community and belonging at Women's Resource Center, where everyone knew her by name and asked how she was doing. She found people who genuinely cared about her future and believed in her.

"Unity of women is something we need to foster more," said Lisa, "And at Women's Resource Center, they do. I can't wait until I'm in a place where I can give back to WRC for all that they've done for me."

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**Women's Resource Center  
Program: Empower**





**RESOURCE CENTER**  
FOR WORK. SKILLS FOR



## OUR IMPACT

**6,914** individuals served through financial security programs funded by United Way

**\$4,642,620** returned to households through free tax preparation

**133** individuals worked toward a healthcare credential



**86%** of individuals became employed or enrolled in school post-programming



# YOUTH EDUCATION

**ENSURING MORE STUDENTS ARE READY TO LEARN AND SUCCEED.**

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## OUR GOAL

Kent County middle school students improve achievement in seventh-grade science and eighth-grade math.

After graduating from City High Middle School in 2017, Cindy began attending Michigan State University (MSU). Though the transition to college was difficult, T2C Studio: Grand Rapids Center for College Success was with her through it all.

“It was a culture shock. I felt out of place as a Latina woman. T2C Studio has a welcoming environment and helped me complete my education.”

Cindy benefited from many services, including college application support, FAFSA assistance, resume and cover letter assistance, and social-emotional support. “They helped me make connections on campus that I couldn’t make on my own.”

Through Our Community’s Children, a public/private partnership between the City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS), and community partners, T2C Studio offers navigational, financial, and one-on-one support services to students going to and through college. The program focuses on increasing the number of GRPS students who receive a college degree, especially first-generation college students and people of color.

“The whole premise is not just to get them to college, but also to get them through. Thanks to United Way, we’ve been able to expand those “through” efforts and

sustain them,” said Dr. Shayla Young, Director of T2C Studio.

At MSU, Cindy made the Dean’s List and loved going to classes. But after her first year, she became pregnant. “I was scared to reach out for help. Should I drop out and take care of my child? Or do I keep going?”

As the first in her family to attend college, Cindy wanted to be a role model for her siblings. “I didn’t want to drop out, that’s for sure. I wanted to get this degree. I have four young children looking up to me, and I didn’t want to let them down.”

After receiving support from her advisor at MSU, Dr. Young, and Sue Garza with To College, Through College, she was able to take a year off without losing her financial aid. “Thankfully, they were able to get me connected and figure that out.”

Now, Cindy interns with Our Community’s Children and is on track to graduate with her bachelor’s degree in social work. She credits T2C Studio for playing a crucial role for students navigating college.

“It gives students an opportunity to feel like they belong and believe they can do it. I’m very thankful for how T2C Studio has helped me.”

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**Our Community’s Children  
Program: T2C Studio**

For a complete list of funded agencies, visit [hwmuw.org](http://hwmuw.org)

# studio

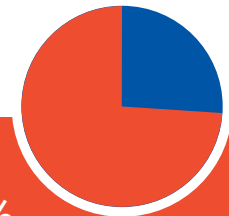
Grand Rapids Center  
for STEM

## OUR IMPACT



**1,462** students received  
in-school and after-school  
STEM enrichment

**25** teachers and  
staff received training in  
STEM instruction



**74%**  
of students receiving  
in-school intervention  
improved math skills

# INTERNAL PROGRAMS

2-1-1

United Way's 2-1-1 connects people to thousands of services in their communities, including food, shelter, utility assistance, disaster recovery, childcare, and transportation.

**SERVING  
15 COUNTIES**

## TOP NEEDS

Utility assistance

Tax filing assistance

COVID testing

Rent payment assistance

Food assistance



**119,000 COVID  
vaccine calls**



**73,597 calls  
to 2-1-1**

## LARGEST CALL VOLUME BY ZIP CODE

49507 49503 49504 49508 49548



**THE  
VOLUNTEER  
CENTER**  
at United Way

The Volunteer Center is a hub for volunteerism in Kent County and connects those who want to serve with organizations that need support.

**4,382 volunteers**  
gave a total of

**15,417 hours** to  
our community—an economic  
impact of **\$440,001**



By providing free, expert tax preparation through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, Kent County Tax Credit Coalition (KCTCC) puts money back into the hands of low- and moderate-income households. Since 2012, KCTCC has generated more than \$106 million in tax refunds and credits for more than 107,000 taxpayers.



**9 tax prep sites**  
including virtual options



**5,710**  
refunds filed



**\$4,642,620** refunded into the hands of those who need it most to pay overdue bills, make car repairs, save for the future, and bolster the local economy

# FINANCES

**TOTAL REVENUE**  
**\$22,012,950**

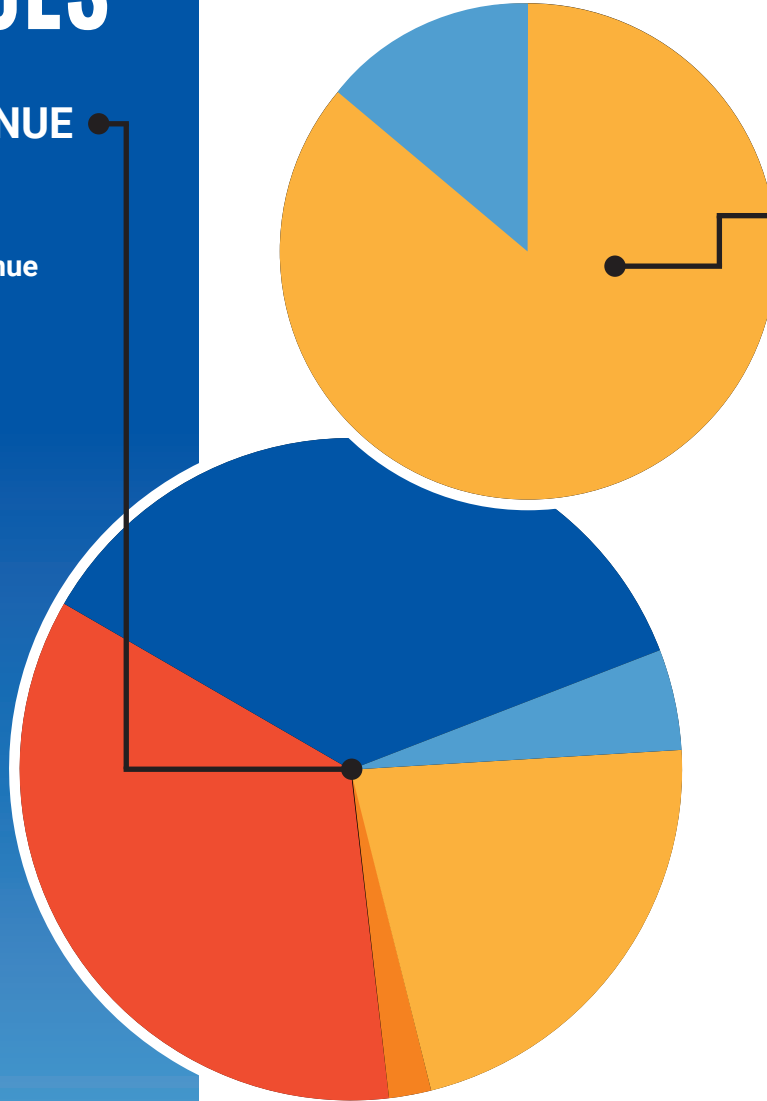
□ Campaign Revenue  
**\$7,899,550**

□ Grants  
**\$1,092,800**

■ Investment &  
Other Income  
**\$4,800,800**

■ COVID-Related  
Funding  
**\$472,300**

■ Emergency  
Housing Grants  
**\$7,747,500**



## EXPENSES

**90% Programming**  
**10% Admin/Fundraising**

**Total Community Investment**  
**\$19,904,750**

**Fundraising & Administration**  
**\$2,108,200**

**Donors**  
**10,370**

**Nonprofits Supported**  
**717**

## 2020-21 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Mercantile Bank of Michigan*

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*BCN Local 2145*

Ovell Barbee  
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*Bohnsack & Associates*

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*Achievement Resources*

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*Community Member*

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*Behler-Young Company*

## 2020-21 CAMPAIGN CABINET

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*Behler-Young Company*

Doug Young  
*Behler-Young Company*

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*Bohnsack & Associates*

Mickey Carolan  
*UPS*

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*Steelcase*

Khumbo Croft  
*Gordon Food Service*

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*Community Member*

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*Mercantile Bank*

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*ASM Global*

Tom Welch  
*Fifth Third Bank*

Tim Williams  
*Meijer*

## 2020-21 GRANT FUNDERS AND EVENT SPONSORS

- Amway
- ARG I Gives
- AT&T
- Behler-Young Company
- BISSELL
- Citizens Bank
- Comerica Bank
- Consumers Credit Union
- Deloitte
- DTE Foundation
- EmPower HR
- Fifth Third Bank
- First National Bank of Michigan
- Fishbeck
- General Motors Corporate Giving
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Hope Network Foundation
- Hope Network HNBHS & HNWM
- Huntington Bank
- Hylant Group
- IRS SPEC Office
- Kawasaki Engines Division
- Kellogg's
- Kent County Health Department
- Kent County DHS
- Level One Bank
- Meijer
- Moore & Bruggink, Inc.
- O'Keefe & Associates
- Old National Bank
- PNC Bank
- Points of Light
- Rehmann
- Robert Muusse Builders
- Rowerdink, Inc.
- Steelcase Foundation
- USA Financial
- West Pharmaceutical Services, Inc.
- WZZM 13

*For a complete list of funders and workplace campaigns, please visit our digital annual report at [hwmuw.org/how-we-help](http://hwmuw.org/how-we-help).*



Heart of West Michigan  
United Way  
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**A THRIVING COMMUNITY FOR ALL**

[hwmuw.org](http://hwmuw.org)

