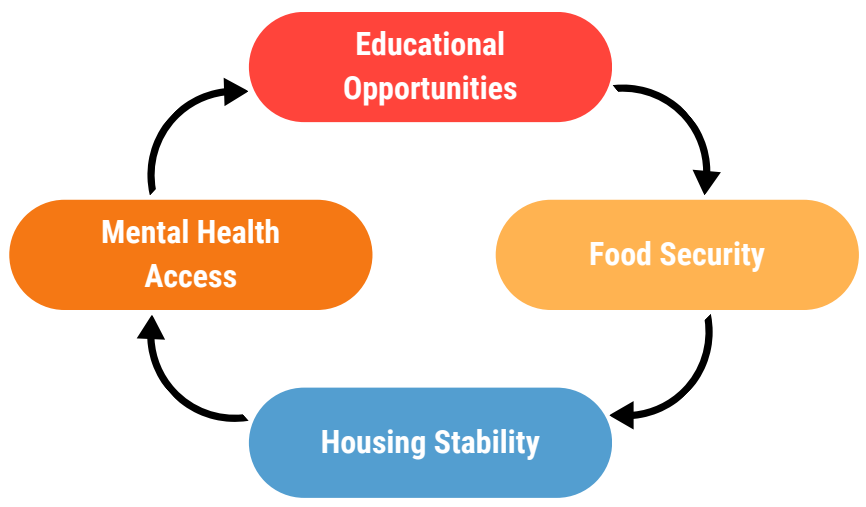


2024 PRIORITY PLATFORM

United Way of Allen County engages in advocacy to advance a better quality of life for all in Allen County.

For Allen County and Indiana to thrive, all individuals and families must have support at home and in the workforce. A strong human service delivery system is needed to deliver efficient and effective services to the community. United Way of Allen County advocates for a reduction in administrative burden and administrative costs within government programs so non-profit providers can cover their costs and focus on delivery of services.

United Way of Allen County seeks to address critical community issues by advocating for the following four priorities:



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- **66% (20,743) of Allen County children under the age of 6 need childcare; however, Allen County only has licensed capacity to serve 45% (9,257) of those children. (Brighter Futures Indiana, 2023)**
- **The average Allen County household spent 19% of its income on childcare for two children. (2023 County Health Rankings)**
- **In Indiana, people with a bachelor’s degree or higher earn 85% more per year than high school graduates**

To meet growing workforce demands, a strong, cohesive system that supports the development and education of individuals from infancy to post-secondary credential and degree attainment is needed. United Way of Allen County advocates for a holistic approach to address educational opportunities beginning in early childhood through post-secondary education. We support continued efforts that will increase the affordability, supply, and sustainability of high-quality early care and education for children. To strengthen our local and regional workforce, we advocate for policies and programming that support individuals in obtaining a credential or degree.

FOOD SECURITY

- **49% of Allen County children enrolled in public schools were eligible for free or reduced price lunch. (2023 County Health Rankings)**
- **37,950 households in Allen County do not have enough food or know where their next meal is coming from. (2023 County Health Rankings)**
- **45% of food insecure households in Allen County are above the SNAP threshold of 130% poverty and ineligible for benefits. (Feeding America 2021)**

When children and adults have access to plentiful, healthy foods, they can focus and be more productive in school and at work. United Way of Allen County advocates for policies and financial support to ensure access to basic food needs and healthy food options in every neighborhood.

UNITED BY MISSION, DRIVEN BY IMPACT

MISSION

United Way of Allen County exists to
BOLDLY IMPACT CRITICAL COMMUNITY ISSUES

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Melissa Beber
Michelle Chambers
Nick Darrah, Chair
Sharon Eisbart
Steve Hoffman
Angie Moellering
Scott Senger
Mitch Sheppard
Paige Wilkins

HOUSING STABILITY



- **44% of renter-occupied housing in the county is housing cost-burdened, which means they are spending more than 30% of household income on rent and utilities. (U.S. Census Bureau)**
- **Allen County had over 1,700 homeless students during the 2022-2023 school year.**

The rising cost of housing continues to surpass any gains made in wages creating more housing instability. United Way of Allen County advocates for policies and financial support to increase the supply of safe, affordable housing and to ensure the preservation of existing affordable housing units for Allen County residents. United Way also advocates for policies that support the funding and administration of land banks in local communities to eliminate blight, create affordable housing options, and provide neighborhood stabilization. To help individuals strengthen credit scores, achieve financial stability, and afford adequate housing, United Way advocates for the elimination of predatory loan practices and the expansion of programs that improve financial wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS



- **15% of adults in Allen County reported experiencing poor mental health for 14 or more of the last 30 days. (2023 County Health Rankings)**
- **38% of women who experienced post-partum depression sought treatment. (Healthier Moms and Babies Infant Mortality Community Needs Assessment 2022)**

Individuals and families from all socio-economic backgrounds face mental and/or substance use disorders. United Way of Allen County advocates for Medicaid updates that would increase reimbursement rates for mental health services and support legislation to increase the number of licensed mental health providers. We continue to support policies that expand access to mental health services for all individuals.

BOARD OFFICERS

Board Chair
Heidi Fowler
Ivy Tech

Vice Chair
Chris Gomez
Community Volunteer

Treasurer
Don Cates
3Rivers Federal Credit Union

Secretary
Javon Bell
Bellaire Studio, LLC

Immediate Past Chair
John Court
PHP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Adams PNC Bank	John Guingrich The League	Lloyd Osborne IUOE Local 399
Aisha Arrington Fort Wayne Urban League	George Guy Fort Wayne Housing Authority	David Pricer Barrett McNagly
Allen Brouwer Old National Bank	Joel Harter Summit Brands	Amy Rudd UAW Local 2209
Bonnie Blackburn-Penhollow Stillwater Hospice	Scott Hoffman Meijer	Evan Schoof BFGoodrich
Jill Brown Asher Agency	Prachi Hoffmeister Flagstar Bank	Greta Southard Allen County Bar Association
Tim Captain Fort Wayne Community Schools	Ron Howard IU Health	Steven Sykes Fortune Brands Innovations, Inc.
Stephanie Crandall City of Fort Wayne	Austin Knox Wayne Township Trustee	
Nick Darrah Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership	Kim Moore Summit CPA Group	
Sara GiaQuinta Parkview Health	Emily Musser Sweetwater	

EMERITUS MEMBERS

Herb Anderson
Community Volunteer

Greg Johnson
YWCA of Northeast Indiana

Marilyn Moran-Townsend
CVC Communications

David Trenkner, M.D.
Radiation Oncology Associates

Ron Turpin
Ambassador Enterprises

Irene Walters
Community Volunteer



United Way of Allen County

unitedwayallencounty.org/advocate