United Way of Metro Chicago

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2022/2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 A Message from Our Leadership

3 2022/2023 Year-in-Review

5 Neighborhood Network Expansion

7 211 Metro Chicago Launch

10 Stories of Impact

13 Our Supporters

22 Top 25 Corporate Partners

23 Executive Volunteers

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Supporters,

The last year was big for United Way of Metro Chicago – and for our region. Together, with our partners, we shifted from pandemic recovery to addressing the ongoing impacts of inflation and a volatile economy, community violence, and other challenges. We did this through our dual approach strategy: meeting basic needs and transforming neighborhoods from the inside out.

211 Metro Chicago launched in partnership with the City of Chicago and Cook County in January 2023. When residents need support with everyday crises such as access to food, shelter, health care, and more, they often either don't know where to turn or face hurdles in navigating the complex web of resources available. 211 Metro Chicago eliminates these barriers and is a natural extension of the critical work we have been doing for 90 years—the work of meeting our neighbors' basic needs. Since the launch, in just six months, 2-1-1 has received more than 21,000 contacts for resources and support, with the top requested needs consistently being housing and shelter, utility payment assistance, and access to food.

Working alongside community partners through the Neighborhood Network Initiative is also key to building a stronger, more equitable Chicago region. Our place-based, resident-led approach to neighborhood transformation significantly expanded this past year. New Networks launched in four suburban communities: Elgin, Ford Heights/Chicago Heights, Harvey, and Park Forest/Richton Park. The expansion reinforces our commitment to lifting up historically disinvested communities across the Chicago region, including the suburbs.

Our Neighborhood Networks were able to expand thanks to partnerships with Cook County and the Nicor Gas Foundation, serving as an example of what is possible when we come together – public, private, nonprofit, and community leaders – to create a region where all people can thrive.

This is what United Way's work is all about – bringing people together, united, to change things for the better. We also saw this transformative work in action in our existing Neighborhood Networks through the multiple grand openings and groundbreakings for much-needed community facilities. Our catalytic investments supported the expansion of the Auburn Gresham Healthy Lifestyle Hub and Campus, the opening of the BUILD community hub in Austin as well as the groundbreaking for the Aspire Center for Workforce Innovation, and what will become a new community center in Brighton Park. Together, we are celebrating these accomplishments, while acknowledging the work that still needs to be done to build stronger, more equitable communities for all our neighbors.

Thank you for being a part of this critical work. Together, we will continue to build a region where children have better access to quality education, communities are safer, neighbors are healthier, incomes increase, and our region prospers.

Sean Garrett
President & CEO

Cheryl Francis
2022/2023 Chair,
Board of Directors

United Way of Metro Chicago

2022/2023 YEAR-IN-REVIEW

JULY 2022

Campaign Heroes Celebration

» The annual event honored United Way's Top 25 Corporate Partners and welcomed 2022/2023 Campaign Chair Wendell Dallas, President & CEO of Nicor Gas.

SEPTEMBER 2022

9/11 Day of Service

» Hosted by Women United and Young Leaders United, volunteers prepped the gardens and grounds at Catalyst Circle Rock Charter School in our Austin Neighborhood Network.

OCTOBER 2022

Second Cohort of the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund

» Ten small, BIPOC-led organizations were selected to receive a $50,000 unrestricted grant for a two-year period, plus capacity building, support from DePaul University faculty, and networking.

Neighborhood Exchange: Behind the Numbers

» Panelists discussed how inflation and the economy are affecting small businesses and our communities.

NOVEMBER 2022

Young Leaders United Speakers Series

» Curtis Reed of JPMorgan Chase spoke about pathways to success in the banking industry and incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in the workplace.

Healthy Lifestyle Hub Opens

» The Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation celebrated the grand opening of the Healthy Lifestyle Hub in our Auburn Gresham Neighborhood Network.

Uniting for the Holidays Supports 8 Communities

» Thousands of meals and gifts were distributed to 3,000+ individuals in 8 suburban communities.

DECEMBER 2022

Learning and Development Fall Cohorts Graduate

» Board Leadership Institute and Responsible Business Leaders cohorts completed their programs, preparing them for board service and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

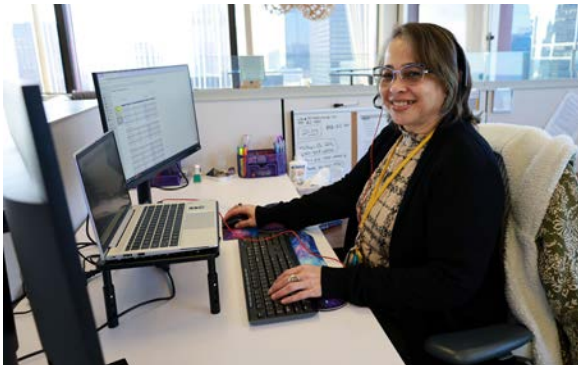
JANUARY 2023

Martin Luther King Jr. Day with Dr. Reuben Jonathan Miller

» 2022 MacArthur Fellow Dr. Reuben Jonathan Miller discussed the systemic injustices of mass incarceration, returning citizens, and a vision forward.

211 Metro Chicago Launches

» In partnership with the City of Chicago and Cook County, this free, confidential helpline is available 24/7/365 for all Cook County residents to connect with health and social service resources.



FEBRUARY 2023

Young Leaders United: Be United Bash

» Young professionals came together at Molson Coors Taproom to network and raise funds for the Neighborhood Network Initiative.

Neighborhood Exchange: The Legacy of Redlining in Chicago

» Panelists shared how historic redlining has shaped the current state of housing and segregation across the Chicago region and what is being done to address the impact.

BUILD Community Center Opens

» Nonprofit partner BUILD celebrated the grand opening of their new youth and community center in our Austin Neighborhood Network.

MARCH 2023

Elgin Neighborhood Network Launches

» The northwest suburb of Elgin became United Way's 14th Neighborhood Network, with a leadership gift from Nicor Gas Foundation.

Women United "Purposeful Transitions" with Angela F. Williams

» The annual breakfast event featured keynote speaker Angela F. Williams, president and CEO of United Way Worldwide.

APRIL 2023

April Food Day Collects 90,000+ Pounds of Food

» The annual food collection event and awards luncheon supported food security for our neighbors in the Southland.

MAY 2023

Aspire Center Breaks Ground

» Austin Coming Together and Westside Health Authority celebrated the groundbreaking of the Aspire Center for Workforce Innovation in our Austin Neighborhood Network.

Neighborhood Exchange: Food Disruptors

» Panelists discussed how local innovators are working to disrupt our inequitable food system and sustainably feed our neighbors.

Learning and Development Spring Cohorts Graduate

» Board Leadership Institute and Responsible Business Leaders cohorts completed their programs, preparing them for board service and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

JUNE 2023

Neighborhood Network Expands in the Southland

» In partnership with the Cook County Transforming Places Program and with support from Nicor Gas Foundation, three new Neighborhood Networks were launched in Chicago Heights/Ford Heights, Harvey, and Park Forest/Richton Park.

ITW Day of Action

» ITW hosted their annual staff volunteer day at David Speer Academy in our Austin Neighborhood Network.

Juneteenth Conversation with Dr. Ngozi Ezike

» The first Black woman president and CEO of Sinai Chicago, Dr. Ngozi Ezike shared insight on health equity and how to help close the health care gap for marginalized communities.

TURN Center Ribbon Cutting

» Bright Star Community Outreach celebrated the ribbon cutting of the TURN Center, which will be the home base for wrap-around services in our Greater Bronzeville Neighborhood Network.

Stronger Neighborhoods Awards Honors Patrick G. Ryan and Peoples Gas

» More than $1.2 million was raised at the annual awards luncheon event.

Pride Parade with the Chicago Federation of Labor

» United Way and the Chicago Federation of Labor marched in the Pride Parade, celebrating our vibrant LGBTQ+ community.

Be sure to follow us on social media to stay up to date on all of our programs, initiatives, and events throughout the year!

@UNITEDWAYCHICAGO @UNITEDWAYCHI @UNITEDWAYCHI @UNITEDWAYOFMETROCHICAGO

» Public, private, nonprofit, and community partners gather at the Village Green in Park Forest to celebrate the expansion of the Neighborhood Network Initiative in the Southland on June 6, 2023.

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK EXPANSION

» For more than a decade, United Way has been working alongside community partners through place-based, resident-led transformation. In 2023, we deepened this commitment in the suburbs through the launch of four new Neighborhood Networks: Elgin, Ford Heights/Chicago Heights, Harvey, and Park Forest/Richton Park.

This significant expansion from 13 to 17 Neighborhood Networks would not have been possible without our partners in business, government, and community. In March 2023, the Elgin Neighborhood Network launched with founding support from Nicor Gas Foundation. Alignment Collaborative for Education is the lead agency driving the work on the ground in Elgin.

"The launch of the Elgin Neighborhood Network is a gamechanger for the Elgin community," said Nancy Coleman, executive director of Alignment Collaborative for Education. "We are grateful for United Way of Metro Chicago and the Nicor Gas Foundation for believing in our work and joining our strong coalition of community leaders to ensure all people can thrive in Elgin, starting with crucial education and workforce development programming for our youth."

A few months later, in June 2023, we gathered at the Village Green in downtown Park Forest to share that our Neighborhood Networks were once again expanding, this time in the Southland. In partnership with Cook County and with support from Nicor Gas Foundation, Networks launched in Ford Heights/Chicago Heights, Harvey, and Park Forest/Richton Park. We also committed an increased investment in the existing Blue Island/Robbins Neighborhood Network.

"In government, we must figure out how to invest in the communities that have been disinvested in, marginalized, and left behind. That means you must have a place-based strategy to address the challenges that those communities face," said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. "Clearly, United Way is best-in-class for executing on place-based strategies, so the opportunity to collaborate was clear."

"The Nicor Gas Foundation is honored to join United Way of Metro Chicago and our community partners on this transformative investment," said Wendell Dallas, President and CEO of Nicor Gas. "When we work together, we can do meaningful things. It takes business, civic, community, government – all of us working together. When we do that well, the citizens and the community benefit from it."

Over the next three years, the new Networks are developing and refining their community visions related to education and youth development, jobs and economic growth, health and wellness, and more. These plans serve as a blueprint to create communities where all people can thrive – where every child has better access to quality education, communities are safer, our neighbors are healthier, incomes increase, and our region prospers.

"All across our region, communities have plans. Too often those plans are left on a desk," said Sean Garrett, president and CEO of United Way of Metro Chicago. "Our job at United Way is to work with our partners to help make those plans happen. The Neighborhood Network Initiative brings people together to create a vision and make that vision a reality." ■

> It takes business, civic, community, government – all of us working together. When we do that well, the citizens and the community benefit from it.
>
> **Wendell Dallas,** President & CEO of Nicor Gas

» 17 NETWORKS

Neighborhood coalitions of local organizations and leaders throughout Chicago and the suburbs

» CITY NETWORKS

Auburn Gresham, Austin, Brighton Park, Bronzeville, Englewood, Far South, Garfield Park, Little Village, South Chicago

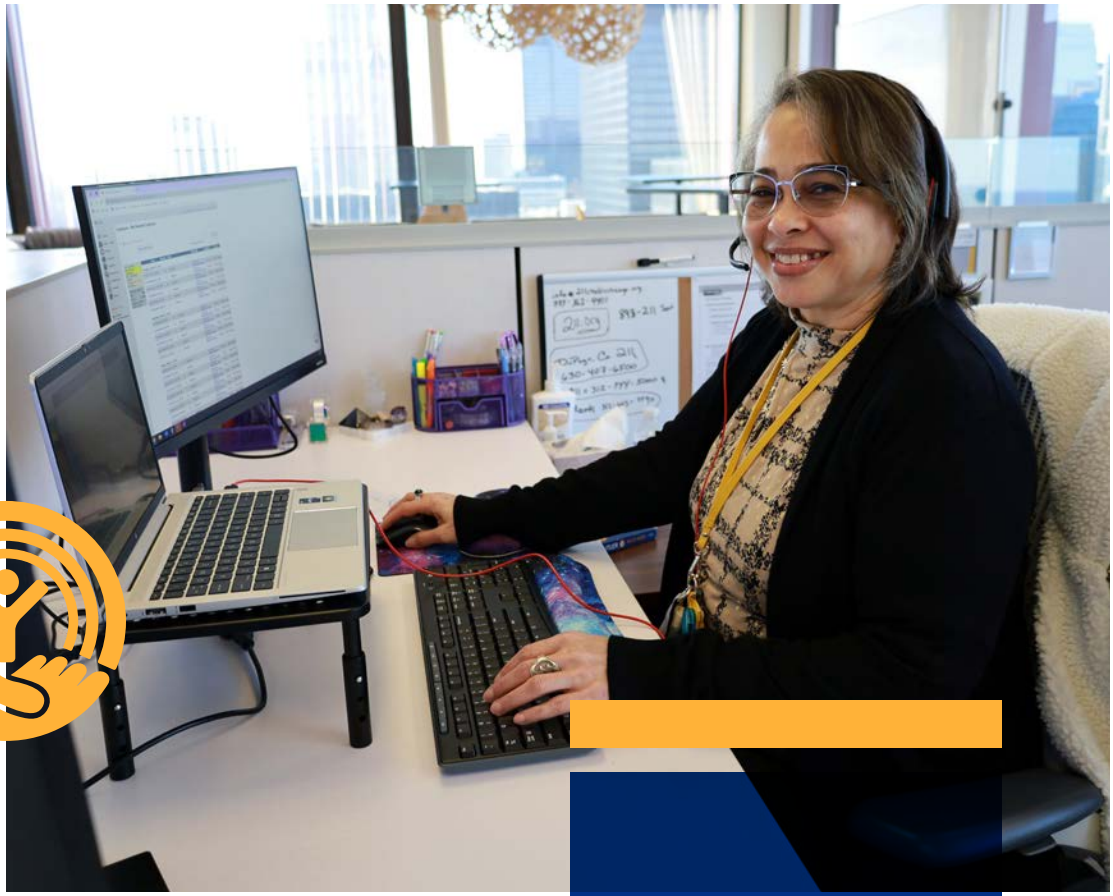
» SUBURBAN NETWORKS

Blue Island/Robbins, Cicero, Elgin, Evanston, Ford Heights/ Chicago Heights, Harvey, Park Forest/ Richton Park, West Chicago

» NETWORK VISIONS

Improve health, education, and financial outcomes to support a better quality of life for our neighbors

211 METRO CHICAGO LAUNCH



» 2-1-1 Resource Navigator Liccia Latham connects Cook County residents with essential health and social service resources.

» **211 Metro Chicago was a decade in the making. The free, confidential helpline was launched by United Way of Metro Chicago, the City of Chicago, and Cook County in January 2023. 2-1-1 connects Cook County residents to essential health and social service resources and is a natural extension of the critical work we have been doing for 90 years – the work of meeting our neighbors' basic needs.**

"We have seen great success with 2-1-1 lines across North America, which have connected millions of people in need to local organizations that can help," said Sean Garrett, president and CEO of United Way of Metro Chicago. "With Chicago and Cook County now part of the 2-1-1 network, all Cook County residents are just one text, chat, or phone call away from an expansive database of incredible social services. We are thrilled to be a part of bringing this critical connection to the greater metro Chicago area."

When residents need support, too often, they either don't know where to turn or face hurdles in navigating the complex web of resources available in Cook County. 211 Metro Chicago eliminates these barriers. When someone contacts 2-1-1 via phone, text, or web chat, a compassionate Resource Navigator is on the other end of the line. They assess the resident's needs and connect them to non-emergency providers for support. Local Resource Navigators are trained staff who are available 24/7/365.

"2-1-1 is a valuable service for people seeking assistance during difficult times," said Liccia Latham, Resource Navigator for 211 Metro Chicago. "As a Resource Navigator, my focus is on providing information and referrals to resources to address the needs of community members."

Resource Navigators like Liccia connect residents with a variety of resources such as food, housing, utility payment assistance, and other free-to-low-cost health and social services. In just the first six months of operation, 2-1-1 reached more than 20,000 contacts over phone, text, and web chat, highlighting a need – and how 2-1-1 is already making an impact.

"Personally, I treat each case as though I'm dealing with family," Liccia said. "With a compassionate ear and knowledgeable experience, I filter out the best resources available to meet the community members' immediate needs."

211 Metro Chicago is operated by United Way of Metro Chicago, but its launch was only possible thanks to support and partnership with the City of Chicago, Cook County, philanthropic partners, and the 211 Metro Chicago Advisory Committee composed of business, civic, charitable, and social service organizations. Progress takes a village—and the launch of 2-1-1 was no exception.

"Government needs to have partnerships with philanthropy and the business community if we're going to effectively serve the people of Cook County," said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. "I'm grateful that United Way has taken the lead on [211 Metro Chicago], bringing everyone together to put this system in place and making it happen." ■

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Special thanks to our public, private, and philanthropic partners for their generous support of 211 Metro Chicago.

» American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund as administered by the United States Department of Treasury
» Anonymous
» Arie and Ida Crown Memorial
» Builders Initiative Foundation
» Chicago Community Trust
» The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
» John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
» The Joyce Foundation
» Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
» Northern Trust
» Otho S.A. Sprague Memorial Institute
» Pritzker Foundation
» Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation
» Robert R. McCormick Foundation
» Steans Family Foundation

» 20,000
contacts over phone, text, and web chat made in first six months of operation

» 3,200
nonprofit and community agencies listed in the 211 Metro Chicago database

» 16,000
services and resources available such as access to food, housing, and utility assistance

» 18
private, public, nonprofit, and community leaders formed 211 Metro Chicago launch Advisory Committee

Uniting for the Holidays
is really good for all
those people who need
extra help for the holidays.
So many people are
financially struggling a little
bit, and we have so much
help from the community.
It's unbelievable.

Maria
Resident of
Palatine

STORIES OF IMPACT

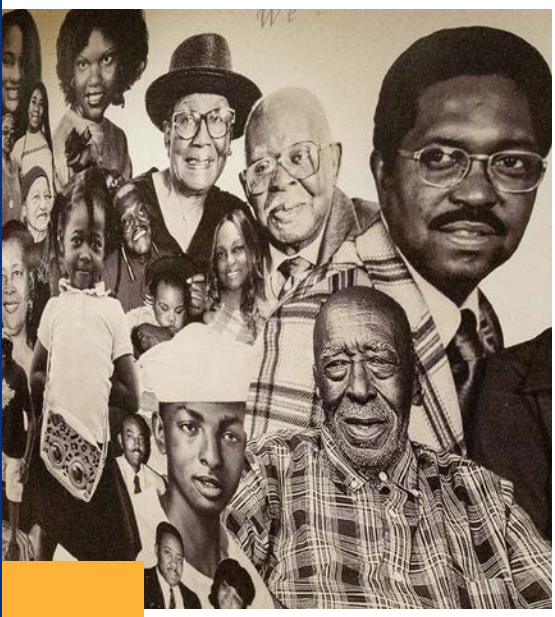
» When we embrace all of our neighborhoods and communities as the heartbeat of the Chicago region, every person has the opportunity to thrive. Here are some highlights from the past year and how we're working together to build a stronger, more equitable Chicago region.

Nurturing Our Neighbors
This Holiday Season

In November and December 2022, more than 3,000 individuals and families in eight suburban communities received thousands of meals and tens of thousands of stuffed animals, toys, and other gifts through Uniting for the Holidays. The "drive-through" event supports our neighbors' basic needs while bringing holiday joy.

Originally from Bulgaria and now living in the northwest suburb of Palatine, Maria and her husband have four children. "We are on a strict budget. We try not to spend too much and spend only for the necessities that we do have," Maria said. "That's why Uniting for the Holidays is really good for all those people who need extra help for the holidays. That means a lot to everybody." ■

» Read more online at bit.ly/UnitingHolidays2022



Healthy Lifestyle Hub
Celebrates Grand Opening

The long-awaited opening of the Healthy Lifestyle Hub, a four-story epicenter of health, wellness, and other resources serving residents in our Auburn Gresham Neighborhood Network, brings more than tangible services – it brings hope – to a historically disinvested neighborhood on the Far Southwest Side. Before its unveiling in November 2022, residents had little to no access to an immediate care center, dentistry, mental healthcare, or even a bank. Now, community members have all that and more contained in a single hub sitting on 79th Street, the neighborhood's once-bustling commercial corridor.

Each set of resources will fill a specific need in the community. One of the Hub's resident organizations, UIC Neighborhood Center, was designed to fill several – by offering numerous academic, entrepreneurial, and healthcare programs. ■

» Read more online at bit.ly/HealthyHub2022

April Food Day **Supports Food Security in the Southland**

The community came together at the Tinley Park Convention Center for April Food Day 2023. The annual food collection event and awards luncheon addresses food insecurity in the south-southwest suburbs. Thanks to generous donors and 150+ volunteers, more than 90,000 pounds of food was collected, sorted, and distributed to 10 local food pantries, replenishing shelves in advance of the summer months when donations tend to wane – but the need remains.

"One in six families in Cook County have food insecurity," said Hannah Hayes, vice chair of United Way's South-Southwest Suburban Regional Board and senior vice president for Northern Trust. "In those households, 22% are children. April Food Day helps people feed their families, and that's one of the most important things we can do." ■

» **Read more online at bit.ly/AprilFoodDay2023**

A Faith Story: **Aspire Center Breaks Ground**

In May 2023, community leaders and partners broke ground on the Aspire Center for Workforce Innovation in the parking lot of the former Emmet Elementary School. Shuttered 10 years ago, the school will be transformed into a workforce development hub for residents in our Austin Neighborhood Network.

"This is what it takes. It takes a village," said Darnell Shields, executive director for Austin Coming Together. "That's what it takes to be able to transform, to make it right, to rebuild your community. This is what moving forward together looks and feels like. Today starts another turning point toward our victory in setting things right. We are more than just resilient. We are united, making the impossible possible. This is a faith story." ■

» **Read more online at bit.ly/AspireCenter2023**

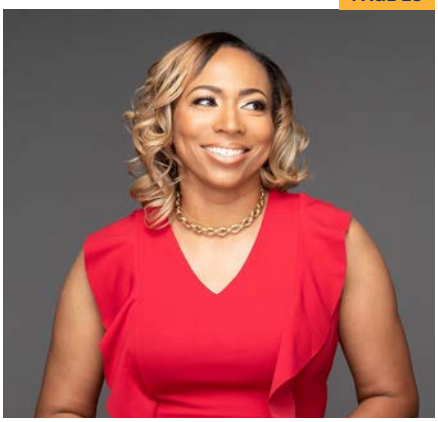
Dr. Marlon Haywood
Executive Director,
Urban Male Network,
2022-2024 United
Neighborhoods Equity
Fund Cohort

Urban Male Network has added five locations since we have received funding from the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund and making more partnerships with city, state, and county agencies so we can ultimately **make more of an impact** with the young men that we are working with.

» Program Participants of the Urban Male Network visiting McDonald's Global Headquarters, located in Chicago's West Loop, in September 2020.

OUR SUPPORTERS

PAGE 18



PAGE 15

PEOPLES GAS®

We Keep Life Moving®

PAGE 14

PAGE 16

LEFT TO RIGHT,
FROM TOP TO BOTTOM »

Peoples Gas, 2023 Corporate Leadership Award Recipient; **Monika Payne**, President and CEO of Caljohn Asset Management, LLC and April Food Day Volunteer; **Wendell Dallas**, President and CEO of Nicor Gas and 2022/2023 Campaign Chair; **Patrick G. Ryan**, 2023 Andrew J. McKenna Leadership Award Recipient; **Dave Blowers**, Vice Chairman of Northern Trust and 2023/2024 Campaign Chair; **Sarah Hughes**, Managing Director at Deloitte & Touche LLP and Women United Volunteer

PAGE 19

PAGE 21

Wendell Dallas is "On The Job"

Wendell Dallas had been on the job as president and CEO of Nicor Gas for just a few days when he got a call from Sean Garrett, president and CEO of United Way of Metro Chicago, welcoming him to Illinois. As a lifelong Southerner with roots in Alabama and Georgia, Wendell and his family moved to the Chicago area for the prominent role with Nicor Gas. Now, eager to learn about his new community, Wendell asked Sean what he could do to help. Sean suggested Wendell serve as the 2022/2023 Campaign Chair for United Way. He didn't hesitate to say yes.

"While I was new to the Chicago area, I was not new to United Way and its deep connections and impact in the community," Wendell said. "I have donated to United Way for more than 30 years, so it was a natural fit to join the United Way of Metro Chicago Board of Directors and serve as the 2022/2023 Campaign Chair."

With this decades-long experience and support of United Way in his back pocket, Wendell led United Way of Metro Chicago's workplace giving efforts over the last year. He also credits the Campaign Cabinet and United Way Board of Directors for welcoming him to the community and bringing their expertise to the table. Their efforts were a great success: $45.2 million was raised during the 2022/2023 Campaign to help build a stronger, more equitable Chicago region.

» Wendell Dallas (center) tours the automotive program at Elgin High School in our Elgin Neighborhood Network.

"It has been one of the most rewarding experiences I've had as a leader," Wendell said. "This was my first time leading a major campaign in the Chicagoland area, and it was a huge honor for me. I am grateful for the incredible network of United Way supporters and for their leadership and generosity."

It was also a big year for Nicor Gas. Consistently ranking in our top 25 corporate partners, the Nicor Gas Foundation deepened its commitment to community transformation, investing $1 million in the expansion of United Way's Neighborhood Network Initiative in the suburbs.

This was my first time leading a major campaign in the Chicagoland area, and it was a huge honor for me. **I am grateful for the incredible network of United Way supporters** and for their leadership and generosity.

"Nicor Gas serves 2.3 million customers in northern Illinois. We are in over 650 communities. Our employees live, work and play in the communities that we serve," Wendell said. "We believe in giving back to these communities, and our nearly 70-year partnership with United Way is the perfect way to deepen this commitment. Nicor Gas is thrilled to be a part of this vital work as a key funder of the Neighborhood Network Initiative in our suburban communities."

With Nicor Gas' investment, United Way launched a new Neighborhood Network in Elgin earlier this year; plus, in partnership with Cook County, Neighborhood Networks expanded in the Southland in Ford Heights/Chicago Heights, Harvey and Park Forest/Richton Park this summer. The existing Blue Island/Robbins Neighborhood Network is receiving an increased investment in their transformative work, creating a more vibrant community for every resident by improving household incomes and access to quality health care and fresh food.

Over the next three years, the new Neighborhood Networks in Elgin and the Southland will develop their coalitions of local nonprofits and define their visions and goals for their communities – from advancing educational opportunities for students to increasing economic and workforce development.

"When we work together, we can do meaningful things," Wendell said. "It takes business, civic, community, government – all of us working together. When we do that well, the citizens and the community benefit from it." ■

Peoples Gas is Building a Brighter Future

» Peoples Gas brought light to the streets of Chicago. In 1850, Peoples Gas installed natural gas lamps to illuminate roadways, becoming the first utility in the city. Today, more than 170 years later, it continues to safely deliver energy to Chicago homes and businesses, while giving back to the communities it serves.

This commitment is shown through Peoples Gas' longstanding partnership with United Way of Metro Chicago. "United Way is a key community partner. On behalf of Peoples Gas, I know we couldn't make the impact we do in our communities without the partnership of United Way and its affiliated agencies," said Torrence Hinton, president – Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.

Peoples Gas consistently ranks among United Way's top 25 corporate partners. Through its robust employee giving campaign and corporate support for United Way initiatives such as the Neighborhood Networks and Board Leadership Institute, Peoples Gas has contributed more than $10 million to United Way.

In addition to investing dollars, Peoples Gas employees also donate their time, participating in volunteer activities, providing critical advisory insight to the launch of 211 Metro Chicago earlier this year, and serving on United Way's Board of Directors and Campaign Cabinet.

From supporting those in need, to promoting diversity and inclusion initiatives, to investing in community infrastructure, Peoples Gas has made a true and lasting impact in Chicago communities. This is why we were honored to present Peoples Gas with the 2023 Corporate Leadership Award at our Stronger Neighborhoods Awards Luncheon on June 21, 2023.

"Every award is unique and special in its own way," Hinton said. "But this one is especially meaningful to us because it recognizes a program that provides support where it's needed the most, and that's at the neighborhood level."

This neighborhood-level program is the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund. In 2021, when United Way approached Peoples Gas about supporting the initiative with unrestricted funding for small, BIPOC-led (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) nonprofits in historically disinvested areas, company leadership didn't hesitate to say yes.

"We knew right away it was a great fit for us," Hinton said. "A large portion of our employees grew up and continue to live in the neighborhoods where we work and serve. Those employees are invested in their neighbors' quality of life because it directly impacts the overall quality of life in their communities. So it's very personal to us at Peoples Gas, for our employees and as an organization."

Peoples Gas not only agreed to support the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund, but it signed on as a founding sponsor. Their commitment of $1 million over four years is helping build the capacity and impact of community-based nonprofits on the South and West Sides and in the south suburban region. The Fund has already had a substantial and lasting impact on 20 BIPOC-led organizations, with a third cohort of 10 more nonprofits to be announced fall 2023.

"The prosperity of our region as a whole can be elevated by maximizing the potential of all people through investments in organizations with expertise at the neighborhood level," Hinton said. "It has been amazing to see how these nonprofits are transforming their communities from the inside out. They truly know what their residents need in order to thrive."

Peoples Gas' partnership with United Way and its support of the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund are shining examples of what is possible when we come together across sectors to make a meaningful difference.

"As a business community, we have both the resources and the obligation to support initiatives that create opportunity in our most underserved neighborhoods, but we cannot do it alone," Hinton said. "We need the leadership of United Way and other key stakeholders with the expertise and the ability to coordinate large scale initiatives like the United Neighborhoods Equity Fund."

"We are committed to increasing economic opportunity for everyone in our region. It is my sincere hope that we will work together to keep the momentum going to ensure a bright future for generations to come." ■

TOP » Peoples Gas employees are generous, volunteering and giving to causes throughout the Chicago region.

BOTTOM » Torrence Hinton, president – Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, (center) accepts the 2023 Corporate Leadership Award on behalf of Peoples Gas at United Way's Stronger Neighborhoods Awards Luncheon on June 21, 2023.

ABOVE » Patrick G. Ryan (second from left) receives the 2023 Andrew J. McKenna Leadership Award at United Way's Stronger Neighborhoods Awards Luncheon on June 21, 2023.

Patrick G. Ryan is a Force in Philanthropy

Master entrepreneur. Keen businessman. Generous philanthropist. Patrick G. Ryan is unstoppable in his success. In his 20s, he founded what would become Aon Corporation, the leading global provider of risk management, insurance, and reinsurance brokerage. He served as Chairman and CEO of Aon for 41 years. Today, he is Chairman and CEO of Ryan Specialty, an international specialty insurance firm and specialty insurance industry leader, which he founded in 2010.

In the midst of his success, Ryan has been committed to giving back – and helping make the Chicago region a place where everyone can thrive.

Ryan's story begins in the suburbs of Milwaukee. His roots are humble. He was the son of an Irish American father who owned a Ford dealership, where Ryan worked in high school. Later, he graduated from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management (or the School of Business at the time), and the Chicago area has been his home ever since.

As decades-long Chicagoans, Pat and his wife, Shirley Welsh Ryan, take pride in supporting the community where they live and work. They have invested millions in arts, education, and youth services, including scholarships for Northwestern students from low-income households, early childhood development through Pathways.org, and advancement in medicine and rehabilitation through the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab.

"For over 60 years, Pat and Shirley have been a force in philanthropy," said John W. Rogers Jr., Founder, Chairman, Co-CEO & Chief Investment Officer of Ariel Investments. On June 21, 2023, Rogers introduced Pat Ryan at United Way of Metro Chicago's 2023 Stronger Neighborhoods Awards Luncheon. Ryan was honored with the 2023 Andrew J. McKenna Leadership Award, as someone whose selfless actions have encouraged others to step forward as civic leaders and philanthropists, improving the quality of life for countless individuals and families in the Chicago region.

Ryan accepted the award at the Hyatt Regency Chicago in the Crystal Ballroom, filled with fellow philanthropists and United Way partners. As he stood at the podium, Ryan reflected on the impact and legacy of Andy McKenna as one of Chicago's most influential businessmen. Ryan was a close personal friend of McKenna's for nearly 60 years before McKenna passed away in February 2023.

"United Way was really important to Andy McKenna because it epitomized what he really felt about giving and sharing with people that needed help," Ryan said. As Ryan built his businesses over the years, McKenna's presence was a constant, serving as a "trusted advisor and mentor." Ryan often asked himself, 'What would Andy do?'

Ryan was also inspired by McKenna's ability to build connections. His network was vast. McKenna often encouraged fellow business leaders to have courage and strive for excellence – while giving back to the community. Ryan called this the multiplier effect, a ripple effect of developing more impactful leaders and driving positive change.

"[Andy] loved helping people. He loved sharing his talents and his treasure," Ryan said. "But what was really unique about Andy was he was a multiplier of bringing people into important roles in the community and giving them advice on how to get involved. You can really make an impact through the multiplier effect. More people are helped, and then they help more people. It just ripples through."

Like McKenna, Ryan has a knack for bringing people together – united – to make a difference. After all, Aon was named after the Gaelic word for "oneness."

"We have to find common ground, collaborate, and listen," Ryan said. "I think if we can do that, we can solve a lot of issues. Listen to what Andy [McKenna] said – get involved. Share, give back, and help out. Those are lessons that all of us should take every day and apply to every activity we're involved in." ■

Share, give back, and help out. Those are lessons that all of us should take every day and apply to every activity we're involved in.

The highlight of April Food Day is always **the spirit of giving** that fills the atmosphere. Everyone is so willing to help, and it serves as proof that there are some wonderful, generous individuals who live among us.

Monika Payne
President and CEO, Caljohn Asset Management, LLC and April Food Day Volunteer

Monika Payne Gives Back Through April Food Day

For Monika Payne, April Food Day is a family affair. Each year, sporting a t-shirt with bold "LIVE UNITED" lettering on the front, Monika joins her brother and extended family at the Tinley Park Convention Center. Together, they sort hundreds of pounds of canned food and other household items into boxes. The donations are then delivered to food pantries in the south-southwest suburbs of Chicago where families will shop to restock their own shelves at home.

Monika's brother is Johanns Williams, chair of United Way of Metro Chicago's South-Southwest Suburban Regional Board. He initiated April Food Day in the Southland more than a decade ago after witnessing the impacts of food insecurity within his own family. The first food drive was driven by Johanns' business constituents in the hotel industry and supported by United Way, Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, and other partners. Each participating hotel collected food, and the first food drive had seven volunteers and one eight-foot table, bringing in about 2,700 pounds of food.

Monika was there to help. "When Johanns invited me to volunteer for this event, I gladly joined this important cause," she said.

More than 10 years later, April Food Day has expanded from an eight-foot table to the Tinley Park Convention Center, collecting tens of thousands of pounds of food. "It's a joyous and definitely 'proud sister' moment for me to be able to participate in such an important cause that represents the huge heart of my brother," Monika said.

» A Background in Community Leadership and Youth Development

Monika is no stranger to supporting her community. When she isn't leading as president and CEO of Caljohn Asset Management, LLC, a project management firm, she serves as a volunteer commissioner for Richton Park, the south suburb where she, her husband, and two middle school sons call home. She is also a computer science teacher for the local school district and recently became executive director for Youth Education Development Academy (YEDA), a nonprofit that motivates youth to value education, care for their health, and exercise a constructive attitude towards life.

"I've been consistently involved with youth development in some capacity for over 20 years, so I definitely have a passion for supporting not only my children, but other youth in the community in becoming well-rounded, productive members of society," Monika said.

"Of course, in working with youth, I was able to see firsthand the need to address the basic needs of families, such as food disparity. Before we can teach them, we have to feed them," she added. Which is why April Food Day is so important. In Cook County, nearly 16% of households experience food insecurity. The number for families with children is even higher: 22%.*

» Monika and fellow April Food Day volunteers at the Tinley Park Convention Center.

» Addressing the Need for Food

April Food Day helps replenish pantries in the south suburbs each spring right before school is out. During the summer months, with kids at home, some families struggle to provide regular, nutritious meals. Ongoing inflation and high food costs don't make this any easier.

"The need to replenish pantries more often than the holiday seasons was evident as I would observe families in the school district struggle to keep food in their homes," Monika said. "One of the most satisfying feelings is seeing the mounds and mounds of food collected at April Food Day. Each year, I would see truckloads of food distributed to the pantries from the food drive. The collective efforts of those who support April Food Day really make a difference."

Monika was excited to be back at the Tinley Park Convention Center for April Food Day 2023. Once again donning her "LIVE UNITED" t-shirt, she greeted guests at the door and tracked hundreds of food donations.

"To me, it's extremely important to acknowledge each individual who brings in donations and let them know that what they are doing is a big deal and greatly appreciated," Monika said. "I see a village coming together to achieve something meaningful."

"The highlight of April Food Day is always the spirit of giving that fills the atmosphere! Everyone is so willing to help, and it serves as proof that there are some wonderful, generous individuals who live among us." ■

Dave Blowers and Decades of Impact

New York City. London. Hong Kong. Dave Blowers has lived and worked across the globe. But there's no denying it – Chicago is his home.

The Vice Chairman of Northern Trust was born in Evanston and grew up in Deerfield, a northern suburb of Chicago. After graduating from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, with a degree in government, he joined the Management Development Program for Commercial Banking at Northern Trust in September 1982. "I thought I'd work there for a year or two and then go to law school. But I loved what I was doing and learning at Northern, and instead of law school, I decided to get my MBA from the Kellogg School at Northwestern," Dave said.

Dave's career at the financial services firm spans four decades – and many different roles. He has served as President of Wealth Management's East and Central Regions, as well as EMEA and the Eastern Region of the United States for Asset Servicing. He also served as Deputy General Manager of the Hong Kong Branch. "I feel like I have had many different careers within my decades-long journey at Northern Trust," he said.

Dave's commitment to Northern Trust is fueled by the firm's "special culture," he said, "one that prides itself on viewing its people as partners and having a strong commitment to the communities where we live and work. Our culture is a culture of caring and of giving."

Northern Trust is rooted in this culture of giving, going all the way back to the founding of United Way of Metro Chicago more than 90 years ago. Following the stock market crash in 1929, a group of business and civic leaders gathered to create a committee in response to countless business closures and hundreds of thousands of people experiencing unemployment. Northern Trust was on the committee that would eventually start the Emergency Welfare Fund – and would later evolve into United Way of Metro Chicago. "It's no coincidence that our sister company, ITW, was also at that table, and the core values of each of our firms go back to our founders, the Smith family," Dave said.

Like Northern Trust's longstanding partnership, Dave's connection to United Way runs deep. He has been a United Way donor for 41 years, since his first employee giving campaign at Northern Trust when he was hired in 1982. He also serves on the United Way Board of Directors and Tocqueville Committee, where he drives high-impact work with the support of fellow philanthropic leaders.

When he was approached about serving as United Way's 2023/2024 Campaign Chair, he didn't hesitate to say yes. "Over the course of my career, I have had the opportunity to see our community from many different perspectives," Dave said. "And there has been no time more than now where the good work and leadership of United Way has been more needed."

» Dave Blowers receives the United Way "torch" as Chair of the 2023/24 Campaign.

As Campaign Chair, Dave is bringing his can-do attitude to the role. He's overseeing a committee of fellow corporate leaders who will drive the next year of employee giving – and inspire greater impact in our communities. "It is such an honor for me to serve in a role that has been held by so many impressive Chicago leaders, including my own colleagues, David Fox, Bill Osborn, and Rick Waddell," Dave said. "I am also so very appreciative of the many volunteers giving of their time, talent, and treasure to United Way."

Dave's approach to a successful Campaign season includes sharing United Way's story – and the impact we have when we come together across sectors to build stronger, more equitable communities throughout the region.

"I love what United Way represents as a convener across our city and in our neighborhoods," Dave said. "Chicago has always been known as the 'city that works' because of our tradition of strong collaboration across the public and private sectors, along with our incredibly generous philanthropic community. In my mind, it's time to get back to that basic formula." ■

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Dave Blowers
Vice Chairman of Northern Trust and 2023/2024 Campaign Chair

» Sean Garrett, president & CEO of United Way of Metro Chicago; Dave Blowers, vice chairman of Northern Trust; Wendell Dallas, president and CEO of Nicor Gas; and Chris Preston, chief development officer of United Way of Metro Chicago, at United Way’s annual Top Corporate Partner celebration event in August 2023.

Sarah Hughes Builds Connection Through Women United

Sarah Hughes was looking for a way to support her community. It was summer of 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when she saw a flyer from Women United, the United Way of Metro Chicago affinity group, calling for diaper and formula donations. She immediately took action.

"I rallied my coworkers and collected $800 and then filled my SUV with stuff from the store," Sarah said. "It was perfect timing."

Her team at Deloitte is generous – and no stranger to United Way. Like many of her colleagues, Sarah has been donating to United Way through Deloitte's employee giving program for years. Through a decades-long relationship, Deloitte professionals contribute more than $1 million each year to support our work in community, building thriving neighborhoods throughout the Chicago region.

Following the success of the diaper and formula drive, Sarah wanted to keep the momentum going and make an even greater impact. Now was her opportunity to lend her experience and time. She joined Women United as a member in fall of 2020.

» Diapers and formula for Women United's Baby Supply Drive filled Sarah's trunk in 2020.

"During such an isolating time, it was great to have another community," Sarah said. "I was excited to get involved right away, and it was incredibly meaningful to have a group of professional women facing similar experiences."

Sarah leaned on her new community when she was promoted last year to managing director at Deloitte & Touche LLP, something she'd been working toward throughout her 16 years at Deloitte. She said her Women United crew was "rooting for me."

> Thinking about the community as a whole and addressing those needs, **that's how we make a real difference.**

"The connection with these fellow women during that time of transition meant a lot to me," Sarah said.

Sarah is no stranger to leadership. She currently serves as chair of Women United's Fundraising Committee. In addition, Deloitte hosted this month's Women United breakfast networking event "Purposeful Transitions." In celebration of Women's History Month, keynote speaker Angela F. Williams, president and CEO of United Way Worldwide, shared what drives her passion for advancing equity and positive change in communities.

Like Angela Williams, Sarah is passionate about bringing people together to support each other and their growth, while also doing good for the community and advancing equity on a larger scale.

"The variety in which United Way touches the community is really impactful," Sarah said. "Thinking about the community as a whole and addressing those needs, that's how we make a real difference."

2022/2023 TOP 25 CORPORATE PARTNERS

1 BMO			
2 KPMG	3 pwc	4 Exelon ComEd An Exelon Company	5 ITW
6 Deloitte.	7 BANK OF AMERICA	8 Nicor Gas	9 PEOPLES GAS We Keep Life Moving
10 NORTHERN TRUST	11 EY Building a better working world	12 AON	13 COSTCO WHOLESALE
14 BAIRD	15 FIFTH THIRD BANK	16 PNC	17 Sargent & Lundy LLC
18 Allstate. You're in good hands.	19 HARRIS ASSOCIATES OAKMARK FUNDS	20 CIBC	21 Kellogg's
22 CATERPILLAR	23 Ford	24 RAYMOND JAMES	25

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Sean Garrett
President and CEO,
United Way
of Metro Chicago

At United Way, we're committed to being **part of the next chapter in which our community thrives**, our neighborhoods rise, and our people have the opportunities and access to the resources that they need and deserve.

» President and CEO Sean Garrett speaks at the opening of BUILD's Community Hub in the Austin Neighborhood Network.

The mural artwork on the outside cover of the 2022/2023 Impact Report represents the vibrancy and diversity of the many neighborhoods across the city and suburbs where United Way of Metro Chicago works to build a stronger, more equitable Chicago region.

Each illustration reflects direct images from the community or represents the ideas and emotions of what makes a community strong. The artistic design and integration of visuals remind us that despite our differences, we are connected and that together—united—we will create a Chicago region where all people can thrive.

IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS (from left to right)

1. Bungalows and the Chicago skyline representing the neighborhoods of the region and downtown
2. Neighborhood Network logo elements
3. An embrace of neighbors, friends, or colleagues
4. Auburn Gresham Healthy Lifestyle Hub
5. Volunteers packing food at April Food Day
6. Friends and family sharing a meal
7. 211 Metro Chicago Resource Navigator
8. Children playing at a park with green space
9. Members of a drill team in the Bud Billiken® Parade in Bronzeville
10. Mother/parent mentor and her daughter
11. Columbus Park in Austin
12. Little Village Arch
13. Paleta vendor cart
14. Rendering of the Brighton Park Community Center
15. St. Charles Air Line Bridge in Chicago
16. Water tower in Robbins
17. Metra train connecting Chicago with the surrounding suburbs
18. Two tradespeople representing United Way's connection to the Labor Movement
19. Rendering of the BUILD Community Hub in Austin
20. United Way logo mark
21. Two urban gardeners in Englewood
22. Elevated train connecting the neighborhoods of Chicago and the near suburbs

ARTIST Stephen Flemister, 2023

United Way
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