UNITED WAY OF METRO CHICAGO
NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK
INITIATIVE

ELGIN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The Elgin Neighborhood Network (ENN) was launched in March 2023 by United Way Metro Chicago (UWMC) with founding support from Nicor Gas. Alignment Collaborative for Education has served as the "community quarterback" for the Elgin Network since its inception. In 2024, ENN began to expand its mission scope beyond youth workforce development by adopting new goals and objectives to use the coalition model to address additional community needs around youth mental health.

Located along the Fox River, Elgin has historic roots founded in 1835 by the Gifford brothers. Booming with growth in the late 1800s, the "City in the Suburbs" became an industry hub with the founding of the Borden Milk Company and the Elgin Watch Company, the largest producer of fine watches in the United States. While these industries have since closed, Elgin continues to thrive with a diverse industry base and a culturally diverse and civically engaged community. Elgin is also home to the second largest school district in Illinois, School District U-46, serving over 30,000 students annually.

LEAD AGENCY

Alignment Collaborative for Education

COMMUNITY VISION

Investing in youth and families to ensure the future strength of the community and its workforce

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: A DUAL APPROACH IN ELGIN

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK IN ACTION

The Elgin Neighborhood Network is rapidly turning collaboration into community impact. This past fiscal year ending June 2026, the greater Elgin community invested more than 17,000 volunteer hours in future workforce development equating to over a $1 million investment in approximately 15,000 youth in the region. In February, the Illinois Association of Career and Technical Education (IACTE) recognized the work of Alignment in the schools and the community granting the Carl Perkins Community Service Award to the organization's leadership and its strong partnership base of more than 200 participating organizations.

By concentrating on the holistic development of youth and their families, Alignment convened a dedicated Steering Committee and launched a specialized Youth Mental Health Work Group acknowledging the importance of bridging the gap between education and community wellness.

RECENT MILESTONES INCLUDE:

- **Career Pipelines:** Launched innovative behavioral health internships for Elgin high school students to build a local talent pipeline partnering with Advocate Sherman Ecker Center, Family Services Association of Elgin, Luna Behavioral Health Center, and Streamwood Behavioral Healthcare System.
- **Systemic Education:** Partnered with School District U-46 and Elgin Township to integrate critical mental health education directly into the elementary, middle and high school curricula.
- **Workforce Preparation:** Provided 307 students paid summer internship opportunities in chosen career pathways investing in partnership with Elgin Community College, Northern Kane County Region 110, and school districts U-46, 300, 301, and 303 more than $330,000 in student employment stipends and wages collaborating with over 70 partner host organizations.

> *"The launch of the Elgin Neighborhood Network is a gamechanger for the Elgin community. We are grateful for United Way of Metro Chicago 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.*

NANCY COLEMAN
Executive Director,
Alignment Collaborative for Education

ORGANIZATIONS IN ELGIN SUPPORTED BY UNITED WAY IMPACT GRANTS

- Center for Informacion of Elgin dba Centro de Informacion
- Chinese Mutual Aid Association
- Community Crisis Center
- Easter Seals DuPage and the Fox Valley Region
- Ecker Center for Behavioral Health
- Enriching Partnerships for Early Learning
- Food for Greater Elgin
- Greater Family Heath
- Northern Illinois Food Bank
- P.A.D.S. (PADS of Greater Elgin)
- YWCA Elgin

**January-December 2026 Grant Cycle*

JOIN US! Together, we can build neighborhoods like Elgin stronger. Direct your United Way gift to **"Neighborhood Networks"** to be a part of this critical strategy. Learn more at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/neighborhood-networks

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