



**UNITED WE THRIVE**



United Way  
of Greater Cincinnati

## The Issue

When individuals and families experience crisis, they may not know where to turn for help. With hundreds of nonprofits and thousands of programs, often with different criteria, the process of seeking help can be overwhelming.

## A Solution

Individuals and families can call **211** to get connected to critical resources and services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Certified call specialists provide confidential and caring support, helping families explore options, connecting them to resources and making referrals to Care Coordinators for individual support and follow-up when additional assistance is needed.



**WE ANSWERED  
50,812 CALLS  
IN 2022**

## IN 8 COUNTIES

### OHIO:

- Hamilton
- Brown
- Clermont
- Adams

### KENTUCKY:

- Boone
- Kenton
- Campbell
- Grant

## 211 IN ACTION

### COMMUNITY MEMBER CONNECTION:

- Housing or utility assistance
- Food assistance
- Help finding a job
- Physical or mental health services
- Homeless shelters
- Veteran or military family resources

## Homeowner “Back on the Right Track” After United Way’s Help

**Mable Allen** needed help paying her mortgage and utility bills. It was right before Thanksgiving 2021, and the widowed 67-year-old food service worker sought assistance from a Hamilton County program that draws on federal relief funds.

She was approved for help with utility bills but was denied mortgage assistance because her mortgage company failed to submit a required vendor form. Mable repeatedly requested that the company complete the form, without success.

When the mortgage company began foreclosure proceedings, Mable worried she would lose the Springfield Township home she and her late husband bought in 2017. “I was very upset,”

she said, “because I felt like I had been doing everything I could to get help.” Then she called the United Way 211 Helpline.

A 211 Care Coordination team member contacted Mable’s mortgage company and explained the mortgage assistance program. Emails were exchanged over a period of months. In December 2022, the Care Coordinator informed Mable that the mortgage company had submitted the required form.

“I was so happy and so grateful,” Mable said. She was even more elated after receiving word that her mortgage payments were current, allowing her, in her words, “to get back on the right track.”

## The Issue

Poverty disproportionately impacts Black families in our region, and many systems that families depend on are inequitable. We believe those closest to any challenge (in this case, Black changemakers) are closest to the solution, yet often furthest from the resources to bring those solutions to life.

## A Solution

People closest to community challenges often have the best perspective on how to solve them. Black-led Social Change focuses on bringing people with diverse ideas together to look for ways to build a stronger community by leveraging the unique strengths and opportunities in our region..

## BLACK EMPOWERMENT WORKS

A network of Black leaders, through our Champions of Change program, set an agenda for what Black social change should be in Cincinnati. The first cohort of Champions won National Philanthropy Day's first **INNOVATORS OF CHANGE** award, given in 2021 by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Cincinnati Chapter.

Now in the third round of funding, Black Empowerment Works continues to promote Black self-determination, social mobility and economic prosperity by resourcing and funding grassroots-generated, Black-led work.

## 90% OF FUNDED BLACK EMPOWERMENT WORKS ORGANIZATIONS

were able to build capacity – strengthen infrastructure, management, staff and growth – during the first grant year.

This puts each in a better position to achieve their mission, instead of focusing on survival.

SUPPORTED BY 38 COMMUNITY REVIEWERS, Black Empowerment Works awarded \$1 million in grants to 45 Black-led initiatives from 2021-2022.

## Entrepreneur Empowers People to Achieve Optimal Health

**Deasa Dorsey**, a registered nurse, often hears patients with Type 2 diabetes say, I can't. She reminds them: You *can* still lead a healthy, fulfilling life. She explains how in a colorful, easy-to-understand paperback called the "iCan Manual: My Simple Manual For Living With Diabetes," which she completed in 2018. She then launched her business, iCan Health Inc., which empowers people to reach an optimal state of health.

When community events designed to increase exposure for the manual and business were canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, iCan Health got a much-needed boost. Deasa received a United Way of Greater Cincinnati Black Empowerment Works grant.

Since then, iCan Health has received two more rounds of Black Empowerment Works funding. Deasa has expanded the reach of her educational presentations to community events, health fairs, churches – even barbershops, a favorite hangout for many Black men, who are at the highest risk for diabetes.

The grants also opened doors to other partnerships. This year, CareSource, a nonprofit health plan, bought more than 6,000 iCan manuals to distribute in Cincinnati and Dayton. "Ever since the first Black Empowerment Works grant, we've been taking off," Deasa said. "As I go into communities, I'm watching lives be changed. I feel like I'm making a difference."

## The Issue

Many working low-income families are eligible for refunds and other benefits, such as **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** and **Child Tax Credit**, but they might lose them if they fail to file their taxes. Unfortunately, some families are confused by the process or unable to pay for professional tax preparation, which costs about \$270 in fees per year.

## A Solution

**Free Tax Prep** can save money for families, especially those with children, plus find tax benefits such as the EITC, which can increase refunds up to \$5,000.



## 3 WAYS FOR FREE TAX PREP

1. Assisted tax prep at site
2. Self-prep at a site
3. Self-serve at [myfreetaxes.com](https://myfreetaxes.com)

## EACH SERVICE PROVIDES IRS-TRAINED AND CERTIFIED VOLUNTEERS

## IN ACTION

- **\$11 million** in refunds
- Around **7,000** federal tax returns filed
- **\$2 million** in tax preparation fees saved
- **357** program volunteers

## Taxpayers Praise Free Tax Prep Service

**Dayle Newman**, who works in manufacturing, looks for ways to protect his hard-earned money. He has avoided tax preparation fees by taking advantage of United Way's Free Tax Prep service the last several years. Its IRS-certified volunteers also ensure he gets the tax credits he deserves. Getting a refund is important, Dayle said. "I rely on it every year. I try to put it away for a rainy day."

Schone Walker, a private duty caregiver who has relied on Free Tax Prep for about four years, takes comfort in knowing

the volunteers are knowledgeable about the latest tax laws so she doesn't have to be. "It takes the worry off your shoulders," she said. "I trust the volunteers 100%."

Ivonne Dominguez greatly appreciated the help she received. "I can barely pay the taxes. How am I going to pay a tax preparer?" she said. Free Tax Prep volunteers helped her. "They got me as much refund as they could. It was important to receive the money. At that time, I had no money. That helped me buy things I needed – clothes and my car payment. It was a relief."

# PROJECT LIFT

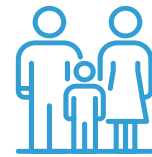
# UNITED IS THE WAY TO SUPPORT FAMILIES

## The Issue

For some families, financial setbacks such as car repairs, unexpected medical bills or a sudden threat of eviction can knock them off their path to financial well-being. While the families are working hard and making the choices they need to thrive, the challenges they experience have a big impact on their situation.

## A Solution

United Way's **Project Lift** initiative brings public and private resources together to eliminate barriers to financial stability. Families can access critical supports by partnering with groups they know and trust while charting their own path to financial stability.



## 5 STRATEGIES TO REMOVE BARRIERS & PROVIDE SUPPORT

- Flexible service coordination
- Wraparound funding
- Employment support
- Community outreach and engagement
- Transportation solutions

## 26 SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

INCLUDING:

- 8 Faith-based Organizations
- 10 Community Services Organizations
- 8 Social Service Organizations

## OVER 1,200 TOTAL HOUSHOLDS ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM

AND ON A PATH OUT OF POVERTY

- 575 new families enrolled in 2022
- 34% overcame two barriers
- 7% saw a 20% increase in income

## Constructing A Successful Career

For **Mecca Lee**, landing a full-time construction job in November 2022 was the culmination of much hard work, including the completion of two intensive training programs. Mecca, a mother of two, received more good news when she qualified for a program that helped her get a car to go to and from work. She needed car insurance, though, and she couldn't pay the premiums until she earned a few paychecks.

She then connected with United Way's Project Lift, which removes barriers so families can attain financial stability.

By providing critical, short-term assistance, the program enables families to achieve long-term success. "The fact that Project Lift was able to pay my insurance for six months was a blessing – a complete, God-given blessing," Mecca said. She is now financially stable and pays the bills herself.

"I get up every morning ready to go to work," said Mecca, a journeyman laborer. She received a raise in the spring and plans to enter a carpentry apprenticeship program. "I've always liked working with my hands." Now she is building her own path to a better future with help from Project Lift.

# UNITED WE THRIVE ENGAGEMENT AND RECOGNITION



We value all gifts, no matter the amount. And we value the giver – you! We want you to know how your gift is at work making good happen. We send a monthly newsletter that includes updates, volunteer opportunities and stories about how your gift is at work in our community.



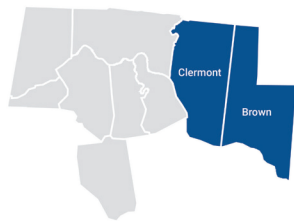
## IMPACT COMMUNITIES

Impact communities are interest-based groups. Members can volunteer, advocate and become a cause champion. **Join one of our Impact Communities to see your gift in action.**



### GOOD DEEDS FOR BASIC NEEDS CHAMPIONS:

A community of supporters dedicated to ensuring all Cincinnatians have access to basic needs such as food, shelter, education and health care.



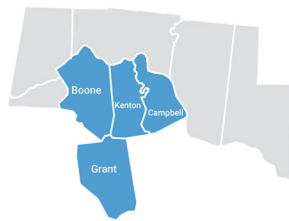
### EASTERN AREA UNITED

A group for people who care about the well-being of those living and working in Brown and Clermont counties.



### EQUITY AND ACCESS CHAMPIONS

A community of supporters committed to social change who aim to level the playing field to give everyone an equal chance to succeed.



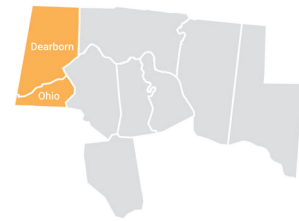
### NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNITED

A group for people who care about the well-being of those living and working in Northern Kentucky.



### KIDS CAUSE CHAMPIONS

A community of supporters who help children and families build resiliency and economic well-being.



### SOUTHEASTERN INDIANA UNITED

A group for people who care about the well-being of those living and working in Southeastern Indiana.

## GIVING SOCIETIES

We are also pleased to recognize leadership donors (Leaders Society \$1,000+ and Tocqueville Society \$10,000+) with special opportunities. Donors will enjoy notes, stories, custom volunteering and opportunities to connect with staff, all of which showcase the impact of your giving.



**LEADERS SOCIETY (\$1,000+)**



**TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY (\$10,000+)**

**Donor networks** provide additional recognition for certain donor communities within Leaders Society (\$1,000+). We know there is a wealth gap for some populations within our community. We think it's important to acknowledge that women (Women United), young people (Emerging Leaders) and Black/ African Americans (Herbert R. Brown Society) are giving at an extraordinary level despite the systemic challenges donors in these communities sometimes face. We are pleased to offer special recognition to Leaders Society donors who are part of these communities.