UNITED WAY
Columbia-Willamette

UNITED IS THE WAY

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COMMUNITY
IMPACT WEEK
POWERED BY HANDS ON GREATER PORTLAND
United
Way
#MakeAnImpact

THIS IS WHAT AWESOME VOLUNTEERS LOOK LIKE
Deloitte
HANDS ON
GREATER

THE CARING POWER OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Dear Friends,

There is so much good unfolding at United Way of the Columbia Willamette, and it all starts with **people like you**. In these pages you will see the impact of what happens when caring neighbors come together to build the foundations every person needs to prosper.

Because of you, **compassion becomes action and hope becomes results**. You make it possible to connect families with stable housing, empower early learners, and lift communities during times of crisis.

And here is the beautiful truth: When you get involved, you are not only changing lives. You are discovering connection, friendship, and the **deep joy of being part of something larger than yourself**.

As you reflect on the work ahead, we invite you to stay connected in whatever way feels meaningful to you. Share your time, talent, or treasure. Volunteer through Hands On Greater Portland. Partner with us as a business committed to community. **Every act of generosity brings more light to the people who need it most**.

United is the Way we are creating a stronger and more caring community so that all may thrive.

KELLY O'LAGUE, MSW
PRESIDENT AND CEO

ALICE: NEARLY HALF OF OREGON HOUSEHOLDS CAN'T AFFORD THE BASICS.

Everything is expensive … and as a single mother with no help, it's really hard for me to manage all the bills, work, spend time with the kids.
– Chanel, single mom and ALICE

Across our region, too many families are walking a financial tightrope. According to the 2025 State of ALICE in Oregon report, 42% of Oregon households, more than 737,000 families, struggle to afford life's basics like housing, child care, and health care.

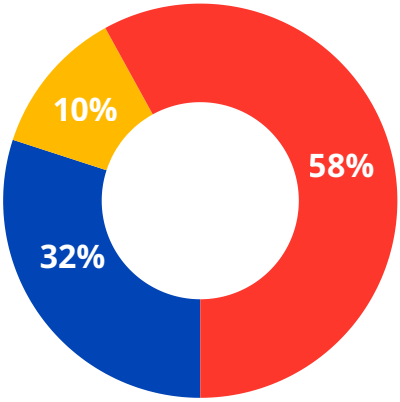
These are our essential workers–the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) families–child care providers, grocery clerks, delivery drivers, and caregivers who keep our communities running. They earn too much to qualify for most assistance programs, yet not enough to make ends meet.

At United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, we're working to close that gap, supporting ALICE families with access to safe housing, quality child care, and community resources that build long-term stability.

BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE
Income below the Federal Poverty Level (current Federal Poverty Line for a family of 4 is $30,000 total annual income)

ALICE HOUSEHOLDS
Income above the Federal Poverty Level but below what is needed to afford the cost of basic expenses

ABOVE ALICE THRESHOLD
Income above the cost of basics



A Message of Gratitude

At United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, we know that real change happens when people come together. Every success you'll read about in this report - every child learning, family finding stability, and neighbor receiving support - **was made possible because of you**.

Your generosity and partnership fuel our mission. With our nonprofit, business, and community partners, you've shown that when **we unite around a shared purpose**, we can build a region where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your trust, your compassion, and your continued support. Together, we're building a stronger, more caring community, one act of generosity at a time.

With appreciation,

FRANKLIN ALEGRIA
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

NAMED AMERICA'S FAVORITE CHARITY IN 2025 BY THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY

OUR IMPACT

Our mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities to advance equity and the common good.

Youth Opportunity

Helping young people realize their full potential.

Financial Security

Creating a stronger financial future for everyone.

Community Resiliency

Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow.

Healthy Community

Improving health & well-being for all.

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS BEFORE IT STARTS

"This program literally saved our lives. We have a home to call our own, and we can sleep and be safe again."
– Program participant

Because every family deserves the security of a home.

At United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, we believe every family deserves the security of a safe and stable home. Yet too many of our neighbors live just one unexpected bill – a car repair, a medical expense–away from losing that stability.

The Resilient Families Fund meets families where they are, helping them stay housed through eviction prevention, rent and utility assistance, and essential wraparound services.

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 3,800+ households kept in their homes
- $2,700 average cost to prevent an eviction
- 90% of families remain housed after six months
- 93% don't need additional assistance

Join Us in Helping Families in Need!

Your gift to the Resilient Families Fund supports our housing stability programs - eviction prevention, rental and utility assistance–so every family can stay safe, secure and strong in their own home.

OPENING A WORLD OF BOOKS: THE POWER OF DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

"She gets so excited when the Dolly Parton stamp arrives – she loves for me to read to her every night!"
– Lydia Moody, DPIL parent

In November 2024, United Way of the Columbia-Willamette proudly became an operational partner with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL). Each month, a book arrives at a child's doorstep, free of cost to the family. Parents read more with their children. Kids enter kindergarten ready to learn. Families build lifelong habits of literacy and a love for reading.

Full Oregon Coverage:
With United Way stepping in, Oregon's three most populous counties, previously without local management, are now covered, meaning every child under age five in Oregon can receive books monthly at no cost.

Bilingual Access:
Families can now receive books in English and Spanish, expanding inclusion and access for thousands of children statewide.

Exponential Growth:
In just one year, enrollment has more than doubled, proving the deep hunger for early learning support and the power of community partnership.

Join Us in Sparking a Love of Reading!

Your gift to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library gives children in our region a lifetime of learning and imagination, building a foundation for success in school and in life.

Volunteering to me is the perfect way to get engaged with my community, to get out of the doom-scrolling, the hopelessness. Especially with everything being said about our city right now, having a project like this to remind me of how beautiful the people here are is invaluable. Thank you Hands On!"

– Hailee, Volunteer at Human Access Project during Community Impact Week

At United Way of the Columbia-Willamette's Hands On Greater Portland, it's easy to volunteer, connect, and make an impact. Whether you're lending a hand on your own, with friends, or through your workplace, you'll help strengthen our community–one project at a time.

Volunteering through Hands On is flexible and rewarding. You can choose from hundreds of local opportunities–planting trees, supporting kids, feeding families, and more. Plus, research shows that volunteering boosts confidence, builds new skills, and improves well-being.

For companies, team service days inspire leadership and teamwork while giving back to the place we call home.

Join Us in Turning Compassion into Action!

Join us at handsonportland.org or scan the QR code to discover upcoming projects and start making a difference today.

BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT OREGON - TOGETHER

When disaster strikes, our greatest strength is each other. United Way of the Columbia-Willamette is advancing disaster resilience across Oregon, because every person deserves a voice in shaping our climate-resilient future.

Our Disaster Resilience department values a people-centered approach to mitigating the harms of disasters in Oregon.

We bring together disaster-impacted leaders, community-based organizations, government, and funders to reimagine how emergency preparedness, recovery, and resilience can truly serve everyone–especially those historically left out of these systems.

Climate change and rising costs are deepening existing inequities. Nearly half of Oregon households live below the ALICE Threshold–earning too much to qualify for assistance but too little to withstand crisis. When climate disasters happen, it's these families and working-class communities who face the greatest harm and the fewest resources to recover.

That's why our work is people-centered and community-led. We invest in local innovations, uplift culturally rooted resilience practices, and advocate for equitable, inclusive access to life-saving preparedness resources.

Because when we prepare, respond, and recover together, our entire region grows stronger. United is the Way we are resilient.

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