

**United  
Way**



United Way of North Carolina



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**United in Gratitude**

# Table of Contents

2	Our Work
4	COVID-19 Response
8	NC 211
12	Member Services
16	NCCARE360
18	Board & Staff

## Our Mission

Increase the capability of the United Way system to improve the quality of human life in North Carolina.

## Our Vision

United Way of North Carolina is recognized as a respected and highly effective organization by its members within the United Way system, and its collaborating partners outside the United Way system. We are known as an instrumental force in ensuring that the United Way system in North Carolina is successful in addressing the essential human needs of our communities.

In hindsight, 2020 is seen as a year unlike any other – one in which none of us ever could have imagined – in terms of the personal, health and human service challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In early March as we began to see the enormity of what lay ahead, our organization, like so many others, took actions to help ensure the health and safety of our staff, volunteers and local United Ways. We quickly transitioned our offices and all 211 call center operations from premise-based locations to at-home offices. We analyzed our financial strength and whether our organization and local United Ways could remain financially strong when the need was so great. We focused on meeting the needs of local United Ways during this crisis and serving the citizens of North Carolina through NC 211.

We were able to continue our work refreshing the North Carolina Self Sufficiency Standard for all 100 counties and for more than 600 household types. The standard brought to the forefront why so many families were struggling as layoffs, home schooling and health issues undermined the financial stability of North Carolina families. We understood the struggle, but our COVID-19 Impact Study added valuable insights by allowing the more than 8,000 survey respondents across the state to tell their story and share where each individual or family saw the greatest impact.

Together, with our United Ways, local partners and funders, we are charting a course toward recovering from COVID-19. We are extremely grateful to the donors and companies that supported our work this past year and are humbled by our United Way members' resiliency and commitment to addressing the unprecedented needs due to the pandemic.

**David McNeill**  
2020 Chair  
United Way of North Carolina  
Board of Directors

**Laura Zink Marx**  
President & CEO  
United Way of North Carolina

# OUR WORK

United Way of North Carolina is proud to focus our efforts on three core areas of work: Member Services, NC 211, and NCCARE360.



Member services provides support for 51 local United Way organizations in North Carolina and leads our network's statewide advocacy efforts. ([unitedwaync.org](http://unitedwaync.org))

NC 211 connects North Carolinians to health and human services information through a free statewide phone number (2-1-1) and website. ([nc211.org](http://nc211.org))



NCCARE360 is the first statewide coordinated care network. UWNC/NC 211 partners with Unite Us, Expound Decision Systems, NC Department of Health & Human Services, and Foundation for Health Leadership & Innovation on this important work. ([nccare360.org](http://nccare360.org))





## Searching for Solutions

More than 8,500 households across North Carolina responded to United Way of North Carolina's COVID-19 Impact Survey from July 27-August 31, 2020. The surveyed households represent 24,000 people, including nearly 7,000 children and 17,000 adults. Results revealed the impact of housing, childcare, job status, financial stability, and more.

The survey was widely shared by local United Way organizations, partner agencies, and individuals. The report offers direction for relief and recovery efforts by United Way and other community partners.

To view or download the full report, visit

[www.unitedwaync.org/coronavirus](http://www.unitedwaync.org/coronavirus)

**31%** reported a shift to working remotely

**55%** asked for help from social service systems

**80%** reported a fear of themselves or a loved one catching COVID-19

**55%** reported that the Cares Act check covered two weeks or less of household expenses

# NC 211 Answers the Call

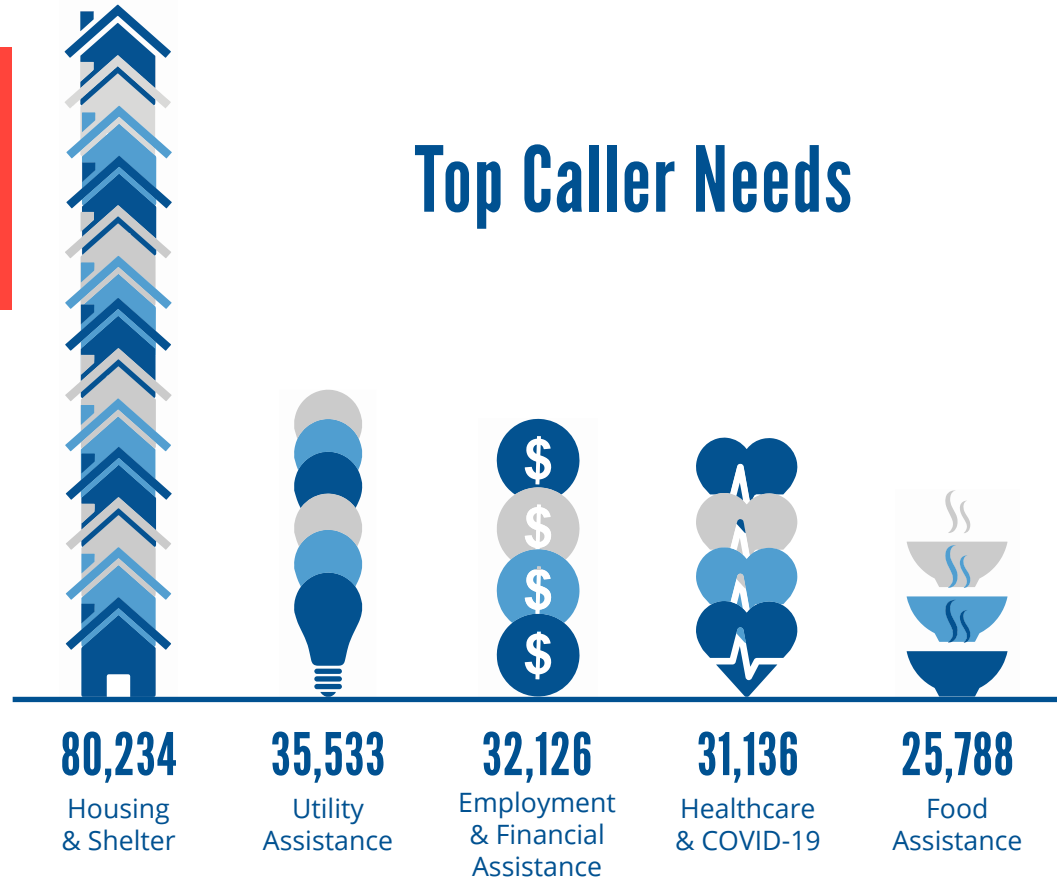
On March 18th, when NC 211 was activated by Governor Cooper as part of the State's emergency response, call volume skyrocketed. NC 211 answered more than 206,000 calls in 2020 and the team of call specialists doubled to keep up with the demand. The resource team tracked how community services adjusted in response to the pandemic and the entire NC 211 staff shifted to working 100% remotely.



NC 211 answered more than 206,000 calls and emails in 2020, a 54% increase from 2019.

When the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency launched the North Carolina HOPE (Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Eviction) Program, NC 211 stepped up to serve as the intake and customer service call line for applicants. A dedicated team of HOPE Call Specialists handled more than 20,000 calls from October to December supporting the tens of thousands of North Carolinians applying for rent and utility assistance through the HOPE program.

## Top Caller Needs





NC 211 is a free, confidential, and multilingual health and human services information system, available 24 hours a day in all 100 North Carolina counties.

The system serves as a key member of the State Emergency Response Team, activated by state leaders during hurricanes Matthew and Florence and for the state response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NC 211 also supports various initiatives and programs, such as Back@Home and the NC HOPE Program.

## NC 211 Resources

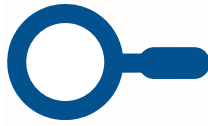
The resource team at NC 211 works to maintain programs and services listed in the database and regularly verify their information.

At the end of 2020, the NC 211 Database contained nearly 13,000 services at a 93% verification rate. NC 211 is proud to report that 100% of resource team members have received AIRS Certification for Community Resource Specialist - Database Curator (CRS-DC), indicating a dedication to professional standards and expertise in curating, organizing, and indexing programs and services.

# 2020 Facts & Figures

12,712

Verified resources  
in NC 211 database



727,921

Sessions on  
www.nc211.org



4.5 M

Informational  
text messages



## Our Team

42	NC 211 Team Members
17	NC Tourism Contact Center Team
15	NC 211 Contractors & Volunteers
8	Cardinal Innovations Team
7	Resource Team Members



Real-time dashboard of  
caller information  
[nc.211counts.org](http://nc.211counts.org)

# NC 211 Caller Story

Jessica is a single mom to her 5-year-old son and infant daughter. Both Jessica and her daughter tested positive for COVID-19, meaning a loss of income for at least two weeks.

When she called NC 211 and explained the situation, the Call Specialist provided a referral to her county's COVID helpline and information on two local programs that may be able to help with bills. Jessica was grateful to have some guidance and felt much less overwhelmed when she finished the call.





# MEMBER SERVICES



## Strengthening Our Network

United Way of North Carolina serves a statewide network of 51 local United Ways who build strong communities in purposeful and unique ways. Increasing leadership capacity, offering connection to proven and innovative practices, and generating research to validate local United Way strategies and action are all facets of the focused Member Services.

Opportunities to support the network in 2020, due to COVID-19, required transformation. The shift to a virtual environment led to 19 weekly network conversations, 26 informational emails, and an increase in digital assets to support the growing need for social media presence.

24

Companies and schools honored with the statewide Spirit of NC Award for exemplary community partnership.



4

Virtual regional conversations with 37 United Ways in attendance, providing training, best practices, and idea exchange.



47

Personal touchpoints with local United Way staff.





# Leading Advocacy Efforts

United Way of NC's advocacy work is a collective effort of the Public Policy Team who set direction and local United Way staff who lend their voice when called to action.

2020 advocacy efforts were focused in several areas:

- Building relationships with state/federal legislators.
- Providing education about the 2020 Self-Sufficiency Standard research report.
- Raising awareness of tax credits and VITA sites.
- Initiating calls to action related to SNAP benefits, Charitable Tax Deduction, and tax credits.



In partnership with United Way Worldwide and the Rockefeller Foundation, UWNC is raising awareness of important tax credits for working families as well as pointing these families to VITA sites for free income tax preparation.

Landing page created to raise awareness of tax credits ([mytaxcredits.additionalinfo.org](https://mytaxcredits.additionalinfo.org)) received 1,335 page views.



**50,000** Emails with Tax Preparation Information

**198,419** Social media impressions through tax credit ad campaign

3

Training sessions offered to local United Way staff members, focused on how to use the Self-Sufficiency Standard data to advocate for households struggling to make ends meet.



120

Attended a virtual press conference announcing the release of the Self-Sufficiency Standard research report.

## Connecting North Carolinians to Care

NCCARE360 is the nation's first statewide coordinated care network that knits together health care, human services and community-based organizations to deliver person-centered care in all 100 North Carolina counties.

United Way of North Carolina's team works to ensure that the more than 13,000 resources in NCCARE360 are up-to-date, verified and accessible, and build on its existing NC 211 resource database and 211 system expertise.

In 2020, NCCARE360 Navigators (based in the NC 211 call centers) responded to 7,743 requests for care coordination services by hospitals, health care practitioners, community health workers and local community based organizations. Most frequent requests for assistance from the NCCARE360 navigators include complex housing needs, multiple needs that require ongoing support, transportation, and financial assistance. Referrals are made within the platform or through the [nccare360.org](https://nccare360.org) self referral form.

*NCCARE360 is a public-private partnership between NCDHHS and FHLI, in collaboration with implementation partners that include the United Way of North Carolina/NC 211, Expound Decision Systems, and Unite Us.*



## 2020 Board of Directors

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David Bailey, Retired UW Executive

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Rep. Ricky Hurtado, North Carolina Scholar's Latinx Initiative

Theresa Lee, Intentional Excellence Consulting

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Gareth Montague-Smith, Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP

Heidi Norwick, United Way of Alamance County

Brittany Pruitt-Fletcher, United Way of Forsyth County

Travis Starkey, Teach for America

Brian White, Vidant Health

## 2020 United Way of North Carolina Staff

**Anita Barker**

*Director of Education & Engagement*

**Heather Black**

*NC 211 State Director*

**Sharon D'Costa**

*Cybercrime & Coordinated Entry Project Manager*

**Kelsey Harris**

*Resource Coordinator*

**Laura James**

*Director, Resource Strategy & Technology Integration*

**Laura Zink Marx**

*President & CEO*

**Marcus Morris**

*Resource Coordinator*

**Michele Otake**

*Resource Coordinator*

**Linh Pham**

*Resource Coordinator*

**Leah Proctor**

*Resource Team Lead*

**Sarah Richards**

*Resource Coordinator*

**Julia Van Patter**

*Marketing & Communications Specialist*

**Vickie Woodbury**

*Finance Director*



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**[www.unitedwaync.org](http://www.unitedwaync.org)  
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