

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



UNITED WAY
North Carolina



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on 2025, I am proud to share the meaningful progress United Way of North Carolina has made on behalf of communities across our state. This year demonstrated what is possible when partners, donors, volunteers, and local United Ways come together with a shared commitment to helping North Carolinians thrive.

Throughout 2025, United Way of North Carolina strengthened its role as a statewide connector—bridging people, resources, and local United Ways to address pressing needs in education, financial stability, health, and disaster recovery. From advancing digital opportunities through NC 211 partnerships to supporting local United Ways with training, data, and advocacy, our work remained focused on creating equitable opportunities for individuals and families.

A major milestone this year was the launch of ALICE® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) in North Carolina. By bringing ALICE data to our state, we are better equipped to understand the true cost of living and the challenges faced by hardworking households who earn above the poverty level yet still struggle to afford basic necessities. This data is already helping inform policy discussions, guide investments, and strengthen solutions that reflect the realities facing families across North Carolina.

This year also marked the launch of an exciting Community Impact partnership with the North Carolina Courage. Together, we are amplifying awareness of critical community needs and engaging new audiences in our mission—demonstrating the power of collaboration and the role that shared platforms can play in driving positive change across the state.

In the year since Hurricane Helene, United Way of North Carolina played a critical role in coordinating and distributing more resources through the UW Helps NC Fund. Thanks to the generosity of donors and partners, families were able to begin rebuilding—repairing homes, replacing essential appliances, and restoring a sense of stability during incredibly difficult circumstances.

These accomplishments would not be possible without the dedication of our staff, the leadership of our board, the commitment of local United Ways, and the generosity of supporters across North Carolina. Together, you are helping build stronger, more resilient communities.

As this marks my final year serving as Board Chair, I want to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to lead and support this incredible organization. I am deeply proud of what we have accomplished together and confident in United Way of North Carolina's continued impact in the years ahead.

Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in our mission.

With gratitude,

Brian White
Board Chair
United Way of North Carolina

2025 UWNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

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Christopher Tissot, Publix

2025 UWNC LEADERSHIP



Senior Leadership

Brittany Pruitt Fletcher, President & CEO

David Mercado, Senior Director of Operations

Sally Gordon, Director of Mission Advancement

Shelley Spears, Executive Assistant

Leadership

Sara Carlson, Mission Advancement Manager

Jacqueline Lopez, Contact Center Manager

K'leigh Mayer, Client Services & Reporting Manager

Magaly Paucar, Resource & Database Manager

Angela Trejos-Baszczewski, Quality Assurance Manager

ABOUT UNITED WAY OF NORTH CAROLINA



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive. For almost 50 years, United Way of North Carolina (UWNC) has been a statewide organization, partnering with 47 local United Ways (LUW) to co-create solutions to people's most pressing challenges. We take a comprehensive approach, listening and responding to statewide needs, including but not limited to, strengthening local resilience and advancing health, youth opportunity, and financial security in our state. UWNC bridges and mobilizes people, local United Ways, and resources so individuals, families, and communities thrive in North Carolina. We are committed to four core areas of work: Member Services, NC 211, Disaster Response, and Advocacy.

MISSION

We bridge people, local United Ways, and resources so individuals, families and communities in North Carolina.

VISION

Thriving communities through equitable access to resources.

PURPOSE

Help individuals, families and communities thrive in NC.

MEMBER SERVICES

UWNC supports our statewide United Way network by providing professional development and networking opportunities, statewide advocacy leadership, technical support, marketing materials, and more.

NC 211

NC 211 is an information and referral service provided by United Way of North Carolina and powered by local United Ways in North Carolina. Families and individuals can call the free, statewide phone numbers 2-1-1 or (888) 892-1162 or visit [NC211.org](https://www.nc211.org) to receive free and confidential information on health and human services within their community. This service is also free of cost and is multilingual, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Real-time caller data is available at [nc.211counts.org](https://www.nc.211counts.org).

DISASTER RESPONSE

UWNC serves as a member of the State Emergency Response Team and is the official steward of the NC Disaster Relief Fund when the NC Governor activates it upon a statewide disaster. NC 211 is also activated by the Governor as the non-emergency number (2-1-1) to call during a disaster. UWNC acts as a support system to the 47 LUWs to address action plans needed to provide disaster relief and recovery.

ADVOCACY

UWNC participates in policy advocacy on state and federal issues on behalf of the 47 LUWs, brokering relationships with the NC General Assembly and using data-driven insights to support effective decision-making. UWNC also facilitates an annual Jones St. Advocacy Day, to provide space for our LUWs to meet with their legislators on key issues.

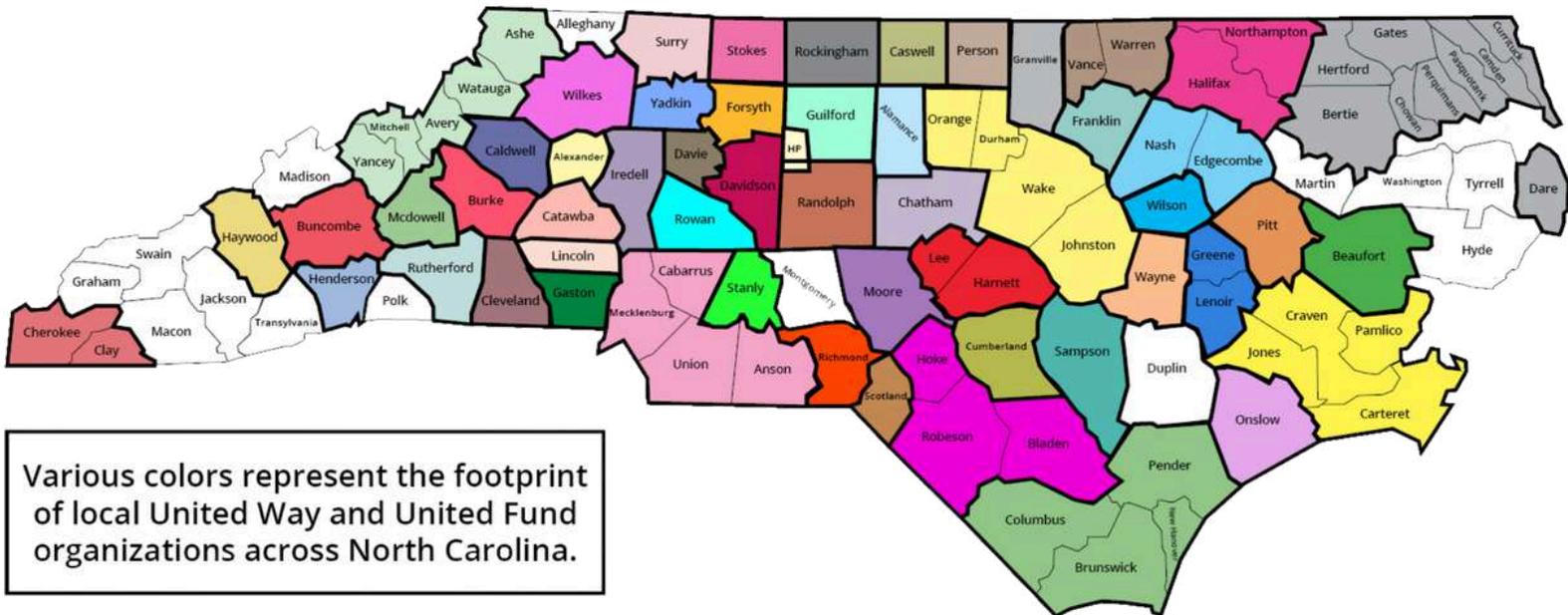
LEADING THROUGH CHANGE



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

We believe in community-led action to create positive change.

Change doesn't happen alone. United Way is uniquely positioned to collaborate with private, public, and nonprofit partners to improve education, financial stability, and healthcare for our neighbors across North Carolina. Together, **47 local United Way organizations** work to build equitable communities where everyone can thrive local United Way organizations work to build equitable communities where everyone can thrive.



2025 was a year of exciting network growth and engagement. United Way of North Carolina hosted training and networking opportunities, celebrated the achievements of United Way organizations and their partners, and provided invaluable tools to strengthen capacity in local communities.

WE SUPPORTED OUR UNITED WAY NETWORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR BY PROVIDING:



48 NC 211 data and caller stories, representing the needs of community members.

12 sets of statewide marketing materials around NC 211, Digital Opportunity, and ALICE.

3 regional, in-person Summer Network Conversations, focused on our **Thriving United Way Framework**.

1 survey to assess network health and inform capacity building content.

50+ network emails with relevant information and connection to resources.

12 monthly network engagement calls.

4 quarterly marketing trainings, covering topics such as the ALICE report and United Way's Global Refresh branding.

CELEBRATING OUR THRIVING NETWORK



In February, our network joined together in person for UWNC's Annual Conference, bringing together **82 attendees** consisting of United Way staff, speakers, sponsors, and board members in Elon, North Carolina. We took time on the final day to celebrate Best Practice winners - fellow organizations who have led effective and impactful fundraising campaigns in their communities. We also celebrated our Anita Barker "Make It Matter" award winner, Celesa Willett, Executive Director of United Way of Haywood County, who embodied the purpose of the award, by doing something to "Make It Matter" in her community.



Frank McCain, President & CEO of United Way of Greater Greensboro, sharing remarks.



Featured winner, Doug Williford, General Manager of Triumph Group, presenting their best practices.



Celesa Willett and colleagues with her "Make It Matter" award.

From March 11-25, United Way of NC presented **67 awards** nominated by **18 United Ways** across the state. We welcomed 3 corporate and nonprofit guest speakers who offered their expertise and praise for the well-deserved winners.

For 25+ years, the Spirit of North Carolina Award has celebrated organizations for their campaign excellence achieved through impactful events, engaged leadership, championing DEI Values, volunteerism, and disaster response.



Featured Central region winner, Cameron Bryant.



Featured Western region winner, Iredell Statesville Schools.



Featured Eastern region winner, City of Rocky Mount.

THRIVING THROUGH ADVOCACY



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

Through NC 211, we uplift the needs of community members across the state and advocate for necessary resources. In collaboration with our United Way network, we raise awareness around statewide initiatives, such as tax preparation and educational assistance. And we work with partners to think creatively about programs and services that help North Carolinians meet their basic needs.

2025 Advocacy Efforts Included:

\$1.4MM in grants and contracts to support the United Way network and NC 211.

\$7.3MM in funds distributed to NC communities from the UW Helps NC Fund.

27 personal visits with legislators to discuss the importance of NC 211 and secure funding.

\$480,000 of state funding secured to support NC 211.

NC 211:

NC 211 is a free, confidential, and multilingual health and human services information system, available 24/7/365.

North Carolinians who dial this 3-digit number will reach a trained and caring community resource specialist who can connect them to resources for housing, senior services, food assistance, healthcare, and much more.

United Way of NC has spent more than 20 years building the NC 211 system, making it an accessible and trusted resource for North Carolinians. In 2024, we hired David Mercado, Senior Director of Operations, who revamped the NC 211 team and evolved it into a system operating at a **98% service level** on average. The NC 211 team has grown to **60+ employees** who dedicate their time and energy to helping North Carolinians calling in for resource information to address their life's needs.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS



326,500
Calls



267,000
Needs
Identified



430,000
Sessions
on NC211.org



UNITED WAY
North Carolina



Powered by United Way of North Carolina
and Local United Ways

TOP NC 211 REQUESTS IN NORTH CAROLINA



122,152
Requests for
Housing Help



56,084
Requests for
Help with Utilities



17,832
Requests for
Food Relief



7,674
Requests for
Help with Healthcare



5,687
Requests for
Legal, Consumer, or Public
Safety Needs



4,501
Requests for
Disaster Related Needs

NC 211'S RESOURCES



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Our dedicated resource team manages the NC 211 Community Resource Directory, which includes **more than 16,000 health and human service resources**. The team works diligently to constantly verify and update resources, ensuring that the information is accurate. Additionally, they actively seek out underutilized resources within communities, ensuring that every available support system is identified and accessible to those in need. This ongoing effort helps to connect individuals with the vital services they require. During the SNAP Benefits halt and government shut down in November 2025, NC 211 Community Resource Specialists were attentive to the needs of thousands of callers, pointing them in the right direction of food and other vital resources.

16,297

Total programs
updated in 2025

4,761

Agencies verified
in 2025

891

Agencies added to NC 211's
Community Resource
Directory in 2025

eLIBRARY

North Carolinians can also read detailed information about resources by visiting NC 211's eLibrary at nc211.org/elibrary. At the end of 2025, there were more than **100 articles** about housing, utility assistance, healthcare, education, and more. NC 211's eLibrary serves as a central hub, providing answers to frequently asked questions around eligibility requirements and application procedures for statewide programs.



United Way of North Carolina's NC 211 partners with AARP and United Way Worldwide to provide resources to family caregivers.

United Way of North Carolina also partners with AARP, the Attorney General's Office, and the NC Department of the Secretary of State to provide support to Digital/Crypto scam victims.

Caregivers and scam victims can have a free and confidential conversation by dialing 2-1-1, or searching for resources by visiting [NC211.org](https://www.nc211.org), to discover resources that can help them.

CAREGIVER PROGRAM



45,124 resources provided to family caregivers



20,686 family caregivers received resources



250% over goal to provide support to family caregivers

DIGITAL & CRYPTOCURRENCY SCAM PROGRAM



63 Victims who reported scams to AARP & NC 211



76 resources provided to scam victims

For years, United Way of North Carolina and the **47 local United Ways** across the state have been dedicated to removing barriers to financial stability. Through the United for ALICE framework, we're expanding our efforts to ensure equitable access to healthcare, emergency savings, and educational resources for future generations.

The State of ALICE in North Carolina: 2025 Update on Financial Hardship is brought to you by **United Way of North Carolina** in partnership with **United For ALICE**, a driver of innovative research and action to promote financial stability for ALICE® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households. With a commitment to racial and economic justice, United For ALICE and United Ways across North Carolina share this work with foundations, government, corporations, and other nonprofits to inform policy and promote positive change for ALICE households.

This report is made possible by United Way of North Carolina; our presenting sponsor, **Carolinas Credit Union Foundation**; and the many volunteers, donors, nonprofit partners, and leaders supporting our local United Ways. Their dedication allows us to turn data into action, improving lives and building a stronger, more resilient North Carolina.



43% of NC falls
below the ALICE
Threshold, as of 2022



In 2022, wages **increased by 5%**,
while total federal assistance
decreased by \$15,000



2 ALICE Reports
have been
published in NC

Coordinated Entry increases efficiency in homeless services by standardizing how people access programs and coordinating referrals. The coordinated entry system covers a set geographic area, can be easily accessed by individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness seeking housing and services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.



23,838
Calls



781
Homeless Management
Information System
Screenings



3,796
Needs

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSING NEEDS

30% - Housing Related Coordinated Entry

18% - Homeless Shelter

15% - Low Income/Subsidized Private Rental Housing

10% - Transitional Housing/Shelter

6% - Rental Deposit Assistance

Oct. 15 - Dec. 31, 2025

DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

United Way of North Carolina is offering disaster case management support to the Long Term Recovery Group in Buncombe County, in collaboration with United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County. Through NC 211, we have developed a closed loop referral system to accept referrals from the Long Term Recovery Group for those that may not qualify for disaster case management but still have needs. Our team is connecting those consumers to resources in their community.

TOP RESOURCE NEEDS



23

Requests for
Housing Help



23

Requests for
Help with Healthcare



3

Requests for
Help with Utilities



2

Requests for
Food Relief



1

Requests for
Help with Legal, Consumer, or
Public Safety Needs



0

Requests for
Disaster Related Needs



38

Needs



68

Consumers

[MyFriendBen](#) is a one-stop online tool that helps North Carolinians find the benefits and tax credits they may qualify for. Results are presented as a report that also populates local, near-term resources, coupled with those long-term resources. MyFriendBen is brought to North Carolina by [MyFriendBen Colorado](#), [Code the Dream](#), and [NC 211](#).



1,506

Total Users



99.2%

Of users came through NC 211

TOP RESOURCE NEEDS



31%

**Seeking
Housing**



29%

**Seeking
Food**



12%

**Seeking Job
Resources**

Jan. 1 - Aug. 31, 2025

The first statewide coordinated care network, led by United Way of North Carolina and NC 211, Unite Us, Expound Decision Systems, NC Dept. of Health & Human Services, and Foundation for Health Leadership & Innovation. This program helps providers electronically connect those with needs to community resources and allow for follow up. This program concluded in August and the datapoints reflect the impact made between January - August, 2025.



6,154
Clients

10,370
Needs

204
Organizations
that sent at
least 1 referral
to NC 211

100%
1st action in 2
business days

98%
Resolution in
10 days





[United Way of North Carolina](#) has become the official Community Impact Partner of the [North Carolina Courage](#) professional women's soccer team. Together with the NC Courage, we will help deliver impactful community programming and deepen connections across the state, proudly represented with our UWNC logo on the team's player appearance polos.



\$25,000 raised by NC Courage for United Way community support



443K Social Impressions & 5.9M Digital Impressions on Title Night posts



\$20,000 raised by NC Courage for UW Helps NC Fund



7,000 attendees at UWNC's Title Night



1,200 tickets donated to **17** community groups



1 Fanfest to promote NC 211 & other programs

NC 211 has partnered with the NC Dept. of Information Technology, Division of Broadband and Digital Opportunity, to provide NC 211 callers with referrals to internet providers, help with creating email addresses, and learning how to use the internet.



31,316 consumers expressed interest in learning more about digital literacy

1,195 consumers received low-cost internet search plans



11 consumers were assisted with creating an email account

448 consumers received referrals to NorthStar for digital literacy training



3,054 consumers completed a digital assessment

WHAT'S TO COME IN 2026



Coordinated Entry

Coordinated Entry increases efficiency in homeless services by standardizing how people access programs and coordinating referrals. The coordinated entry system covers a set geographic area, can be easily accessed by individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness seeking housing and services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool. Through 211, United Way of North Carolina is the access point for Forsyth County, Region 6 (Person, Rockingham, Alamance, Chatham, Caswell), and Region 1 (Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon, Swain, Jackson, Haywood, and Madison).



Ride United

Launched in 2018 in partnership with Lyft, United Way Worldwide created Ride United, a transportation access initiative that leverages the strength of United Ways, the 211 Network, and partners, to provide clients in need with free rides for essential use cases. United Way of North Carolina has received funding to be able to provide transportation to an essential location and receive a ride for free or discounted rate, while the driver is still paid at a normal rate. Use cases can include but are not limited to travel to doctor's appointments, places of employment, or to access food resources.

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

The VITA program has operated for over 50 years and is an official program of the IRS. VITA sites offer free tax help to people who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns, including people who generally make \$69,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and limited English-speaking taxpayers. United Way of North Carolina is partnering with a Local United Way to schedule VITA appointments through 211 for this tax season.



EXPLORE & FOLLOW



UNITED WAY
North Carolina

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