

THE UNITED WAY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



2018 UNITED WAY COMMUNITY IMPACTS.

The United Way utilizes a grantmaking and social change framework rooted in Collective Community Impact. This ensures that our funding drives community change in the areas most needed in Douglas County by harnessing the collective power of nonprofits and multisector supports to make lasting impact. Your United Way investment supports these community goals and organizations who are working for a thriving, United Douglas County.



Our Health Partners:

Douglas County Dental Clinic
 Headquarters Counseling Center
 Heartland Community Health Center
 The Sexual Abuse & Trauma Care Center
 Willow Domestic Violence Center
 Lawrence Community Shelter
 Lawrence Meals on Wheels
 Success by 6 Coalition
 CASA

Our Education Partners:

Girl Scouts of NE KS
 Ballard Community Services
 Child Care Aware of Eastern KS
 Communities in Schools Mid-America
 Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence
 Big Brothers, Big Sisters
 Success by 6 Coalition
 Positive Bright Start

Our Financial Stability Partners:

Independence, Inc.
 Tenants to Homeowners
 Catholic Charities of Northeast
 Kansas Housing & Credit Counseling, Inc.
 Willow Domestic Violence Center
 Lawrence Community Shelter
 Cottonwood, Inc.
 Just Food

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends of United Way,

I want to acknowledge the tremendous support you have offered to us over the past year. That support has gone beyond the financial and through advice and an investment in time and energy, you have enabled us to rebuild the United Way and set it up for success in the coming months and years. We now have a talented, energetic and committed full-time staff ready to bring stability and a bit of innovation to the United Way and those we serve. We remain committed to our mission "to address the Human Service needs of County residents and advance the common good by mobilizing community resources and building partnerships," and we recognize the tremendous work our partner organizations are doing daily to ensure those in need are cared for and our mission is realized.

One of our objectives for this year is to take our messaging to the next level. To focus on raising awareness of what the United Way does and how your United Way donation impacts the community. This Annual Report is meant to do just that. In the coming months, you will see me and the staff out in the community giving voice to critical social issues, providing training and education sessions, and intentionally serving not just Lawrence, but all of Douglas County. We will be communicating to you through personal letters, e-mail, social media, and over the airwaves. It's all part of ensuring that you are well informed, engaged, and ready to stand with us as we strengthen our social safety-net and build a strong, resilient Douglas County.

With respect,

Jeffrey A Cornish, President & CEO

Peggy Johnson, 2018-19 Board Chair

2018 BOARD MEMBERS:

- Peggy Johnson, Board Chair
- Kurt Schueler, Secretary
- Grant Huddin, Treasurer
- Jacy Hurst, Chair-Elect
- Dr. Mahasweta Banerjee
- Dr. Tami Gurley-Calvez
- Courtland Triplett
- Silas S. Dulan III
- Linda Robinson
- Krystal Loomis
- Ranelle Fischer
- Greg Gardener
- Jamie Lowe
- Wint Winter
- Brad Allen

2018 AMERICORPS SITES:

In 2018, AmeriCorps members provided services to 2,534 Douglas County residents.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Lawrence Douglas County Health Department | Willow Domestic Violence Center |
| Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority | DCCCA, First Step at Lake View |
| Heartland Community Health Clinic | United Way of Douglas County |
| Lawrence Community Shelter | Lawrence Meals on Wheels |
| Lawrence Public Library | Just Food -and- Bert Nash |

ROGER HILL VOLUNTEER CENTER:

- Brainfood program:** 14,000 books for 400 students
- United Way Readers:** volunteered over 475 hours
- 200+ Literacy Kits & 308 backpacks delivered
- Collected school supplies for 3,479 students
- 2,400 Mangel Swim Passes distributed
- 4 Born Learning Trails at local parks



United Way Douglas County

TOTAL: \$1,571,459.00

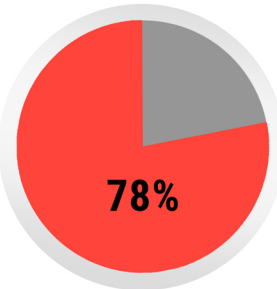
Program Services Expenses: \$1,397,742 (89% goes to programing). Management/General Expenses: \$75,407 (4.8% goes to Admin). Fundraising Expenses: \$98,310

OUR GOAL: KIDS START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN THROUGH KINDERGARTEN READINESS AND STAY ON TRACK WITH BOTH READING AND MATH PROFICIENCY.

OUR CHALLENGE: In Douglas County, 44% of children are not academically prepared for kindergarten. 65% of 8th graders are not proficient in math and 63% of 4th graders are not proficient in reading. Overall, 14% of students in Douglas County are not graduating on time.

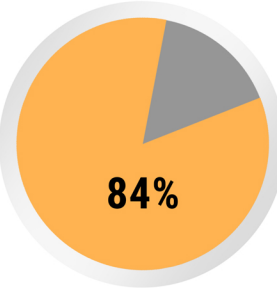
OVER 6,880

Douglas County K-12 students received academic support services through United Way supported programs. Through our work, an average of **78%** of students served are reading and doing math at grade-level by 5th grade



OVER 700

preschool children received services through United Way supported programs. **84%** of the children served showed improvement toward kindergarten readiness.



JACEY'S STORY

I had a good childhood. I was born and raised in Lawrence. I am one of you. My parents had good jobs, loved me, and provided me with a good home and a great childhood. I graduated from Lawrence High School hoping to get a career working with kids. After graduation, I enrolled in Johnson County Community College planning for a degree in Early Childhood Education. I thought I knew what my future looked like, but I was wrong.

Things became harder for me. I became pregnant at age 19. I now have a beautiful 11-year old daughter, but with her in my life, school became more difficult. I finished my first year of college but needed money. I lived with my parents because I couldn't afford to live on my own. I took some classes and worked on the side. My parents gave me a place to stay and made sure I was safe.

A mutual friend introduced me to a man named Michael when I was 26. I was a single, working mom with very little free time, and I was thrilled that this great-looking man was paying attention to me. He was interesting and funny, and I felt he needed me. I liked his mom and his sister. Michael said he had a rough childhood, and I thought I could offer him the support he didn't seem to have. He quickly became a part of my life.

Two months later, I was (again) pregnant. It seemed like this should be a happy occasion, but Michael became difficult to deal with. He became controlling. He told me I was too dependent on my family and began cutting me off from my friends and family members. I thought that when the baby came, things would get better. They just got worse.

I became afraid of him and felt there was no way out. His behavior became more demanding and violent. He threatened to kill me and my family, and I was afraid to tell anyone what I was going through. Things got still worse. My son Zion received his 18-month checkup, and 2 days later had a fever and seizures. My happy little boy was developing fine, but suddenly, he was not the same. He stopped talking. He would not make eye contact. He was no longer affectionate. He was diagnosed with autism at age two. I knew I had to be strong for my child, but my life had become a nightmare. I had surgery, and my grandmother died the next day. The abuse also worsened. Having an autistic child didn't fit Michael's image. He became physically abusive. Michael wanted me to put Zion into a home. I left him the next day. *(continued on page 5)*



JACEY'S STORY

(continued from page 4)

I moved in with my parents for five months before finding low-income housing for myself. During this time, lawyers battled over custody of our children. In the last ten months, Michael has seen them a total of four hours. I knew that I needed help and support!

I found help at the Ballard Center. After four years of abuse, the Ballard Center allowed me to reconnect with my past—with better days. I enrolled my children at the preschool and received a tuition discount. I had few possessions and made use of the food and clothing pantry to stabilize my life. They assisted me with learning how to cook healthy foods on a budget and secured a gift certificate through the Fairy Godmother Fund to allow me to purchase the organic foods from the Merc I needed due to a medical condition. I've received diapers from them, school supplies for the kids, and Christmas presents through the Holiday Bureau.

Meanwhile, the Ballard Center helps me stabilize the lives of my children. With the help of the Calm Corners, Zion learns to self-regulate his emotions and grow as a child. He loves the Calm Corners and Magic Room and feels safe there. We get help from the Ballard Center family therapist and have created plans for working on his aggression. It is a relief and a comfort to have someone that understands and supports us. The Ballard Center Family Connections Coordinator has helped make this a safe place for us all, which has been lacking in my life since I was very young. Good things are happening now, and I look to the future with hope now. A hope I didn't have before. A hope I wouldn't have if it were not for my friends at the Ballard Center.

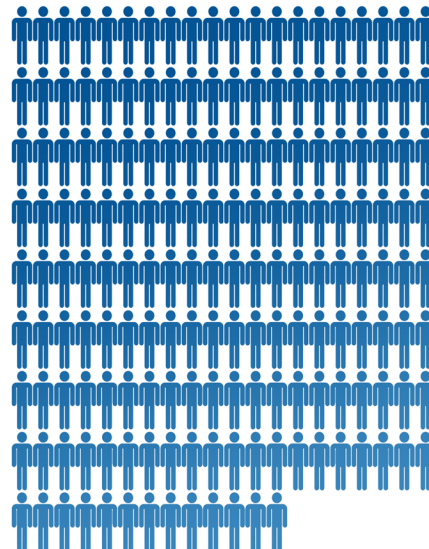
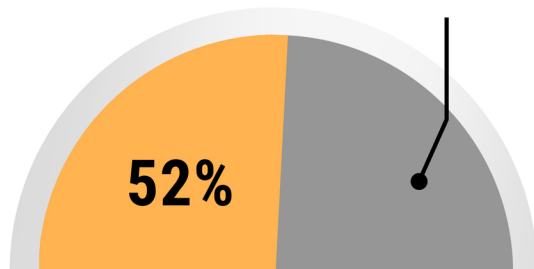


OUR GOAL: INCREASE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY FAMILIES/INDIVIDUALS THROUGH AFFORDABLE HOUSING, FINANCIAL LITERACY, AND JOBS TRAINING.

OUR CHALLENGE: While unemployment is down, the percentage of the population living in poverty has continued to increase. 18% of Douglas County lives in poverty, above the national average of 13%. Over 50% of renters and 18% of homeowners lack affordable housing, 16% face food insecurity.

OVER 1,200

residents had housing case management through United Way supported programs. 52% of those individuals moved from permanent shelter or transitional housing to permanent, affordable housing.



173 unique Douglas County residents received jobs training and assistance through programs which United Way supports. 64% of those served gained regular-full time employment.

852 individuals were provided financial literacy education through programs the United Way supports. 76% of those served reported a reduction of debt as a direct result of their education.

Over 16,000 residents of Douglas County have accessed community resources to combat food insecurity. 33% of those who accessed these United Way supported food banks increased their intake of healthy, fresh, and whole foods.

A horizontal bar chart with a red segment representing 76% and a grey segment representing the remaining 24%. A black dot is positioned on the red segment, with a thin black line extending from it to the left.

76%

CRYSTAL'S STORY

Crystal suffered from over 10 years of physical and emotional abuse at the hands of her children's father. When his abuse turned towards their kids she knew it was time to leave; enough was enough. Crystal turned him into the authorities, and he was arrested the next day. Days later she moved to Kansas to find a fresh start for her and her children, Ariel and Abel.

They lived in Kansas with Crystal's mother and her mother's boyfriend for the next six months. It was tough, but they were making it. In February, disputes with her mother's boyfriend escalated and Crystal's family was forced out of their home. It was the dead of winter and they had nowhere to go. Eventually, with the help of the Lawrence Police Department, Crystal got in touch with the Lawrence Community Shelter and secured a room in the family program.

Crystal knew she needed to work hard as soon as she arrived. She knew if she worked hard at making herself better, and making her family better, she could go farther in this program and in life. "Really, though, at that moment, I was just grateful to have a roof over our head and a safe place to sleep."

Now that she had their basic needs taken care of she knew the rest was up to her. "It's up to you if you want to do good in a program. It's up to you to ask yourself, 'am I going to fail, or am I going to succeed?' It wasn't a choice. As a single mother of two beautiful children, failure isn't an option. There's no choice but to succeed."

Crystal immediately got the kids enrolled in Prairie Park elementary school, which was a huge victory. Ariel and Abel love their school. "The school doesn't sweep their mental health problems under the rug and kick them out. They actually call me to tell me what's going on. They actually work with me. And I've noticed positive changes in my kids".

After they started school Crystal enrolled herself in a GED program at the Lawrence Adult Learning Center. She goes several times a week. "After I get my GED, I'm going to college to become an EMT. In the meantime, I'm working to find a job that works with me around my kids' schedule". Crystal and her family have also been regularly attending Strengthening Families, which has given her new strategies for raising her kids. LCS helps support and facilitate the program. "I would be lost right now without LCS. They helped me enroll in school, they helped get my kids and I's medications aligned, and have helped me through everything. [...] Since I came here, I've actually succeeded. And I know I can pull me and my family out of poverty. It's because of the people here that work with me."

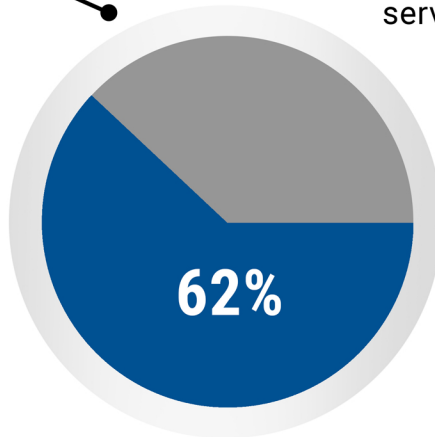


OUR GOAL: INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, QUALITY HEALTHCARE IN ORDER TO IMPROVE OVERALL PHYSICAL, DENTAL, AND BEHAVIORAL WELLBEING.

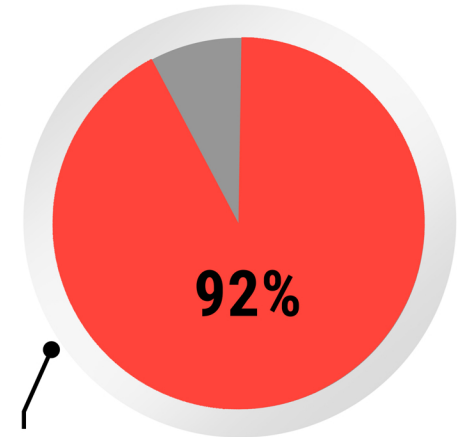
OUR CHALLENGE: In Douglas County, more than 36% of adults are unable to work or do normal daily activities as a result of poor physical or mental health. 15% of Douglas County adults ages 18-64 are uninsured, and 5% of Douglas County children are uninsured.

OVER 4,016

Douglas County residents received dental or physical health services through multiple United Way supported programs. Over 62% of those served showed positive clinical outcomes for dental and physical health as a result of the services provided.



403 unique individuals received mental health services through United Way supported programs. 58% of those served showed improvement in their mental health because of services they received.



92% of those trained in suicide intervention through United Way supported programs demonstrated confidence utilizing suicide intervention skills.

ANONYMOUS STORY

Thanks to the support of the United Way of Douglas County, I was able to attend the ASIST Training for free, as I am a member of a United Way partner agency. As a person who has worked in a number of social service fields, I had worked with several individuals who had expressed suicidal ideation; however, I never felt confident in providing support for or safety planning with them.

As soon as I became aware of this opportunity, I signed up for the two-day training, not knowing what to expect but recognizing that I had a lot to learn. The two-day training was an intense and enlightening experience. I made sure to tell all of my colleagues about the importance of this training and how much practical knowledge I had acquired. I even came home and told my partner and my child about how impactful this experience was for me.

Little did I know that the first place I would utilize the skills I learned in the ASIST training would be in my home with the very person I love the most. About one week after I attended the ASIST training, my teenage child experienced a significant loss. As much as we empathized with our child, I don't believe either of us really understood the impact this loss had on them.

My partner and I had an event that we attended, and our child didn't want to go. While we were out of the house, our child began posting sad messages on their social media accounts, and we became very concerned rather quickly. We came home right away and discovered that our child had been contemplating ways to end their pain. The information I received in the ASIST training became real at that moment. I was able to ask my child questions and hear their story. We were able to devise a plan to keep them safe and help connect them to available resources.

Without the ASIST training, I would not have felt prepared to support my child in their time of need, and it is possible that my lack of knowledge would have led to more harm for them. I am grateful for Headquarters Counseling Center, and their work to educate the community on how to support and best care for their loved ones.

