

CARING CONNECTIONS

News from Your United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

2024 United for ALICE Report

The rising cost of living and the housing crisis are top of mind issues for many families in our region. Last month, United for ALICE released their 2024 update which unpacks important data on the most pressing obstacles to financial stability, such as the cost of housing, childcare, health care, groceries and more. United for ALICE is a nationwide advocacy movement which originated out of a desire to better understand the struggles facing everyday families. Founded by United Way of Northern New Jersey, the United for ALICE initiative has developed into a collaboration between several United Ways, government agencies, corporations and other nonprofits and foundations across the country.

ALICE is an acronym used to represent the often underrepresented populations who are not living in poverty, but are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. 38% of households in Virginia are considered ALICE and 11 out of the 16 localities in our region have a higher percentage of ALICE families than the state average. These issues impact everyone in our society and take a tangible toll on our economy. At United Way, we are committed to raising awareness of the most pressing issues in our region, rallying a united effort to find solutions, and advocating for systems-level change so that all in our region can thrive. As a United for ALICE partner, we’re leveraging this quality, unbiased data to inspire meaningful action and stimulate progress that will improve the financial stability of ALICE families, ultimately benefiting our entire community.

We encourage you to join us on this path to create a thriving region by uniting the caring power of our community. You can read the latest ALICE report and access helpful data tools by visiting [www.UnitedforALICE.org/virginia](http://www.UnitedforALICE.org/virginia), or emailing [connect@yourunitedway.org](mailto:connect@yourunitedway.org) to get connected with our team.



GIVE

New Early Learning Trail in Chesterfield

In partnership with The Cameron Foundation and C-Fit Community (a new community initiative led by Chesterfield County), we are thrilled to announce the installation of a new United Way Early Learning Trail in Chesterfield. The Early Learning Trail will provide an engaging, educational environment for young children, encouraging physical activity and cognitive development through interactive outdoor activities.

The installation will take place later this fall at Ettrick Park, a location chosen for its accessibility and community significance. United Way volunteers will support the installation efforts, bringing together community members and organizations in a shared commitment to enhancing early childhood education. We believe this trail will become a valuable resource for families in Chesterfield, offering a fun and enriching space for children to learn and grow. Stay tuned for more updates on the installation process!



GIVE

Jonathan & Jennifer Leon: 2024 Alexis de Tocqueville Award Winners

United Way’s Alexis de Tocqueville Society is a generous group of local philanthropists dedicated to creating positive change and fueling high-impact work in the Greater Richmond and Petersburg region. The Alexis de Tocqueville Award recognizes supporters who embody the American spirit of unparalleled generosity and volunteerism, as observed by Alexis de Tocqueville, political philosopher and writer, when he traveled to the United States almost 200 years ago. This year, we are thrilled to recognize an outstanding couple who embody the spirit of giving back - Jonathan and Jennifer Leon. Jonathan and Jennifer have demonstrated their commitment to both United Way and the greater Richmond community. Jennifer Leon has served as a member of our WomenRise Steering Committee, and during a staff vacancy during a busy time of year, she rolled up her sleeves and helped us to administer the program as a committed volunteer. She is passionate about child welfare and has dedicated time to several organizations in our community including Chesterfield CASA and our partner agency, St. Joseph’s Villa. Jonathan Leon served on our Board of Directors from 2012 to 2023. In addition to serving as board chair, he previously served on our finance committee, strategic planning committee and investment committees. As Senior Vice President of Finance & Corporate Treasurer at Owens & Minor, he has helped to create a culture of philanthropy at his workplace. Their passion for quality education, health and human services is inspiring, and we are so grateful to have their support.



*“We believe that United Way has a tremendous track record of assisting those in the community with the greatest need, which in doing so uplifts the entire community. United Way makes us feel like whatever we contribute, whether it’s through volunteering or financial support, we just get back so much more than we give. It’s essential that we have United Way in this community because United Way has the breadth and depth of knowledge to actually help us understand where we can make the most impact through funding a variety of programs and measure that impact. Without United Way, there would be a tremendous gap in our community’s ability to uplift those with the greatest need.”*

– Jennifer and Jonathan Leon

ADVOCATE

United Way on PlanRVA Panel for Upward Economic Mobility

PlanRVA Day is an annual data-driven decision making session where experts share best practices on utilizing the Upward Mobility Framework and the role of data in improving economic mobility outcomes in the community.



United Way staff participated on the panel at PlanRVA Day alongside (left to right): **Sarin Adhikari**, Ph.D, Principal Data Manager, Plan RVA; **Isabel Eljaiek**, MSW, Senior Officer, Data & Research, Community Foundation for a greater Richmond; **Christina Stacy**, Principal Research Associate, Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center, Urban Institute; **Frank Cardella**, Director, Research and Evaluation, UWGRP; **Alexis Weaver**, Policy Program Associate, Research to Action Lab, Urban Institute.

Charitable Deduction Being Considered

Congress is considering reinstating the universal charitable deduction (UCD), which expired in 2021. The universal charitable deduction will make it easier for everyone, no matter their income, to support the work community-based organizations do daily throughout the country. The bipartisan Charitable Act (H.R. 3435/S. 566), provides a charitable tax deduction to taxpayers who claim the standard deduction. The current charitable deduction is only available to those who itemize, 12% of taxpayers. The Charitable Act has the potential to expand charitable giving and provide important resources for the organizations many Americans depend on to meet critical community needs.

# VOLUNTEER

## Deloitte Impact Day at United Way

Deloitte demonstrated their dedication to investing in the future of our region through their Deloitte Impact Day! Deloitte employees gathered at our United Way office to volunteer their time and talents, decorating and assembling 100 Literacy Kits. These kits are filled with crucial school supplies to help young learners at local elementary schools thrive academically. We know that when students are not reading on grade level by third grade, they are four times more likely to drop out of high school. By increasing access to school supplies and age-appropriate reading materials, United Way Literacy Kits support early literacy, and ultimately higher graduation rates in our region. Socially conscious companies like Deloitte make this impact possible. We are so grateful for Deloitte's generous support of our work in the community!



## Hodges Partnership Installs Little Free Library at St. Joseph's Villa

Thanks to volunteers from The Hodges Partnership, our newest Little Free Library was installed! This library, which is located at St. Joseph's Villa, marks our 24th library in the region! These libraries are located throughout neighborhoods and at key community centers, providing free and accessible reading materials to local families. We rely on donations and volunteers to keep this important resource stocked. Learn how you can get involved by visiting our website: [www.YourUnitedWay.org/volunteer](http://www.YourUnitedWay.org/volunteer)



# OTHER CONNECTIONS

## United Way Board Member Recognized By Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

Congratulations to **Tammy Hornsby-Fink**, a United Way Board of Directors member, on her recent notable recognition from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. Tammy has been named as a finalist for the 2024 Capital ORBIE® Awards in the CISO Public Sector category.



## Welcome New Board Chair and Community Leaders to Board of Directors

We are excited to announce four new members joining our Board of Directors starting on July 1: **Andrew George** (Bank of America), **Tracey Ragsdale** (Community Volunteer), **Cheryl Moore** (Federal Reserve), **Jason E. Williams** (Dominion Energy). We also welcome the appointment of **Robert (Bobby) Cowgill**, First Vice President of South State Bank, as our incoming board chair. We are grateful to have the insights and expertise of these board members as we forge the future of United Way! We appreciate their service and dedication to our community!



ANDREW GEORGE



TRACEY RAGSDALE



CHERYL MOORE



JASON E. WILLIAMS



ROBERT COWGILL

# SAVE THE DATE

## July 2024: FREE EveryDay Strong Trainings

Just one caring adult in a kid's life can make a meaningful impact on their mental health. It can be challenging to connect with kids and teens, but EveryDay Strong training makes it simple! Register for a FREE upcoming training here: [www.EveryDayStrongVA.org/trainings](http://www.EveryDayStrongVA.org/trainings)



## July 15 - August 15, 2024: Canned Food Drive at Local Publix Supermarkets

Look out for canned food donation bins at your local Publix Supermarket this summer! Between **July 15 and August 15**, Publix is partnering with United Way to collect non-perishable food items for local community members in need. Items donated will be distributed to Henrico Food Bank and Chesterfield Food Bank. Spread the word and stop by your local store to support this cause! For more information, contact Tiffany Beissel at [BeisselT@yourunitedway.org](mailto:BeisselT@yourunitedway.org)



## August 8, 2024: Literacy Kit Kick-Off Breakfast

Join us on August 8 at 8:30 a.m. to learn about United Way's Literacy Kit volunteer opportunities! Each year, thanks to support from community volunteers and corporate partners, we deliver thousands of Literacy Kits to local elementary schools, easing the burden on families and teachers to provide the necessary school supplies for kids to thrive academically. At this kick-off breakfast event, you'll learn all about Literacy Kits, including the impact they have on early literacy and how you can get involved! [Click here to register.](#)

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 - 2024 LITERACY KIT LEADERS!



To read the digital version and access links, scan this QR code with your smart phone camera.



## Be a Changemaker: Interested in Supporting United Way?

If you have any questions about United Way or questions about donating, please reach out to **Heather Farber**, Director of Major Gifts.

(804) 771-5883 | [farberh@yourunitedway.org](mailto:farberh@yourunitedway.org)



United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg, a nonprofit dedicated to improving lives and mobilizing the caring power of communities, has been at the forefront of positive, lasting change since 1924. Collaborating with nonprofit partners, donors, and volunteers, we continue to unite community resources to deliver effective programs and initiatives.