



## WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER

### COMMUNITY IMPACT WORK MAKES GREAT STRIDES

In 2017, the newly merged United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties (UWMOC) created a strategic plan to hone in on our mission, vision and community impact goals. In one year's time, UWMOC has made significant advances in the expansion of community impact programs to our bi-county region in all four of our focus areas: school readiness, early grade reading,

youth career pathways and financial stability. Arriving at this point of making a substantial impact on the lives of youth and their families in Monmouth and Ocean counties has been no small task, requiring months of consulting with members of our community to determine gaps in service and bringing together new partners to accomplish our goals.

*Continued on next page*

# LIVE UNITED



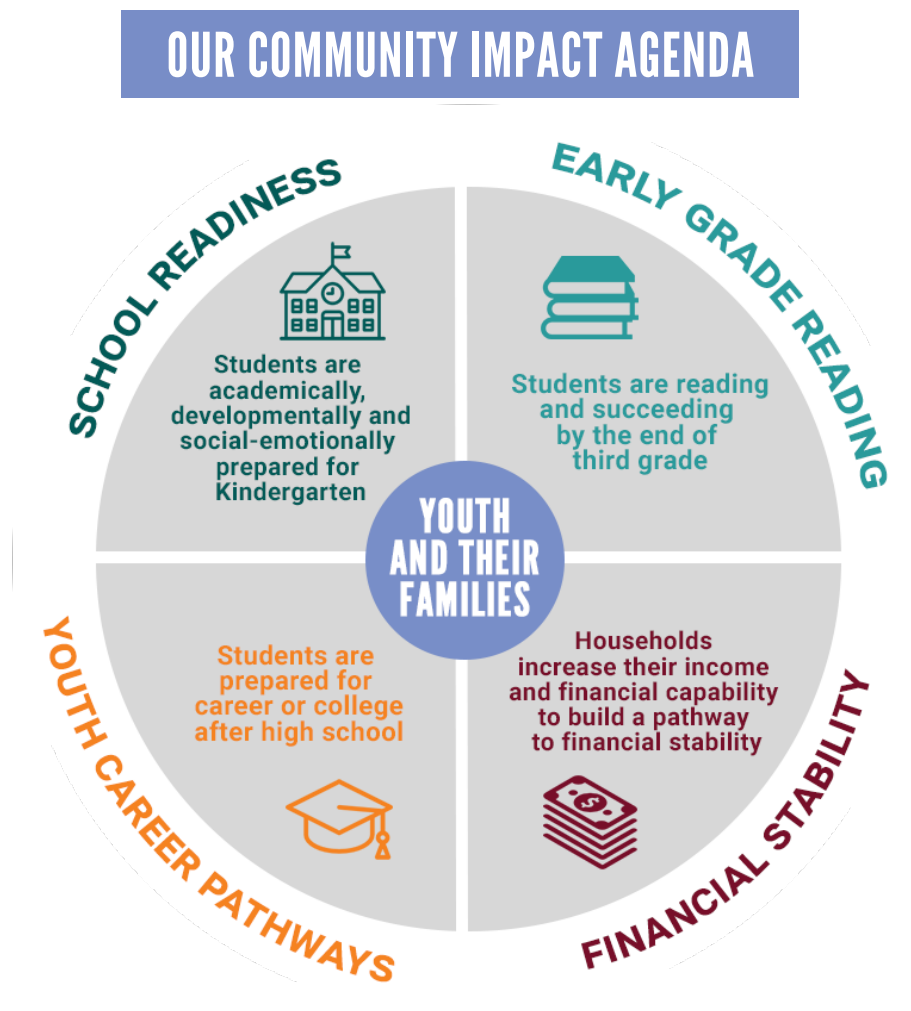
# COMMUNITY IMPACT WORK MAKES GREAT STRIDES *continued*

United Way has long been regarded as a community convener and collaborator. In order to determine our impact focus areas, community conversations were held with a variety of corporations and nonprofits. UWMOC also hosted roundtable discussions with many community organizations on the topics of school readiness, early grade reading and financial stability to ascertain the issues in each area. Once the focus areas were established, volunteers on Community Impact subcommittees conducted a competitive grant process. Grant applications from nonprofits and schools were reviewed, and partners were carefully selected to provide the most comprehensive services. In order to ensure donor dollars are being utilized properly, programs are monitored and required to report outcomes.

The new impact work in our strategic plan targets not

only the challenges of today, but prepares the youth of our community to be successful in the future. School readiness is a focus area that engages and empowers parents to prepare their children for Kindergarten, developed with four partners throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties. Early grade reading, a literacy initiative designed to help stop the summer slide when children are out of school, has been regionalized to include four new partners—totaling ten partners for this initiative. Financial stability has had considerable growth over the past year. We began with providing economic wellness services at one Financial Success Center location and have expanded to ten locations spanning our entire region.

In the following pages, the progress of our community impact areas are highlighted, as well as the successes of our fundraising events that help make this work possible.



Cover photo // Students at Monmouth Day Care Center in Red Bank thank United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties for funding their summer literacy program.

# FINANCIAL SUCCESS CENTER NETWORK EXPANDS TO 10 LOCATIONS

The Financial Success Center (FSC) Network has expanded from a flagship location in the Freehold Raceway Mall to ten sites throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties. Free services are now offered in Bayville, Eatontown, Freehold, Keansburg, Long Beach Island, Manahawkin, Neptune, Red Bank, South Toms River and Toms River.

FSCs provide comprehensive resources under one roof to help Monmouth and Ocean County residents move from financial difficulty to economic well-being. Participants will meet one-on-one with a trained Financial Coach who will develop an action plan to meet their goals. All FSC services are free and include ways to manage your money, increase income, find a better job and improve housing.

**The FSC Network is a partnership of nine organizations: Affordable Housing Alliance, Child Care Resources of**

**Monmouth County, Fulfill, Mental Health Association of Monmouth County (MHAMC), Monmouth County Workforce Development Board, Navicore Solutions, Social Community Activities Network (SCAN), St. Francis Community Center (LBICC) and UWMOC.**

This expansion will help serve the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) population in our region, which earns more than the Federal Poverty Level but less than the basic cost of living. According to the 2018 United Way ALICE Report for New Jersey, 39% of households in Monmouth and Ocean counties are struggling to afford basic needs as the cost of living increases and wages lag behind—up 4% from the 2016 report.

**For a full list of services, locations and more information, visit [uwfinancialsuccess.org](http://uwfinancialsuccess.org).**

**Eligible residents of Monmouth and Ocean counties can get their taxes prepared for FREE at the following FSC locations from January 26, 2019 to April 15, 2019:**

## **FSC FREEHOLD**

Meridian Community Resource Center  
Freehold Raceway Mall, First Floor Macy's Wing  
3710 Route 9, Freehold, NJ 07728  
Tuesday - Friday: 12pm - 7pm  
Saturdays: 10am - 3pm

## **FSC TOMS RIVER**

The B.E.A.T. Center - Fulfill  
1769 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, NJ 08753  
Mondays and Thursdays: 12pm - 7pm

**To make an appointment, dial 2-1-1 and press 27 or schedule online at [fulfillnj.org](http://fulfillnj.org) under "Get Help"**



*In partnership with Affordable Housing Alliance, UWMOC provided free NeighborWorks America training sessions to 30 nonprofit employees. Pictured above, employees of Fulfill received their NCCBE certification in Financial Capability to better serve our community.*

# WARMEST WISHES DRIVE FOR LOCAL CHILDREN

UWMOC partners with local schools and nonprofits to provide children with brand-new coats, hats, gloves and scarves to keep them warm to and from school. Thanks to the generous support of 56 companies and donors in our region, over 5,500 winter items—including nearly 1,200 coats—were donated to 27 schools and nonprofits in Monmouth and Ocean counties!

*O.C.E.A.N., Inc. Head Start received new winter outerwear for their students on behalf of the Warmest Wishes drive.*



## SUMMER LITERACY PROGRAMS LAUNCH REGIONALLY

As part of the early grade reading focus area, our summer literacy initiatives help ensure that more children are exposed to reading and enrichment opportunities over the summer months, fostering their success in school and in life. Without access to the enriching activities available to more affluent peers, research shows that children from low-income families can experience the summer slide, losing as much as three months of reading comprehension skills.

Each of the summer literacy programs feature daily literacy activities, experiential learning, reading, parent engagement, physical activity, nutrition and access to books. UWMOC worked with the following partners to launch the program regionally:

**AMP Zone, Boys and Girls Clubs of Monmouth County, Collier Youth Services, Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore, Horizons at Rumson Country Day School, Monmouth Day Care Center, O.C.E.A.N. Inc., Ocean County YMCA, Red Bank Primary School and YMCA of Western Monmouth County**

As a result of the summer literacy regional launch, the Ocean County YMCA became one of our new partners in this area of our work. Thanks to United Way and funds raised by our Women United group, the YMCA was able to open a brand new Learning Adventure Center for its campers. Children created new STEM activities, explored arts and crafts, learned new games using technology, journaled, and explored their thoughts and feelings on different literature. Campers could also take books home and return them through the lending library, allowing them to share their



favorite books with family and friends. Through UWMOC's grant, scholarships were offered to children who would not have been able to attend the Ocean County YMCA summer camp due to the cost.

**“To be able to offer this program to children who wouldn't otherwise have this type of learning resource during the summer was hugely inspirational to staff, parents and children alike,”** stated Jennifer Friedhoff of the Ocean County YMCA. **“The teachers and staff involved with this program considered it to be a smashing success.”**

*Pictured above // A student from the Ocean County YMCA summer literacy program reads a book in the Learning Adventure Center.*

## WOMEN UNITED HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL CASINO NIGHT



*Women United members Laura Frank (left) and Virginia Piccolo (center) enjoying Casino Night with guests.*

Women United hosted its third Casino Night on November 1, 2018 at the Shadowbrook at Shrewsbury. Over 160 guests enjoyed the Halloween-themed event with classic casino games, dinner, open bar, and chances to win a 50/50 raffle, chance auction and silent auction baskets. Sponsored by Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, CAPP General Contractors, Investors Financial, TD Bank and UPS, the event raised nearly \$39,000—making it the most successful Casino Night to date. Event proceeds will benefit United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties' work in early grade reading.

**For more information about how to support the work of Women United or become a member, visit [uwmoc.org/WomenUnited](http://uwmoc.org/WomenUnited).**

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS SERVING THE JERSEY SHORE

To commemorate our 50th Anniversary serving the Jersey Shore, UWMOC hosted a Gala on April 20, 2018 at Eagle Oaks Golf and Country Club in Farmingdale. The Gala was a huge success, raising over \$75,000 with 203 guests in attendance, making it our largest fundraiser to date. The evening was reminiscent of being at the beach in the summer with boardwalk games and prizes, music, ice cream sundaes and a s'mores bar.

UWMOC was proud to honor Enterprise-Rent-Car with the Corporate Leadership Award, David & Sarah Fischell with the Loyal Individual Leadership Award and Fulfill with the Community Partner Award. We value our long-standing partnerships with these individuals and companies who have truly made a difference in our community.

Thank you to the Gala's top sponsors New Jersey Natural

Gas and the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation for their generous support!



*UWMOC President & CEO (L) and Board Chairman (R) with honorees of our 50th Anniversary Gala David and Sarah Fischell, who received the Loyal Contributor Leadership Award.*

## TEEING OFF FOR UNITED WAY



*Left to right: Tom Ando, Don Cowan, Ken Greco and Mike Smit teeing off to benefit United Way.*

The 2018 Spring Tee-Off presented by Hackensack Meridian Health was held on May 21, 2018 at Hollywood Golf Club in Deal, NJ. Over 90 golfers enjoyed a round of golf at one of New Jersey's premier courses, brunch, dinner, a 50/50 raffle, awards and the chance to win over 30 silent auction items.

Thanks to the attendees and top sponsors of the event for helping UWMOC raise over \$49,000: The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, Branning Collision Centers, Deloitte, Echologics, OceanFirst Bank, Tait Weller and New Jersey Natural Gas. Funds raised from the event will benefit our Community Impact work to improve the lives of youth and their families throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties.

## THE GRUNIN FOUNDATION \$1 MILLION CHALLENGE

**The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation Challenge is helping UWMOC raise \$1 million by 2021!**

In order to support our mission to improve the lives of youth and their families, the Grunin Foundation will match all new or increased donations dollar for dollar up to \$1 million.

As of June 30, 2018, the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation has generously matched nearly \$570,000 in donations raised by UWMOC!

***To donate and be a part of the Grunin Foundation Challenge, visit [uwmoc.org/give](http://uwmoc.org/give).***

## HOW I LIVE UNITED

Brian and Mary Massey have been involved with United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties in various capacities for over 40 years. Brian Massey has been a member of the Board of Directors, served as interim CEO, and currently chairs the Community Impact Committee and Spring Tee-Off Committee. In addition to being a member of the Spring Tee-Off Committee, Mary Massey joined our Women United group in 2014. The Masseys are dedicated volunteers whose knowledge and passion have been invaluable to our community.

### What drew you to United Way given the variety of choices in giving and serving as a volunteer in our community?

*Brian:* I donated through workplace giving for many years, which was instrumental in my awareness of various charities. I chose United Way as my primary charity based on its focus on local communities. The grants given to need-based nonprofits were visible, recognizable and precise in their intention. Once I volunteered for the well-organized nonprofit, I was hooked! The opportunity and impact of giving back had a profound impact on me.

*Mary:* It had been my understanding that United Way was a huge charitable organization which dispersed funds to other large organizations. When I learned United Way had changed its goals and methods by seeking input from local communities and working with those communities to resolve their issues, I felt this was an organization I wanted to help.

### You have been dedicated leaders and loyal donors to this organization for many years. What would you say are compelling reasons to support United Way?

*Brian:* In our two fine counties, there are countless children and families who are in need of support—not just financial, but holistic in scope. How can you turn away from that fact when you have the capacity to help in so many ways? You cannot; that is the compelling reason. The mission of directing efforts locally in Monmouth and Ocean counties remains my focus.

*Mary:* United Way reaches out to towns in Monmouth and Ocean Counties and seeks feedback from the communities about their needs. Whether UWMOC supports programs providing financial guidance for individuals attempting to better their lives; funds early reading programs; or provides books, coats, school supplies and more; its decisions are made with input from the various communities. With this local involvement, United

Way can mold its objectives to meet the ever-changing needs of the people in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

### Brian – As the Chair of the Community Impact Committee, which of our impact areas speaks to you the most and why?

While all four of our community impact focus areas earn my interest, there is one that stands out. That is the Early Grade Reading initiative, and within that area the School-Based Nurse Practitioner program. Getting our children's early years off to the right start, both with their skills and health, is so important.



### Mary – Our Women United group works to combat the summer slide and help children read on grade level by the start of fourth grade. As one of the founding members, why is this work important to you?

I did not know of the “summer slide” before I became a United Way volunteer. I was deeply moved but also angered to learn that an inability to read at grade level by the third grade can set a child's future. This is because by the fourth grade a child should no longer be learning to read, but rather reading to learn. It is shocking that a child's future is destined by the age of 8 or 9.

No child should bear a burden of failure at this early age. Today's world offers enough strife in a child's life, the inability to read should not be one of them.

### What does it mean to you to “Live United”?

*Brian:* Living United means having a sense of community and realizing that individually we all have to be involved in the solution. Action and participation are the foundation of Living United.

*Mary:* To me, Live United means that we are all united and connected. Regardless of our skills, there is always something we can do to better the life experiences of those less fortunate.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: UPS

UPS has been a long-time supporter of UWMOC, both financially through corporate campaigns and by employees volunteering their time to better our community. Leaders in the company have served as volunteers on our Board of Directors for many years. Over the past year, UPS employees have volunteered to help run our 50th Anniversary Gala and Casino Night special events. They have also participated in many Days of Caring at various nonprofits in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

This past June, eight UPS employees spent their day volunteering at Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore Camp Sacajawea getting it ready for the summer. Volunteers painted picnic tables, benches, fences, the infirmary bathroom and storage units. In September, UPS team members volunteered at the LADACIN Network annual end of summer BBQ for clients and their families.

Thank you to UPS for your hard work and dedication in delivering goodwill to our community!



*UPS employees spent a Day of Caring volunteering at Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore's Camp Sacajawea getting it ready for the summer.*

## GET CONNECTED: VOLUNTEER PORTAL

Powered by Get Connected, our mobile-friendly Volunteer Portal is a free tool that makes it easy to connect volunteers to local organizations. It allows nonprofits across Monmouth and Ocean counties to post opportunities and special events, and interested individuals or groups can register to volunteer directly through the site. For more information or to register, visit [uwmoc.org/volunteer](http://uwmoc.org/volunteer).

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**2019 SPRING TEE-OFF**  
**Monday, May 20, 2019**  
**Hollywood Golf Club in Deal, NJ**



**UNITED WAY GALA**  
**Friday, October 4, 2019**  
**Eagle Oaks Golf and Country Club in Farmingdale, NJ**



**United Way of Monmouth  
and Ocean Counties**

**MONMOUTH COUNTY**

**1415 Wyckoff Road  
Farmingdale, NJ 07727**

**OCEAN COUNTY**

**253 Chestnut Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753**

**PH: 732.938.5988**

**[uwmoc.org](http://uwmoc.org)**

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**UNITED WAY OF MONMOUTH AND OCEAN COUNTIES MOBILIZES DONORS, VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES. OUR VISION IS TO ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD IS SUCCESSFUL, EVERY FAMILY IS FINANCIALLY STABLE, AND EVERY COMMUNITY WE SERVE IS STRONGER.**

**LIVE UNITED**