

**United Way of Monmouth
and Ocean Counties**

NEW DECADE. NEW OFFICE. NEW LEADERSHIP.

WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

LIVE UNITED

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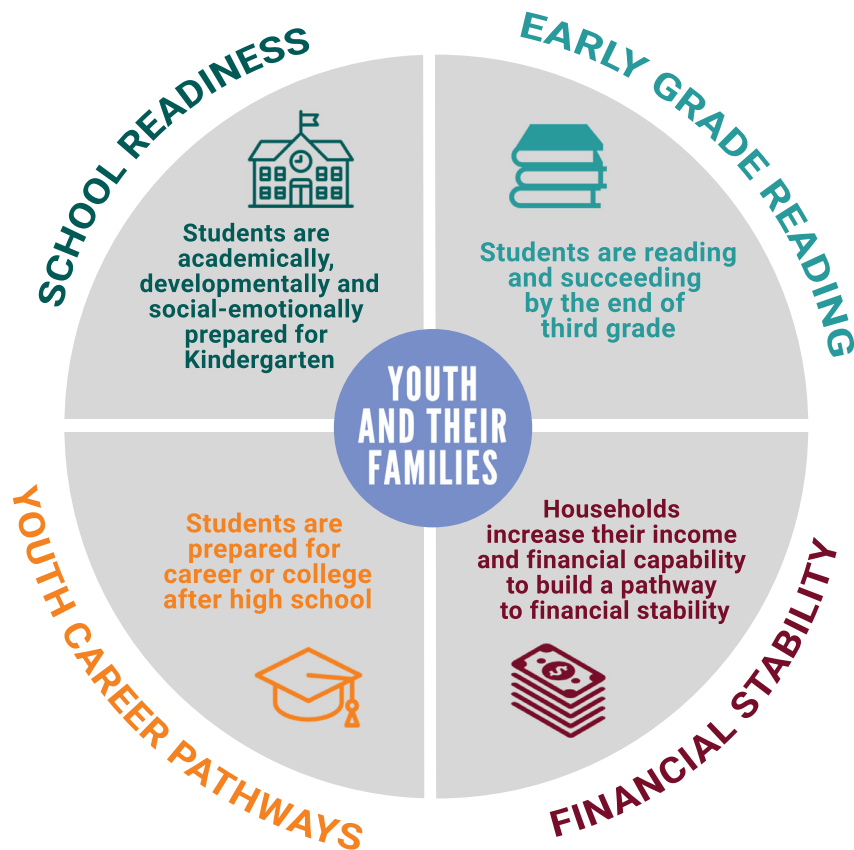
United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties (UWMOC) began this new decade in a brand-new office space in Wall Township with a new President and CEO Lori-Anne McLane at the helm. Born and raised in Monmouth County, McLane began her position when the former President and CEO, Timothy Hearne, retired in May 2019 after 11 years with our organization.

“I am thrilled to serve in this role and continue the impact United Way has made in a community that has been my lifelong home,” said McLane. “I’m incredibly honored to lead an organization that combines the generosity of thousands of donors with the meaningful work of our local partners. I appreciate the Board of Directors’ confidence in me to build upon the strong foundation established by my predecessor.”

UWMOC’s four impact areas not only target the challenges of today, but prepare the youth and families of our community to be successful in the future. **School Readiness** engages and empowers parents to prepare their children for Kindergarten, provided by three 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 six partners for this initiative. **Youth Career Pathways** is launching with an innovative pre-vocational program at Toms River High School South in order to assist students in creating a vision and planning for their future. **Financial Stability** has had considerable growth over the past year, providing economic wellness services at ten locations spanning our entire region.

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

OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT AGENDA



Cover photo // United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties’ President and CEO Lori-Anne McLane in UWMOC’s new office space in Wall Township.

FINANCIAL SUCCESS CENTER NETWORK CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY

The Financial Success Center (FSC) Network celebrated its one-year anniversary of the expansion to ten sites throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties. Free services are 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 meet one-on-one with a trained Financial Coach who develops an action plan to meet their goals. New for this year is the addition of mobile outreach to bring FSC services directly to participants. All FSC Network 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.



Participants in a financial education workshop series graduated after completing the four-week program hosted by FSC Network partner Affordable Housing Alliance.

Select FSC locations are also Benefit Enrollment Centers (BECs), helping seniors and adults with disabilities receive assistance to see if they qualify for benefits including prescriptions, utilities, groceries, health care and much more.

For a full list of services, locations and more information, visit uwfinancialsuccess.org.

Eligible residents of Monmouth and Ocean counties can get their taxes prepared for FREE at the following FSC locations from January 31, 2020 to April 15, 2020:

FSC FREEHOLD

Hackensack 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 LONG BEACH ISLAND

St. Francis Community Center (LBICC)
4700 Long Beach Blvd.,
Long Beach Township, NJ 08008
Virtual Tax Site, By Appointment Only
Call 609-494-8861 x116

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 at the FSC Freehold or Toms River locations, dial 2-1-1 and press 27 or schedule online at fulfillnj.org under "Get Help"

GRUNIN FOUNDATION \$1 MILLION CHALLENGE COMPLETED!

Beginning in 2017, the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation (Grunin Foundation) generously matched all new or increased donations to UWMOC dollar for dollar up to \$1 million. We are proud to announce that as of October 2019, the Grunin Foundation Challenge has been completed, raising an additional \$1 million for the youth and families we serve.

Thank you to the Grunin Foundation for their incredible act of kindness for our community!



YOUTH CAREER PATHWAYS PILOT PROGRAM AT TOMS RIVER SCHOOL

UWMOC is proud to announce our partnership with Toms River Regional Schools to pilot a pre-vocational initiative at High School South (HSS) as part of our work in Youth Career Pathways. Project SPEAR-IT (South's Pre-Vocational Educational Alternatives Resource Institute) is based on a growing need and interest in public schools for authentic career and technical education (CTE) experiences.

The program especially helps at-risk students who often disqualify themselves from vocational programs before they even get to their sophomore and junior years. The initiative also promotes equity and individualization in both its programs and the supports it offers students, from on-site therapists to staff training in social emotional learning to girls coding field experiences.

“At Toms River South, our goal will always be to graduate students and supply them with the tools they need to be successful in life,” says HSS Principal Mike Citta. “We recognize that success can be measured in many different ways, and the path is not always the same.”

Project SPEAR-IT will not only create a model pre-vocational pathway, but will increase student commitment to their education, improve attendance, and decrease

dropout rates. As part of the grant from UWMOC, HSS will remodel a space that is dedicated to the program, and facilitate at least 10 field experiences for students. The grand opening of the remodeled classroom will be announced this year, and we welcome the community's involvement in celebrating this new and exciting initiative.



Students in Project SPEAR-IT worked hard to prepare the space in Toms River High School South that will host the program.

SUMMER LITERACY PROGRAMS PREVENT SUMMER SLIDE

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 offer these services to our region: **AMP Zone, Collier Youth Services, Community YMCA, Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore, Monmouth Day Care Center, O.C.E.A.N. Inc. and the Ocean County YMCA.**

UWMOC convened a Summer Literacy funded partner roundtable in January to collaborate and share best

practices and challenges in order to strengthen the program for Summer 2020.



Students in the summer literacy program hosted by UWMOC's partner O.C.E.A.N. Inc. in Toms River.

WOMEN UNITED HOSTS CASINO ROYALE

Women United hosted Casino Royale on October 4, 2019 at Eagle Oaks Golf and Country Club in Farmingdale, NJ. Over 200 guests enjoyed the evening honoring UWMOC's Past President & CEO Timothy Hearne with the Loyal Contributor Leadership Award, New Jersey Natural Gas with the Corporate Citizen Award, and the Ocean County YMCA with the Community Partner Award.

Presented by New Jersey Natural Gas and The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, the event raised over \$220,000—making it the most profitable event in the organization's history. UWMOC also unveiled the United for Impact Fund, a live appeal that raised over \$73,000 in donations for our early grade reading initiative, which ensures students are learning, engaged and healthy over the summer months so they are ready for the start of the school year.

For more information about how to support the work of

Women United or become a member, please visit uwmoc.org/WomenUnited.



From left to right: Peter Rosario of the Ocean County YMCA, Lori-Anne McLane of UWMOC, Tom Hayes and Jackie Shea of New Jersey Natural Gas, and Timothy Hearne.

WARMEST WISHES COAT DRIVE FOR LOCAL CHILDREN



Thanks to the generosity of over 80 organizations and individuals throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties, 27 local schools received over 1,500 brand-new coats -- the most coats ever collected -- for their students on behalf of the 2019 Warmest Wishes Coat Drive!

School administrators say warm winter coats are among their most pressing need to help children come to school in cold weather ready to learn. **To view the Warmest Wishes Coat Drive video and learn more about the impact it has had on our community, visit uwmoc.org/warmest-wishes.**

Pictured left: Students from Red Bank Primary School in their new winter coats donated through the Warmest Wishes Coat Drive.

TEEING OFF FOR UNITED WAY

The 2019 Spring Tee-Off presented by Hackensack Meridian Health was held on May 20, 2019 at Hollywood Golf Club in Deal, NJ. The sold-out event with 121 golfers in attendance was the organization's most successful golf outing to date, raising over \$125,000 for UWMOC.

Thanks to the attendees and top sponsors of the event for making it a rousing success: Hackensack Meridian Health, UPS, New Jersey Natural Gas, Deloitte, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, Monmouth Medical Center, NJ American Water, OceanFirst Bank and Tait Weller.



Hackensack Meridian Health's foursome, pictured left to right: Laura Frank, Lisa Brown, Pamela Garanger and Leanne Storer.

HOW I LIVE UNITED

Sonia Grant, Vice President and Retail Market Manager for TD Bank, has been involved with United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties in various capacities for over 20 years. Sonia has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2014 and has served as the Secretary since 2019. She also joined our Women United group in 2014. Sonia Grant is a dedicated volunteer whose leadership 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 with nonprofits in our community?

I had a one-on-one conversation with a United Way board member who approached me to come on the board, and he really broke down what the mission and vision were. I was totally in, I was sold at that point. I joined the board and really got in to the work that UWMOC does; it really aligns with my core values of giving back to the community. The organization touches so many different buckets and it all makes an impact on people's lives, that's very important to me.

How do the mission and values of TD Bank align with those of United Way?

I'm so blessed to work for a company that really values its connection with the community. TD Bank partners with United Way annually for our employee giving program, and working for a company that believes in that is huge. We give grants out every year and support many community efforts, but our main pillar is education—which United Way has a strong focus on.



What does being a woman leader mean to you?

It really means a lot to be a black female leader. I mentor a lot of people, and one of the things I do is pay it forward. I mentored a young lady who was in junior high and not in a good situation. I was one of her constant supporters and it got her through high school and even on to college. For me, the importance of being a leader in TD Bank, in the community and even my own household is all about being the example and paying it forward to someone else.

How was your experience supporting the Warmest Wishes Coat Drive?

It was great, the team really got behind it and wanted to

support the kids in our community. Our branches in Tinton Falls and Point Pleasant collected over 230 coats! The drive's success was really about the partnership and how we can make a difference in a child's life. Children will be warm throughout the winter and their parents won't have to worry about not being able to afford a coat. Just knowing that you had a part in that can bring you to tears. It was such a huge eye-opener for my team, people really went out of their way to volunteer their time and money to make it happen for the kids in this community who are in need.

Which of UWMOC's impact areas speaks to you the most and why?

They all speak to me, but the thing that really stands out and resonates with me is Financial Stability and the Financial Success Center Network. I've even referred people there for various services such as free tax preparation, and they come back to me with great feedback. Families are suffering and they need support, now they know where they can go. All of the

services the FSC Network offers are so important and relevant, and the impact it makes on the lives of the people in our two counties is touching. It's good to know that the work United Way does is valuable and really makes an impact.

What does it mean to you to "Live United"?

It's not just about one thing, it's about connecting the dots between everything we do and how it impacts people. It's connecting everyone on the board and staff to align and become one United Way. Everyone is on the same page, everyone has skin in the game to help the community so that there's no child or family that's left behind. We have to Live United to support the people in our community, and I'm all in 100%. As long as I'm here living in our area I will be a part of United Way – and if I ever move, I will still be a part of it. I'm a firm believer in the work that United Way does.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: J.F. KIELY CONSTRUCTION CO.

Based out of Long Branch, J.F. Kiely Construction Co. has been a supporter of UWMOC for more than 15 years. Over the years, the company has donated over \$160,000 through sponsorships and corporate campaigns, and employees have volunteered their time and donated goods to better our community.

J.F. Kiely Construction Co. has been an avid supporter of our Stuff the Bus school supply drive and Warmest Wishes Coat Drive. Most recently, the company held a drive for elementary school-aged books, and brought the books they collected to our partner Monmouth Day Care Center in Red Bank to read to the children. Leaders in the company have also served as volunteers on our Board of Directors and on various committees for many years.

Thank you to J.F. Kiely Construction Co. for your hard work and dedication in delivering goodwill to our community!



J.F. Kiely Construction Co. employees donated over 160 new coats and winter outerwear to the 2019 Warmest Wishes Coat Drive.

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS



UNITED FOR IMPACT FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL
Saturday, April 18, 2020
31 West Main Street in Freehold, NJ



2020 SPRING TEE-OFF
Monday, May 18, 2020
Hollywood Golf Club in Deal, NJ



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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