OUR CASE FOR SUPPORT

United Way of the Bluegrass (UWBG) fights for the basic needs, education, and financial stability of every person in Central Kentucky.

But change cannot happen alone. We are in this together, and it is your support that will drive lasting change. Together, we can fight for every person in Central Kentucky. Together, we will win by finding new solutions to old problems, mobilizing resources, fighting for equality in our community, and by forging impactful partnerships to create hope and lasting change.

We need your help to build stronger neighborhoods for a stronger Bluegrass.
After a century of service, UWBG still provides the resources, expertise, vision, and leadership to help bring community-driven goals to life. Since 1921, we have been tackling the region’s most pressing needs. As our community and organization have evolved, many obstacles remain today for thousands of families across Central Kentucky. And United, we know we can do more.

Together, we must continue to fight for every person, in every neighborhood across the region.

Over the last decade, UWBG and its partners have provided 1,218,000 instances of service to low-income and underserved families across its 10-county service area.
UNITED IS THE WAY

As Central Kentuckians, we have a great sense of pride and love for our horses, bourbon, and basketball. While there is plenty to celebrate in our region, the Zip Code in which you live still has a significant impact on your access to opportunities and success. We believe that where you live should never be a barrier to your success.

That is why UWBG has launched a neighborhood-based initiative in our Centennial year called WayPoint. These neighborhood centers offer clients a waypoint—or a stopping place on their journey toward financial stability, physical and mental health, and long-term success. These centers bring a customized suite of programs to the folks in our communities who need them most, building resilience one family at a time within underserved neighborhoods. African American and other communities of color as well as all other historically underserved, low-income communities will benefit from the presence of a WayPoint Center within their neighborhoods by growing financial stability, ensuring basic needs are met, supporting school age children, and much more.

In our region’s wealthiest Zip Code, 40513, the median household income is $105,356, while in the least wealthy, 40508, the median household income is just $25,199 per year.

WayPoint provides clients a stopping place on their journey toward financial stability, physical and mental health, and long-term success.
UWBG’s WayPoint strategy was born out of an in-depth analysis of our regional community and current demographics, and a meaningful understanding of what our community needs to evolve into a better, more resilient Bluegrass.

WayPoint’s mission is to create an access point for families and individuals, and to provide vital programming to people living in underserved neighborhoods and communities of color. WayPoint Centers will coordinate an ecosystem of partners and programs to have the greatest impact on local families from a physical and place-based anchor in their communities.

WayPoint Centers will open in neighborhoods and Zip Codes across our region where our help is needed most. Our team of caring experts will meet clients where they are on their journey forward and will provide personalized support to help stabilize individuals in crisis, move families toward self-sufficiency, and create innovative solutions to break the cycle of generational poverty.

WayPoint Centers are a place where the community can go to lean on a trusted neighbor. WayPoint Centers will help stabilize, grow, and empower every person and family, no matter their current financial situation or Zip Code. Open to the public year-round, WayPoint Centers will provide:

**Basic Needs:**
provide access to essentials and critical needs for our most vulnerable neighborhoods and residents.

**Family Opportunity:**
support programs to improve the education, financial stability and empowerment, and overall health and well-being of the whole family.

**Collective Impact:**
develop new, collaborative solutions and partnerships to accelerate positive change and equality for every person in our community.
Each WayPoint Center will bring together the region’s most effective nonprofit, government, and business organizations to leverage their strengths against our community’s biggest issues. WayPoint Centers will serve as a neighborhood resource that is anchored in family financial success and stability, coupled with bundled social services, and supported by a robust coalition of agencies working toward a common goal to empower families and individuals.

Collective impact partners in each center will offer daily financial stability and basic needs programming, and clients will have access to case management and comprehensive services in one central location.

From the perspective of a family in need, outcomes fall into three categories:

**Stability:**
Basic needs are met, physical and mental health is good and family/individual can meet future needs based on a budget.

**Growth:**
Family/individual has acceptable credit, debt within limits, exceeds a hand-to-mouth budget, earns a sustainable wage and kids are thriving.

**Empowerment:**
Family/individual owns at least one asset, is saving for the future and is on-track to meet economic goals.

Case studies from the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Centers for Working Families model show that families who receive “bundled services” (more than one financial stability service combined with wrap-around services to meet other basic and immediate needs), are more than three times more likely to meet their economic goals.
WHY WE FIGHT

By tackling critical issues, neighborhood by neighborhood, we can stabilize our community, make meaningful change, and improve the quality of life for all our neighbors.

We fight because...

• 22% of Central Kentucky children are living in poverty
• 50% of kids in our region do not meet school readiness standards when they enter kindergarten
• Over 50% of Central Kentucky students are not reading on grade level by third grade
• 1-in-6 of our neighbors are living at or below the poverty line
• The three lowest-income census tracts (neighborhoods) across Central Kentucky are communities of color, and predominantly African American

We fight for Jeni

When Jeni was in the third grade, both of her parents were incarcerated. She lived with her aunt, grandmother, and cousins in a neighborhood that was unsafe, so she was not allowed to play outside. Her school and family felt that the consistent presence of a mentor could provide more opportunities for Jeni. Jeni was matched with her mentor in early November and they began meeting at school once a week. They played games, ate lunch, and did a lot of talking. Jeni’s mentor took her into the community to explore, shop, go to the movies, and out to eat at local restaurants. Jeni’s mentor says, “Jeni is a great kid and the experience of serving as a mentor has been more wonderful than I expected.” Together the “sisters” have formed a bond that will help Jeni as she navigates through elementary school and beyond.

Jeni says she loves her mentor, “because she is generous, and I can talk to her about anything.”

We fight for Louis

Louis had a crippling amount of unsecured debt, as well as a heavily mortgaged home. Desperate for relief, Louis started seeking options to help him pay the debt and develop a better way to manage his finances. Louis enrolled in a one-year financial coaching program to help him gain skills and change behaviors for long term financial success. The changes he has implemented through the coaching process have turned his initial $2,100/month budget shortfall into a budget surplus of close to $2,000. His net worth has improved from $15,971 to $94,164 as he has paid down debt and built assets. His credit scores have risen by about 80 points. Louis has now paid off enough debt to start building emergency savings and plans to start saving $1,000/month after making his debt payments.

“I finally feel that I am in control of my money for the first time in my adult life.” -Louis
OUR WORK TODAY

UWBG has been a trusted partner and leader in health and human services since 1921. Our organization is uniquely qualified, experienced, and ready to lead this new initiative.

Last year, UWBG programs, with the help of 96 partner agencies and over 11,000 volunteers, provided over 240,246 instances of service to low income families across the bluegrass region in the areas of basic needs, health, and family financial stability, including:

- **47,562** families received basic needs support, such as food, household goods, and rent and utility payment assistance
- **17,082** families were aided in achieving financial stability through credit counseling, job training and placement, and financial education
- **15,624** families were provided with access to educational programs that helped their children to thrive, such as star-rated preschool, kindergarten readiness initiatives, and mentoring and tutoring programs
- **89,273** families were provided with vital supplemental food and nutrition services during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic

UWBG’s unique position as a convener and collaborator allows us to identify gaps in services available to our low-income and underserved neighbors. UWBG fills those gaps with new, innovative partner programs, or powerful and poignant United Way led programs.

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, UWBG programs and volunteers supported:

- 15,000+ calls to its 2-1-1 health and human services resource and referral hotline, connecting those in-need with the right services for their specific situation.
- 3,000+ Central Kentuckians who filed their taxes for free through our CKEEP program.
- 235 area students with a new pair of shoes through the Lace Up for Learning program, led by Women United.
- 2,050 area students with a holiday break care package that included new pajamas, books, toiletries, and snacks through the Sweet Dreams Project.
- And much more...

2-1-1 is a Contact Center that connects people in our communities with available resources like food, housing, health care, senior services, childcare, legal aid and much more. People can call **2-1-1**, visit [www.uwbg211.org](http://www.uwbg211.org) to search for help, or can text or chat live with a trained specialist who can assess the full scope of their needs and match them to the right services.
Central Kentuckians have much to be proud of. According to Commerce Lexington, our region is one of the best in the country for jobs, higher education, technology, innovation, and even retirement. Central Kentuckians are generous, loyal, and hard-working people with a dedication to their region and their neighbors.

There is more to the story, however, as many of our friends and neighbors continue to struggle with poverty, unequal health and educational outcomes, and lack of access to basic needs and services. The level of needs in our community are geographically distinct down to the Zip Code, census tract, or neighborhood.

The map below illustrates these disparities. Lexington and the surrounding area are divided by census tract and are shaded according to the percentage of households living in poverty—deeper purple indicates a higher percentage of poverty.

The areas shaded deepest purple on this map not only have the highest density of household poverty, but also the lowest per-capita income, lowest levels of educational achievement, and highest incidences of crime and public safety concerns.

Perhaps even more concerning, however, is that despite these neighborhoods being in the highest need of services, they are also least likely to have immediate access to social services within walking distance. UWBG’s WayPoint initiative seeks to change this, but we need your help.
In 2021, UWBG launched WayPoint Centers in three of Central Kentucky’s most underserved neighborhoods, including:

**LEXINGTON’S EAST END**  
A) Charles Young Center

**LEXINGTON’S WEST END**  
B) Black & Williams Neighborhood Center

**DOWNTOWN PARIS**  
C) Paris-Bourbon County YMCA

Each center provides services that are custom tailored to its neighborhood and are staffed by professionals who are intimately familiar with the needs of the community. Your partnership will help make this transformational effort possible for years to come, and will help us open WayPoint Centers in these potential locations:

D) Nicholasville  
E) Lexington – Cardinal Valley  
F) Winchester  
G) Frankfort  
H) Georgetown

On the following page is a visualization of what this ecosystem of programming might look like within any given neighborhood.
OUR COMMUNITY IS COUNTING ON US

When families succeed, kids succeed. When children are successful in school, neighborhoods begin to change, evolve, and become healthier and more prosperous.

Research shows that families who are financially stable are more than twice as likely to have kids that are successful in school.

WayPoint Centers will drive improvements in community and family resiliency. In times when resilience is most needed, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, or during an economic or natural disaster, WayPoint Centers will generate a focused response for underserved communities and families who are often hit the hardest in times of community crisis.

Research confirms that the communities hit the hardest during the COVID-19 pandemic were underserved, often minority and low-income neighborhoods. The resiliency added to these neighborhoods through WayPoint Centers will help to prevent future disasters from generating disproportionately negative, inequitable, and lasting outcomes.
LIVE UNITED

Be a part of the next generation of community champions, and the evolution in how social and community services are delivered across Central Kentucky.

Our community needs us, and we must Live United despite the challenges we are facing today. Now more than ever, our neighbors are relying on United Way of the Bluegrass. We must continue the fight, and with your support and partnership we can impact more families, build stronger neighborhoods, and lift-up our region for another 100 years. United we fight. United we win.

UWBG set a goal for our organization to raise $21M over the next three years to ensure that this critical work can be extended to more families across our region. Your investment and partnership with UWBG will provide hope and a helping hand to people in our community who are looking for a way forward. And when more families succeed, our entire community wins. United is the Way, and only together can we do more. Join us on this journey towards a better Bluegrass.

Thank You to Our Lead Sponsors

TOYOTA

Valvoline

www.uwbg.org