



LIVE UNITED 2027

A PLAN FOR A BETTER DELAWARE



Dear Friends

We are thrilled to present this summary of *Live United 2027* (LU2027), United Way of Delaware's (UWDE) new three-year strategic plan. Crafted over more than a year by countless individuals who believe deeply in the potential of every Delawarean, LU2027 will guide UWDE as we help shape a new era for Delaware.

Live United 2027 is more than a plan...it's a promise. A promise to lift all Delawareans, especially those in communities characterized by both significant need and great potential. We call these areas "Promise Communities" and they are where we will concentrate our work.

Moreover, *Live United 2027* embodies our understanding of the diverse needs, challenges, and aspirations that define Delaware. The plan is built on the pillars of community engagement, systemic innovation, and focused action, and is a comprehensive agenda that tackles the root causes of poverty, educational disparities, and financial instability. We invite you to take a few moments to review this plan summary.

But as much as LU2027 represents a bold step forward, it is only a beginning. Our greatest achievements can only be realized by harnessing the collective power of community. So, whether you're a lifelong supporter or new to our cause, your involvement is crucial. We need your ideas, your passion, and your investments to bring LU2027 to fruition. We call on you to become part of this exciting new chapter. Volunteer your time, lend your expertise, or contribute resources—every action counts. Join us in forging pathways to opportunity and success for all Delawareans, especially those in our Promise Communities.

Together, we can ensure that no one is left behind as we build a more equitable, prosperous future for all.

Warmest regards,



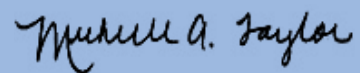
Rick Deadwyler

Chair, Board of Directors, 2021-2024



Brian Nourie

Chair, Strategic Steering Committee



Michelle Taylor, Ed.D.

President & Chief Executive Officer
United Way of Delaware

Introduction



Since its inception in 1946, United Way of Delaware (UWDE) has stood as a beacon of hope, collaboration, and transformative action within the state of Delaware. Born out of a necessity to connect individuals, organizations, and communities with the means to collectively address the most pressing societal issues, UWDE has evolved into a pivotal force for advocacy, volunteerism, and strategic investment, aimed at creating both immediate relief and sustainable, long-term change. Our goal is to ensure a more equitable life for all Delawareans. We do this by focusing on reaching children and families in eight areas of the state with the greatest need; these are UWDE's "Promise Communities." And we serve the people of Salem County, New Jersey by supporting a range of health and human service initiatives.

Live United 2027 (LU2027) is the culmination of decades of dedication to improving the quality of life for all Delawareans. It reflects a deep understanding of the complex tapestry of needs, challenges, and aspirations that define our communities. This strategic plan is not just a roadmap; it is a commitment to harnessing the collective power of diverse stakeholders to forge a future where every individual and family in Delaware can realize their full potential, unfettered by economic, social, or racial barriers.



UWDE's mission— uniting people, ideas and resources to improve lives and build a stronger community — is the guiding star for LU2027. It is a mission that acknowledges the inherent dignity of every person and the undeniable value of every contribution. It recognizes that the strength of our community lies in our diversity and that our greatest achievements are those we accomplish together.

In an era marked by unprecedented challenges, from the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to the deep-seated inequities that have come sharply into focus, LU2027 stands as a bold declaration of UWDE's unwavering resolve. It is a plan that seeks to address the symptoms of poverty, educational disparities, and financial instability by tackling their root causes.

Our Vision

United Way of Delaware envisions a community where everyone has an opportunity to achieve their potential, regardless of zip code, race or ethnicity.

Our Mission

United Way of Delaware unites people, ideas and resources to improve lives and build a stronger community.

Our Commitment to Collective Impact,

through which we unite people, organizations, ideas, and resources to forge a shared path forward, underscores everything we do.

OUR CORE VALUES

- **WOW Customers:** Exceed stakeholder expectations in every interaction.
- **Grow and Learn:** Seek continuous improvement to enhance impact.
- **Drive Collective Change:** Harness collective action to drive meaningful change.
- **Be Mission-Driven:** Focus on improving lives and building a stronger community.
- **Build Relationships:** Value and nurture relationships that advance shared goals.

OUR PRIORITIES

- **Relevance:** Stay at the forefront of addressing social challenges by ensuring that our initiatives evolve to meet the community's changing needs.
- **Impact:** Focus on creating meaningful, measurable improvements in the quality of life for the individuals and communities we serve.
- **Sustainability:** Develop strategies that address immediate needs and foster long-term stability and resilience in the communities we serve.
- **Infrastructure:** Maintain a robust organizational structure that supports efficient services, effective communication, and scalability of successful initiatives.

OUR APPROACH

- **Act With Urgency:** Recognize the needs in our community and act swiftly to address them.
- **Build Capacity:** Enhance our reach and ability to serve through strategic growth and development.
- **Expand Impact:** Strive for a profound influence on the systemic issues facing our community.
- **Measure Impact:** Employ robust evaluation tools to understand and amplify our effectiveness.
- **Inspire Engagement:** Tell compelling stories aimed at inspiring engagement, action and support for our work. Our Guiding Principles

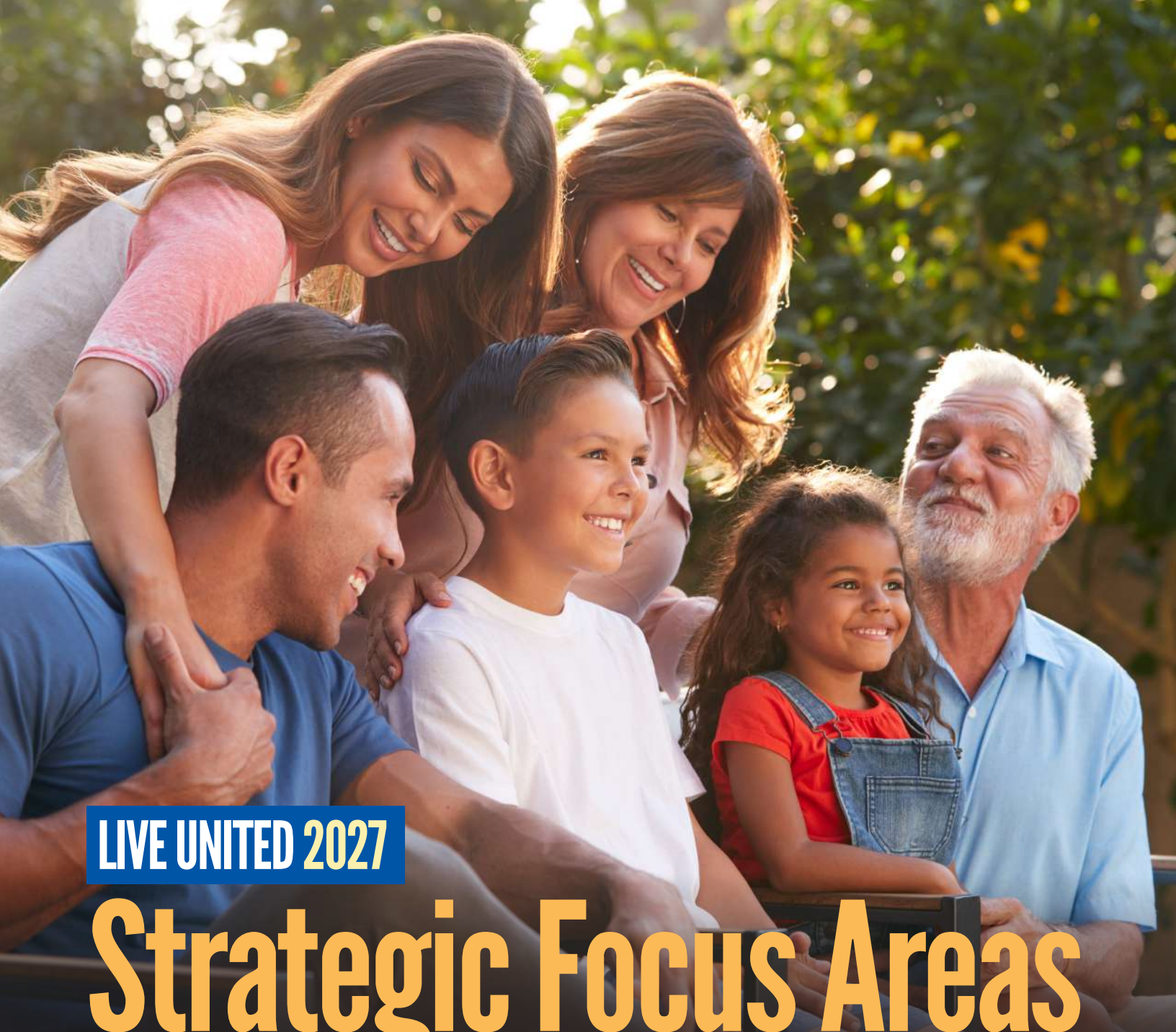
OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Lead with Intention and urgency,** pursuing excellence in all we do
- **Grow as a statewide backbone organization,** thought leader, advocate, convener, and collaborator
- **Advocate for change at the systemic level** while we impact lives and communities at the grassroots level
- **Scale and integrate programs and partnerships** to maximize reach, revenue, and impact
- **Build a cohesive engagement system** that increases individual investments and generates sustainable revenue
- **Employ data-driven, technology-powered,** evidence-based strategies and solutions

OUR CORE ASSUMPTIONS

- **Connect and engage** with individual investors
- **Approach all work** through an equity lens
- **Be intentional** in serving ALICE households
- **Pursue** a collective impact framework





LU2027 marks a strategic evolution for United Way of Delaware (UWDE), reaffirming our commitment to our core focus areas that have guided our impactful work in the past, while integrating Delaware 211 as a fourth pillar. This validates our ongoing efforts and amplifies our capacity to serve children, families, and individuals through a holistic, multi-generational approach, from cradle to cane.

THE PROBLEMS

Over 40% of households live in poverty or one crisis away.

Too many children are not reading proficiently at grade level by the end of third grade.

Too many youth are not on a clear path to a thriving career after high school.

Over 40% of all households struggle to make ends meet.



OUR SOLUTIONS

Delaware 211 connects families in need of vital resources.

We close the reading proficiency gap collaboratively with our community partners, parents, and schools.

We help ensure youth have a clear path to a liveable wage career.

We empower people to increase financial success and build wealth.

Each strategic focus area, from enhancing access to services through Delaware 211 to advancing financial empowerment, is designed within a collective impact framework. This ensures that we address specific challenges and work collaboratively across systems and communities to create lasting, widespread change.

Together, these strategic pillars—bolstered by the unique role of Delaware 211 as Delaware's Helpline—form a robust, multi-generational framework aimed at ensuring that all Delawareans have the resources, skills, and opportunities to thrive.

DELAWARE'S HELPLINE — DELAWARE 211

LU2027 underscores our strategic focus on Delaware's Helpline, Delaware 211 (DE211), as a distinct pillar, complementing our targeted efforts in early literacy, career and college success, and financial empowerment. DE211 emerges as a pivotal resource, not merely offering crisis intervention but also serving as a gateway to stability and self-sufficiency. This strategic alignment highlights our comprehensive approach to support Delawareans through every phase of life.

We envision DE211 as the state's definitive resource hub, effortlessly connecting residents to essential services and support. Aimed at becoming a model for innovative community assistance, DE211 will ensure individuals and families have access to the resources they need to flourish, marking a new standard in statewide support and resilience.

GOALS

Serve Delawareans by answering the call for help

45,000+
TIMES EACH YEAR

Continually improve and increase our % of follow up calls (texts, emails, etc.) to ensure needs are met to reach

70%
OF ELIGIBLE CALLS
RECEIVING A FOLLOW UP

Work collaboratively to increase the % of needs met to achieve

75%
OF NEEDS MET OF
ALL FOLLOW UPS

A smiling man with a beard and mustache, wearing a black headset with a microphone, is the central figure. He is wearing a black t-shirt with the words 'LIVE UNITED' in large, rainbow-colored, block letters. The background consists of white horizontal blinds on the left and a blurred office interior on the right.

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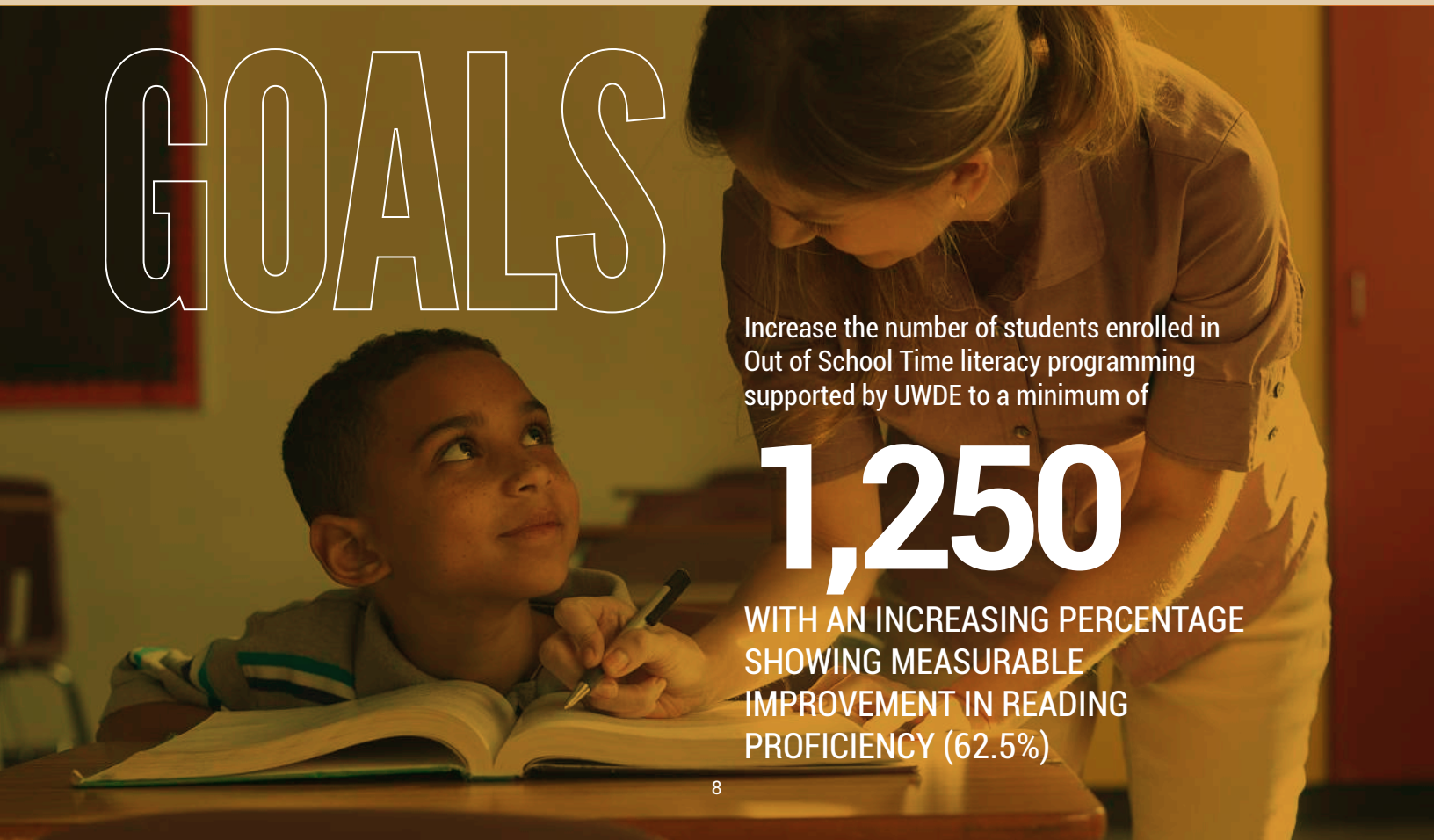
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EARLY STUDENT SUCCESS

We remain steadfast in our belief that reading proficiency is the cornerstone of early student success, opening doors to lifelong learning and opportunities. To this end, LU2027 is catalyzing high-dosage reading programming in out-of-school time settings, strategically designed to mitigate educational gaps and boost proficiency levels. This initiative underscores our commitment to address immediate learning challenges and to foster a nurturing environment that propels students toward academic and social/emotional success and a brighter future.

We envision a strategic approach grounded in addressing root causes and guided by our theory of change, we focus on community collaboration, enhanced parent engagement, and literacy support to raise reading levels, particularly in underserved communities. This concerted effort promises not just to improve literacy rates but to foster a culture of equity and success for every child.

GOALS



Increase the number of students enrolled in Out of School Time literacy programming supported by UWDE to a minimum of

1,250

WITH AN INCREASING PERCENTAGE SHOWING MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENT IN READING PROFICIENCY (62.5%)



CAREER & COLLEGE SUCCESS

LU2027 bolsters the journey of middle and high school students through comprehensive career and college success initiatives. By focusing on mentorship, career exploration, financial literacy, and the development of self-efficacy, we also integrate the principles of Developmental Assets into our programming. These assets, encompassing internal strengths and external supports, are crucial for nurturing resilience and a robust sense of self among youth. Our approach prepares students for the workforce and higher education and cultivates a framework of Developmental Assets to empower them with the confidence and skills necessary for a prosperous and fulfilling future.

We envision Career and College Success to ensure that Delaware youth are fully prepared for the future workforce, or higher education, to achieve their fullest potential. We aim to foster a culture of preparedness, ambition, and resilience. Our initiatives will focus on career exploration, financial literacy, leadership development, and amplifying youth voices, establishing a seamless pathway from education to employment or college.

GOALS

Increase the number of 4th – 12th grade youth with access to Developmental Asset profile pre and post assessments through in-school and out-of-school programming to

6,000 youth

with an increase in the percentage of youth showing gains in Developmental Assets.

Increase the number of middle school and high school youth engaged in career path readiness or financial literacy programming supported by UWDE to

10,000 youth

with an increase in the percentage who show gains in readiness and/or financial literacy as measured by surveys and assessments.



FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

The core strategy of LU2027 for financial empowerment maintains a strong emphasis on the transformative power of 1:1 financial coaching, pivotal in steering families and individuals towards financial stability and prosperity and helping to break the intergenerational poverty cycle. This individualized coaching offers practical support in budgeting, credit improvement, debt management, and savings strategies, aiming to catalyze a generational shift towards financial well-being, homeownership, and wealth creation. Extending this strategy, we also integrate financial and business coaching tailored for minority small businesses, ensuring they receive the specialized guidance needed to overcome obstacles and build thriving businesses.

We envision financial empowerment initiatives driven by the Stand By Me® 1:1 coaching model, focused on equipping Delawareans with the tools for immediate financial improvement and long-term prosperity. We prioritize practical financial skills like budgeting, credit improvement, debt reduction, and savings, to foster a generational shift toward financial empowerment and wealth creation.

GOALS

Increase the percentage of clients moving beyond establishing a budget or improving a credit score to achieving one or more savings goals

to 28%

Maintain the success of our

Minority Small Business program

WITH 90% OF COHORT GRADUATES ACHIEVING AN INCREASE IN REVENUE YEAR-OVER-YEAR

Serve over
7,000

Stand By Me financial coaching clients through yearly 1:1 coaching and workshops

Increase the percentage of clients who are credit ready to be mortgage-qualified

to 15%

Fundraise to invest in nonprofit organizations in Salem County, New Jersey, serving a minimum of

500 individuals and families



In addition to the strategic pillars of Delaware 211, “LIVE UNITED 2027” places deliberate emphasis on:



ALICE: A CORE FOCUS OF LIVE UNITED 2027

In Delaware, nearly 30% of households are known as ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households. These families and individuals earn above the Federal Poverty Level but below a basic living standard. That means they face a constant battle against economic instability. By addressing the root causes of financial instability, UWDE strives to lift ALICE individuals and families towards a stable financial future.

Nearly 30%
OF HOUSEHOLDS ARE
KNOWN AS ALICE

We work with organizations across the state to address poverty and inequality, supporting programs that make a real difference. Whether through public policy advocacy, connecting ALICE families to critical services via Delaware 211, enhancing their children’s literacy and success in school, supporting their youth’s journey towards career and

college readiness, or offering personalized financial empowerment coaching, our initiatives aim to lift ALICE households and create lasting change. By weaving the needs of ALICE families into each of our strategic focus areas, LIVE UNITED 2027 seeks to address the complex web of challenges that prevent ALICE families from achieving economic self-sufficiency.

BUILDING UPON A FOUNDATION OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Live United 2027 harnesses the transformative power of collective impact, embodying our belief that profound, sustainable change can only be achieved through unified efforts. This approach further focuses our effort on the collaboration of diverse stakeholders — nonprofits, businesses, government agencies, and community members — all working towards a common agenda for systemic change. By aligning our goals, measuring outcomes consistently, engaging in mutually reinforcing activities, and communicating effectively, we aim to address complex social issues more effectively than any single entity could alone. This model ensures continuous communication and strong backbone support, critical for maintaining momentum and adapting strategies in real-time.

By embedding equity into our collective impact framework, we ensure that our efforts are inclusive and reflective of the diverse voices within our community.

DEEPENING OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

At the heart of Live United 2027 is a profound commitment to equity. The plan acknowledges that true progress is only achievable when every member of our community can succeed, free from the barriers imposed by historical injustices and systemic inequalities. We are dedicated to dismantling these barriers through deliberate, thoughtful strategies that prioritize the needs of those who have been underserved and marginalized. By embedding equity into our collective impact framework, we ensure that our efforts are inclusive and reflective of the diverse voices within our community. This commitment to equity drives us to be intentional in our actions, ensuring that our mission to improve lives and build a stronger community leaves no one behind.



The success of **LIVE UNITED 2027** rests on these

Raising Revenue to Drive Community Impact and Engaging Directly with Investors

In the face of shifting philanthropic trends, we are committed to a transformative approach in fundraising, aiming to enhance direct donations and individual giving, while adapting to the diverse preferences of multiple generations of investors. Our goal is to diversify and increase sources of support, both in and out of the workplace, focusing on securing unrestricted funding and intensifying volunteer engagement.

Increase revenue to \$25,230,000

Diversify giving and increase resources under management to \$9,780,000

Increase individual investors to 33,000

Inspiring Volunteerism & Converting of Volunteers to Investors

We are evolving our approach to volunteerism and engagement, aiming to deepen our community impact and foster stronger connections. Our efforts extend well beyond traditional environments, aiming to touch individuals wherever they may be, and creating an inclusive atmosphere of participation that spans all demographics. This comprehensive approach is designed to not only build a robust culture of community support but also to convert this engagement into sustained philanthropy.

Increase volunteers to 5,500 individuals

Increase percentage of volunteers who are investors to 30%

Positively drive engagement to build advocacy to create policy changes

ORGANIZATIONAL DRIVERS OF EXCELLENCE

Elevating Storytelling to Inspire Engagement, Giving, and Advocacy

We are refining our messaging to connect more deeply and effectively by crafting communications that resonate across generations and individual experiences. We aim to bolster our online presence, integrate our partners into collective impact storytelling, and drive brand loyalty through valuable content. Leveraging technology, including AI, we are enhancing engagement across all demographics, aiming for increased conversions and a more personalized experience.

Improve brand recognition/loyalty measured by Net Promoter Score (+10% from baseline)

Enhance and personalize experience for investors, partners, and volunteers through technology implementation

Cultivating Excellence Through an Internal Culture of Innovation, Collaboration, and Belonging

We are dedicated to fostering a culture committed to the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). Our approach is rooted in ensuring that every individual and team is empowered and equipped to contribute meaningfully to our collective goals. We aim to cultivate an environment where every colleague is an integral part of our mission's success.

100% of full-time employees will have current, individual plans aligned to LU2027

Increase awareness and accountability of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) throughout the organization and community



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