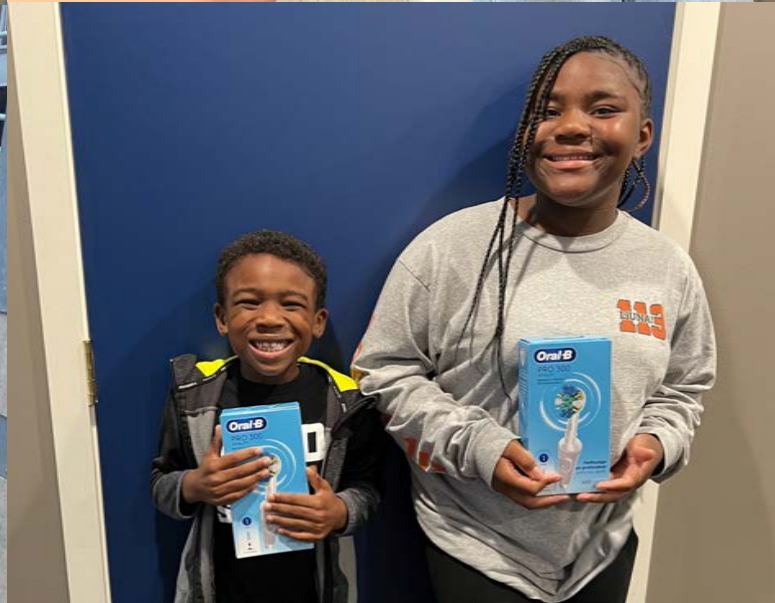


💡 THE EQUITY INNOVATION FUND 💡



March 2022 Grantee Impact



United Way
of Racine County

▶ Equity Innovation Fund

United Way of Racine County's Equity Innovation Fund supports projects, programs and solutions that use innovative strategies to reduce disparities, improve outcomes and empower members of historically marginalized populations.

The United Way of Racine County (UWRC) Equity Innovation Fund is made possible through the generosity of MacKenzie Scott and through support from Racine County.

▶ Fund History

January 2021

UWRC receives a donation of \$5 million from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. UWRC board and staff identified allocations, including equity innovation. UWRC was the smallest United Way organization selected by Scott to receive a grant.

The Equity Innovation Fund officially launches to support projects and programs that use innovative strategies to reduce disparities, improve outcomes and empower members of historically marginalized populations.

January 2022

UWRC receives the first Equity Innovation Fund applications and begins the process of awarding the first grants.

March 2022

Racine County contributes \$1 million to UWRC's Equity Innovation Fund, demonstrating the County's shared commitment to equity. The funding opens the door for more innovative projects.

June 2022



May 2023

Grantee gathering brings together grantees for the first time, to network and share successes.



UWRC is poised to award grants to the eighth cohort of grantees of the Equity Innovation Fund.

January 2024

▶ Adding equity to UWRC's investment process

Many of the Equity Innovation Fund applicants have never applied for a grant before. UWRC wants the Equity Innovation Fund to support programs, but also encourage equity in the community investment process.

the application to discuss the project proposal, budget, timeline and data. The staff member is available to the organization as a resource throughout the investment process.

Interested applicants are assigned a staff member or volunteer to help the organization through the entirety of the process, from before application to the end of the project. Organizations considering applying for a grant meet with a United Way employee prior to completing

When an organization receives funding, they are assigned a coach. The coach is a United Way employee or volunteer who will serve as a mentor, advocate and accountability partner. Grantees meet with their coach at least quarterly to give updates, share success and troubleshoot any barriers that may arise.

MARCH 2022 GRANTEEES
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Racine Vocational Ministry
Project: Second Chance Reentry Program



Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps
Project: Urban AgVets Educational Initiative



Urban League of Racine and Kenosha
Project: Urban Sports Academy



The Passions Project
Project: The Passions Project | LGBTQ+ Racine



The Blue Way
Project: The Dental Backpack



Racine Zoological Society
Project: Community Outreach Zoo Initiative (COZI)



SAFE Haven
Project: Feather-a-Nest



Women's Resource Center
Project: Legal Advocacy for Victims and Survivors

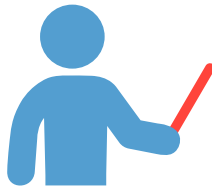




8 projects totaling over **\$302,067**.



916 individuals have been served.



6 projects were directed by BIPOC, women, LGBTQIA+ community members or other marginalized individuals.

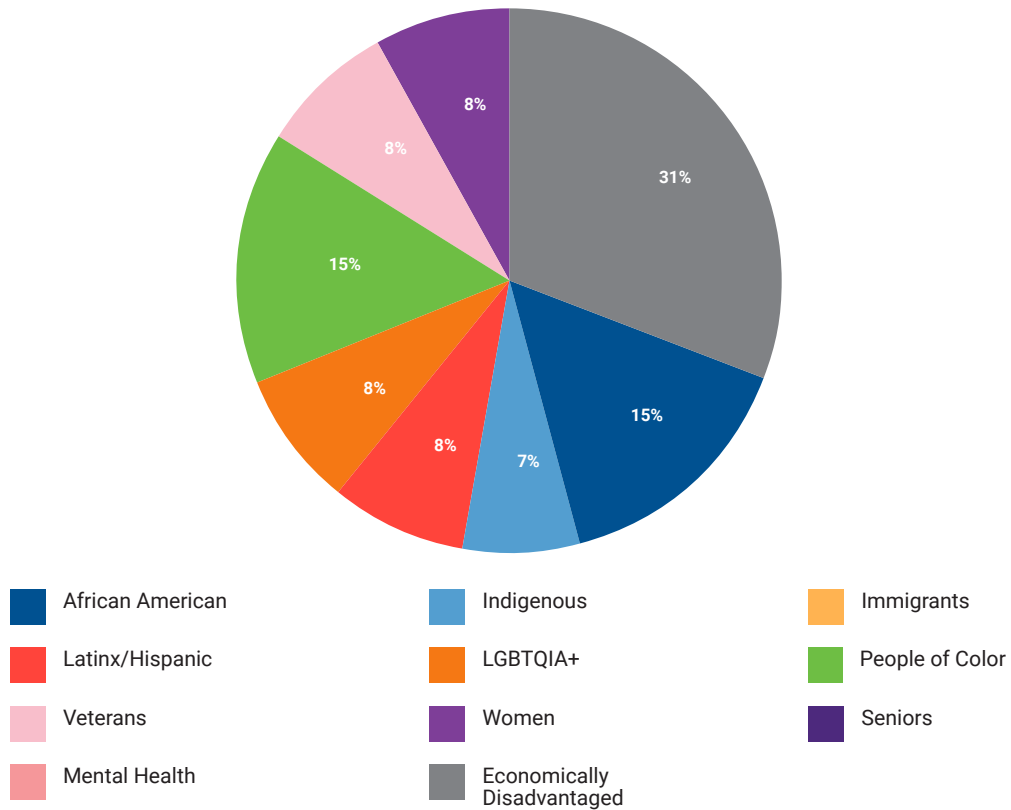


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“Through the generous philanthropy of MacKenzie Scott, the creation of the local Equity Innovation Fund grant initiative has accelerated the community impact work of the United Way of Racine County. From improving healthy birth outcomes to investing in innovative after school youth development programming and more, EIF-funded grant programs have collectively worked to improve the health, education and stability of the underserved within our community.” – Art Howell, Equity Innovation Fund Committee member and Chief of Police (Ret.)

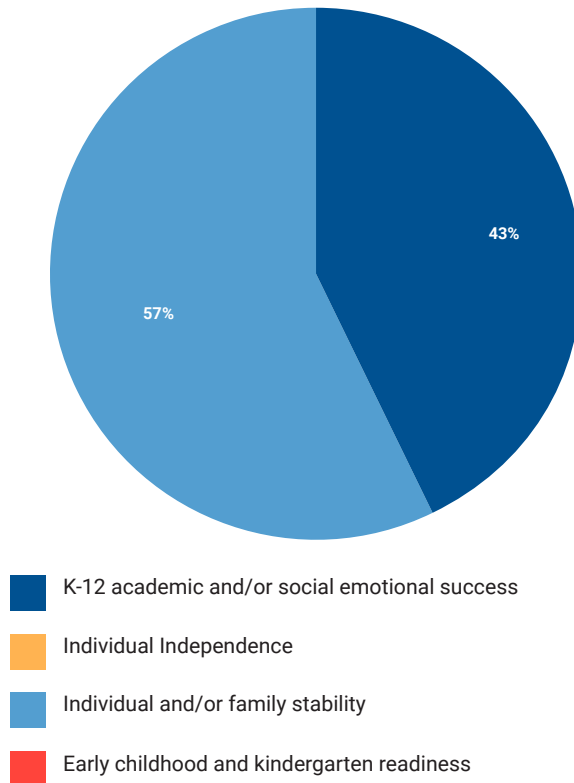
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Marginalized Populations Served by Projects



Grantees indicated in their application which marginalized population their projects will serve. Projects may serve more than one population.

Areas Addressed by Projects

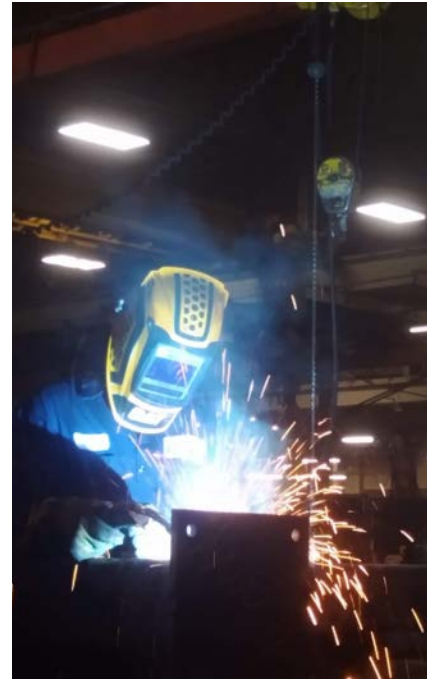


Grantees indicated in their application the focus area addressed by their project. Projects may address more than one focus area.



Racine Vocational Ministry Project: Second Chance Reentry Program

Racine Vocational Ministry's Second Chance Reentry Program aimed to reduce the recidivism and reincarceration rate for BIPOC women by helping to increase gainful employment. The Second Chance Reentry Program utilizes a holistic approach, including case management, career-readiness skills and interventions to change negative thinking patterns. During the grant cycle, RVM supported a total of 19 individuals as they reentered our community.



The Second Chance Reentry program tracked participants' progress with the evidence-based Ohio Risk Assessment. This tool determined each participant's likelihood for recidivism and allowed RVM to establish tailored goals and programming for each individual. Second Chance Reentry Program is the first EIF grantee to be invited to apply for a second grant.

By the Numbers

- 79% acquired gainful employment
- 95% did not return to prison
- 89% did not become involved in a new crime
- Over half of participants secured employment at an average wage of \$39,763



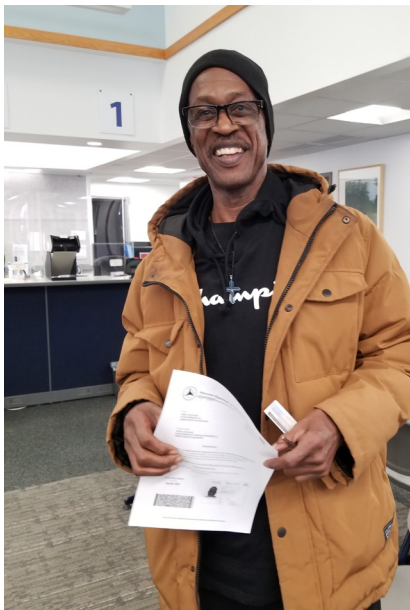


Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps Project: Urban AgVets Educational Initiative

Urban AgVets Educational Initiative assisted veterans in reentering their community and the workforce through training and education in agriculture and food production. Veterans enrolled in the program were able to acquire skills through hands-on training, prepare for vocational opportunities and serve their community.

AgVets Educational Initiative measured participant gains in earnings, credentials, experience and employment. Veterans participated in the hazardous waste management course, emergency manager course and aquatic invasive species to name a few.

The program served 40% more veterans than anticipated. Great Lakes CCC used program data to help secure U.S. Department of Labor funding to continue the program for three years.



Equity Innovation Fund grantee participant Gary D., a U.S. Army veteran, successfully regained a valid driver's license after a hiatus of over 16 years. The efforts of numerous individuals at the Veterans Corps of Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps facilitated this momentous achievement.

"If it weren't for the Veterans Corps, I wouldn't be alive today." – Al M., U.S. Navy veteran and program participant.

By the Numbers

- 84 veterans who were homeless or at risk of homelessness served
- 1,752 total hours of training completed
- 69% of participants obtained or maintained employment



Urban League of
Racine & Kenosha



Urban League of Racine and Kenosha
Project: Urban Sports Academy

The Urban League of Racine and Kenosha Urban Sports Academy created a unique program in which a sports-oriented platform was used to teach youth basic reading, math, conflict resolution and de-escalation tactics. The program predicted that by pairing reading and math with team sports, participants would have a positive education experience. This short-term program provided youth with a safe and structured environment for the entirety of their summer break.

The program tracked outcomes by looking at participants' personal development and progress. Each student was required to identify a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goal at the beginning of programming. About 70% of participants achieved their SMART goal. Students also reported improved behaviors, self esteem and morale.

By the Numbers

- 27 children participated in 80 sessions, completing 600 hours of activities
- 23% of participants were consistently reading four nights or more a week, increased independent reading time by 20 minutes and improved their reading level by at least one grade level
- 41% were consistently reading for two nights a week and improved their independent reading time by seven minutes





The Passions Project Project: The Passions Project | LGBTQ+ Racine

The Passions Project | LGBTQ+ Racine was created by photographer Heidi Wagner to raise awareness, ignite social change, increase community understanding and broaden the inclusion and visibility of the Racine LGBTQ+ population. The project captured the stories and passions of local multigenerational queer persons through an art-based, community impact photo installation. The project is the only activist installation highlighting members of the LGBTQ+ community in Racine.

The anticipated impact for both the subjects of the art and the audience was personal and emotional growth, as well as enhanced visibility and acceptance of the Racine LGBTQ population. The proposed method of measurement was to track participants, partners, panelists, event attendees and survey evaluations. Social media engagement provided qualitative and quantitative data including comments and direct feedback.



"I believe this project will change how people in the LGBTQIA+ community feel about Racine and the degree to which they are welcomed and celebrated in our community. Hopefully it will also increase broader understanding of our community and support for the protection of our rights and freedoms. Being in the room at Social on Sixth for the public opening of this event is not something I will soon forget. I was moved to tears seeing my former teacher and one of the few out LGBTQIA+ people I knew as a young person talk about her experiences in our community and how far we've come. This project powerfully exemplifies our progress and that is something to celebrate!" – Greta Neubauer, State Representative for the 66th Assembly District



By the Numbers

- 27 participants (panelists and art subjects)
- 1,297 event attendees
- 15 community partners





BLUE DOOR — DENTAL —

The Blue Way Project: The Dental Backpack

The Dental Backpack Program provided economically disadvantaged school-aged children dental care services over three visits as well as oral hygiene education. The program aimed to increase access to dental care by creating a positive dentist/patient relationship.

The Blue Way successfully provided services to 32 children and their parents/guardians, for a total of 64 individuals. A great deal was learned about the dental needs of the community throughout the funding cycle. This resulted in some patients requiring more than three visits. All participants of the program showed improvement in oral hygiene by their third visit. Participants of the Dental Backpack program also received backpacks with educational books and American Dental Association brochures.

By the Numbers

- 100% of participants completed a comprehensive exam and associated activities
- 100% of participants completed an individualized, interactive dental health seminar
- 86% of participants received sealants or restorative treatments





Racine Zoological Society Project: Community Outreach Zoo Initiative (COZI)

COZI provided regular animal ambassador visits to Bethany Apartments and HALO. The goal of the program was to improve the mood, morale and empathetic behaviors of adults and children experiencing significant stress and instability due to experiencing homelessness or transitioning out of domestic violence situations.

The Racine Zoological Society utilized data collected during the Equity Innovation Fund cycle to apply for additional funding. In October 2023, they received a Women United Brighter Future Fund Grant to continue the COZI program.



"By providing free animal programs for families at HALO and Bethany Apartments, we have been able to bring the zoo to those who may not be able to visit the zoo themselves due to financial, transportation, or other constraints. We have witnessed that meeting animals serves to brighten the day and improve the mood of those who attend our programs." – Cassie Sanchez, Racine Zoo Conservation Education Specialist



By the Numbers

- 20 animal ambassador sessions were held with 48 attendees, surpassing the anticipated scope of the program
- 8.5% increase in agreement with empathy-minded and conservation-minded statements over the course of attended sessions
- 17.9% increase in average mood rating after completing program sessions



By the Numbers

- 334 individuals served
- Total of 161 homes furnished
- Total of \$91,059.36 of in-kind donations

SAFE Haven Project: Feather-a-Nest

SAFE Haven of Racine's Feather-a-Nest project supports individuals who are moving from homelessness to permanent, stable housing by providing essential items. People transitioning from shelters have few personal possessions, so the need is greater than a roof over their head. Items provided by the project are delivered, set up and arranged before move-in day. Feather-a-Nest involved participants in every step of the process, restoring dignity that may have been lost through homelessness.

Client satisfaction surveys were used to determine if the program met expectations. Recipients of the program reported gratitude for the items and services they received. The impact seen was far greater than receiving items; participants found an increase in dignity and were able to focus on other aspects of living.





Women's Resource Center Project: Legal Advocacy for Victims and Survivors

Women's Resource Center (WRC) enhanced its Legal Advocacy Services for victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and interpersonal violence. The project provided more robust trauma-informed services to Women's Resource Center residents and members of the community through the work of a legal advocate. Their legal advocate provided a multitude of services, including assisting clients with completing and filing paperwork for restraining orders, representation at injunction hearings, assisting in the forensic interviewing process, preparing clients for testimony and much more.

Women's Resource Center was also able to increase awareness of domestic violence in the community through partnerships with numerous agencies and by being active within the community. Staff members were present and visible at vigils, events and schools. WRC is the second EIF grantee to receive a second grant, and intends to serve 500 individuals in the next year.

Success Story

"A" was physically, sexually, and psychologically abused for years. Her young daughter's exposure to the abuse motivated her to leave her abuser. When I first met her, she was incredibly timid and had been abused for so long that she kept questioning whether some of the things she experienced were actually abuse. She also questioned whether she would regret petitioning for a restraining order, because the abuser is the father of her daughter. Through multiple meetings and hours of dialogue, she was able to decide that seeking a restraining order was not

only what she wanted, but what she deserved. I helped her fill out the restraining order paperwork and collect evidence of abuse and harassment. She left empowered, knowing she made the healthiest choice for her and her daughter, and if her abuser seeks the help he needs to be a good father, she can reconsider. She later reached out to express her gratitude and inform me that the judge granted the restraining order for 10 years, allowing her to finally have a peace of mind. – Katie, legal and justice liaison



By the Numbers

- 345 clients served, exceeding the goal set in the application process
- 97% of clients surveyed reported feeling safer after receiving services from WRC
- 123 self-set goals were achieved by participants



▶ Grantee Gathering

On May 23, 2023, United Way of Racine County hosted its first EIF grantee gathering at the Gateway iMET Auditorium. This was an opportunity for grantees to meet other grantees, identify opportunities to collaborate and share successes and challenges. Equity Innovation Fund grantees each shared a brief overview of their project or program.

Grantee representatives were also able to share how confident they felt in various grant process areas, including tracking and reporting data, recruitment and promotion, and creating a budget. United Way is using this data to develop workshops to help future grantees successfully navigate the grant process. Grantees also completed a survey to provide feedback to UWRC on the grant process and offer suggestions for improvement.

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“Feedback (from United Way staff) during our initial call gave me the affirmation and tools I needed to develop this project that is so dear to my heart.” – Patricia McNamee Rosenberg, Burlington Senior Activity Center Executive Director

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Grantee Feedback

100% Agree or strongly agree that the pre-application meeting with United Way staff was useful
94% Felt it was beneficial having a coach/mentor



▶ **Stay Up to Date**

If you have any questions about the Equity Innovation Fund, please contact Special Projects Manager Katie Tuttle at ktuttle@unitedwayracine.org



To learn more, and to see other Equity Innovation Fund reports, scan the QR code or visit: UnitedWayRacine.org/EIF



**United Way
of Racine County**