



# THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING.

Summer Update 2023

## A SOLUTION FOR EVERYONE

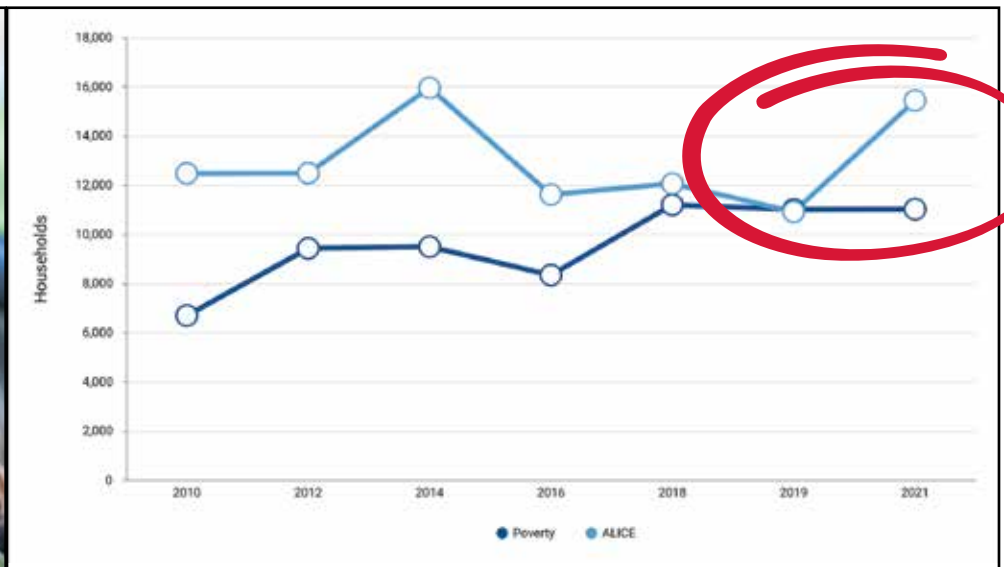
Here in McLean County, every resident is our neighbor. That's why we must work together to ensure that everyone experiences a more prosperous future. Our community thrives when everyone can access pathways to prosperity.

Your partnership with UWMC makes that possible for everyone in McLean County. Together, we are championing innovative solutions that close service gaps by bringing together local partners. It's essential that we find new solutions, especially in light of the most recent ALICE data. ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county. And today, there are over 15,000 households in our county qualified as households, just barely making ends meet in 2021 — that's 4,521 *more* households than just two years before, in 2019.

Although this report isn't what we want to hear, it affirms our mission together. United Way of McLean County is working with community partners to reverse these trends by stopping poverty where it starts. From creating an innovative career education program that gives young adults at risk of poverty a path to self-sufficiency, to convening dozens of powerful organizations to address the affordable housing gap, we are committed to reversing this trend. Join us today, in changing the trajectory of the latest ALICE data. Work with us by supporting our work and partnering with us, for the sake of your neighbors in McLean County!

David Taylor  
President & CEO, United Way of McLean County

## Financial Hardship Has Changed Over Time in McLean County



# CONGRATULATIONS, WORKFORCE180 STUDENTS!



Sal and Jenny



Vera



Sam and his mentor, Nayoka

Seven students finished their Workforce180 journey this spring — and we couldn't be more proud! In honor of all they've accomplished, Sam, Jayda, Kelli, Vera, Sal, Jenny, and Mandy were recognized at the Workforce180 Spring Summit held earlier this year at Heartland Community College. Each student received a certificate of completion from United Way of McLean County CEO, David Taylor.

## Here's what they have planned next:

**Sam** focused on business at Heartland; this fall, he continues his studies at ISU as a business major.

**Jayda** completed paramedic certification coursework and is now finishing her clinical hours; her hope is to work as a paramedic in McLean County!

**Kelli** will complete nursing prep at Heartland this fall; she will continue to a nursing program in 2024.

**Vera** completed her Recovery Support Specialist Certificate; she is now working as a Recovery Specialist with the YWCA McLean County. *Plus*, she will be a Workforce180 Mentor starting this fall!

**Sal** completed his associate degree in nursing at Heartland; this fall, he continues his studies in ISU's nursing program.

**Jenny** completed her associate degree in nursing at Heartland; this fall, she continues her studies in ISU's nursing program.

**Mandy** became a Certified Nursing Assistant through Heartland; she is now a Patient Care Tech at OSF.

## WHAT IS WORKFORCE180?

Launched in August 2019, Workforce180 is a direct response to the generational poverty and barriers that can block at-risk youth from careers and self-sufficiency. This partnership coordinates services and opportunities for our students via the resources of our Women United affinity group and multiple local entities.

## 70+ STUDENTS ARE ON THEIR WAY — THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT!

Through generous donations from our community, United Way is supporting 70+ students on their pathway to a stable career and a bright future. Workforce180 allows students the opportunity to pursue training in work-ready programs such as industrial trade programs and medical certifications. Plus, Workforce180 helps students stay with their plan of study and overcome any barriers that life may bring, thanks to the support from caring United Way volunteer mentors.

# HAPPY 1<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY, THRIVEMIND!

ThriveMind is only a year old but it's grown leaps and bounds. We launched it knowing that teens were experiencing mental health challenges and that more support services were needed, especially in our rural school districts throughout the county.

As you know, finding innovative ways to close service gaps is our superpower here at UWMC! So we launched a partnership with Carle BroMenn Behavioral Health Counseling and the Lexington, Olympia, and Ridgeview school districts, and the recently added LeRoy school district. It started with just two students and one therapist. Now a year in, and we've served more than 35 high school students from four schools across the county, with four therapists providing essential therapeutic support.

One student receiving counseling through ThriveMind is making tremendous progress. Prior to counseling, this student was constantly in the nurse's office due to severe anxiety and stress — which is understandable, but missing class only made the situation worse. Faculty and teachers have observed that this student is more energetic and outgoing and is regularly in class, due to therapy support. *The change is obvious and incredible.*

We are thrilled that area students are experiencing greater mental and emotional health through ThriveMind. And we cannot wait to see what happens in year two!

“Our students and their parents are seeing how this is helping and they are making these appointments a priority in their weekly schedules. They see success happening in their homes as well.”

— Paul Deters, Superintendent,  
Lexington School District

## THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING!

Your partnership with UWMC is truly transforming lives throughout McLean County. That's what inspired our upcoming summer campaign theme, ***This Changes Everything***.

Your mid-year gifts will ensure that everyone has access to the resources they need for a bright future. Visit [UWmclean.org/donate](https://UWmclean.org/donate)

HELP MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE!





Women United of McLean County

# POWER *of the* PURSE



## RAISING FUNDS FOR CHILDHOOD LITERACY!

We had a fantastic time at this year's Power of the Purse! It was so fun to gather with so many friends to put some power behind childhood literacy.

This year's event focused on giving kids greater access to books through our newest partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Research shows that when kids have access to books at home, their academic standing in both reading and math soar.

More than **\$34,500** was raised to boost childhood literacy in our community! Thanks for being a change agent so kids in McLean County find the path to future success. This truly changes everything.



United Way  
of McLean County

P.O. Box 1348, Bloomington, IL 61702 | 309-828-7383  
[www.UWmclean.org](http://www.UWmclean.org) | [dtaylor@uwaymc.org](mailto:dtaylor@uwaymc.org)