



UNITED WAY
Northwest Vermont

LEADING THE WAY

2024 IMPACT REPORT



Mobilizing our community to do the work
that no single organization can do alone.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Together, we positively impacted the lives of over 60,000 people last year.

Throughout this report you will find stories that demonstrate what's possible when we focus on solutions and invest in what's working.

Together, we are creating a healthy community.

In this report you'll meet Cari who helped United Way train 150 people last year in **Mental Health First Aid**, a potentially life-saving intervention that any of us can learn to support someone experiencing a mental health crisis. You'll meet Edna, one of 1,100 older adults that came to our free **Bone Builders** classes last year. You'll meet Joss, a young person working on **substance misuse prevention** because we can't solve our community's substance misuse issues by only focusing on treatment and recovery. And you'll meet Hawa, another young person, who is focused on **supporting families** and creating inclusive, welcoming spaces for all.

Together, we are building financial security for all.

In this report you'll meet Kristy, one of almost 1,200 Vermont workers served by United Way's **Working Bridges** program last year. With your support, Working Bridges is helping people like Kristy keep and grow stable employment by connecting them to community resources, including help with **housing, food, and transportation**.

Together, we are strengthening community resiliency.

In this report you'll learn how United Ways across Vermont coordinated **flood response and recovery** efforts to support the communities, organizations, and people most impacted by the disaster. Nonprofits play a crucial role in disaster response, and they also help our families, friends, and neighbors meet essential needs every day of the year.

In this report, you'll learn how **Common Good Vermont** is uniting and strengthening Vermont's entire nonprofit sector to better support the people who do the work as well as the people they serve.

Together, we are creating a future where everyone can reach their full potential.

Your investment in United Way uplifts our community, improving lives today and helping build a more just tomorrow. Thank you for helping make change possible.



Gratefully,

Jesse Bridges, CEO

DONATE TODAY!

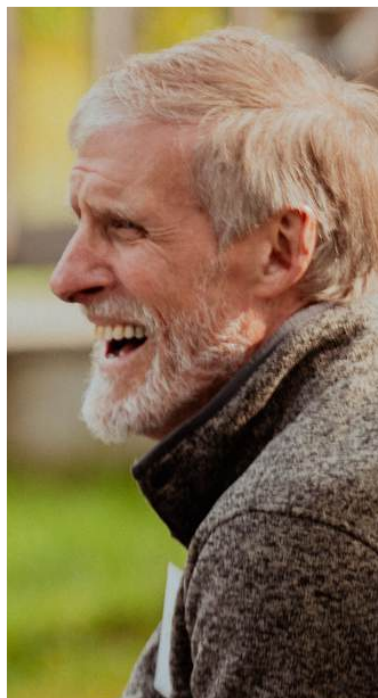


OUR IMPACT BY NUMBERS



60,000
LIVES DIRECTLY IMPACTED

Through United Way programs and partners supporting community members to reach their full potential.



3,500
PEOPLE



550
ORGANIZATIONS
ENGAGED IN
THE WORK

We cannot and do not do this work alone!
Thank you to the donors, volunteers, businesses, nonprofits, policymakers, and community members for helping make change possible.

OUR MISSION

United Way mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive. Since 1942, United Way of Northwest Vermont has partnered with local people to co-create solutions to our community's most pressing challenges.

OUR IMPACT AREAS

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Improving health and well-being for all



Promoting mental health

Reducing substance misuse

Supporting children & families

Promoting healthy aging

Fostering inclusion & increasing access to opportunities for all

FINANCIAL SECURITY

Building financial stability and strength



Working Bridges:
Helping people keep and grow stable employment

Helping neighbors meet basic needs (food, housing, transportation)

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow



Vermont 211:
Community resources information & referral, emergency response

Common Good Vermont:
Uniting and strengthening VT nonprofits

Emergent fundraising & crisis relief efforts

We bring the community together to do the work that no single organization can do alone. Together, we're working towards a future where every person and community can rise.



\$2.7 Million
INVESTED IN OUR COMMUNITY

Funding to community partners, including flood relief and response, and the value of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer hours.



2,500+
PEOPLE SUPPORTED TO
LEARN AND GROW



Through educational opportunities provided by United Way programs.

When Kristy started meeting with Nicole, her **Working Bridges** Resource Coordinator at FoodScience, she was homeless, had an unreliable car, and had just taken in her 3-year-old grandson who has autism – all while trying to maintain her sobriety. Kristy and Nicole **worked together** tackling one challenge at a time.

“I was completely focused on all my problems, and I wasn’t focusing on my work,” Kristy says. “Today I have a beautiful apartment, a good car, and my grandson is doing great. I’ve even gotten a promotion.”

I wasn’t sure whether I’d be able to keep working with everything I had on my plate. Now I come to work and can leave the other stuff behind.”

5

Kristy

FoodScience employee, Working Bridges participant

Watch
Kristy's
Story



FINANCIAL SECURITY

Working Bridges



30 EMPLOYER PARTNERS
REPRESENTING THE
MANUFACTURING,
HEALTH CARE, NONPROFIT AND
HIGHER EDUCATION SECTORS.

United Way's Working Bridges program helps working Vermonters reach stability and thrive. Working Bridges is a partnership between United Way and employers focused on giving employees the resources they need to gain, keep, and grow stable employment. We do this by bringing human services support directly to the employee onsite at the workplace.

TOP 3 REFERRALS

HOUSING

Housing Counseling, Low-Income Housing, Shared Equity Program

HUMAN SERVICES

Goodwill Vouchers, 185 Fund, Financial Support

FINANCIAL

Income Advance Loan, Financial Coaching, Tax Preparation



1,448

INDIVIDUALS
SERVED

5,644

TOTAL
INTERACTIONS

Our number one fundamental is 'think safe, work safe.' Most people think that means coming to work and leaving physically intact, but we also need our employees to be mentally and emotionally intact. ”

Michelle Sacco

FoodScience Director of People & Culture

GET INVOLVED

Interested in supporting this work and/or want to become a Working Bridges employer partner?

Contact Liz Gamache -lizg@unitedwaynwvt.org or 802-861-7843

A portrait of Joss Clegg, a young man with dark, curly hair and black-rimmed glasses, wearing a red and orange hoodie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

Joss Clegg

Lead Project Intern,
Project All Together Now

Project All Together Now VT serves youth in the Mount Mansfield Union school district encompassing Bolton, Jericho, Richmond, Underhill, and Huntington. It's one of 19 prevention partners that received substance misuse prevention subgrants in 2024 through United Way. It's led by student interns, like Joss Clegg, who organize programs aimed at fostering community and reducing isolation.

"It can be very isolating to live in a rural area. For many students, school is the only opportunity for connection. When COVID hit, people were alone in their own thoughts. I think that led to mental health issues and substance use," Joss said.

“To me, prevention is all about working with youth and figuring out what they see as the issue that affects them most.”



Watch
Joss's
Story



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Reducing Substance Misuse

ENGAGING

270

COMMUNITY MEMBERS THROUGH THE
PREVENTION NETWORK

We believe in a comprehensive approach to reducing substance misuse through prevention, eliminating barriers to treatment, supporting recovery, and addressing the root causes of substance misuse and addiction. United Way partners with and funds local organizations serving community members of all ages and every walk of life who have been affected by substance misuse.

Engaging Community: Leading Regional Prevention Efforts

United Way was selected by the State of Vermont Department of Health, Division of Substance Use as one of four Lead Prevention Organizations across the state. In this role, we are leading regional coordination and collaboration of prevention efforts and allocating funds to prevention partners located in Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, and Washington counties. We convened a Funding Committee of community members from across the region to determine the best use of state funds to meet local needs.

United Way In The News

These Vermont orgs create safe spaces for Black & rural youth with substance misuse prevention funds

Vermont Public | By Elodie Reed
Published February 21, 2024 at 3:19 PM EST



\$372,000

in subgrants to
19 ORGANIZATIONS

GET INVOLVED

Prevention Network meetings and events are open to all. Learn more and get involved:

PreventionNetworkNWVT.org

Cari Kelley

Mental Health First Aid/QPR instructor and United Way of Northwest Vermont Employee

In one year, Cari Kelley helped United Way certify 150 people in Mental Health First Aid, an 8-hour public education program that teaches people how to recognize and respond to mental health and substance use challenges.

United Way's Mental Health Initiative paid for 10 individuals, including Cari, to become certified Mental Health First Aid instructors. The goal is to give more of us the skills to step in and help each other before a visit to the Emergency Department.

"Being out in the community and teaching Mental Health First Aid gives me an opportunity to let people know that they're not alone," Cari said.

I want people to be able to say the word 'suicide' and not bristle. We need to be able to talk about how we can keep each other safe.



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Promoting Mental Health

ENGAGING

200

ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH THE
MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

United Way brings people and resources together to promote mental health for all. With your support, we're advancing local solutions – from prevention to crisis response to helping people access appropriate and timely treatment. We partner with and fund local organizations that promote mental health for community members of all ages and backgrounds.

Engaging Community: United Way's Mental Health Initiative

United Way's Mental Health Initiative is engaging 200+ community members to address some of the most pressing problems in Vermont's system of mental health care. Our participants come from schools, early childhood and higher education, housing, transportation, local and state government, law enforcement, religious and civic groups, and of course direct care providers and community members with lived experience.

Last year, with your support, the Mental Health Initiative advanced several innovative projects focused on Youth Mental Health, Workforce Development, and Suicide Prevention.

Examples include:

- **Mental Health First Aid:** We more than doubled the number of certified Mental Health First Aid trainers in Vermont. By increasing the number of upstream, community-based interventions, we are strengthening our ability to provide sub-acute care before a mental health challenge becomes a crisis.

- **Therapy pods in schools:** We supported the installation in schools of stand-alone private rooms, or "pods," that can provide a much-needed solution for private therapeutic space for youth to meet with a therapist during school hours.



150

 people
certified in
**MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID**

GET INVOLVED

Sign up for the Mental Health Initiative newsletter to stay up to date, access resources, and learn more about our current projects at UnitedWayNWVT.org/mental-health-initiative



It's been wonderful for me.
I'm pretty sure I'd be in a
wheelchair by now if I didn't
have Bone Builders. ”

Edna Chagnon
RSVP Bone Builders Participant



Edna Chagnon, 89, started coming to **Bone Builders** a couple of years ago after a series of dangerous falls. When insurance stopped paying for physical therapy, her therapist suggested trying the free Bone Builders class near her house in St. Albans.

Edna says: **“People that are friends that I haven’t seen for a while, they say: ‘My God, you’re so much stronger than you were!’”** In addition to getting stronger physically, Edna feels less isolated and more connected to community.

“It’s been a great way to get out and see people. And people laugh! **We laugh all the time at Bone Builders,**” Edna said.

Watch
Edna's
Story



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

AmeriCorps Seniors

212

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Engagement and Healthy Aging

AmeriCorps Seniors programs at United Way for adults 55 and older enrich the lives of volunteers and participants by keeping them engaged in the community. In turn, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers strengthen our community by leveraging their talents, interests, and expertise to help others.

RSVP:

Connecting adults to community volunteer opportunities.

Foster Grandparent Program:

Volunteers provide 1:1 support to children in local schools that sets them on a path to a successful future.

Bone Builders:

Free exercise classes for older adults taught by volunteer instructors.

360

CHILDREN
SUPPORTED
IN CLASSROOMS



18,500



VOLUNTEER HOURS

1,100

BONE BUILDERS
PARTICIPANTS

33

CLASS
LOCATIONS



United Way In The News



Super Senior: David Pratt



AmeriCorps
Seniors

Hawa Adan started coming to King Street Center when she was in elementary school. "It's a space where my mom and my siblings and I could come and see other people that look just like us," Hawa recalls. King Street provided a safe, welcoming after-school environment and exposed her to opportunities in the greater Burlington area.

Today Hawa is director of King Street's K-5 program. She also volunteers at the Janet S. Munt Family Room in Burlington, where she helped start a support group for families of children on the autism spectrum.

King Street and the Family Room are both United Way funded partners that foster community and connect diverse families to whatever resources they need to thrive.

I love when our girls come in and see me in my hijab and they see somebody that looks like their mom or their aunt or their sister. They know this is a place they belong.

Hawa Adan

King Street Center Employee and Janet S. Munt Family Room Volunteer

Watch
Hawa's
Story



HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Supporting Families

Strong communities start with strong families

From Parent Child Centers to home visiting for new parents to mentoring organizations to support for families in the refugee, LGBTQ+, and disability communities, United Way is helping Vermont families thrive.

United Way in the News



Rolling around on the ground pretending to be a ninja. Posing for pictures with R2-D2 at a ComiCon event. Decorating his water bottle with Pokemon stickers. These are things Mahat Abdullahi, an Airman of the Vermont National Guard, would not have imagined himself doing before meeting Owen, his 8-year-old mentee.

“My interest is always his interest,” Abdullahi said. “I learn from Owen. He’s helped me to be more fun and more creative.”

Abdullahi found out about Watershed Mentoring through his work as the Prevention Network Manager at United Way of Northwest Vermont. In this role, Abdullahi engages with partners across the region focused on substance misuse prevention, including youth mentoring programs.

“Having worked in prevention and knowing a little bit about the need for mentors, particularly in Franklin County and rural areas, I wanted to play a role in helping that community,” he said.

Owen’s mom shared: “I can see Mahat’s influence on him. Owen was having a hard time communicating and figuring out how to be a good friend and that’s something Mahat has modeled for him.”

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Crisis Support and Disaster Relief

At United Way we work with our neighbors to build resilient communities that are ready for any challenge. Through initiatives in crisis support and bringing together people and resources, we are strengthening the foundations of communities – addressing urgent needs today while securing a better tomorrow.

VERMONT 211

United Way helps fund and support Vermont 211, a critical resource connecting our neighbors to trained specialists offering help with disaster assistance, stable housing, food security, access to health care, employment services, veteran services, childcare and family services, and much more.

2.1.1

Get Connected. Get Help.™





FLOOD RESPONSE AND RELIEF

In recent historic flooding events and as Vermonters continue to experience more extreme weather, United Way and our partners are here, listening and responding to local needs and mobilizing volunteers and resources to support our neighbors.

In 2023, you helped us raise \$90,000 for flood relief

Thanks to generous individual donors and businesses, United Way of Northwest Vermont distributed flood relief funding to:

- **Address food security** for Vermonters affected by the loss of local farms and food systems in Northwest Vermont;
- **Support Vermont 211's operations** as they helped coordinate emergency responses and getting Vermonters connected to whatever resources they needed;
- **And support organizations working directly on the ground** via United Ways in neighboring counties in Central and Northern Vermont helping hard-hit rural and underserved communities.



Green Mountain United Way On The Ground

Mental Health Resources for Natural Disasters

For many people, the emotional and mental health impacts of natural disasters can be intense and long-lasting. **If you need help, you are not alone.** Don't hesitate to reach out for the support you need. United Way's Mental Health Initiative compiled a list of Vermont-based mental health resources to get you started.



Thanks to supporters like you, United Way is here when disaster strikes. More importantly, we are here year-round mobilizing communities to action to do the work no single organization can do alone.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Common Good Vermont

1_{IN}5

VERMONT WORKERS
ARE EMPLOYED BY A NONPROFIT

Vermont nonprofits provide services, good jobs, and civic engagement that make our communities stronger. Common Good Vermont, a statewide program of United Way of Northwest Vermont, is dedicated to uniting and strengthening Vermont's nonprofit sector and is the go-to resource for Vermont nonprofits to share resources, gain skills, and build partnerships.

Advocacy in Action

On January 25, 2024, Common Good Vermont gathered nonprofit leaders and supporters in Montpelier for Nonprofit Legislative Day to raise nonprofit voices and inform lawmakers about the issues impacting the sector, its workforce, and Vermonters who rely on nonprofit services. Common Good Vermont's top legislative priority is reforming state grants and contracts to **fund the full cost of nonprofit services** and lessen challenges that are putting too many Vermont nonprofits at risk of closing their doors.



2024 Vermont Nonprofit Wages & Benefits Report

The bi-annual Vermont Nonprofit **Wages and Benefits report**, which will be published in the fall of 2024, **is the only Vermont-specific resource for nonprofit organizations** to use for objective salary information and insights into key sector staffing and compensation trends.



Learn More At
CommonGoodVT.org

Providing Education, Resources, and Community for Nonprofit Leaders



You're not alone and there are resources available. For me, Common Good Vermont being a hub for those resources and providing a framework to connect with other nonprofit leaders, that has made all the difference in the world.

- Dr. Melissa Houser

Executive director of
All Brains Belong



Dr. Melissa Houser is executive director of All Brains Belong, a Montpelier-based community healthcare organization with a mission to make life better for people with all types of brains.

"I remember reaching out to Common Good Vermont in 2021 when I was getting ready to launch All Brains Belong. I had never started a nonprofit before and knew I needed help."

She quickly immersed herself in everything Common Good has to offer. She signed up for the newsletter and found out about grant opportunities and affordable webinars. She participated in Common Good's Nonprofit ED Roundtable and got connected to other nonprofit leaders in Vermont. When it came time to hire staff, she looked to Common Good's Nonprofit Wages and Benefits Report to benchmark salaries.

Participating in Common Good Vermont's Fundraising and Development Certificate Program in 2023 and Nonprofit Management Certificate Program in 2024 gave Dr. Houser the confidence to tell her story and the systems, structure, and community of support she needed to take All Brains Belong to the next level.

Dr. Houser has also shared her own expertise by leading a webinar for Common Good about how to create workplaces for people with all kinds of brains to thrive.

"Being able to learn in community, that's my jam. And Common Good Vermont has made that possible."

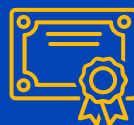
620

PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
IN COMMON GOOD VT
EVENTS AND WEBINARS
LAST YEAR



80

PEOPLE TOOK
COMMON GOOD VT
CERTIFICATE
PROGRAMS





UNITED WAY
Northwest Vermont

PROUDLY SERVING CHITTENDEN, FRANKLIN & GRAND ISLE COUNTIES

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