# Annual Report



UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS of Northeastern Pennsylvania ROOK

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### **Our Mission:**

To work together with neighbors to provide services and create opportunities that empower individuals and build strong interdependent communities.



# Leadership Message

2022 was a challenging year for the families and individuals that United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania serves. The obstacles of finding affordable housing and rising costs at the gas pump and grocery store brought many more people in crisis to our agency. The demand for services increased exponentially as people were simply unable to keep up, but I am proud to say that the team at UNC rose to the occasion.

We understand that the pathway to success is as unique and varied as each individual. Over the years, UNC has developed an innovative, wrap-around approach to helping people reach their full potential. Throughout this report, we share what we believe are the key challenges facing our community, and what UNC is doing to meet them. These include crisis services; affordable housing; obtaining a job that pays a living wage; quality childcare; developing language skills; and building safer, stronger, healthier, and more connected communities.

We are grateful to our funders and donors who trust us with their precious resources to build and support the programs that make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many. We're grateful for the generosity of individuals, who, even during a difficult year, continued to donate the dollars needed to provide more than 1,500 Thanksgiving meals, and made this year's NEPA Gives and Giving Tuesday a success. And we never take for granted the trust of our consumers, who come to us in the most vulnerable times of their lives and share the details of their struggles and circumstances with us.

We know we cannot predict everything that 2023 will bring, but we do know that it will be a special year for UNC as we'll be celebrating 100 years of service to the community. It has been a pleasure and privilege to serve as UNC's board president for the last three years.

Sincerely,

Koremany Brodenich



## Help & Hope in Times of Crisis

As the world started recovering from the global pandemic, many families faced the next crises -- rising prices for food, utilities, gasoline, and housing, forcing many who were barely getting by to seek help from UNC for the first time. Because of this, we also had one of our most challenging years, and by the end of 2022 we had **doubled** the number of families served.

For 100 years, United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania has been providing assistance to individuals and families facing food insecurities, and help in obtaining other basic needs. Hungry families can come to the "Angel's Attic" food pantry on Olive Street daily to access bags of food filled with healthy pantry stable items, produce, meats and dairy items. UNC's Community Services department distributed 13,097 bags of food to 2,876 families. 1,510 families were provided a Thanksgiving meal with help from WNEP-TV's annual Feed A Friend campaign, the Upper Valley Community Food Basket program, and the generous donations of more than 50 local businesses, their clients, and employees.

UNC's emergency services is also funded in part by the generosity of the United Way, Scranton Area Community Foundation, the Overlook Foundation, and the CEO/Weinberg Food Bank.

Because of our "open door" approach, UNC's emergency services are often someone's first step to finding the assistance to change their lives. Intake specialists take the time to address the whole person's needs, and can make referrals to other programs within UNC and with other community agencies. Utility assistance, language proficiency, health insurance navigation, behavior health services and childcare are just some of the barriers that UNC can help lift in order for an individual to attain their full potential. UNC's counselors can work with each person to create a plan that will help them through an immediate crisis, and put them on a path forward towards a better life.

To make a monetary donation or volunteer at UNC's Angel's Attic food & clothing pantry, visit our website: uncnepa.org/donate. Food donations are accepted M-F, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm at 410 Olive Street in Scranton.



### Supporting the Whole Person: A UNC Client Story

This is the true story of one of UNC's clients that illustrates our commitment to wrap-around care across the agency, and why UNC is unique in NEPA as a provider of whole-person services. Because of confidentiality concerns, we'll call her "Mary."

During a recent hospitalization, Mary was evicted from her stable housing, and upon being discharged from the hospital, was sent instead to a personal care home. Mary was understandably unhappy with this situation. That's when she met Michelle Gorton, UNC Community Health Navigator and her life was changed.

Mary had lost many of her personal possessions when she was evicted, so Michelle and her team purchased towels, sheets, and toiletries for her, so she could be be more comfortable while they looked for a new home for Mary. They arranged for free transportation to her doctors appointments and secured a new "LifeLine" phone for her. But most importantly, they provided ongoing emotional support, building a powerful rapport that helped Mary build confidence and remain hopeful.

It wasn't long before Michelle found a new home for Mary where she could live more independently. Michelle and her team not only found her a new bed and comfy chair, but delivered them all by themselves to Mary's new place! They continued to support her by helping her find doctors closer to home and establish care with a pulmonologist and eye doctor.

Mary's journey isn't over, but Michelle and her team will be there for her. Next steps include partnering Mary with a "buddy" at one UNC's Healthy Aging Centers to welcome her and ease her isolation. At one point, Mary said to Michelle, "nobody as ever helped me this much before."

### "Nobody has ever helped me this much before."

- "Mary," UNC client

Support

### **Caring for Refugees - A Trauma-Informed Approach**

Newly arriving refugees fled their countries of origin in the pursuit of freedom and safety. Many have suffered great loss and may have experienced traumatic events requiring intensive case management. Through generous funders like AllOne Charities, UNC provides assistance to refuges including ESL instruction, citizenship education, case management and coordination of resources and services. UNC case managers utilize a clientcentered and trauma-informed approach to ensure quality services are provided and clients are empowered to begin planning overall success in their new country.



8 individuals achieved itizenship.

# Meeting the Workforce Challenge

### **RISE Program Graduation**

On September 15, 2022, the first class of RISE participants graduated in the disciplines of medical assistant and computer support specialist.

Readiness In Skilled Employment (RISE) is a workforce development program created to give residents of Lackawanna and Luzerne counties the opportunity to obtain technical training while receiving additional supports to remove barriers that stand in the way of starting a new career, including assistance obtaining transportation, housing, childcare, technology and language assistance. In an effort to help remove socioeconomic barriers for some individuals looking to enter the workforce and earn a life-sustaining wage, Johnson College, United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania, The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, and the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund have formed this unique partnership to address the skills gap in NEPA.



"Our goal is to help students create long-term success that lasts a lifetime, and sets the course of success for future generations."

- Liz Finley, Program Director, RISE NEPA Program Director, William G. McGowan Charitable Fund

students graduated.

### **Obtaining Skills for Today's Jobs**

#### **UNC's Upward Economic Mobility Program**

For many, the pathway out of poverty-- and a job that pays a living wage -- starts with education. But sometimes, the lack of reliable transportation, safe housing, or childcare, creates a barrier to getting started. The goal of UNC's Upward Economic Mobility program is to remove barriers to education and employment for those interested in obtaining today's in-demand jobs.

In 2022, 148 individuals connected with at least one of UNC's workforce programs. The support received by participants is as varied as the individuals themselves, and included career exploration, assistance with applying for financial aid, help finding childcare, and transportation options. Sometimes a participant may need prerequisite training such as English-as-a-second language (ESL) or working towards a high school equivalency or GED. UNC also offers free training in communication, networking, problem solving and other skills that help individuals succeed at work.

When the student is ready, UNC counselors assist them in enrolling in a variety of career certification programs. Certifications include clinical medical assistant, basic maintenance, machinist, welding, plumbing and forklift operator.

UNC's Upward Economic Mobility program is part of its Community Education Department and is funded in part by the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and in partnership with the NEPA Health Care Foundation's Careers in Care program.



**15,000** breakfasts. **10,000** lunches.

25,000 after school snacks.

### **4-Star Quality Childcare for Working Families**

In 2022, UNC's 3 childcare centers served 253 children from 199 families, allowing parents and siblings to work and go to school while their youngest were learning in a safe environment. UNC's childcare centers also offer transportation to and from school.

> With support from the City of Scranton, each childcare participant is now being evaluated through the Teaching Strategies Gold curriculum, allowing our teachers to develop lesson plans specifically to address the strengths and areas of growth of each of our students.

> > locations.

# Building Strong, Interdependent Communities

### Pine Brook Plan Receives Elm Street Designation





August Press Conference: Senator Marty Flynn, PA State Rep.; Bridget Malloy Kosierowski; Neil Weaver, Acting Sec. of the State Dept. of Community & Economic Development; Lisa Dunkin, UNC President & Chief Executive Officer; PA State Rep. Thom Welby; Paul Macknosky, Reg. Dir. of the State Department of Community & Economic Development.



Volunteers.

Volunteer

Hours



#### **Welcoming Scranton Event**



UNC held its 6th Annual Welcoming Scranton event on Saturday, Sept. 10 at the South Side Farmers Market. Welcoming Scranton is part of a movement by Welcoming America to help make communities more inclusive for all. Together with sponsors University of Scranton, Amerihealth Caretas, and Lackawanna County Arts and Culture,

UNC welcomed more than 1,100 attendees and showcased diverse artists, musicians, and food vendors in our local area.

#### **ARPA Facade Grant Funding**

Voluntee

impact.

\$23,551

UNC is partnering with the City of Scranton and other local agencies to administer federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds for facade and exterior improvements. The \$100,000 to be used in Scranton's Pine Book, South Side, and Minooka neighborhoods.



September Press Conference: Vincenzo Cicco, Vincenzo's Pizzeria and Catering; Christina Manuel, UNC Director of Community Revitalization; Todd Pousley, Neighborhood Revitalization Manager, NeighborWorks; Scranton Mayor Paige Cognetti; Leslie Collins, President & CEO, Scranton Tomorrow.

### First "Family Arts Festival" Brings the Community Together

UNC's Community Revitalization team partnered with 30 organizations and local businesses to create the first Pine Brook Family Arts Festival. Four hundred attendees from all over Scranton enjoyed the family fun creating over \$12,000 of economic impact through local vendors and paid local artists.

The Pine Brook Family Arts Festival was made possible in part through funding from Lackawanna County Arts & Culture and The University of Scranton.



#### UNC Farmers Market at Fallbrook Celebrates One Year of Bringing Healthy Food to Carbondale

The Carbondale Farmers Market celebrated one year in operation on Thursday, Sept. 8. Visitors enjoyed music, cupcakes, popcorn, party favors, and many local vendors.

51% of shoppers who visit the Carbondale Farmers Market live in UNC's Fallbrook Housing or in the city of Carbondale. 91% of shoppers have a family income of under \$35,000 annually. Vendors at the market accept SNAP/EBT, making it a great way to acquire healthy, locally grown products and produce.

UNC's Carbondale Farmers Market is open every Thursday year-round from 1:00 - 6:00 pm.



# A Safe, Healthy Place to Call Home

### **Housing & Utility Counseling**

Finding and keeping safe, affordable housing in the Scranton area continues to be a challenge for many low-income individuals and families. Households are considered to be cost burdened if they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing and severely cost burdened if they spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. Due to inflation and the rising costs of rent, gas, utilities, groceries and other household bills, many families, individual and seniors living at the poverty line were forced to seek assistance from UNC to avoid eviction or homelessness.

On average in 2022, UNC's Community Services Department saw 25-30 walk-in clients a week seeking help with rental and utility assistance.

As an agency with decades of experience in helping people obtain affordable housing, UNC is entrusted by the Office of Economic Development and Lackawanna County's Homeless Assistance Program to administer housing assistance dollars in a manner that is fair, equitable, and transparent. UNC's housing intake counselors assess each individual's circumstances, help them navigate eligibility requirements, and create an action plan to resolve the crisis. Counselors can also assist with apartment searching, applying to subsidized or public housing, communicating with landlords and referrals to other agencies.

Housing and utility assistance is also funded in part by the Emergency Food & Shelter Program and Gift of Warmth through the United Way of Lackawanna & Wayne Counties.

Housing Counselors are available at Community Services Department at 410 Olive Street in Scranton, M-F, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. More information on eligibility can be found at uncnepa.org/housing-counseling-program.



households received assistance with rent and utilities.

### \$1.2 Million

in rental & utilities distributed.



#### Living Well & Independently Supportive Services Coordinators

Anyone who lives in one of UNC's senior or family properties is eligible to receive help from a Supportive Services Coordinator like UNC's Chrissy Grunza. Chrissy is just one of the service coordinators who work with residents at each location to help them navigate the wide variety of programs and services for which they may be eligible.

Seniors find help with transportation, health insurance and Medicare, grief counseling, and assistance with managing chronic health conditions. UNC's Supportive Services also create fun and engaging activities that residents can join in to ease isolation and stay healthy, active and engaged.

Families at UNC housing find assistance with obtaining childcare, budgeting and transportation, and use Supportive Services to connect with UNC education and Upward Mobility programs.

UNC owns, manages, or provides supportive services for the residents of 691 housing units across 18 locations in NEPA. More information about UNC housing and housing supportive services can be found at uncnepa.org.

> 5,848 services and consultations.

850

individuals

of all ages.

1,176

hours of care

coordination.

UNC Community Health Supportive Services 2022



**691** 

household units

with UNC managed

services.

# A Sense of Belonging at Every Age

#### Project Hope Returned to Camp Kelly in July, 2022

After holding summer programs virtually in 2020 and 2021, in-person camp returned to Camp Kelly near Tunkhannock in July of 2022. Camp is a special place for many youths who get to experience the great outdoors for the first time, and with the help of UNC's experienced counselors, develop the personal and emotional skills needed to become responsible adults. For more than 40 years, UNC has held Project Hope day camp at Camp Kelly, and we look forward to keeping the tradition alive for many years to come.

campers in July 2022.

ش**91% 9% 9%** improved their social & emotional skills.



63% increased their physical fitness.

#### **Growing Confidence & Learning Together**

**UNC Youth Arts & Leaders in Training (LIT)** 

UNC's free youth programs provide opportunities for atrisk youth to learn and grow in a safe, supportive environment.

Illumination Youth Arts offers an opportunity to explore various arts disciplines including photography, pottery, visual arts, 3D design, video, and podcasting.

LIT is a successful delinquency prevention and leadership training course for at-risk youth. 95% of LIT participants progress to the next grade level, graduate, or move on to either secondary education or the job market.

Through these programs, participants build confidence, explore career opportunities, create meaningful friendships, and transition into successful, healthy adults.





teen community

service hours.

14

#### UNC Healthy Aging Campuses for Today's Active Seniors



Cooking demos, pickleball, fitness, dance and art -today's active seniors can find fun and a sense of belonging at UNC's Healthy Aging Campuses. Programs are updated often, and provide participants with the chance to learn something new, stay engaged, and make new friends.

Check UNC's Facebook page for the latest calendar of FREE events.







#### UNC Adds Senior Programming at 2 New Locations

Since the fall of 2022, UNC has been providing programming at two additional locations: the Hillside Healthy Aging Campus at 1151 Winola Road in Clarks Summit, and Jefferson Township Satellite Campus at 487 Cortez Road near Mount Cobb.

Find our monthly calendar of events for each campus on our Facebook page.



#### New Golf Simulator at Fallbrook Healthy Aging Campus



Golfers of all ages are welcome to try out the new golf simulator at UNC's Fallbrook Healthy Aging Campus in Carbondale. There are over 4,000 courses available from around the world including St. Andrews, Pebble Beach Golf Links, and TPC Sawgrass. Golfers 60 and over, or attending with a golfer 60 and over can play for free. All others can join in the fun for \$10.

The golf simulator at Fallbrook is open on Tues., noon - 4:00 pm and Wed., 1:00 - 6:00 pm. Reserve your time by calling Nancy at: 570-580-9765.



All programs are funded, in part, through a partnership with Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging and Pennsylvania Department of Aging.

### **THANK YOU to our Community Partners** for your generous contributions

and support.



### **THANK YOU** to our Corporate Sponsors





















WEALTH ADVISORS

### 2022 Funders

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#### **Organizations**

United Way of Lackawanna & Wayne Counties Lehigh Valley Health Network Holy Cross High School University of Scranton Marywood University First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit The Church of the Epiphany Covenant Presbyterian Church Maternal Family & Health Services

#### Government

City of Carbondale City of Scranton Borough of Dunmore Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging Lackawanna County Commissioners Lackawanna County Dept. of Economic Development Lackawanna County Dept. of Human Services Lackawanna County Office of Art and Culture Lackawanna County Office of Art and Culture Lackawanna County Office of Behavioral Health/Intellectual Disability/Early Intervention Lackawanna County Office of Youth and Family Services Community Care Behavioral Health Organization The Harry And Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Inc. Sabia Family Foundation Walter L Schautz Foundation Lockheed Martin Employees The Hawk Family Foundation America's Charities The Grimm Foundation PNC Foundation The Ross Family Foundation The Broderick Family Fund AllOne Foundation & Charities Irving & Edythe Grossman Foundation PP&L Foundation

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PA CareerLink PA Department of Aging PA Department of Community & Economic Development PA Department of Education PA Department of Health PA Department of Public Welfare PA Housing Finance Agency PA Liquor Control Board Scranton Office of Economic & Community Development Special Services Lackawanna County Interagency Council US Department of Education US Department of Housing & Urban Development

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#### Up to \$100 Continued

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#### Up to \$100 Continued

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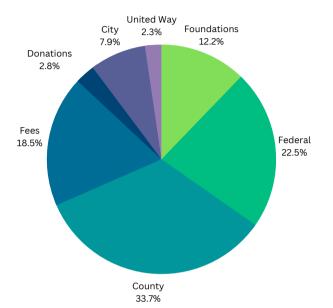


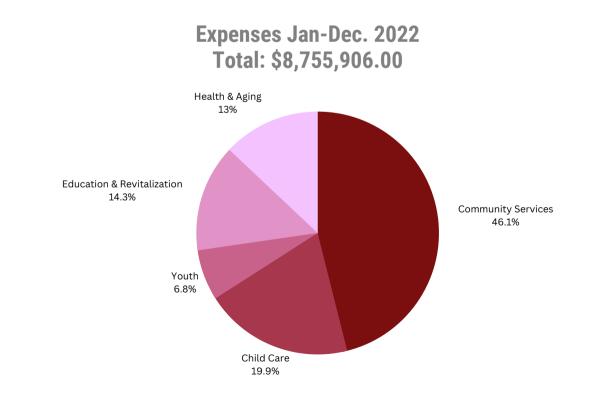




### **2022 Revenue & Program Expenses**







# **Thank You for Your Support!**



#### Scan the QR code to make a donation at uncnepa.org/donate

- Food
- Crisis Services
- Youth Art Programs
- Project Hope Summer Camp
- Senior Support Services
- Literacy Education



425 Alder Street, Scranton, PA 18505 www.uncnepa.org

UNC is fully registered and compliant as a charitable organization with the Pennsylvania Department of State. The agency is committed to responsible governance, financial responsibility, financial transparency, and maintaining our good standing with state authorities. The official registration and financial information of UNC may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.