Celebrating a century of service

Report Annual Report Centennial Celebration 1923 - 2023 UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS of Northeastern Pennsylvania

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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.

Our vision:

To address emerging social needs and be an innovative leader in building strong interdependent communities based upon our traditional commitment of partnering with individuals, families and neighborhoods.

100

Leadership Message

For a century, UNC has been dedicated to improving the lives of families in Northeastern Pennsylvania. In our 100th year, as we celebrate our rich history, we also acknowledge the increasing challenges our community faces.



In 2023, we witnessed rising costs in essentials like food, housing, utilities, and consumer goods. Many of the individuals we serve felt the impact as benefits were reduced. We welcomed 4,340 new clients who sought our assistance for the first time, while the needs of our existing clients continued to grow.

In this report you'll find stories that reflect both hardship and hope and learn about the transformative pathways we have developed to empower our consumers to a brighter future. The times we live in require unwavering determination and adaptability, and as you will see, our dedicated staff is well-prepared to meet these challenges.

Despite the strain of inflation, we were heartened by the outpouring of generosity, community care, and volunteerism this year. Individuals and businesses alike rallied behind our Feed A Friend campaign, and our community pantry benefited from the kindness of 75 businesses that collected non-perishable food for the busy holiday season.

As we reflect on what sustains us, it's clear that our strength lies in both the people we serve and the resources we've been entrusted with. We could not do what we do without our donors.

It is a privilege to serve as board president during this milestone year, where we reflect on how far we have come and light the path to the future. What we build today will shape the next hundred years, and we are ready for the challenges ahead.

In gratitude,

I

Jude McDonough Chairman of the Board



Reflecting on 100 Years









1923

UNC's beginnings date back to 1923, when members of the Bethel Church opened a small settlement house in center city Scranton to serve the needs of the African American community.

In 1924, another settlement house opened to serve the new immigrant populations living in the Lower West Side of Scranton.

These two independent centers merged in 1970 to form United Neighborhood Services, later renamed United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

UNC continues to embrace the settlement house vision to aid in the solution of problems at the neighborhood level.

2023

- m Progressive Recreation &
- Social Service Association
- 🗝 was formed.

Honoring our Legacy

- Big Sisters became Bellevue Community Center.
- Both organizations came together to create
- United Neighborhood Services
- of Lackawanna County.
- Angel's Attic food and clothing pantry and
- our first Child Care Center was formed,
- Project Hope started.
- Senior community center programs were added.
- Green Ridge Child Care Center opens.
- United Neighborhood Centers of Lackawanna County officially changed its name to United Neighborhood
- Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania to better represent the six counties it serves.
- South Side Scranton neighborhood revitalization.
- UNC merged with SCOLA to provide adult literacy education services.
- UNC development of a community
 health department.
- UNC took ownership of the former Camp St. Andrew in Tunkhannock, now renamed Camp Kelly.

Upward Economic Mobility program, Readiness In Skilled Employment - RISE,

Citizenship Education classes and one-on-one tutoring partnerships created to address the skills gap in NEPA.

UNC's Pine Brook Neighborhood revitalization plan was awarded a five-year "Elm Street" designation in from the PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development.



Senior Housing



Feed a Friend





Big Sisters





Child Care

Project Hope



Senior Center

Meeting a Growing Need

10,036 families were served across the agency in 2023.

UNC's Community Services Department is often the first door many of our neighbors walk through, and the stories that unfold there, highlight the transformative impact of our dedicated staff and volunteers.

41,906	4,340
bags of food were distributed this year, a 63% increase over 2022.	individuals were NEW clients served for the first time by UNC in 2023.

In March 2023, we unveiled new check-in kiosks at UNC's Community Services department.

These kiosks have provided a streamlined check-in process during an increased need for social services during 2023.

Clients can check-in easily providing a better and more efficient experience. This allows staff to focus on what they do best caring, individualized consumer services and case management.



33,000+ kiosk check-ins in 2023.



3,600

individuals received housing counseling

60

households received financial assistance to move into a new apartment or prevent eviction

Stories of Impact

Natasha, our Housing Team Lead, assisted a grieving father who was caring for his 2-year-old daughter following the sudden loss of his wife. Initially, he struggled to cope, burdened by the difficulty of explaining to his daughter that "Mommy" would not be coming home. Natasha provided encouragement, assuring him of his ability to care for his daughter during this challenging time. While assisting with rental arrears to prevent eviction, Natasha provided much-needed emotional support.

Giving and Receiving

UNC depends on broad community support to do the work that we do. This year, more than 80 businesses and hundreds of individuals donated to our Feed A Friend campaign. Many volunteers assisted in organizing non-perishable items in our food pantry, and helping to ensure everyone who walks through our doors gets the warm welcome they deserve.



UNC is grateful to be the designated Lackawanna County WNEP Feed a Friend agency for 39 years.



Dunmore High School Students



Gerrity's The Fresh Grocer



UNICO Carbondale Chapter



Tom Hesser BMW and Nissan



South Scranton Intermediate School



Steamtown National Historic Site



Holy Cross High School Student Council

Pathways to Transformation

For a century, UNC's doors have remained open to address critical needs, frequently serving as the first refuge for individuals and families in crisis. However, our relationship with the individual or family doesn't end there.

Over the last 100 years, our work has evolved, introducing life-changing programs and services that can alter the entire trajectory of a family – pathways to transformation.

One area that remains a steadfast focus for us is job readiness and breaking down barriers to stable employment. Local residents are hungry for opportunities that lead to stable, family-sustaining jobs.

In 2023, UNC provided 166 individuals with job readiness and workforce assistance through case management and executive skills coaching. UNC's workforce programming aims to educate and connect participants to career paths in high demand occupations while deepening their understanding of their executive functioning skill knowledge.

Witnessing clients flourish within our programs is truly heartwarming, especially as we observe English language students achieving citizenship or clients transitioning into our job training programs, ultimately securing family-sustaining careers.

100

In 2023, we served 414 English Language Learners from 65 Countries speaking 20+ Languages.

Our commitment extends beyond the classroom, acknowledging that it's often the challenges outside of those walls that pose barriers for many.



Family Literacy Program participants created artwork for UNC's Centennial Poster Contest.

Educating Families, Elevating Communities

4 New U.S. Citizens



Stories of Impact

UNC has been working with a recently resettled refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo since July 2023. He initially joined the Family Literacy program to enhance language and literacy skills for parents and children. He faced challenges finding employment due to limited English proficiency. UNC's workforce case manager helped him with his resume, interview preparation, and he successfully secured a job at a residential glass company. This marks the first step toward his goal of entering the Readiness in Skilled Employment (RISE) program. He receives ongoing case management to support his goal development and barrier removal. He continues to attend English classes and will join UNC's leadership class, preparing for the RISE cohort by building executive skills, understanding high-priority occupations, and gaining hands-on experience through working with our academic partners.

Leadership & Advancement

UNC offers pathways to higher education and indemand careers through our Leadership & Advancement program. This program combines classroom, executive skills coaching and case management to holistically address the individual barriers each client faces. Sessions are offered in cohorts with one-on-one support.

In June 2023, UNC received American Rescue Plan funding from The City of Scranton to expand our long-standing work in Family Literacy Education. 127 adults and 90 children received educational support through Family Literacy or Family Education & Tutoring Programs.

38% of RISE graduates were English Language learners



Vibrant Hubs of Activity

UNC's five Senior Community Centers served **1,369** seniors in areas of meals, education, recreation, and fitness in 2023. The centers are Fallbrook in Carbondale, Hillside in Clarks Summit, Jefferson Township near Mt. Cobb, Mid Valley in Jessup, and Scranton in the city's West Side.

Our Senior Community Centers always have something exciting going on. From wine-tastings and yoga sessions to special visits by Governor Josh Shapiro (he visited us twice in 2023) and Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. during the holiday season, there's always something happening to keep our seniors engaged and entertained.

In 2023, we were awarded a grant by Pennsylvania Department of Aging to rejuvenate the furniture, fitness equipment and technology at the centers, further enhancing the quality of services and amenities we provide to our valued senior community.

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



"I like being here and being 100 myself is Phenomenal"

683 new seniors enrolled across all centers

1,369 individual participants across all centers.





UNC served 2,169 seniors across the agency, a 43% increase over 2022.



Community Farmers Markets

vendors, weekly and special, between both markets in 2023.

209

Average Weekly Shoppers between both markets. 50% increase in SNAP/EBT buying power with Food Bucks Program.





Through a partnership with The Food Trust, both UNC's South Side Farmers Market and Carbondale Farmers Market now offer an incentive that provides \$2 in Fresh Food Bucks for every \$4 in SNAP/EBT benefits spend with no weekly limits. This not only benefits our shoppers, it provides additional revenue for local farmers. In 2023, our markets had \$11,072 in SNAP/EBT sales which became \$16,608 in buying power with Food Bucks incentives. We look forward to continuing to grow this valuable program.



Above and Beyond

Our HBHI Community Health Navigators offers intensive, individualized interventions that address the social determinants of health.



Stories of Impact

In our Housing and Behavioral Health Initiative (HBHI), Laura and Michelle, our Community Health Navigators, go above and beyond to break down barriers for our clients.

One day, Laura found out that a woman in the Refugee Resettlement program loved sewing but didn't have a sewing machine. Guess what? Laura had an extra machine! She gave it to the woman and even went to her house to show her how to use it.

But that's not all - Laura and Michelle assist individuals during the most challenging of times. They coordinate care with coroners and funeral homes for those with limited support, and help clients obtain essential documents like birth certificates and social security cards, crucial for subsidized housing.

Laura and Michelle's roles are supported by our partnership with Community Care Behavioral Health, a contract where we receive funding to address the social determinant of health barriers across the agency.

Re-envisioning Pine Brook

UNC's Pine Brook Neighborhood revitalization plan is now in year two of implementation. The team launched a Pine Brook Neighborhood Association, Business Alliance and quarterly Safety & Wellness fairs to improve neighborhood safety, empower residents and build a better business community.

Volunteers make it happen!

303

Volunteers

1,747 \$49,860 Volunteer Economic Hours impact

facade projects completed.

front door &

The first annual Garbage Olympics neighborhood clean-up came in 2023 as part of City Pride's week-long event. More than 1,000 pounds of trash was collected, and teams celebrated their victories with a picnic at the Capouse Corner Green Space.



Second "Pine Brook Family Arts Festival" is honored with award at Statewide Revitalization Conference.

Flourishing Green Space

UNC partnered with Leadership Lackawanna Class of 2023 to turn a once vacant, blighted property from the Lackawanna County Land Bank into Capouse Corner Green Space, a vibrant place with native plantings, a Little Free Library, benches, and plenty of room for outdoor activity.

Over 250 hours of volunteer time went into the cleanup, planting, and maintenance of the space in 2023. Many partners helped to make this happen including the Penn State Master Gardeners and Scranton Tomorrow. The site hosted several events this year including the City Pride picnic and Fall Bulb Planting workshop.

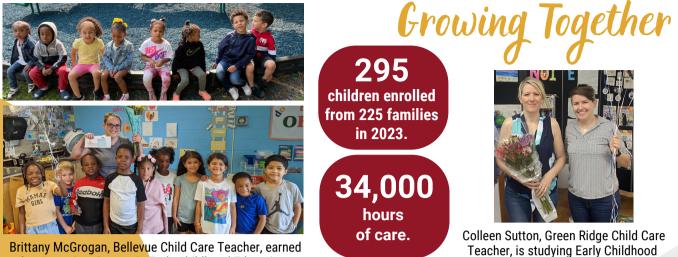








Safety & Wellness Initiative UNC held the second annual Safety and Wellness Fair in August at National Bakery on Capouse Avenue. We were joined by 14 community organizations including a Bike Rodeo, which taught children about street bike safety.



her Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education.

UNC's three child care centers provide affordable before and after school care, as well as preschool services. The growth of our teachers is as important as the growth of our students. This year, our Child Care Center teachers can receive bonuses through a grant from the Scranton Area Community Foundation Women in Philanthropy for continuing their education. Beyond the day-to-day guality child care, we grow strong partnerships with families so our students thrive.

In 2023. **UNC** served 6,883 children, an 18% increase over 2022.

July 2023.

99

campers in

Since 1970, UNC's Project Hope Summer Camp at Camp Kelly has been providing children with a great outdoor experience.

Learning Together

Education and has earned a 4.0 GPA.

Through Pennsylvania's **Educational Improvement Tax Credit** program, private companies contribute to making our summer camp affordable for local low-income families.

of LIT Seniors graduated high school in 2023.

100%

Succeeding Together



Every year, top LIT performers go on an annual trip, and this year, they picked the U.S. Capitol!

For more than two decades. UNC's Leaders in Training (LIT) is a successful delinguency prevention and leadership training course for at-risk youth. The students take monthly educational field trips and are given the tools, connections, and motivation to become successful.

123 students enrolled in Illumination Youth Arts.

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

Celebrating our Centennial

Mayor Paige G. Cognetti declares Wednesday, November 8, 2023 as United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania Day!

"We lean on UNC to do so much of what we need to do for our residents. The work that we do today... and all of the work going forward." Mayor Paige Cognetti

City of Scranton

On Wednesday, November 8, 2023, UNC received a proclamation honoring our Centennial Celebration from Mayor Paige G. Cognetti, City of Scranton.

UNC also received proclamations from U.S. Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr. delivered by Kristin A. Magnotta, Director of Outreach for Senator Casey, Rep. Kyle T. Donahue, 113th district; and Rep. Bridget M. Kosierowski, 114th district. A proclamation from Senator Marty Flynn, 2nd Senatorial District, was also recognized, as well as, an insertion into the Congressional Record from U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright, PA's 8th Congressional District.

The crowd was full of UNC Board and staff members, City of Scranton staff, and multiple partnering organizations. Remarks were made by Lisa Durkin, UNC President & CEO; and Andrew Hailstone, Esq., UNC longest standing Board Member, serving for 50 years.



"UNC is an anchor in our community and a place of warmth. You provide our city with a soul, with a home." Kristin A. Magnotta, Director of Outreach for Senator Casey



Paige G. Cogfietti

Reflecting on 100 Years

m100

Celebrating 100 years of empower

UNC's centennial celebration was not just a reflection of our past accomplishments but a testament to our enduring commitment to serving the community. Throughout the year, we took many opportunities to highlight our rich history while looking towards a future of continued service and impact.

Celebrating 1923 (00) 2023

100

S J J N C

We celebrated at many UNC events including Welcoming Scranton, Carbondale Fall Fest, our Designer Purse Bingo, and Art Show & Sale fundraisers!

We commemorated with the staff of Coney Island Lunch, another anchor institution celebrating their Centennial in 2023!

We held a 100 Year Art Contest which received many wonderful entries from talented local artists of all ages and we held a year-end celebration for UNC board and staff members.



UNCNEPA

@100

Civic Engagement & Participation



UNC was honored to be voted Non-Profit of the Year by our peers at Scranton Area Community Foundation's NEPA Learning Conference.





In May, out of all the Senior Centers in Pennsylvania's 67 counties, UNC's Scranton Senior Community Center was chosen to host Governor Josh Shapiro's signing of the executive order directing the PA Department of Aging to develop a 10-year Master Plan for Older Adults.

In August, Governor Josh Shapiro signed HB 1100 into law on August 4 at UNC's Scranton Senior Community Center. This law will expand the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program to nearly 175,000 more Pennsylvania seniors.

In December, UNC's President & CEO Lisa Durkin participated in a panel discussion with Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. on the pressing issue of inflation in Pennsylvania, hosted at the University of Scranton.



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

Investing in our Future CEDAR CENTER

Community, Education, Development and Revitalization Center

On April 4, Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. secured \$1 million in federal funding for renovations on the former Peoples Security Bank on Cedar Avenue. This is a continuation of the neighborhood revitalization work that UNC has been doing for over 15 years in Scranton's South Side.

CEDAR Center will offer UNC's expanding services in job readiness and workforce development, small business and entrepreneurship services, and a welcome center for new immigrants. Penn State's LaunchBox will operate a business accelerator and manage a student-run café/retail area. It will also serve as a venue to expand our regional year-round farmers market.



Mark Your Calendars!

Friday, April 5, 2024 - 2nd Annual Designer Purse Bingo Holy Cross High School in Dunmore

Friday, September 27, 2024 - Chocolate and Wine Frolic Scranton Cultural Center at the Masonic Temple Our sweetest event is back!

Scan QR code to purchase tickets for our Designer Purse Bingo



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Celebrating 100 Years of Service to the Commu

Thank you to our Corporate Sponsors













*Donations listed are from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 and are cumulative for the year.

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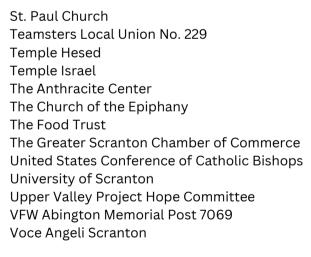
Government

Child and Adult Care Food Program City of Scranton Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging Lackawanna County Arts Engage Lackawanna County Commissioners Lackawanna County Dept. of Economic Development Lackawanna County Dept. of Human Services Lackawanna County Early Learning **Resource Center** Lackawanna County Office of Arts and Culture Lackawanna County Office of Youth and **Family Services** Lackawanna County Treatment Court

Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Behavioral Health/Intellectual Disabilities/ Early Intervention Lackawanna/Susquehanna Office of Drug and Alcohol PA CareerLink PA Department of Aging PA Department of Community and **Economic Development** PA Department of Education PA Housing Finance Agency PA Liquor Control Board Scranton Office of Economic and **Community Development** Special Services Lackawanna County Interagency Council State Correctional Institution at Waymart U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development

Organizations

AmeriHealth Caritas Services LLC Boy Scout Troop 8 Community Care Behavioral Health Organization Covenant Presbyterian Church First Presbyterian Church Deacons Fund First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit Geo Reentry Services Holy Cross High School LCBC Church Regional Hospital of Scranton Rotary Club of the Abingtons Shiloh Baptist Church





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\$10,000+

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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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