

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE COMMUNITY

# UNITED

# WE

# RISE



United Way of Kern County



# A Message From Our CEO

The greatest joy of being part of the United Way of Kern County Family is seeing first-hand the grace and resiliency of a community united – from our tireless volunteers, our generous donors, our committed staff, and our extraordinary Board of Directors to our corporate and non-profit partners, policymakers, and the families and individuals we are privileged to serve. This past year has once again called upon all of us to reach out our hearts and our hands and find what truly unites us – a vibrant community where everyone can prosper.

I have stood in awe watching hundreds of volunteers work and dedicate their valuable time in Monthly Book Program, Healthy Minds Healthy Bodies, Meal distributions, Teddy Bear Toss, Adopt-A-Highway Clean-up, VITA services, lending a hand to our staff during our move to our new downtown location and many others.

I am deeply grateful, for the legacy of compassion and commitment our recently passed board member Javier Lozano instilled in all of us these last 15 years as Chair, Past Chair and board member. At a time when the world changed in front of our eyes, the needs of our community multiplied, and hope wore thin, Javier's steadfast leadership and unwavering commitment to our mission was a port in the storm. His legacy will be felt in our community for many years to come. I'm forever grateful to have had the honor to work under the wings of such an amazing human being and highly spirited soul.

In 2022, we challenged ourselves to be better champions for every member of our community, and I know this will have a positive impact on our work for generations to come.

Lastly, thank you for continually entrusting United Way of Kern County with this important work, especially through these few years of uncertainty. Your generosity makes it possible for us to ensure that every family and every individual has the resources they need to thrive.

Gracias por seguir confiando en United Way of Kern County para hacer el trabajo que se necesita hacer, especialmete en momentos de inseguridad. Sus contribuciones, ya sean en forma de donación o tiempo como voluntario, hacen posible que nosotros nos aseguremos que familias e individuos en nuestra comunidad tengan los recursos necesarios para salir adelante.

Gracias por un año mas de éxito y recuerden siempae VIVIR UNIDOS!  
Thank you for another successful year and please remember to always LIVE UNITED!

Mari Pérez-Dowling

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Javier Lozano, Past Chair 2007-∞**  
Honorary Life Time Member

**Matthew Rogers, Chair 2021-2023**  
Manager UPS

**Emily Duran, Vice-Chair 2021-2023**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kern Family Health Care

**Jordan Kaufman, Treasurer 2021-2023**  
Treasurer and Tax Collector  
County of Kern

**Morgan Topper, Secretary 2021-2023**  
Chief Operating Office  
Dignity Health, Mercy Hospital Downtown,  
Mercy Hospital Southwest

**Dr. Vernon Harper 2021-2023**  
Provos Vice President of Academic Affairs  
California State University, Bakersfield

**Dr. Timothy Fulenwider 2021-2023**  
Director of Instructional Support Services Division  
Bakersfield City School District

**Jessica Grimes 2021-2023**  
Dean of Economic and Workforce Development  
Kern Community College District

**Ana Montenegro 2021-2023**  
Director of Operations  
California Resources Corporation

**Jaron Cramer 2021-2023**  
Executive Director  
Tejon Ranch Conservancy

**Adrian Nevarez 2021-2023**  
Human Resource Director  
Tasteful Selections

**Sandeep Singh Malhi 2022-2024**  
Peace Officer & Detective  
Bakersfield Police Department

## Message from Chairman Matthew Rogers



As I sit here reflecting on the past year, I think about how rapidly the world around us is changing. This has been the year of adaptation and overcoming challenges, and in my opinion no group has been better at this than the United Way of Kern County. I am so very proud of the work that has been done in our community over the last year in the areas of education, health, and economic resilience. We have welcomed many new faces to the board and the staff of the UWKC this year and with every single one, I am amazed by the desire of these individuals to help. My goal is to reduce the footprint of the UWKC, not because I don't want to see the amazing work continue, but because there is no longer a need. We are not there yet, and this is the group that will continue to push daily to improve conditions in our communities for the betterment of us all until we do get there. Together, as one community, we will make an impact

## Message from Vice-Chair Emily Duran



United Way of Kern is an organization whose mission is demonstrated by actions; though the programs and services we provide to our community. Its these grass roots efforts that make the most impact and facilitate change for the community and by the community.

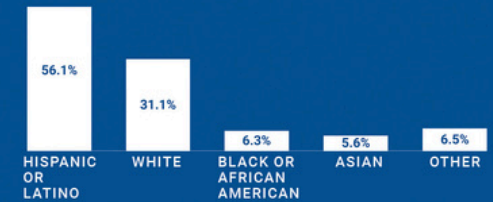
# THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

## POPULATION

917,673



## RACIAL BREAKDOWN



## KERN COUNTY AT A GLANCE



## PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH HIGH NEEDS

73%



## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$54,851



(\$15,933 less than the national average)

\*Data from annual census report

# Education

## BOOKS DISTRIBUTED IN 2022

Monthly Book Program

7,059

Our monthly book program provides books to over **700** children every month. These books are brand new and age-appropriate for children ages 0-8. The packages addressed to the children also include encouraging notes and resources for the families. BOTMC fosters a love for learning and creates an environment where families get to share stories and create lasting memories

Outreach Events

17,115

Outreach and special events allow us to distribute books to children in more inclusive ways. Through our various resource fairs and grassroots events, we have been able to distribute an additional **17,115** books in 2022. These events get more books into children's hands while also helping them build their own home library and encourage the love for reading.

## HEALTHY MINDS, HEALTHY BODIES

Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies (HMHB) is a project that distributes food boxes, books, dental kits and other resources to low/moderate-income families within the different school districts throughout Kern County. Two of the largest issues in Kern County are **literacy** and **hunger**, and these events target both. This year, we handed out **746 dental kits**, **3,028 books**, and over **1,000 boxes of food**. The success of this project is thanks to the contributions of HMHB partners; Dignity Health, Community Action Partnership of Kern, State Farm, No Kid Hungry, and Capital Dental.

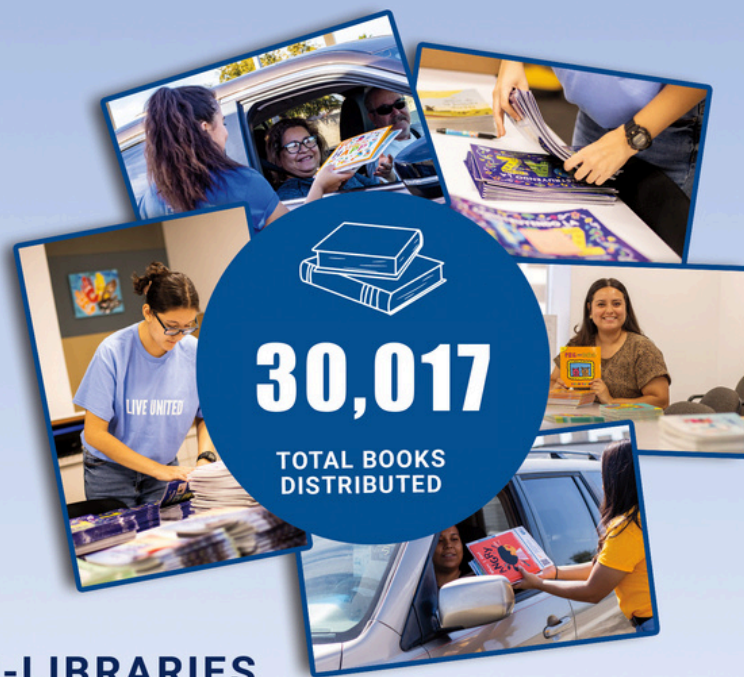
746



3,028



1,000



## MINI-LIBRARIES

The "Mini Libraries" is a new partnership-project between Councilmember Eric Arias and UWKC. This initiative was created to provide book access to families around Kern county and to encourage our community to read and donate books for others to read. The partnership consists also of The East Bakersfield Literacy Project, and the Carpenters. This year we were able to establish **5 mini libraries**.

## BORN LEARNING TRAIL - LAMONT

The families that surround Weedpatch Park in Lamont received a brand new "Born Learning Trail" (BLT) through a partnership with United Way and Aera Energy. The BLT is a colorful **10-station** circuit course with learning activities at each station, presented in both English and Spanish. It provides a fun way for parents and caregivers to interact with children from newborn to five-years old. UWKC partners with the office of Parks and Recreation, as well as elected officials to install new BLTs or refresh old BLTs, providing an exciting and fun display for families to explore together. Our main sponsors for BLTs this year were Aera Energy and Chevron.

# Education

## 8TH ANNUAL "A CHOCOLATE AFFAIR"

The 8th Annual "A Chocolate Affair" fundraiser raised over \$65,000 for UWKC's Early Childhood Education and Literacy Initiatives. With the help of this event, we were able to distribute over 30,000 books throughout 2022.



**\$65k** RAISED FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

## POSITIVE PREVENTION PLUS

The Positive Prevention Plus Program consists of three United Way educators teaching with all 12 middle schools within the Bakersfield City School District. Our teachers cover an array of topics that include bullying, sexual harassment, human trafficking, pregnancy prevention and STIs, among other topics. This program provides sexual education for over 12,000 students annually enhancing their growth as young adults in our community.

**OVER 12,000** STUDENTS REACHED



# Health

## SINGLECARE

UWKC partners with SingleCare (formerly FamilyWize) to provide community members with access to affordable prescription medications, ensuring greater health and financial stability. Through their prescription savings card, SingleCare works to make prescription medications more affordable for all families. No one should ever have to make the hard choice between the medication they need and other basics like food or rent. SingleCare cards can reduce prescription drug costs by an **average of 35%**. With the assistance of these cards, **1,735 residents** of/in Kern, Inyo, and Mono counties were able to save **\$192,695.20** on their prescriptions in 2022.



For Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties

Individuals Served	<b><u>1,735</u></b>
<b>Total Discounts for Kern, Inyo and Mono</b>	<b><u>\$192,695.20</u></b>

In Partnership with SingleCare



## HOT MEAL DISTRIBUTION

Kern County ranks among one of the highest-rated counties of food insecurity according to Feeding America, it's more than 25% national average. UWKC continued its dedication to end food insecurity in Kern by partnering with Fresco Mexican Grill and distributing **2,200 hot meals** to those in need within our community. In addition to the hot meals, UWKC distributed resources and stuffed animals to the families served. This event was made possible due to the support and partnership of Fresco Mexican Grill, Que Buena, State Farm, No Kid Hungry - California, and Health Net.

# Health

## CLEAN AIR COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

United Way of Kern County has directed focus to clean air within Kern County. With the support from the California Air Resource Board, United Way brought awareness to climate change by planting **40** new trees in Kern County. We encourage our Kern residents to change daily habits to reduce their carbon footprint by conserving energy, carpooling, using public transportation, biking, walking, using safe paints and cleaning products, and by re-utilizing mulch, compost leaves and yard waste. Together we can #LiveUnited!



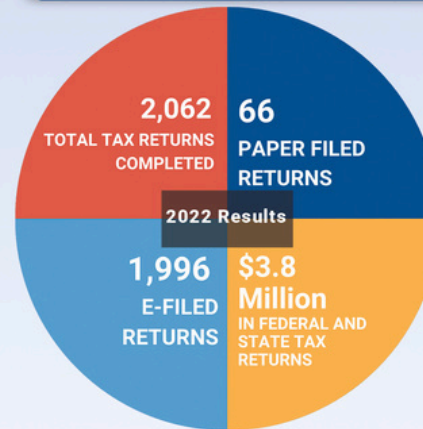
## Financial Stability

### VITA - VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

UWKC' has run many resourceful programs throughout the years in order to help the community. One of them being the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program; this program falls under UWKC's financial stability department which is a free income tax assistance program that has granted low-income families and single individuals the option of not having to pay for such an expensive service, while still receiving quality work. Thanks to the Kern VITA Partnership and our **numerous dedicated volunteers** we have been able to provide this free service and bring money, back into our community. During the 2022 tax year, we were able to file over **2,000 tax returns** and bring close to **3.8 million dollars** in tax refunds back to the community. Our goal is to increase these numbers therefore, the help of volunteers is always encouraged.

### CMRP - CALIFORNIA MORTGAGE RELIEF PROGRAM

CMRP is provides financial assistance to homeowners who are behind on their mortgage, payments or property taxes. Using \$1 billion in federal funds, UWKC recieved a \$380,000 grant to help homeowners who have had a financial hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic. The assistance provided through this program is not a loan and does not need to be paid back.



### CESH- CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS & HOUSING

United Way of Kern County is the fiscal agent and the administrator of the California Emergency Solutions & Housing Program (CESH). UWKC distributes funding to The Housing Authority of the County of Kern, which serves those who are experiencing homelessness or may be at risk of homelessness by providing shelter, temporary housing vouchers, low-income housing access support, and rental assistance.



# Financial Stability

## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOPS

The Financial Empowerment Workshops were a continuous project we offered this year in partnership with Bank of the Sierra. By combining our outreach and marketing techniques and their financial knowledge, we were able to facilitate **8 workshops** and reach over **80 high school students**. These workshops consisted of various topics ranging from simple budgeting, to how to save towards retirement. We know that the need for financial literacy is high and is also not traditionally taught in grade school, so we look forward to offering these opportunities more consistently in the years to come, but this time targeting a wider audience. United Way could not have done this alone and we encourage more financial institutions to partner with us to make a bigger impact together in the financial education and stability of our community members.

## RESUME BUILDING WORKSHOPS

Thanks to our partnership Citizens Business Bank, this year we were able to offer a new opportunity to our community members to learn the importance of resumes. These workshops were offered with the goal to teach individuals how to highlight their qualifications, target employers and develop an eye-catching resume to get noticed! Whether it was someone returning to the workforce, or someone changing careers, these workshops were targeted to anyone seeking help in this area. The workshops consisted of drafting and revising resumes, learning general guidelines, such as correct language and format, and ended with a mock interview to put everything they had learned to the test. In 2022 we offered multiple workshops. We anticipate this program to grow and help give our community members the boost they need to find employment.



## EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER PROGRAM

UWKC is the administrator of the Emergency Food & Shelter Program. The EFSP distributes funding to nonprofit and community-based organizations that serve those who are experiencing homelessness, may be at risk of homelessness, may be experiencing food insecurities, are seeking utility assistance, or may be lacking essential basic needs in the home. Participating agencies who report directly to National include The Open Door Network (formerly known as Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault and Bethany Services), Catholic Charities, Alpha House, Necessary Economic Emergency Distribution Site (N.E.E.D.S Center), The Mission at Kern County (Bakersfield Rescue Mission), The Salvation Army, Mountain Communities Family Resource Center, McFarland Family Resource Center, Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK), and Women's Center High Desert (WCHD)

## PG&E REACH PROGRAM



For over 30 years, the REACH program has helped low-income families keep their utilities services turned on in times of hardship. The REACH program helps you pay for energy during a crisis. REACH provides an energy credit for up to \$300 based on the past due bill (energy credit support is subject to funding availability). Over 170 Nonprofit organizations run the REACH program in Northern and Central California.

## RIDE UNITED PROGRAM



The Ride United program (in partnership with Lyft) seeks to reduce transportation barriers that prevent individuals from accessing healthcare, getting quality jobs, completing education programs, and more. Transportation have proven to be a key issue for many individuals seeking services to support pandemic recovery.

## COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

In 2022, our 31st Annual Community Professional Development Conference brought together over **200 professionals, 15 workshops, 20 vendors and 2 keynote speakers**. For 31 years UWKC has hosted a community professional development conference for community-based organizations, individuals, and way makers. UWKC continues its commitment to provide a quality community conference to help with the development of professionals, from interns to Chief Executive Officers. This effort continues to take place thanks to the generous support of corporations and agencies throughout Kern County.



## COAT DISTRIBUTION

In 2022, UWKC continued its partnership with the Office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas, Chevron, and Aera Energy for the Annual Holiday Coat Distribution. This year around 600 coats were distributed to children in various areas of Kern County.

**600** COATS DISTRIBUTED



## COMMUNITY SHOW (COMUNIDAD UNIDA)

The Comunidad Unida Show's mission is to bring awareness and to bring our partners, donors, stakeholders, and volunteers together to help Kern County thrive. With our partnerships, we can continue to bring this resource to the community. We discuss topics that relate to education, health and financial stability, such as community events, social services, climate change, financial empowerment and much more.



## TEDDY BEAR DRIVE, TOSS & 5K RUN & WALK

Every year UWKC collects thousands of teddy bears to donate to agencies that serve thousands of children in our communities. This year, UWKC made large contributions of bears, blankets and books to the Bakersfield Police Department so that peace officers are well equipped with care packages to help children in situations of adversary. Schools and organizations also utilize our teddy bears to help reward a student or to soothe a child during a hardship. This year we hosted our 1st Teddy Bear 5k Run & Walk in order to collect more teddy bears and funds to benefit local charities and organizations that serve children in need. This year our drive brought in **2,452 stuffed animals** and the 24th Annual Teddy Bear Toss at the Condors Game brought in **6,077 bears** for an a total of **8,529 bears overall!**



## 2022 NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR

United Way of Kern County was honored by the state senators and assembly members for our outstanding contributions to the community we serve. California Nonprofit of the Year gives elected officials the opportunity to shine a light on the important work nonprofits are doing in their districts and for everyone to appreciate the collective impact of nonprofits in our communities. Staff and volunteers at United Way of Kern County strive to create positive community impacts that affect the lives of individuals and families every day, and we are deeply humbled to be recognized by Assemblymember Rudy Salas as a 2022 Nonprofit of the Year.



# THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS WHO HELP CREATE LASTING CHANGE IN KERN COUNTY

## CAMPAIGN LEADERS

Workplace Campaigns, Corporate and Foundation  
Donors with combined gift totals exceeding  
**\$30,000**



Workplace Campaigns, Corporate and Foundation  
Donors with combined gift totals from  
**\$19,000 - \$29,999**



### \$10,000 - \$18,999

- Dollar General
- Kaiser Permanente
- National Express Transit
- Taft College
- Target Corp.
- Valley Republic

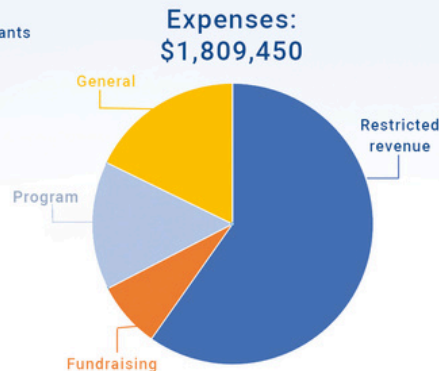
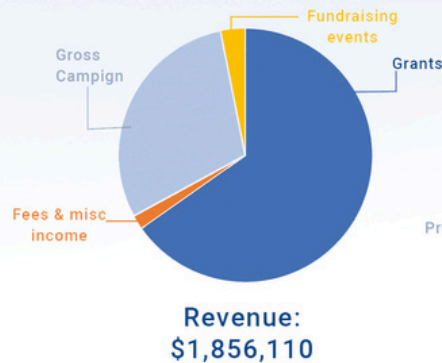
### \$5,000 - \$9,999

- Aera Energy LLC
- AT&T
- BNSF Railway Foundation
- Caterpillar Distribution Center
- Citizens Business Bank-Stockdale
- Dignity Health Mercy & Memorial Hospitals
- FedEx Corp.
- Shirley J. Gordon
- ITW National

### \$2,500 - \$4,999

- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Bakersfield Condors
- Bank of America
- DD's Discounts
- Interinsurance Exchange of the Automobile Club
- Javier Lozano
- Kern County Sup. Of Schools
- Kern Family Health Care
- Kern Family Health Systems
- Orange County's UW
- Palmer T Margaret
- Room to Read Sponsor BOTM
- The Wonderful Company including Marissa Jimenes

### 2021/2022 FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE



To make a donation to United Way of Kern County, please scan the QR code below.

**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.**

**UNITED WAY OF KERN COUNTY**  
1707 Eye Street, 3rd Floor  
Bakersfield, CA, 93301  
(661) 834-1820 | info@uwkern.org  
UnitedWayKern.org