

A CLEAR LINE OF

# VISION

United Way of Waco-McLennan County  
2022-2024 Community Report

**100 years**  
of service illuminates  
the path leading into  
the next century



United Way of  
Waco-McLennan County





Prove Yourself Worthy of Sharing Both Ways—Now and Hereafter  
**WACO COMMUNITY CHEST**  
 DEC. 3rd to 8th  
**1929 CAMPAIGN**  
 "A FAIR SHARE FROM EVERYONE"



**GOOD GUYS GIVE**



**GIVE**  
 COMMUNITY CHEST

give to **UNITED FUND**

YOU can make sure that Waco takes care of youth . . . the aged . . . the sick . . . the disabled. Accept your share of this year's UNITED FUND quota and give gladly. It's the efficient, planned way to meet these needs. And, you can be sure that your gift to UNITED FUND is doing the job it's supposed to do. Pictures shown here depict but two of the many services rendered throughout the year by UNITED FUND agencies.



## A Tale of Two

# CENTURIES

Every community is endowed with its own unique set of resources. Providentially located along the banks of the Brazos River, Waco has been graced with an abundance of natural beauty.

You might say that our community has been equally blessed with human resources, having been given a double portion of community-minded citizens with a heart for caring for their neighbors. The attitude of giving has always been strongly felt here, and it was in that spirit that the first seeds of United Way of Waco-McLennan County were sown more than a century ago.

In 1923, business leaders started the Waco Community Chest (often recognized by its red feather symbol) to serve as a central collection point for local funds that would then be distributed among various local service organizations.

Although our operations have become more sophisticated over the past century, our basic mission is unchanged. **We remain dedicated to helping our neighbors attain the educational, healthcare, and financial stability resources needed to reach their full potential.**

Sustained by the generous contributions and volunteer efforts of people like you, we are optimistic that United Way of Waco-McLennan County will continue to successfully carry out this mission through the next 100 years and beyond.



### United Way of Waco-McLennan County Board of Directors

- J.T. Carpenter, Board Chair *Texas Farm Bureau*
- Tammy Richards, Immediate Past Chair *Extraco Banks, Waco*
- Hector Sabido, Governance Committee Chair *Prophecy Media Group*
- Tammie Bowman, Resource Development Chair *Atmos Energy*
- Reagan Fitz-Gerald, Finance & Investment Committee Chair *Patillo, Brown & Hill, LLP*
- Paula Solano, Impact & Engagement Committee Chair *La Hacienda*
- Betty Bauer, At-Large Executive Committee Member *Community Volunteer*
- Brandon Guerra, Board Member *HOLT CAT, Waco*
- Geoffrey Nelson, Board Member *Karen Purvis Institute of Child Development at TCU*
- Diego Genera, Board Member *Envases*
- Dr. Frank Graves, Board Member *McLennan Community College*
- Dr. Kristina Campos-Davis, Board Member *Baylor University*
- Shane Turner, Board Member *Turner Brothers Real Estate*
- Tracy Guillory, Board Member *McLennan County - Precinct 2*
- Orlando Rodriguez, Board Member *First Central Credit Union*
- Deidra Emerson, Board Member *City of Waco*
- Edward Love, Board Member *Waco Independent School District*

## Quotable

United Way of Waco-McLennan County Board Chair J.T. Carpenter shared his thoughts on United Way's role in the community in a recent interview. Below are a few excerpts; to watch the video, scan the QR code.



**J.T. Carpenter**

Board Chair, United Way of Waco-McLennan County



**My name is J.T. Carpenter.** I've been involved in the United Way since 2022, when I was requested by my boss to serve on behalf of Texas Farm Bureau. My involvement with the United Way has been a phenomenal experience.



It has been amazing to learn about what I often hear described as a "supertanker," because (United Way's) involvement in the community is so broad.



I have learned a ton about all of the different things going on in our city and in our county, whether it's taking a site visit to one of the designated agencies that United Way supports, or meeting with employers, local business owners or their employees ... to hear stories of how employees were able to make use of some of the services ... supported by the United Way and ... how meaningful it was to know that their employer supported that.



## Real People. Real Stories.

Annual reports have a reputation for being a bit dry. By necessity, they are filled with a lot of facts and figures that reflect the work of an organization in very black and white terms. However, numbers don't always reveal the true impact an organization is having on the lives of the people it serves.

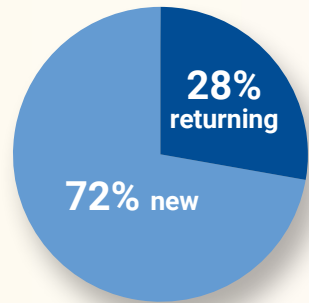
Alongside the numbers and data points in this report you'll find stories about the people—our neighbors—who are represented by those numbers. The names have been changed, but the stories are real. These testimonials bring to life our simple but bold message: **United Way of Waco-McLennan County continues to fulfill its longtime mission of equipping local service agencies to meet the needs of our neighbors.**



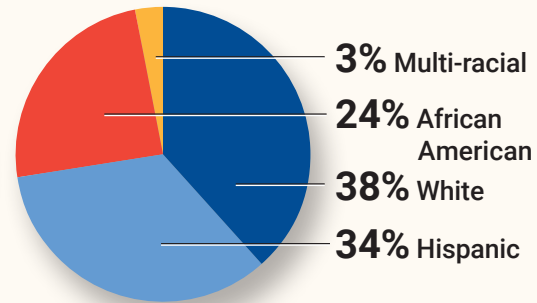
# Community-Driven Investments

These statistics reflect the demographics of Community Investment Council and Financial Review Council members during the 2023–25 grant cycle. Both are made up of diverse groups of people who are willing to lend their voices and expertise to making funding decisions.

## New vs Returning Members



## Race/Ethnicity



## Gender

79% Female

21% Male



## Age

Under 45 72%

Over 45 28%

## Lived Experience

24%

(Individuals who have been personally impacted by non-profit services)

## Meet Our Key Players

### Loaned Executive Program

This is the third year the Loaned Executive Program has supported our community efforts. Loaned Executives participate in team building and training to expand their skills as the next generation of diverse leaders in our community. They also visit with our Community Partners to see firsthand how United Way of Waco-McLennan County and our funded partners help improve the quality of life for residents in need. They share this information with our Workplace Campaigns to strengthen the fundraising initiative.

Look for more of our local United Way "Key Players" on p. 7 & 13.

### 2022 Loaned Executive Program Members

- Courtney Hays *Bowman*
- Jennifer Cervantez *Atmos Energy*
- Zachary Teague *Topgolf*
- Scott Snyder *Atmos Energy*

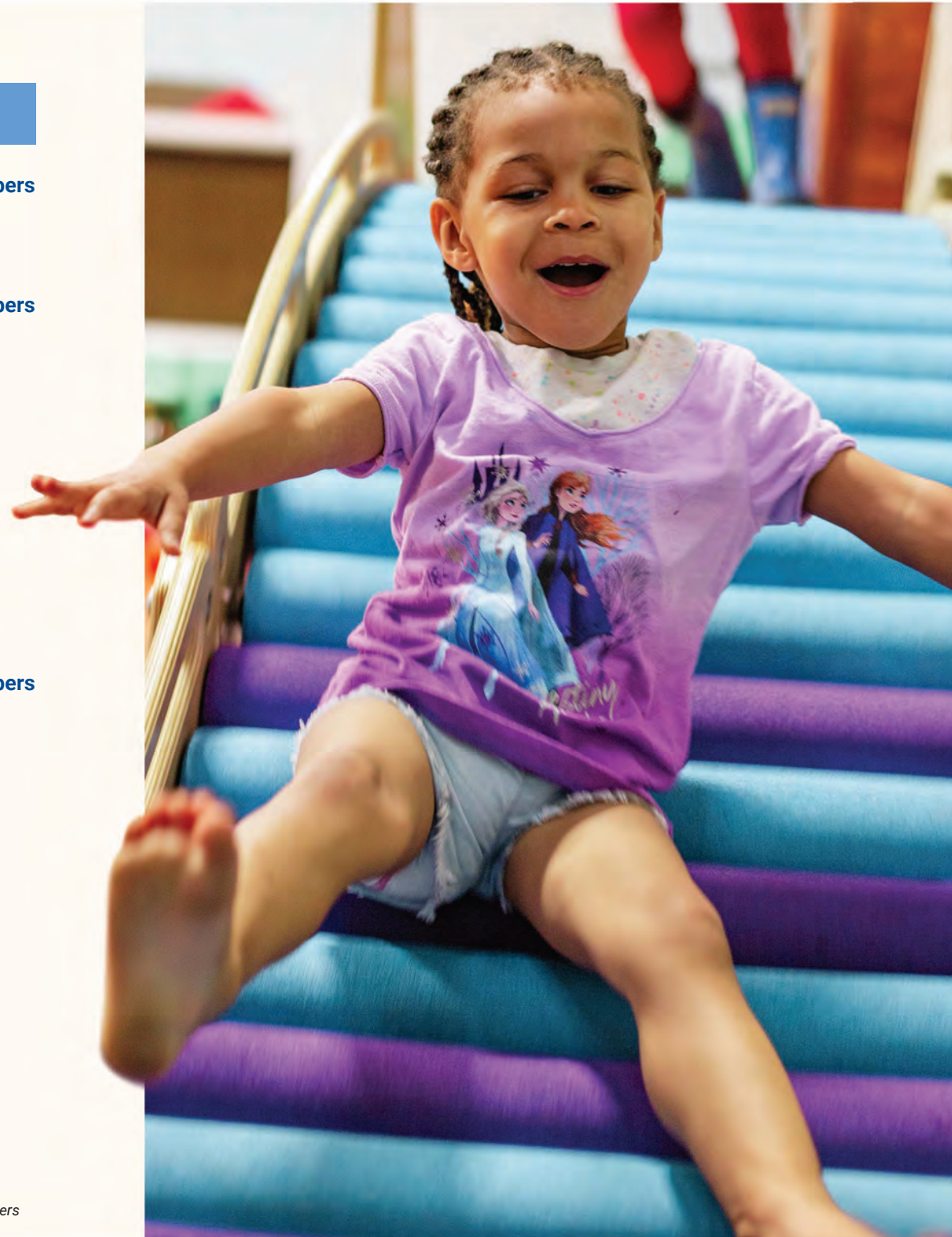
### 2023 Loaned Executive Program Members

- Abbey Mackey *Extraco Banks, Waco\**
- Belinda Jennings *Extraco Banks, Waco\**
- Camille Wilder *Baylor University*
- Chris Gerick *Alliance Bank Central Texas\**
- Elizabeth Walker *Target Solutions*
- Haley O'Brien *American Bank, N.A.*
- Hailey Sparks *Texas Farm Bureau\**
- Jennifer Lee *Home Instead*
- Lindsay Watkins *Texas Farm Bureau Insurance*
- Lisa Saxenian *Waco Independent School District\**
- Matthew Bell *HOLT CAT, Waco*
- Nathan Churchman *Topgolf*
- Randall Brown *Baylor University*
- Reagan Fitz-Gerald *Pattillo, Brown & Hill, LLP\**
- Stephen Hayes *Atmos Energy\**
- Wes Allison *Extraco Events Center*

### 2024 Loaned Executive Program Members

- Alyce Lehmann *Texas Farm Bureau*
- Brandi Meador *Alliance Bank Central Texas*
- Cameron Curry *Extraco Banks, Waco*
- Carson Bell *American Bank, N.A.*
- Debbie Weaver *Baylor University*
- Ferlisa Raglin *Waco Housing Authority*
- Fernando Arroyo *Waco Family Medicine\*\**
- Hyla Ruiz *Turner Brothers Real Estate*
- John Gorrell *Extraco Banks, Waco*
- Jonatan Garcia *Velocity Clinical Research*
- Justin Vining *Atmos Energy*
- Khristian Howard *Baylor University*
- Luis Ortiz *Waco Independent School District*
- Mayra Gutierrez *Alliance Bank Central Texas*
- Olga Dominguez *Caterpillar*
- Terri Corley *Atmos Energy*
- Tim Webb *Baylor University*
- Tina Keel *Waco Family Medicine*
- Tory Schafer *HighView Insurance Group*
- Heather Travers *McLennan County Health Services\*\*\**
- Stephanie Alvey *City of Waco\*\*\**

\*Also 2022 Loaned Executive Program Members  
 \*\*Also 2023 Loaned Executive Program Member  
 \*\*\*Also 2022 and 2023 Loaned Executive Program Members



Real People. Real Stories.

## THREE WOMEN WHO BEAT THE ODDS

Christian Women's Job Corps of McLennan County

Earning a GED can be a daunting task.

It's especially challenging for women who have missed the opportunities most of us take for granted. For more than 20 years, Christian Women's Job Corps of McLennan County has been helping women transform their lives by fostering their spiritual, personal, and professional growth.

"Maria" is a diligent, driven student who has worked hard to obtain her GED despite facing the added challenge of a language barrier. Maria was

further limited by a high-risk pregnancy that forced her to work from home. With CWJC's support, Maria was able to get an online tutor and specialized study software that allowed her to work from home and still pursue her GED. Even though Maria's situation didn't allow her to spend time at the CWJC site, its staff checked on her regularly to help her stay on track with her goals and to feel encouraged.

Overcoming an overwhelming lack of confidence is another common obstacle women face as they work to complete their high school education. Some, like a bright young woman named "Denise," have tried other GED programs and failed to finish them simply because they didn't think they were capable of passing the exam.

When Denise came to CWJC, she had never even attempted a GED practice test because she thought she'd never be able to pass it. When a new client comes to CWJC, baseline testing is given during the

initial orientation process, which helps CWJC staffers understand how to provide the appropriate kind of help for each student. Denise immediately proved that it wasn't her ability holding her back, but her lack of confidence. She passed all four practice tests inside of a week and is now on her way to finalizing her GED.

Many CWJC alumnae are so deeply affected by their experience that they stay in contact after completing the program. "Ruby" finished the program within six weeks and is now in college, but she still gives regular reports on how she is doing. As an alum, Ruby still has access to ongoing support. Not only has she asked for help with math tutoring, CWJC has made networking connections to help her get an apprenticeship in welding.



# Power Through Partnership

United Way of Waco-McLennan County's network of nonprofits support the community in four Areas of Impact

**This diverse list** of local service agencies supported by United Way of Waco-McLennan County underscores the idea that our purpose is to function as a giant "supertanker." A supertanker is a massive vessel built for the task of providing fuel to scores of smaller vessels, thereby making it possible for them to carry out their own specialized missions. With the United Way

leveraging its resources to maximize funding, designated service agencies are able to put their energy into doing what they do best: directly meeting the needs of the people who live in our community. Dividing these agencies into four Areas of Impact helps ensure that our neighbors' most basic needs—financial stability, good health, food and shelter, and education—are being addressed by the organizations that are best suited to meet them.



## Financial Stability

Focuses on individuals' financial resiliency and workforce development.

Christian Women's Job Corps of McLennan County  
Community Loan Center of the Heart of Texas  
Grassroots Community Development  
Greater Waco Legal Services  
Heart of Texas Goodwill Industries, Inc.  
NeighborWorks Waco  
Waco Habitat for Humanity

## Health

Increases awareness and availability of healthcare services reaching underserved communities.

Ascension Providence Foundation  
Baylor Scott & White Central Texas Foundation  
Community Doulas of Waco  
Greater Waco Sports Commission  
Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network  
La Puerta  
Waco Family Medicine

## Safety Net Services

Supports essential services and emergency interventions.

Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children  
American Gateways  
American Red Cross – Heart of Texas Chapter  
Caritas of Waco  
CASA of McLennan County  
Central Texas Youth Services Bureau  
Community Cancer Association  
Compassion Waco  
Family Abuse Center  
Foster Village Waco  
Friends for Life  
Isaiah 117 House  
Lovely Village  
McLennan County Pack of Hope  
Meals on Wheels Waco  
Mission Waco Mission World  
The Salvation Army Waco  
Waco Shepherd's Heart

## Education

Provides supportive classes and groups for caregivers, family connectivity to local schools, and equitable access to educational opportunities.

Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children  
Art Center Waco  
Care Net Pregnancy Center of Central Texas  
Communities in Schools of the Heart of Texas  
Family Abuse Center  
Girl Scouts of Central Texas  
Greater Waco Legal Services  
Greater Waco YMCA  
Inspiración  
Mentoring Alliance  
STARRY, Inc.  
Talitha Koum Institute  
The Arc of McLennan County  
The Cove, Heart of Texas  
Transformation Waco  
VOICE Inc.  
Youth Connection Inc.

# Measuring Impact by the Numbers

Breaking down funded partner data points from the 2022–23 grant cycle

**Every year, more than 22,500** McLennan County residents are helped by United Way-funded programs. When we analyze statistics like this, it's easy to forget that behind each one of those data points is a real person with a story: a single mom struggling to provide for her children, an unemployed elderly man worried about feeding his grandchildren, an at-risk high school senior straining to meet the demands of school and a part-time job. When you consider that the assistance given to each of these individuals may indirectly help three or four other people (or more), the scope of impact is staggering. It's not unreasonable to think that a single instance of providing help could positively impact a person's family for many generations to come.

## Last grant cycle, United Way funded service agencies along four distinct Areas of Impact:

**Safety Net** (provided by 10 funded programs)  
**16,575** individuals experiencing family crisis and domestic violence had access to shelter, counseling, legal advice, and basic needs

**Health** (provided by 9 funded programs)  
**5,478** adults, pregnant women, and children received medical care, mental health services, and prenatal care

**Education** (provided by 5 funded programs)  
**468** children participated in free, year-round educational opportunities

**Financial Stability** (provided by 4 funded programs)  
**240** individuals gained new job skills, earned their GED, and improved their financial literacy

Real People. Real Stories.

## PROOF THAT IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Caritas of Waco

**"LaShayla" is a strong, independent mother** of three adult children who came to Caritas seeking assistance in obtaining her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credentials as part of the case management program. Driven and determined to achieve her goals, LaShayla poured herself into meeting the responsibilities that came with the program. She attended financial literacy classes offered by Caritas and completed the McLennan Community College

CNA program requirements. She is currently employed full time in the healthcare field while she works toward her Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) certification. With the help she's received in reaching her career goals, LaShayla now stands poised to help her neighbors lead healthier lives.



## Key Players (cont. from p. 4)

### Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

**Harry Harelik, Board Chair** *Community Volunteer*  
**Susan Copeland, Secretary** *McLennan Community College*  
**Dr. Kerry Burkley, Board Member** *Greater Ebenezer Baptist Church of Waco*  
**Bill Pitts, Board Member** *Community Volunteer*  
**Tom Newsom, Board Member** *Retired/Baylor University Community Volunteer*  
**RoseMary Mayes Rafuse, Board Member** *Community Volunteer*  
**Brooke Swate, Board Member** *Catholic Charities of Central Texas*  
**Paula Solano, Board Member** *La Hacienda*  
**John Vorderkunz, Board Member** *Heart of Texas Council of Governments*  
**Nicole Wiscombe, Board Member** *Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network*  
**Jennifer Young, Board Member** *American Red Cross*

### Greater Waco United Fund Foundation (GWUFF)

**Tammy Richards, President** *Extraco Banks, Waco*  
**J.T. Carpenter, Vice President** *Texas Farm Bureau*  
**John Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer** *Brazos Higher Education Service Corporation*  
**Bill Clifton, Board Member** *The Clifton Foundation*  
**Malcolm Duncan, Board Member** *Retired/Former Mayor of Waco*  
**Andrew Pick, Board Member** *Caterpillar*  
**Brian Remson, Board Member** *Credent Wealth Management*  
**Scott Rogers, Board Member** *Alliance Bank Central Texas*





# Making Sure the Children Are Well

In 2021, United Way of Waco-McLennan County released a 44-page report, *Are the Children Well?*, intended to gauge local children's well-being. Responding to the report's findings, partners of the McLennan County Child Well-being Movement worked with residents to develop the *McLennan County Child Well-being Community Action Plan* in 2022. It designated workgroups made up of local service agencies, and those groups are now actively seeking to identify and promote resources to ensure that the residents who need them know where to turn. The plan also takes a two-generation approach: while the focus is on children, programs and services that help their parents are also given special attention.

Grant funding spearheaded by the Episcopal Health Foundation has helped to make this important work possible.

**Watch a video**  
*The Child Well-being Movement*

Workgroups created from the *McLennan County Child Well-being Community Action Plan* address five areas of focus:

- ◆ Ensure Access to High-Quality Childcare and Educational Opportunities
- ◆ Meet the Basic Needs of Children and Families
- ◆ Increase Access to Resources
- ◆ Create More Connectedness & Address the Racial Divide
- ◆ Take Action

## Partners of the McLennan County Child Well-being Movement

### Primary Partners

Advocacy Center for Crime Victims & Children  
 American Gateways  
 Baylor Center for Developmental Disabilities  
 Baylor University Office of External Affairs  
 Care Net Pregnancy Center of Central Texas  
 Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce  
 Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
 Christian Women's Job Corps of McLennan County  
 City of Waco  
 Communities In Schools of the Heart of Texas  
 Community Doulas of Waco  
 Compleo Physical Therapy & Wellness  
 Cooper Foundation  
 EOAC Head Start & Early Head Start  
 Education Service Center Region 12  
 Esther's Closet  
 Families & Foster Care Coalition  
 H.O.P.E.S. Waco  
 Friends for Life  
 Grassroots Community Development  
 Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce  
 Greater Waco Legal Services  
 Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network  
 Heart of Texas Goodwill Industries  
 HighView Insurance Group  
 Hispanic Leaders Network

Inspiracion Waco  
 Junior League of Waco  
 La Puerta Waco  
 Magnolia  
 McLennan Community College  
 McLennan County  
 McLennan County Diaper Collective  
 Mission Waco Mission World Inc.  
 Nurse Family Partnership Waco  
 Primrose School of Waco at Woodway  
 Prosper Waco  
 Saint Francis Ministries  
 Saint Paul's Episcopal School  
 STARRY, Inc.  
 Talitha Koum Institute  
 The Cove - Heart of Texas, Inc.  
 Together For Good  
 Transformation Waco  
 Texas State Technical College  
 Velocity Clinical Research  
 VOICE, Inc.  
 Waco Family Medicine  
 Waco Independent School District  
 Waco-McLennan County Public Health District  
 Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas  
 YMCA of Central Texas  
 2-1-1 Heart of Texas Council of Governments

This list is growing every day, and if you'd like to join the movement, please contact us to find out where you can contribute your resources and expertise to make the greatest impact.

# The "Invisible" Struggle

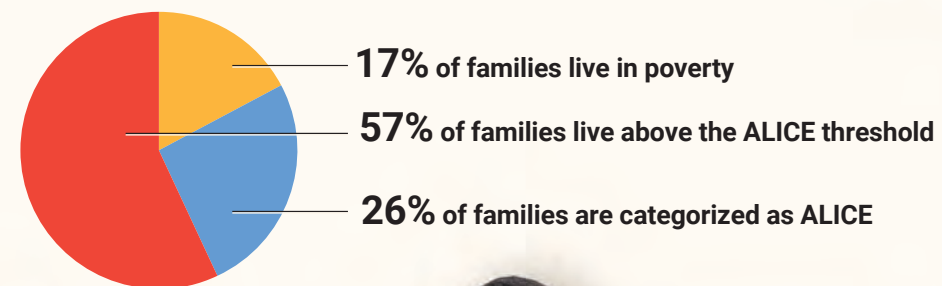
Data reveals increasing numbers of hardworking Central Texas families straining to meet basic needs

It is often assumed that people who struggle to provide for their families are either underemployed or not employed at all. In fact, McLennan County has a significant number of residents who, despite being both hardworking and employed full-time, still find it difficult to meet their families' basic needs. United Way recognizes these individuals as "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed" (ALICE).

Scan for more ALICE data:



In McLennan County:



Real People. Real Stories.

## A PLACE TO CALL THEIR OWN

Grassroots Community Development

"Allyson" moved to the community eight years ago and decided at the beginning of 2020 she was ready to officially claim Waco as home for herself and her boys. Having made that decision, she also decided it was time to take a leap of faith into homeownership. Allyson enrolled in Grassroots Community Development's (GCD) financial literacy and homebuyer program, where she began taking financial literacy classes and going to homebuyer coaching sessions. She even started picking out house colors and designs.

Then the unexpected happened. The COVID pandemic began, followed closely by the winter storm of 2021, which disrupted things even more. Everything was put on hold. Allyson was discouraged, but she never gave up on her dream.

"I kept my faith high and prayed my way through," Allyson said. "(GCD coach) Mr. Darrell was also there to encourage me to trust the process and not give up."

It is encouraging to witness the success of determined clients like Allyson who don't give up on their dreams of becoming homeowners. Allyson completed her education and counseling sessions and moved into her new house with her sons, fulfilling her longtime dream of making Waco her family's permanent home.





Real People. Real Stories.

## A POSITIVE INFLUENCE

H.O.P.E.S. Program

**You never know** when the change effected in one person's life is going to positively influence the lives of others.

"Sandra," a H.O.P.E.S. program participant, was shopping one day with her young son, "Ian." When it was time to leave, Ian started getting upset. Worried that he would make a scene in the middle of the store, Sandra felt her pulse quicken. But she then remembered some of the discipline and parenting tips she picked up as a participant in the H.O.P.E.S. program. Sandra recalled that children often feed

off their parents' behavior and mirror their reactions and responses. Instead of raising her voice or responding negatively, she spoke to Ian calmly until he, in turn, calmed down. Sandra wasn't aware that another mom was standing nearby, quietly observing the whole thing. She came over to Sandra and told her how impressed she was with how she handled the situation, noting that she had been skeptical that it would work. This opened up the opportunity for Sandra to give the other mom encouragement and share some of the tips that had shaped her parenting skills. As she left, Sandra proudly told her, "it really works!"

## It All Adds Up to Success

Thanks to these businesses and the generosity of their employees, United Way's Workplace Campaign has funded \$1 million during this grant cycle

A special "thank you" to our top three campaigns

### Texas Farm Bureau • Caterpillar H-E-B Food Stores

#### Other Workplace Campaign Contributors for 2022-2023

AAA Life Insurance Company  
AbbVie  
Achievers LLC  
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children  
Alliance Bank Central Texas  
Allstate Insurance Co.  
Ameren Missouri  
American Amicable Life Insurance Company of Texas  
American Bank, N.A.  
American Income Life Ins. Co.  
Aqua America, Inc.  
AT&T  
Atmos Energy  
Bailey Insurance & Risk Management, Inc.  
Baylor Scott & White Hillcrest Medical Center  
Baylor University  
Blue Cross Blue Shield Service Center  
Brazos Higher Education Service Corporation, Inc.  
Brazos River Authority  
Cadence Bank  
Cargill  
Caritas of Waco  
Central National Bank  
City of Waco  
Community Bank & Trust  
CSI-Computer Services, Inc.  
Dillard's

Do It Best Corp.  
DuPuy Oxygen & Supply Co.  
Economic Opportunity Advancement Corp.  
Education Service Center Region 12  
Eli Lilly & Co  
Energy Future Holdings Corporation  
Enterprise Rent A Car  
Expedia Cruises  
Extraco Banks, Waco  
Exxon Mobil/Pipeline  
Family Abuse Center  
FedEx Corporation  
First Guaranty Bank  
Fluor  
Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce  
Heart O' Texas Fair & Rodeo  
HOLT CAT Waco  
HOT Council of Governments  
IBM - International Business Machines  
Insurors Indemnity Companies  
Insurors of Texas General Agency Ltd.  
JC Penney Company, Inc. #2021  
Kendra Scott  
L3Harris Technologies, Inc.  
Lincoln National Corporation  
Lutron  
M. Lipsitz and Company, LTD.  
Manpower Group  
Masonic Lodge (Baylor) No. 1235  
McLennan Community College

#### Workplace Campaign Contributors 2022-2023

McLennan County  
Midway ISD  
Naval Nuclear Laboratory  
NOV  
Oncor Electric Delivery  
OneAmerica Financial Partners, Inc.  
Owens-Illinois Glass Containers  
O'Reilly Auto Parts  
Packaging Corporation of America  
Pattillo, Brown & Hill, LLP  
Paychex, Inc.  
Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company  
PNC Financial Services Group  
Principal Financial Group  
QuikTrip  
Ricoh  
Sanderson Farms  
Southwest Business Corporation  
Southwest Research Institute  
Sturdisteel Company  
Target Greatland Store # 1531  
Texas A&M Forest Service  
Texas Life Insurance Company  
Texas New Mexico Power Co.  
The Arc of McLennan County  
The First National Bank of Central Texas  
Theis Distributing Company  
TransTech Fabrication, LLC  
Union Pacific  
UnitedHealth Group  
United Way of Southeast Louisiana  
United Way of Waco-McLennan County  
United Way Worldwide  
University of Texas at Austin  
Waco Housing Authority  
Waco Independent School District  
Wal-Mart Stores  
Walker Information, Inc.  
Washington Federal Bank, NA  
Wells Fargo  
Wilsonart / ITW - Illinois Tool Works  
Zachry Group  
Zurn Elkay



Real People. Real Stories.

## FINDING A SAFE HAVEN AFTER THE FINAL BELL

The Arc of McLennan County



**When it comes to after-school care,** parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities face a unique challenge. Due to the specialized care their children may require, traditional daycare settings are often out of the question.

The Arc of McLennan County is meeting that need, offering a dynamic after-school program from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. each school day.

Youngsters like "Colin" are thriving in the program. There is a daily routine from the time Colin is picked up at his school until the time he is picked up by his parents. Colin understands the routine and follows it. His parents are able to work full-time jobs, confident in knowing that their son is in a safe, adaptive environment where people truly care about him.

[Watch a video](#) Everyone Belongs





# Recognizing the Power of Giving

Ask most people what a “typical” donor to a charitable organization looks like, and they may conjure up the image of a wealthy individual who has no personal experience with the organization’s services. We’re proud to say that our donors reflect every corner of our community, and we’re even more proud of the number of our supporters whose lives have been directly impacted by services that are funded by United Way. United Way of Waco-McLennan County thrives on the selfless contributions (not to mention the volunteer service hours) of hundreds of ordinary people. **We’re pleased to recognize the donors listed below for their generous contributions of \$500 or more as well as our many anonymous benefactors. We thank you!**



Ms. Cleopatra L. Allen  
Louis Alvarado  
Eric Alvarez  
Bobbie Charles Amos  
Suzanne and Paul Baldon  
Ms. Alicia Baxter  
Mr. Matthew Bell  
Mark Benning  
Stephen and Christy Benson  
Charles Benton  
Richard N Bradley III  
Lawrence Brooks  
Mr. Cody M. Brown  
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Mr. David Coody

Edgar and Lety Coronado  
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Hunter James Davis  
Ms. Martha Delgado  
Blake Landon Denman  
Mr. Charles D. Dennard  
Trinity Tyler Dial  
Bobby Dillard, Jr.  
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Zachery Doering  
Christopher Tyler Donaldson  
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The Honorable Scott M. Felton  
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Staci Gerick  
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Dr. Richard Gochis  
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Ms. Leslie Hicks  
Becky & Doug Hill  
Fred and Barbara Hills  
Mr. Dean A. Hoepfinger  
Mrs. Mary R. Holley  
Mrs. Melissa Dorsch  
Mr. John Hubbard  
Steven Hubbard  
Mr. David Iler  
Ms. Holly Ivy  
Mr. Mark W. Johnson  
Patti Johnson  
Triston Johnson  
Mrs. Marlene Johnston  
Ms. Jill King  
Susan Menninger Krause  
Mr. Steven Michael Kresta  
Charlene Michelle Laktash

Shannon Landolt  
Deon Landrum  
Missy Larson  
Mr. Randall Larson  
Jeff Levin  
Mr. Melvin Lipsitz  
Dr. Linda Livingstone  
Ms. Holly Lockhart  
Mr. Guy Clayton Loper  
Andrew Lopez  
Edward Love  
Ms. Jennifer Manning  
Luke James Markham  
Mr. Timothy Marusak  
Eric J. Mateos  
Ms. April M. Matos  
Ms. Connie Matthews  
Alexander F. McNeil  
Amanda R. Merriam  
Mr. Gary H. Miller  
Homer A. Milliken  
Dr. Mia Moody-Ramirez  
Brooke and Tanner Moore  
Mr. Todd T. Moore  
Mr. Bradley M. Moseley  
Ms. Catherine Elizabeth Muehlenbein  
David Myers  
Earl Leroy Nelson II  
Mr. Joseph W. Nesbitt  
Mr. William A. Nesbitt  
Ramin Nosrat  
Mary K. Owen  
Mr. & Mrs. Marshall Owen  
Ms. Patricia Pack  
Tracy Pas  
Rhonda Patton  
Mr. Tom Pearson  
James Perkins  
Mr. Taylor M. Peterson  
Carmen Pratt  
Mr. Brian Quinn  
Christina Rains  
Charles Ramirez  
Mrs. LaTanya D. Rector  
Sarah Elizabeth Reed  
Lexy & Joshua Reil

Mrs. Caitlyn E. Remson  
Mr. Justin Rice  
Brandon & Tammy Richards  
Kenneth Edwin Ricketts  
Mrs. Molly M. Rieger  
John D. Roder  
Ms. Dawn Rogers  
Karen Ruiz  
Veronica Russell  
Miguel Salazar  
Eder J. Sanchez-Martinez  
William Jason Sanders  
Eric and Michelle Shero  
Christopher Smith  
Mr. Matt S. Smith  
Blair Snyder  
Mr. Levell Spencer  
Melvon Karl Stephenson  
Martha Stuhr  
Paul & Linda Taft  
Mr. Brandon Tate  
Mrs. Lillie K. Taylor  
Amber Tellez  
Mr. Monte D. Tidwell  
Jazzmine Torres  
Heather M. Travers  
Sophia Anne Tullos  
Dr. Elizabeth Blevins Turnage  
Ms. Abigail Umhoefer  
Mr. Jeremy A. Vickers  
Michael Viereggs  
Mr. Christopher K. Watkins  
Jamie Waugh  
Mr. Hal Whitaker  
Jimmy Wright  
Ashley Young  
Jordan Young

Real People. Real Stories.

## SOMETIMES ALL IT TAKES IS LOTS OF LOVE AND A LITTLE TIME

### Mentoring Alliance

“Riley” is a bright young girl who has been a Mentoring Alliance participant since 2022. When she first entered the program, she was angry at everyone and picked at other students whenever she had the chance. Underneath all of the anger was a girl who just wanted to be loved and listened to. Throughout the year, Mentoring Alliance counselors worked with her, and for every negative thing she did, they spoke something positive to counter the lies she believed about herself. The tough skin and rude words had been developed in an environment where everyone talked behind each other’s backs and looked out for themselves. As time went on, the protective walls Riley had put up gradually crumbled. At the Alliance’s annual Trunk or Treat, she cried when she saw one of her counselors from the previous year. Looking for reassurance that the love and support she got from her Mentoring Alliance counselors was genuine, Riley would often ask the same question over and over:

“Y’all care?”

“Yeah, we do,” was the answer she got every time she asked.



Recently, Riley was in the game room with her mentoring group, and she called one of the other children “dumb.” The counselor gently took her aside and talked with Riley about the importance of words and the impact they can have on other people. Throughout her life, Riley had been called dumb, so it was deeply ingrained in her nature to say the same thing about others.

A short time after their conversation, Riley looked at her counselor and said, “I’m gonna apologize.”

She walked over to the student she had insulted and said, “I’m sorry.” The boy unconditionally accepted her apology and quickly forgot what had happened.

“Thank you,” he said. “You wanna play Jeopardy now?”

Students like Riley are proof that a lot of love and a little bit of time can really make a difference.

## Key Players (cont. from p. 7)

### 100th Anniversary Committee Members

Wendy Ellis *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*  
Karen Brown *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*  
Haley O’Connell *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*  
Allen Holt *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*  
Lorena Ortiz *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*  
RoseMary Mayes Rafuse *Community Volunteer*  
Betty Bauer *Community Volunteer*  
Tammy Richards *Extraco Banks, Waco*  
Tammie Bowman *Atmos Energy*  
Paula Solano *La Hacienda*  
Diane Deaver *Community Volunteer*  
J.T. Carpenter *Texas Farm Bureau*  
Nelwyn Reagan *Community Volunteer*

### Community Impact and Engagement Committee

Paula Solano, **Chair** *La Hacienda*  
Brandon Guerra, **Member** *HOLT CAT, Waco*  
Diego Genera, **Member** *Envases*  
Edward Love, **Member** *Waco Independent School District*  
Geoffrey Nelson, **Member** *Karen Purvis Institute of Child Development at TCU*  
Elaine Botello, **Member** *Hispanic Leaders Network*  
Galen Price, **Member** *City of Waco*  
Libby Cain, **Member** *Extraco Banks, Waco*  
Haley O’Connell, **Liaison** *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*

### Finance and Investment Committee

Reagan Fitz-Gerald, **Chair** *Pattillo, Brown & Hill, LLP*  
Deidra Emerson, **Member** *City of Waco*  
Orlando Rodriguez, **Member** *First Central Credit Union*  
Tracy Guillory, **Member** *McLennan County - Precinct 2*  
Karen Brown, **Liaison** *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*

### Resource Development Committee

Tammie Bowman, **Chair** *Atmos Energy*  
Betty Bauer, **Member** *Community Volunteer*  
J.T. Carpenter, **Member** *Texas Farm Bureau*  
Tammy Richards, **Member** *Extraco Banks, Waco*  
Dr. Kristina Campos-Davis, **Member** *Baylor University*  
Shane Turner, **Member** *Turner Brothers Real Estate*  
Allen Holt, **Liaison** *United Way of Waco-McLennan County*

### Governance Committee

Hector Sabido, **Chair** *Prophecy Media Group*  
Betty Bauer, **Member** *Community Volunteer*  
Deidra Emerson, **Member** *City of Waco*  
Edward Love, **Member** *Waco Independent School District*  
Dr. Frank Graves, **Member** *McLennan Community College*  
J.T. Carpenter, **Member** *Texas Farm Bureau*  
Tammy Richards, **Member** *Extraco Banks, Waco*

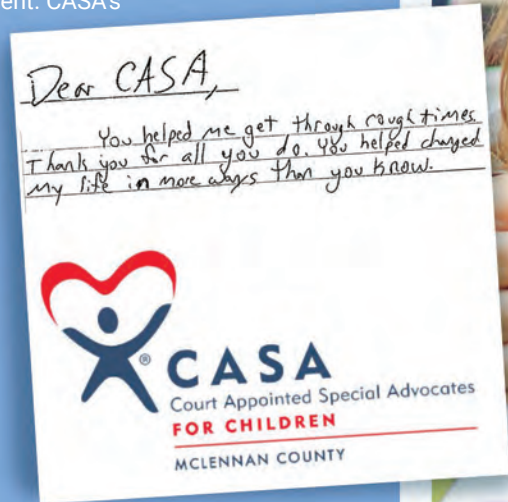


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## TOGETHER AGAIN

CASA of McLennan County Court-Appointed Special Advocates

“Caty” entered foster care at a young age and was later adopted by her aunt and uncle. However, after some time they were no longer willing to care for her, and Caty returned to foster care. In 2022, CASA was assigned to advocate for Caty’s best interests and provide her with much-needed support. After several placement changes, Caty finally found a foster home where she received the care and guidance she needed. Although she struggled with behavioral issues, her bond with her foster mother was strong. Unfortunately, her foster mother decided against adoption, but she allowed Caty to stay until a permanent home was found. After careful consideration, CASA, Caty’s attorney ad litem and her caseworker selected a family. The family included a brother who Caty quickly formed a relationship with, and this became the start of her “forever family.” Caty’s behavior improved, and she radiated happiness. In August 2024, she was officially adopted, bringing tears of joy to everyone present. CASA’s crucial role in advocating for Caty and helping her find a loving home highlights the importance of every child having a supportive and caring family, whether biological or chosen.



# Making “HOT” Connections!

2024 marked the launch of United Way of Waco-McLennan County’s HOTSpot and HOT Huddle, which are designed to draw on the power of the local United Way network and fill gaps where needs aren’t being adequately met.

## HOTSpot

United Way of Waco-McLennan County has developed a method for social service agencies to connect and access resources with an online bulletin board called the “HOTSpot.” Designed to address the challenges of locating timely or difficult-to-find resources for individuals in need, HOTSpot will serve as a collaborative platform for nonprofit agencies, schools, government organizations, the faith community, and healthcare agencies. In the Fall of 2024 this program moved from beta testing to full operation due to its success.

One of the benefits of HOTSpot is that it will help streamline resource allocation by preventing duplication of services and reducing the time required to locate resources. It will enable agencies to find resources or services while accessing information that may not be readily available through other channels.

Participating organizations can utilize HOTSpot to post announcements, share information about new programs or events benefiting the community, and request assistance for clients’ basic needs. Subscribers will have access to donated equipment, computers, office supplies,

Within the first month of the launch we had **85 members** representing **40 organizations**  
We now have **118 members** representing **55 organizations** (and counting...)



and furniture made available by various corporations. Additionally, groups can offer training opportunities, forums and seminars relevant to HOTSpot subscribers.

### How it works:

1. A participant sends a request to United Way.
2. The HOTSpot Administrator is notified that a request has been submitted for approval.
3. The administrator approves or rejects the posting.
4. If approved, the participant and all subscribers receive the posting in their email inbox.
5. To respond to a single posting, users click “reply” on the email posting they received, and it automatically replies to the sender only.
6. To respond to a posting within the weekly digest email, users compose a new email message to the appropriate contact listed for that posting.
7. Users can manage subscriptions or access archived messages by clicking on the link at the bottom of any HOTSpot email they’ve received to view options and prior messages.

## HOT Huddle

While the HOTSpot serves as a virtual meeting place for local service agencies, the HOT Huddle is an in-person event that helps to strengthen inter-agency collaboration. HOT Huddle is a semi-annual gathering for staff of United Way-designated agencies to collaborate, learn from one another, share community announcements, and strengthen partnerships.

On average, **30 agencies** attend Huddle gatherings.

Watch a video  
Our Community Voice



If you’d like your organization to be part of the HOTSpot network, contact us today:





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## THE POWER OF ATTORNEYS

Greater Waco Legal Services

**Distraught and grieving,** “Joan” walked through the double-glass doors of Greater Waco Legal Services (GWLS). Her husband had died unexpectedly, leaving her overwhelmed by the requirements of settling his estate. A GWLS attorney stepped alongside Joan and provided representation during the probate process. Taking this burden off Joan’s shoulders gave her the additional space she needed to grieve, recover, and simply rest. Each time Joan came to the GWLS office, she became emotional as she thanked every staffer she could for helping her. After completing the probate process, Joan continued to be a GWLS client through their Will and Estate Planning services. Not only will Joan now be able to benefit from her husband’s estate, she’ll also be able to pass it down to their children, keeping their hard-earned property in the family and building generational wealth.



## Above and Beyond

The passion we have for serving our community isn’t limited to the work we do through the United Way of Waco-McLennan County. When we’re not here in the office or participating in a local United Way event, our staff members can be found lending their time and energy to many of the following service-driven community projects and organizations.

### Coalitions

- ◆ Early Matters Texas
- ◆ Families and Foster Care Coalition
- ◆ Healthy Women & Children Coalition
- ◆ City of Waco Neighborhood Revitalization Taskforce
- ◆ Alliance for Safe Children
- ◆ Greater Waco Chamber Education to Workforce Leadership Committee
- ◆ United Ways of Texas Public Policy Taskforce
- ◆ Waco Leadership Forum

### Boards

- ◆ Heart of Texas Goodwill Industries
- ◆ Greater Waco Chamber - Waco Young Professionals
- ◆ Early Education Apprenticeship Advisory Board
- ◆ WISD Parents as Teachers Advisory Board (2023)

### Volunteer Work

- ◆ Hispanic Leaders Network
- ◆ Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service 4-H Youth Development
- ◆ Heart O’ Texas Fair & Rodeo Committee

### Memberships

- ◆ Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Heart of Texas SHRM
- ◆ Association of Fundraising Professionals

## Meet the Team

United Way of Waco-McLennan County Staff



**Wendy Ellis**  
CEO



**Karen Brown**  
Senior Director of Finance and Administration



**Haley O’Connell**  
Director of Impact & Engagement



**Allen Holt**  
Director of Resource Development



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## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Mission Waco Mission World

There is a common perception that everyone who is homeless is in that situation because of bad personal decisions. All too frequently, ordinary people find themselves standing on the brink of homelessness as the result of extraordinary circumstances.



“Richard,” who is disabled, came to Mission Waco in the spring of 2022. His wife had just passed away from COVID complications. Richard was able to get a temporary voucher for housing while case management worked with him to obtain his disability status. He stayed in Mission Waco’s My Brother’s Keeper shelter for five weeks, but with their help, he eventually moved into an apartment of his own and is doing well.



Increasingly, the homeless population is made up of young people like “Lynn,” a victim of human trafficking. Lynn spent a little more than two weeks in Mission Waco’s shelter. Through a combination of wraparound services and collaboration with two other agencies, Lynn was able escape life on the street and get into a permanent safe haven in another part of the state.



## Want to See Positive Change? Join the Club.

Our new Second Century Club offers businesses and individuals unique giving opportunities

Embarking on our second century of service, United Way of Waco-McLennan County has launched the Second Century Club. This exclusive giving society honors the achievements of our first 100 years while igniting excitement for the incredible potential of the next century.

The Second Century Club invites businesses and individuals to join us in making a lasting impact. Our goals include encouraging 200 new businesses to contribute at least \$2,000 annually, with an emphasis on obtaining a three to five-year commitment, ideal for smaller companies or those not holding a campaign. Additionally, we encourage individuals to pledge a minimum of \$200 annually with a similar long-

term commitment. For larger companies, the target is to have at least 100 employees each contribute \$200 per year. Membership in the Second Century Club offers unique benefits and annual renewal opportunities, and it embodies the United Way philosophy of working toward the collective good to make our community stronger and ensure a brighter future for everyone.



# Leading into the Next CENTURY

What you can do to help ensure our Heart of Texas neighbors continue to thrive

One thing is certain about United Way of Waco-McLennan County. It has now been a part of our community for so long that no one remembers a time when it didn't exist.

While that kind of longevity is to be celebrated, we can't take for granted that it will go on serving our community indefinitely. If that's going to happen, it's up to us to make sure of it.

Two ways you can have a lasting impact:

### VOLUNTEER

You don't have to give hours upon hours of your time to make a difference. The United Way network relies on the help of hundreds of volunteers from every walk of life who give their time as they are able. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit our website or give us a call.

[unitedwaywaco.org](http://unitedwaywaco.org)  
254.752.2753

### GIVE

Your gift—large or small—can positively change the course of a single life, an entire family, and sometimes a whole community. To donate now, scan the QR code below. You can also call to discuss donor options.

[unitedwaywaco.org/give](http://unitedwaywaco.org/give)  
254.752.2753



During its first 100 years, United Way of Waco-McLennan County has supported local nonprofits with more than \$100 million in funds.





## A Legacy of Leadership

United Way of Waco-McLennan County owes its many years of service to a long succession of dedicated leaders going back to 1923. Pictured here are past board members (upper left) and current board members (front), who are ready to lead our community into the next century.

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United Way of  
Waco-McLennan County

