



United Way of Harrisonburg
and Rockingham County

Our Why

Everyone deserves opportunities to succeed

Our Goals (what)

Advance Equity

“Equity is the intentional inclusion of everyone in society. Equity is achieved when systemic, institutional, and historical barriers based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities are dismantled and no longer predict socioeconomic, education, and health outcomes.” (UWW Equity Framework)

So what do we do about it? Well, let’s start by stating the obvious: United Way cannot and will not do this alone. We have incredible leaders and organizations in our community that have been working toward justice for many years and we hope that our work will come alongside their longstanding commitment as well as elevate the voices of people who are most directly impacted by systemic injustice.

Equity isn’t a program. This can’t be said enough. We are committed to using the framework established by United Way Worldwide to ensure that equity is a part of all of our work.

Specific Equity Goals:

1. Reach and impact more diverse ALICE households
2. Working with both board, staff and external stakeholders, develop a clear action plan for our internal and external operations to ensure a solid foundation of equity in all that we do.
3. Support our funded community partners in conducting an equity audit

Move ALICE from Crisis → Survival → Sustainability

We’ve been working with the ALICE Report since 2017 and it continues to drive all of our work – from collection drives to advocacy to grant investments, it’s all focused on ALICE. We approach our work from several angles, knowing that we have to simultaneously address the immediate needs and systemic issues.

In focusing on the short-term, we invest in local, direct service organizations that serve people living at or below the ALICE Threshold. We believe that the best way to support this work is through unrestricted grant dollars. We work alongside our partners to ensure both accountability and flexibility. Building trusted relationships with our community partners is an important part of our work, and this is one of the ways we do that.



United Way of Harrisonburg
and Rockingham County

Specific ALICE Goals:

1. Reach more ALICE Households through strategic investments in local nonprofit organizations (as measured by Unite Virginia)
2. To have the language of ALICE become a more common measure used by community partners in nonprofit, education, government, and business to define and understand the experience of individuals and families experiencing financial insecurity.

Convene Community

Bringing people together is what we do best. In fact, there is no other organization in our community that focuses on this in the same way that we do. We get to see firsthand the power of bringing leaders together to solve community issues. We do this through our ALICE Coalition as well as short-term gatherings of leaders that are all connected to a shared issue.

Specific Convening Goals

1. Foster deeper relationships and collaboration across all sectors – nonprofit, local government, education and business
2. United Way is described and seen as a community connector throughout Harrisonburg and Rockingham County



United Way of Harrisonburg
and Rockingham County

Our Strategy (How)

Data

We use data to tell the full story of our community – who is thriving, who is struggling, who is on the brink of financial crisis. We invest in tools that empower others to use data to drive programmatic and strategic decisions, such as Unite Virginia and the ALICE Report. We look at data through a number of lenses and disaggregate the data to look specifically at populations that might be disproportionately impacted by issues we work to address. This helps us and our partners make the most informed decisions when it comes to issues we work on together.

Intentional Connection

It's one thing to get a bunch of people in a room; it's another to establish a shared agenda and metaphorically row in the same direction toward a shared goal. We are always thinking about this. Further inspired by a recent read among our staff entitled *The Art of Gathering* by Priya Parker, we aim to connect people, organizations and needs in a way that is mutually beneficial and eventually leads to a scenario where $1 + 1 = 3$.

Advocacy

Human service work is vital to the health of our community, but it has limits. In fact, sometimes the systemic issues live at the legislative level and can be addressed more effectively by changes that only our local, state or federal government can enact. By working collectively with our ALICE Coalition and the Advocacy Committee of our Board, we identify areas where our collective voice can lead to measurable impact. We build and maintain meaningful relationships with our local and state elected officials to ensure consistent, two-way communication about issues that impact people living below the ALICE Threshold.

Strategic Investment

For more than sixty years, one strategy has remained the same for our United Way: invest in quality, local direct services and serve as a resource for donors who are looking to make a sound investment in the well-being of our community. We did this in 1957 and we still do it today. We've worked hard to ensure accountability, equity and trust in our process, making adjustments with each investment cycle to improve the process for all involved.



United Way of Harrisonburg
and Rockingham County

Our Values

Core Values

These are the few behavior traits that are inherent in an organization. Core values lie at the heart of the organization's identity, do not change over time, and must already exist. In other words, they cannot be contrived.¹

Collaboration

With a name like "United Way", it's safe to say that collaboration is in our DNA. We believe that as a community, we can accomplish more together than any one of us can on our own.

Shared Humanity

We are all human. There are so many things that make us unique, but our shared humanity is central to our work. Acknowledging this going into work with fellow community leaders reminds us that we all want what's best for our community, even if we approach it from different angles.

Aspirational Values

These are the characteristics that an organization wants to have, wishes it already had, and believes it must develop in order to maximize its success in its current market environment.

Equity

We aspire for equity to be a part of all that we do; that it would become second nature. We also acknowledge that one never fully "arrives" but must always be working on this.

Advocacy

We believe in elevating the voices of people most impacted by the issues we address and using our own voice to advocate for long-term, systemic change.

Permission to Play

These values are the minimum behavioral standards that are required in an organization.

Radical Candor

Radical Candor – caring personally while challenging directly – is guidance and feedback that's both kind and clear, specific and sincere. We practice this as a team to create a work environment that promotes growth, professional development and honesty.

Teamwork

Collaboration is not just a strategy, it is a core part of our culture. Modeling it internally allows us to lead it externally.

Transparency

Our work is no secret. Being good stewards of our funds means we have a responsibility to share how we invest them. It also means we are open about the data we use to inform decisions.

¹ *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business, p. 93-98*