

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood with numerous houses and trees. A vibrant rainbow is visible in the sky above the town. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent box on the left side containing text.

UNITED WAY OF BROOME COUNTY
**COMMUNITY COMMITMENT
PLAN 2019-2022**

Change Starts Here.

Our Mission:

To drive change that will have a positive impact on the critical needs of our community by strategically leveraging the collective resources of community partners.

BECOMING THE UNITED WAY OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS

Change starts here.

For over 100 years, United Way of Broome County has worked to improve lives by creating the opportunities people need to build a better future for themselves and their families. Throughout the years, we've made a real difference by supporting a variety of services, projects, and programs people turn to when they need help: assistance in finding shelter, a safe place to be after school, access to warm meals, and disaster relief in times of need.

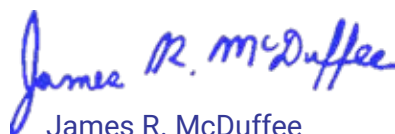
Times are changing and the challenges facing our community today are increasingly complex.

Meeting immediate needs and focusing on short-term solutions alone isn't enough. Today, people expect non-profits to be more innovative and deliver better results than ever before.

Our new Community Commitment Plan builds on a solid foundation laid over the past century and confirms our commitment to do more. It provides clarity of focus about our priorities and a renewed sense of purpose in how we approach our work. In many ways, this plan is a logical next step in an ongoing evolution towards maximizing our impact in the community we serve.

It's also a declaration. We will work to become innovative, more nimble, and better able to respond to emerging priorities. A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion will be embedded in everything we do, and we will challenge both our partners and ourselves to find new and better ways of working together. We will set clear objectives, base our strategies on solid research, and foster partnerships across all sectors to build momentum for change. We will work to ensure success and sustainability, and continue to build awareness and understanding of key issues facing our community. As we drive greater impact in our community, we will also make our own internal operations more efficient and effective.

Our new Community Commitment Plan will strengthen United Way of Broome County's capacity for making lasting, measurable improvements, in both individual well-being and in community-wide social conditions. Ultimately, our intent remains the same. We will continue to create the opportunities people need for a better future. We will continue to bring people together to build a stronger community - because we believe that no one organization can create a better future by working alone. We look forward to working with you as we take the next steps together on this journey.



James R. McDuffee

James R. McDuffee
2018-2020 Board President



LoriAnne Welch

LoriAnne Welch
Executive Director

Our Vision:

United Way of Broome County is enhancing quality of life in the community by revitalizing collaboration, inspiring giving, and unifying efforts and resources to drive social change through health, education, and financial stability.



What We Do:

Like all United Ways across the globe, we focus our efforts on three main building blocks and life's essentials that are fundamental for our community to thrive:

Building Blocks & Basic Needs

Health - A stronger community is built by promoting healthy eating and physical activity, expanding access to quality healthcare, and fostering healthy environments and relationships.

Education - Every child, regardless of race or income, deserves a high-quality education and the opportunity to learn and achieve their full potential.

Financial Stability - All residents should have the opportunity to prosper economically through pathways to attaining better employment, increasing income and financial literacy, and building savings and assets.

Basic Needs - Individuals and families in our community should have access to life's essentials: food, shelter, and safety as a foundation for a quality life.



How We'll Do It:

Our Community Commitment Plan is geared to achieving lasting, measurable outcomes in the areas of health, education, and financial stability of individuals and families in our community. We will increase our ability to deliver impact in the community by focusing on three organizational priorities:

Revitalize Collaboration - We will take action to increase and encourage ourselves and our partners to find new and innovative ways of creating impact in our community through enhanced funding opportunities.

Inspire Giving - We will focus on ensuring the sustainable growth of fund development, partnerships, impactful community projects and programs, and volunteer and engagement resources.

Unify Efforts and Resources - We will build our internal capacity to connect individuals with up-to-date community data, collaborate with field experts to provide training and development to community based organizations, and commit to a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Our Guiding Principles:

Respect

We recognize each individual's time, work, knowledge, and commitment to our organization.

We embrace an inclusive, diverse, and culturally competent community.

We always assume positive intent and strive for self-awareness.

Transparency

We hold ourselves and each other accountable.

We offer positive and constructive feedback.

We are a culture of integrity that stands with and supports one another.

Communication

We are open-minded and practice active listening.

We recognize continuous, open communication as an essential part of trust and understanding.

We encourage individuality and celebrate our team in moving our mission forward.

Revitalize Collaboration

BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY BY WORKING TOGETHER

SUPPORT:

Based on community feedback, we will implement and invest in supportive service initiatives to broaden the capacity of community based organizations, so they can best leverage funding to address the most critical needs of the community.

ENGAGEMENT:

Driving an impact approach requires that we become more purposeful, deliberate, and strategic in all that we do as an organization. By fostering deep connections, we will drive awareness of community needs and engage the organizations whose work and mission address those needs. We will generate new partnerships and enhance existing collaborations.

ADVOCACY:

Many of the issues that contribute to social problems and community vulnerability are systemic, meaning they involve broad economic, social, and societal trends. We will work to improve the public's understanding of our role and the role of community based organizations in resolving these issues and we will seek to engage with others in common cause.





Inspire Giving

GROWING OUR SUPPORT SO WE CAN GROW OUR IMPACT

INVESTMENT:

We will continue to invest donor dollars in smart strategies and impactful projects and programs that make a real difference in people's lives. To support long-term, measurable progress of our strategic priorities, we will ensure sustainable growth in fund development and resources. This includes strengthening our communications and marketing to grow awareness of our work and the work of our funded community partners. We will also grow and invest in strategies that target new and emerging donor audiences.

EVALUATION:

We will invest in research to better understand trends that impact life in Broome County and how these inform our long-term community investment strategies. We will work with partners and our community to set goals. We will measure ourselves against those outcomes and make course corrections as necessary to ensure we're on the right track.

PARTNERSHIPS:

Philanthropy is about generosity in all its many forms - time, talent, and treasure. By cultivating positive experiences, we will deepen our collaborations with non-profits and donors with a focus on growing our impact. This includes expanding engagement opportunities for volunteers, connect with like-minded peers, and witness their personal impact on people and organizations first hand.

Unify Efforts and Resources

BEING PURPOSEFUL ABOUT LONG-TERM CHANGE

MOBILIZE:

We will unite people and organizations through our role as a leading community catalyst to embrace and reach towards a common vision for Broome County. We will bring together organizations and individuals in new, networked ways with the understanding that we can't address complex issues alone.

INNOVATION:

We will leverage our unique position to serve as a conduit between data experts in the fields of health, education, and financial stability, and community stakeholders. We will strengthen our capacity, convene influential partners from across sectors, and drive meaningful change through measurable outcomes.

EXCELLENCE:

We will cultivate an environment of diversity, equity, and inclusion by designing and fostering a culture that empowers stakeholders to be successful and bring full identities to initiatives. We deeply value the trust that the community has placed on us and we work tirelessly to ensure that this trust will always be well founded.



What we heard and what we learned

AN OPEN & HONEST DIALOGUE WITH BROOME COUNTY RESIDENTS

The Community Café series, was an exciting collaborative effort to engage the community at the grass-roots level, in order to gain a better understanding of the shared aspirations for the future, define the challenges that hold residents back today, and identify opportunities to make positive changes.

Through Community conversations that took place in 2015, United Way of Broome County quickly understood their value and re-embarked on the journey in 2018. We began listening to our community through kitchen-table style café sessions. The public knowledge gathered through these conversations informs how we engage with the community, steers the organization's work in health, education, and financial stability, and deepens the impact of projects and programs throughout Broome County. Knowledge of a community is developed not only by understanding research data, but also by listening to and learning from people within the community. That kind of learning only happens through real, authentic conversations that are designed for people to share what they want to see in their neighborhoods and what they see as the challenges facing them and others.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

United Way of Broome County fulfilled the role of community convener, served as a steward of community knowledge, and was responsible for communicating with and engaging residents in the initiative. Residents were convened in the public spaces, community based organizations, places of worship, and civic/social organizations. Strategic partnerships were formed with the conversation site hosts who informed and invited residents to participate in the discussion, and gained community trust and participation. In turn, these Community Café conversations involved more than 300 Broome County residents of all ages, reached all sectors of the community, spanned across the county, and provided a rich source of qualitative data about each neighborhood. The information obtained allows United Way of Broome County and our community partners to look at new opportunities for collaboration, develop strategies to address the most critical needs facing our community, and mobilize resources to address those needs.



Acknowledgments

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING:

A special thank you to the **Care Compass Network**. This initiative would not have been possible without their extensive support and funding.

We also thank our community partners, facilitators, elected officials, and most of all, community members that volunteered their time to contribute to this discussion. We would like to specifically thank the following individuals:

Facilitators

Carole Coppens, YWCA of Binghamton and Broome County
Colleen McCabe, American Red Cross of the Southern Tier
Gareth Sansom, YMCA of Broome County
Jack Salo, Rural Health Network of South Central New York
Jack Seman, Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse CHOW
Sharon Chesna, Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network

A critical element of the Community Café series was accessibility. It was of the utmost importance that conversations were held in diverse neighborhoods across the county. To that end, Community Café conversations were held at the following locations:

Conversation Locations

Aiello's Italian Restaurant | Whitney Point
Broome County Public Library | Binghamton
Chop & Chat Programming at Vestal Senior Center | Vestal
First United Methodist Church | Deposit
George F. Johnson Memorial Library | Endicott
Johnson City Senior Center | Johnson City
Southern Tier Independence Center | Binghamton
Teen Center Programming at Boys & Girls Club | Binghamton



A LOOK AT WHAT RESIDENTS HAD TO SAY

As we engaged in conversation with residents around our “kitchen table” we had the ability to see the world from their unique points of view. As each person began to share their hopes, dreams, and vision for the future, we were challenged again and again to rethink our traditional approaches to engaging and mobilizing the community. The voices around the table were as rich in diversity in thought, as they were of ethnicity, age, income, and life experiences.

The Community Café series represents our dedication to public knowledge and insight. At the core of this effort was a deep desire to ascertain what was on the hearts and minds of those who make this community great – our local residents. We understood that to accomplish this aim, we would have to serve solely as an observer. Our role in each of these conversations was not to interject opinions or beliefs, but to create a space in which residents would feel safe in sharing their hopes for the future and candidly discussing the concerns and challenges they face today. The goal was not to change beliefs, nor to steer those around the table to a certain agenda.

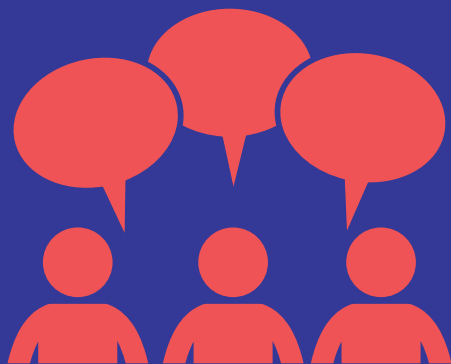
It is our hope that this report will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our neighborhoods each day. From this information and feedback gathered we can enhance the quality of life for all in Broome County, together.

Broome County Snapshot

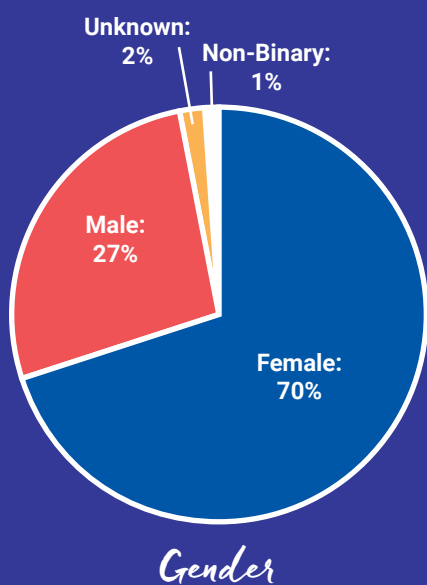
BROOME COUNTY NEW YORK STATE

Population	196,124	19.49 million
Median Age:	39.6	38.4
Median Income:	\$49,064	\$62,765
High School Diploma or Higher:	90.4%	86.1%
Unemployment Rate:	7.2%	6.8%
Poverty Rate:	17.1%	15.1%
Child Poverty Rate:	23%	21.3%
Spending 30% or More of Household Income on Rent:	54.1%	53.5%
Individuals under age 65 years who are uninsured:	5.5%	7.6%

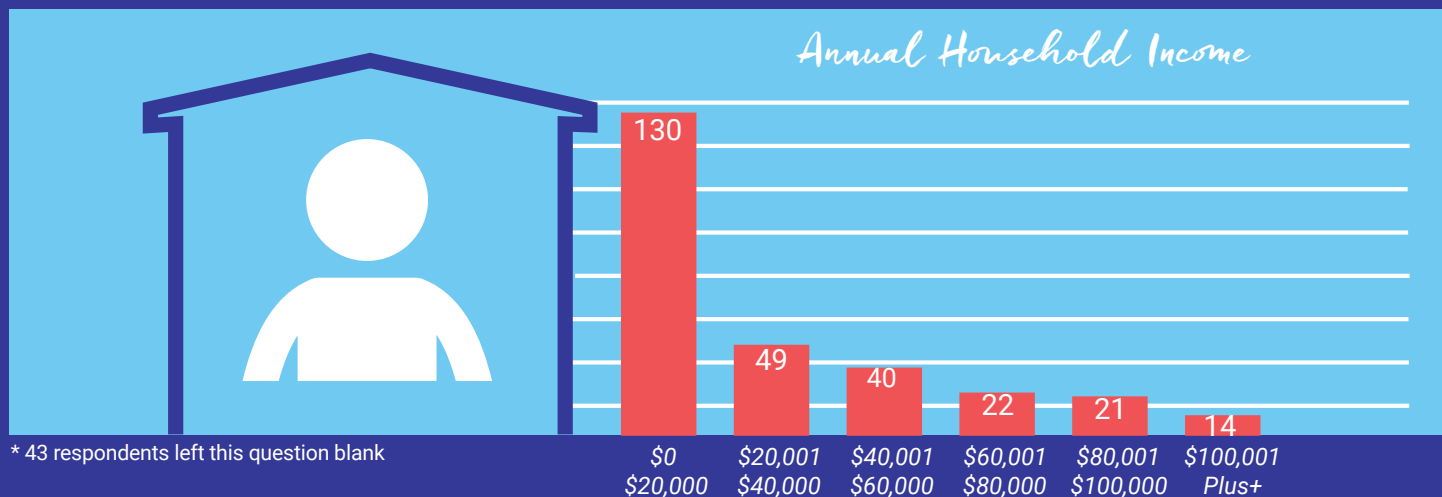
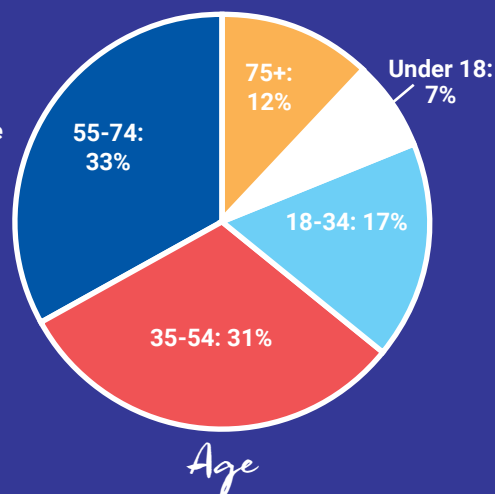
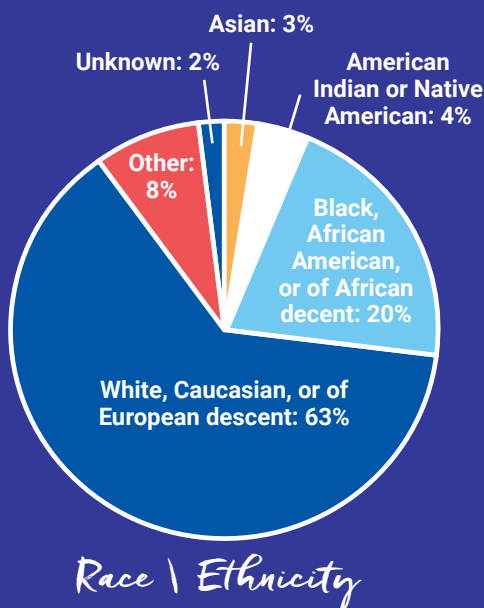
A Look at Who Came to the Table



United Way of Broome County's intent for the Community Café series was to bring together a diverse group of people with a variety of experiences and perspectives. We invited local residents, community leaders, nonprofit professionals, and community members concerned about these issues. To ensure that we had a diverse audience, we asked participants to complete demographic forms when they registered. These forms were not linked to the participant's name or information. The following charts show the demographic breakdown of event attendees.



Participants by:



* 43 respondents left this question blank

* The results gathered from the Community Café series are a snapshot of a point in time. All of the data was collected between January – July 2019. Please note, duplication of individual participant data and incomplete responses are possible.

What We Asked

During the Community Café series, we asked participants open-ended questions surrounding the three building blocks that are essential for each individual to thrive: Health, Education, and Financial Stability.

Topics were divided into the following categories: Childhood & Youth Success, Health Access, and Economic Mobility.

The following questions fostered an interactive conversation that allowed for each individual to participate:

	What kind of community do you want to live in?	
What are challenges facing childhood and youth success?	What are challenges facing health access?	What are challenges facing economic mobility?
What are the strengths regarding childhood and youth success and how can we build upon them?	What are the strengths regarding health access and how can we build upon them?	What are the strengths regarding economic mobility and how can we build upon them?

What We Heard

COMMON CONCERNS FACING OUR COMMUNITY

Broome County residents identified the following challenges as the most critical issues compromising the vitality of our community:

Safe Community

People want a place to live where they feel safe and comfortable with their family. Concern about crime, violence, gangs, and drug use in our community leads to an overall unsafe feeling.

Childhood & Youth Success

Parents want to ensure their children's success is a community priority and civic engagement opportunities are available to our youth. There is a high need for quality childcare, as well as out-of-school and after-school activities for our community's youth.

Health Access

Individuals are looking to adopt healthy lifestyles and achieve positive health outcomes. Access to affordable healthcare and healthy foods are growing concerns. There is a need for more mental health services.

Economic Mobility

Lack of opportunities that provide family-sustaining employment and the ability to attract more jobs, retain young adults, and develop new business are major concerns. Public transportation issues, lack of affordable housing, shortage in childcare providers, and insufficient job training impact employment status.

Shared Aspirations for the Future

OUR RESIDENTS WANT TO LIVE IN A COMMUNITY THAT:

Feels safe and is free from crime and drugs.

Ensures all children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed.

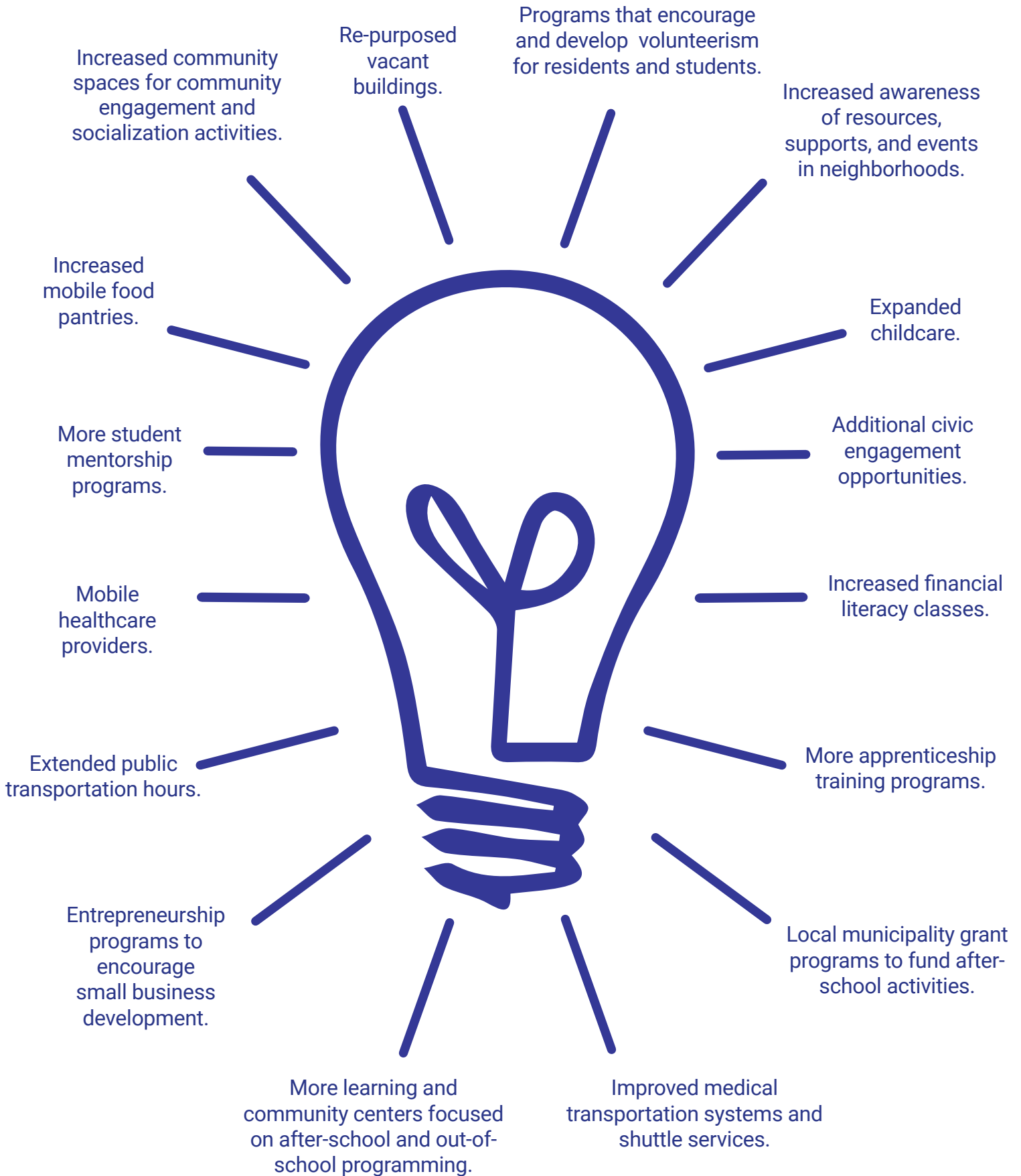
Provides quality childcare opportunities and increased awareness of available services.

Residents are both physically and mentally healthy, have access to mental health support, healthy foods, and quality healthcare.

Thrives economically: increased job opportunities and educational trainings, public transportation improvements, and safe and affordable housing.



Ideas That Can Drive Solutions





Next Steps:

The Community Café series stimulated excellent discussion and accomplished its goal of helping to better understand the concerns, perspectives, and ideas of community members.

This summary is one of the first steps by sharing results and considering possible actions. In some cases, United Way of Broome County may choose to take the lead in addressing an issue. In other cases, there may be complementary works already underway. Some issues may find homes outside United Way, while still engaging community based organizations at some level.

One common question we heard from participants was, “how will these conversations be turned into action?” Indeed, we acknowledge that talking is a great first step, but it is only useful if it is followed by action. The insights and ideas contained within this summary should be viewed as a call to action for our partners and community leaders. It is our intention that this summary will spark conversations and lead to concrete action around the issues raised throughout the Community Café series.

Contained in the following pages are the actions United Way of Broome County will take as a commitment to our community over the coming three years.

BUILDING BLOCK: *Health*



COMMUNITY VISION:

Broome County will be an engaged and empowered community that fosters healthy environments, healthy relationships, and healthy people.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

In Broome County, one in three adults are considered obese. In census tracts on the North and East Sides of Binghamton, that rate increases to over one in two. Approximately 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease, and 77% have at least two. Four chronic diseases—heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes—cause almost two-thirds of all deaths each year. Depression among people with chronic conditions is also more common. In turn, chronic conditions account for over 70% of the money our nation spends overall on healthcare. According to 2016 data, both emergency room department visits and deaths for overdoses involving opioid abuse was twice as high in Broome County as in the state as a whole.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

Much of what determines a person's health occurs outside a doctor's office. Good health depends not just on access to quality medical care, but also the opportunity to live in an environment that is conducive to healthy living. A stronger community is built by promoting healthy eating and physical activity, expanding access to quality healthcare, and fostering healthy environments and relationships.

Healthy children perform better in school and healthy adults perform better in the workplace. The result is a thriving community where people are active and have access to nutritious foods. United Way of Broome County and our Community Partners will work to ensure residents have access to needed health care, support services, healthy foods, and physical activity to lead a healthy lifestyle.

KEY STRATEGIES

Support the social, emotional, and mental health of all youth, individuals, and families.

Increase access to healthcare.

Promote a healthy and safe environment.

Increase access to healthy food and increase physical activity.



BUILDING BLOCK: *Education*



COMMUNITY VISION:

Together, we can ensure all children and youth in Broome County have the opportunity to do well in school, graduate on time, succeed in a career, and achieve their full potential.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

Broome County currently faces a childcare deficit – there is a need for 1,464 more early childcare slots and 2,434 more after-school care slots to support children and youth. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that one in four children, birth to age five, are at risk for developmental delay, leading them to lag behind their peers. The graduation rate across Broome County is 81%. However, there are disparities across the county, with some schools as low as 63%. Broome County youth also lack opportunities for civic engagement during out-of-school time. A lack of civic, job, and higher education opportunities increases the likelihood that youth will become disconnected from their community and encounter more risks as they transition to adulthood.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

Research shows that children who enter school ready to learn are more likely to achieve early reading proficiency, and consequently more likely to graduate high school on time. Those benefits stack up: students who graduate high school are more likely to find a job that pays a livable wage, live healthier lives, stay out of the justice system, and have children who also graduate high school on time.

United Way of Broome County and our Community Partners will work to ensure improved access to and programming for quality, affordable childcare; ensure the preparedness for all children in primary school; and work to provide all youth with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in middle school, high school, post-secondary education and the job market.

KEY STRATEGIES

Support early grade literacy, reading proficiency, and school readiness programs.

Developmentally and academically prepare children for Kindergarten.

Provide work readiness and soft skills training for youth.

Increase middle school, high school, and post-secondary school success.

BUILDING BLOCK: BLOCK:

*Financial
Stability*



COMMUNITY VISION:

With the right tools, all Broome County families can have the earnings, income, and assets to be financially stable.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

According to the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Report, the household survival budget of a family of four in Broome County totals to \$56,964 annually, significantly greater than the U.S. poverty level of \$23,850. In Broome County, 42% of residents live below the U.S. poverty level and the level set by the ALICE report, meaning that many families struggle to make ends meet, even though they may be employed. There may also be barriers to them becoming – and staying – employed. In Broome County, the average annual cost of full-time, center-based childcare is \$10,400. A single parent with an infant pays 55% of their income on center-based childcare. That percentage increases to 100% when they have two children.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

The whole community benefits when more working individuals and families are able to stop walking a financial tightrope and get on solid ground. Financially stable people are more likely to have access to quality health care, provide a good education for their children, and contribute to their local economies.

In order for people to achieve financial stability and subsequently improve their socio-economic status, they need the education and skills to get a good-paying job with the possibility for promotion; access to affordable financial products; and the knowledge, skills, and supports to make choices that help them achieve their financial goals. United Way of Broome County and our Community Partners will work to create pathways to financial stability that will improve employment, provide advancement opportunities, and advance the socio-economic status of individuals and families in our community.

KEY STRATEGIES

**Increase
employment and
advancement
opportunities.**

**Provide
mentorship
programs.**

**Increase
financial literacy
programs.**

**Increase access
to improved
housing
options.**

A FOUNDATION FOR A QUALITY LIFE: *Basic Needs*



COMMUNITY VISION:

Ensuring basic needs such as food, shelter, and safety is the first step to identifying the complex, long-term issues individuals and families face. Together, we can provide basic needs and work on collaborative solutions to success.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

In Broome County, the poverty rate is 17% and the child poverty rate is 23%. In census tracts around the county, those numbers can reach 40% and 49%, respectively. Over 25,000 residents are defined as food insecure, indicating a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life. From 2016 to 2017, there was a 25% increase in individuals facing homelessness overall, and a 75% increase of families with children facing homelessness. Additionally, between 2009 and 2018 there was a 175% increase in the number of students identified as homeless within Broome County school districts.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

While we work toward providing long-term outcomes through the building blocks of life, covering basic needs is a vital first step on the pathway to success. United Way works to help families in Broome County meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and safety as a foundation for a quality life. When needs are unmet and uncertain – if we are hungry, if we don't have a place to sleep, if we are in fear for our safety – the other challenges we encounter in life become even more difficult to overcome. We cannot focus on getting a better job, going to school, or taking care of our health without meeting our basic needs first.

United Way of Broome County will continue to provide funding to programs that help people overcome life's challenges and meet their basic needs so they are prepared to take advantage of the resources that allow them to build a better life.

The Role of United Way of Broome County

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES ACTION ITEMS:

Our Community Commitment Plan approach is geared to the achievement of lasting, measurable improvements in the health, education, and financial stability of individuals, families, and our entire community. We will deliver impact in the community by focusing on three organizational priorities: Revitalize Collaboration, Inspire Giving, and Unify Efforts and Resources.

Below you will find a snapshot of some of the many, new and exciting initiatives coming from the United Way of Broome County:

Revitalize Collaboration -

- As part of our commitment to strengthening our community, United Way of Broome County will collaborate with local experts to host supportive services and develop resources for community based organizations, so they can continue to do what they do best - create positive change in our neighborhoods.
- United Way of Broome County will also actively participate in community advocacy efforts that align with the organization's building blocks for a better life.

Inspire Giving -

- Over the course of the next three years, United Way of Broome County is committed to evaluating the current Healthy Lifestyles Coalition model and determining best approaches for replication and program expansion in other high-needs neighborhoods, while increasing community engagement in the process.
- In order to share the story of Broome County, we are dedicated to showcasing the impact and work of funded community partners to those in our community through a series of Impact Tours.
- To serve our community's veterans, United Way of Broome County will engage and collaborate to establish a local Mission United affinity group.

Unify Efforts and Resources-

- United Way of Broome County will build our internal capacity and establish the organization as the local liaison for community-needs assessment data.
- We will cultivate an environment with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

United Way of Broome County
101 S. Jensen Road
Vestal NY 13850
607-240-2000 | uwbroome.org



United Way
of Broome County