

UWM AND THE CITY OF



ARPA IMPACT REPORT



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OMAHA



In 2022, the United Way of the Midlands (UWM) was entrusted to distribute \$5 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding on behalf of the City of Omaha. Over two years, this partnership underscored the confidence placed in our community-driven processes and our unwavering commitment to fostering community resilience and recovery.

As the pandemic tested our community, exposed barriers to opportunity, and widened gaps for many families, it also highlighted the resiliency of nonprofit organizations and the populations they serve. Thanks to the leadership of Mayor Stothert and the City of Omaha, our community had the loudest, most important voice in determining how to direct ARPA dollars where they are needed most.

A dedicated group of about 100 local volunteers identified 33 impactful basic needs programs for investment over a two-year period. ARPA funds were strategically invested in programs providing food, shelter, behavioral and physical health and other essential services – addressing the immediate needs of our community while laying the groundwork for long-term recovery and growth. From bolstering essential services to supporting local organizations, the ARPA funding facilitated substantial progress in helping our community recover from the challenges posed by the recent global crisis. **Every dollar was allocated with precision and purpose, ensuring maximum benefit for those in need.**

“We have the opportunity to provide direct aid to organizations that support individuals and families. We will make an immediate and direct impact on the citizens of Omaha.”
- Mayor Jean Stothert

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the programs supported, the outcomes achieved and the stories of transformation that emerged as a result of the ARPA funding.

ARPA FUNDED PARTNERS



Note: Some organizations above received funding for multiple programs

Funded programs were required to report quarterly with submissions including a detailed accounting of all spending and results of the funds. In 2023 and 2024 an independent auditor reviewed United Way of the Midlands' internal control over financial reporting and compliance through both an independent and single audit. The ARPA audits revealed no material deficiencies in internal controls nor instances of noncompliance.

RESULTS, TRENDS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The following results highlights the tangible impacts achieved by the programs that received ARPA funding through UWM over the two-year funding period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024. This section showcases the measurable impact these investments had on our community, illustrating how the funds directly addressed critical needs in food security, shelter, behavioral and physical health, and other essential services.



7.2 MILLION

MEALS DISTRIBUTED

262,572

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES



77,604

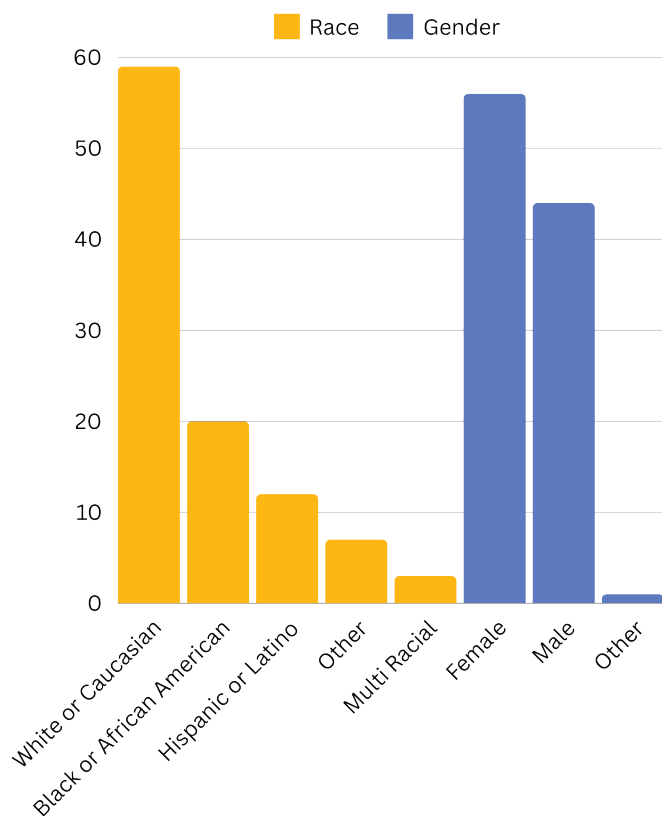
SHELTER NIGHTS

206,829

EDUCATIONAL AND OUTREACH MATERIALS



RESULTS, TRENDS AND DEMOGRAPHICS



42%

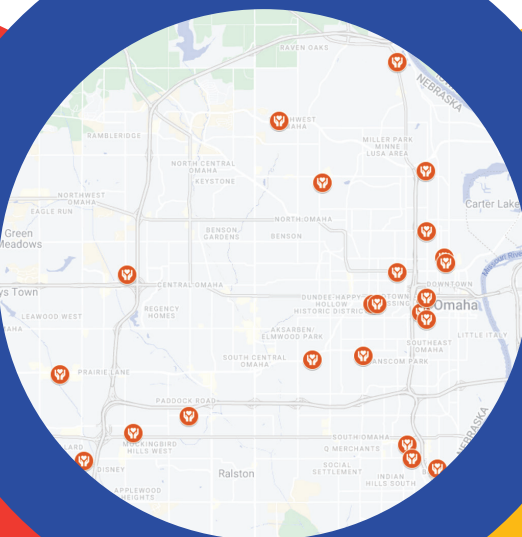
EARN LESS
THAN \$15,000

30%

UNDER 18

9%

AGE 65+



STORIES OF IMPACT

"I was at my wit's end, but the support and encouragement I received kept me going. I'm grateful for the stability my family now has."

“ Homeless and sleeping in their car, Leah had been evicted with her 5 children and was panicked. Her application to a local family shelter was rejected as she had no significant medical issues. Her efforts to secure housing were thwarted by outstanding debts at several apartment complexes, leaving her desperate. With support from the Siena Francis House Case Management Program, Leah secured a temporary hotel stay and in May, a private landlord agreed to rent to her. **Case Managers were able to braid ARPA support with Diversion/Rapid Exit funds to cover her first month's rent and deposit.** With assistance from community resources, Leah maintained her employment despite the challenges of being unhoused and her outlook has shifted from desperation to hope. ”

“ When Eleanor, a 70-year-old widow, first joined the Intercultural Senior Center, she struggled with food insecurity and extreme social isolation due to transportation barriers and a lack of social outlets. Living alone on a fixed income, she found it difficult to afford nutritious food and lacked the energy to cook for herself. Eleanor reached out to ISC for help and was connected to pantry assistance and much more. ISC's senior advocacy team completed her intake, ensuring she received a nutritious food pantry. Our delivery staff brought food to her home and provided door-to-door service for her to attend social programming onsite at ISC, significantly reducing her transportation barriers. As Eleanor attended the center more frequently and got to know our staff and programs, our senior advocacy team continued to help her find additional services beneficial to her situation. **Since joining our program, her outlook has completely changed.** She now receives regular nutritious meals delivered to her door, improving her physical health and energy levels. More importantly, she has become more socially engaged through our programs, forming meaningful connections and creating a social support system she can rely on. ”

"I was feeling so alone and worried about how I would manage. I didn't know where to turn."



GROWING NONPROFIT CAPACITY

For several nonprofits, ARPA marked their first experience receiving federal funds, which required them to navigate the complexities of reporting at a higher level of detail. United Way played a crucial role by providing feedback and technical assistance on a quarterly basis, ensuring that these organizations maintained accountability in their use of funds. Beyond meeting compliance standards, this support helped nonprofits understand what auditors look for, fostering a deeper knowledge of federal regulations. As a result, programs not only expanded their capacity to serve clients but also established a solid track record of successfully receiving and reporting on federal funds, positioning them for future opportunities.

“The partnership with United Way extends beyond funding, but to education, awareness, and collaboration.”

In our annual partnership survey, 100% of ARPA respondents said UWM’s ARPA funding, reporting and monitoring processes:

- Builds program capacity
- Helps our program expand to serve new client populations, geographies or methods of program delivery
- Demonstrates a commitment to accountability
- Demonstrates a commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Improves our evaluation processes



Additionally, in March of 2024, UWM invited ARPA-funded agencies and other nonprofits to a sustainability workshop hosted at UWM and offered by Oui Coaching and Consulting titled “Navigating the Future: Thinking Strategically about Nonprofit Program Sustainability.” The workshop was designed to help organizations plan for the end of ARPA funding, and think about how their programs would continue to serve clients as the immediate threats of COVID 19 reduce in scale.

The end of ARPA funding is further complicated by record inflation, which increases the demand for nonprofit services, but also increases the cost of labor and supplies for nonprofits. The workshop and optional 1:1 coaching sessions provided tools for agencies to identify key areas to build on, determine what to maintain or phase out, and think strategically for long-term sustainability. Of the 33 funded programs, seven indicated they will adjust or reduce the scope of their program, and the remainder plan to continue the program without adjustment. In a dynamic and ever-changing environment, these efforts equip organizations to be more responsive to both client needs and their own evolving organizational capacity.

“United Way’s patience and flexibility in helping us through the ARPA process was so appreciated by myself and my team. We were honored to have your support and partnership!”



UNITED WAY
of the Midlands

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