

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

United Way of Southern Cameron County





Message from the President & CEO

United Way of Southern Cameron County partners with the community to help individuals and families rewrite their stories and build a solid foundation for the future. With input from our board of directors, staff, volunteers, funded partners, and donors, UWSCC created this plan to help us achieve our mission of improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community to advance the common good.

Advancing the common good requires time, financial resources, and collaboration across systems. United Way of Southern Cameron County's strategic plan supports the work that lasting change requires.

While there are no quick fixes to any serious community problems, this plan will ensure that we keep our eye on the strategies most likely to bring about real change. By mobilizing people and organizations with the talent and resources needed to get things done, we will help people improve their lives and strengthen our community. The common good matters to all of us. That's why we Live United.

Traci Wickett
President & CEO



United Way
of Southern Cameron County

The United Way of Southern Cameron County's **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

- 1** Create and articulate a plan of action for the MacKenzie Scott gift
- 2** Increase awareness for UWSCC
- 3** Review programs for mission-centeredness, alignment, and impact
- 4** Focus on UWSCC's human capital—board sector diversity and staff satisfaction and development
- 5** Imbue innovation in all UWSCC does

OUR VISION

United Way of Southern Cameron County envisions a community where everyone has the opportunity to live their best life.

OUR MISSION

United Way of Southern Cameron County improves lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities to advance the common good.

From the Board Chair



I am delighted to share United Way of Southern Cameron County's 2022-2025 strategic plan.

United Way of Southern Cameron County has served South Texas since 1955, bringing together people and organizations to develop innovative solutions to local challenges. We have grown during our 66 years of service from an organization focused on raising funds for local nonprofits to our present role as a community convener focused on mobilizing the caring power of our community. And, yes, we still raise and distribute money, but now we and our funded partners are marching to the beat of the same drummer.

During this planning process, Alexis De Sela of De Sela Consulting helped us hear the voices of board members, donors, staff, partners, and other stakeholders. The voices of people who care deeply about our communities and the role United Way of Southern Cameron County plays in enhancing the well-being of those communities helped us create a blueprint for the future. We thank everyone who provided thoughtful insights about our best future, and we share their excitement about what we can accomplish together.

Sincerely,

Frank Lopez
Board Chair

STRATEGIC GOALS

The strategic priorities informed the development of United Way of Southern Cameron County's strategic goals for 2022-2025:

- Goal 1** Evaluate and strengthen current programs and any new programs to maximize impact and effectiveness.
- Goal 2** Create a strategic funding model that ensures on going planning and long-term sustainability.
- Goal 3** Effectively communicate United Way of Southern Cameron County's story to enhance understanding of its mission and inspire greater community engagement, collaboration, and support.
- Goal 4** Promote organizational sustainability by developing an integrated, engaged, and highly effective team of staff, board members, and volunteers to cohesively deliver the mission of United Way of Southern Cameron County.

Advancing the common good requires time, financial resources, and collaboration across systems. United Way of Southern Cameron County's strategic plan supports the work that lasting change requires.

Planning Overview

United Way of Southern Cameron County's President & CEO, Traci Wickett, and past Board Chair Art Garza led this strategic planning effort with assistance from De Sela Consulting, LLC, a consulting firm serving the Rio Grande Valley. The work and deliberation of the Strategic Planning Committee produced the strategic goals and objectives for the next three years, along with an operations plan to ensure accountability for implementation. This strategic plan is a key step toward continued success and provides United Way of Southern Cameron County with a clear roadmap for strengthening organizational capacity and sustainability.

This plan was developed with involvement and guidance from a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of 11 board members and key staff.

The Committee met twice, first to reflect on the vision of the organization and develop strategic priorities, and later to determine the strategic goals to govern the strategic plan.

United Way of Southern Cameron County sought the voice and opinion of its stakeholders, including the board, volunteers, staff, funders, individual donors, and community partners in this planning effort. Based on input from its stakeholders, this plan focuses on key priorities to create greater impact in the Rio Grande Valley. De Sela Consulting also conducted an organizational scan to review United Way of Southern Cameron County's structure, systems, programs, processes, people, finances, and reputation to assess the overall operational health of the organization and make recommendations for improvement. The data gathered through these exercises helped the Planning Committee assess both the challenges and opportunities United Way of Southern Cameron County is likely to face over the next three years and set the context for the choices reflected in this strategic plan.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

United Way of Southern Cameron County was founded in 1955 in an effort to facilitate and promote philanthropic giving in the community. Traditionally, United Way has raised funds through workplace giving and local contributions. In early 2000, United Way reframed its focus and began to work toward addressing the root causes of the community's most profound health and human service issues. At the same time the organization began to diversify its funding base to include not only workplace giving but grants and designated contributions toward an array of internal program.

Today, with a budget of \$1.2 million United Way of Southern Cameron County continues to mobilize the caring power of communities to develop collaborative solutions to improve the health, education, and financial stability of individuals and families. The organization advocates, supports, funds, leverages resources, and convenes the community to achieve measurable results that change lives.



PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY IMPACT



Pillar Initiatives

EDUCATION

Education is the foundation for a good life. Access to high-quality early childhood education has proven to lead to better academic achievement during the school years. On-time high school graduation opens the door to a world of opportunities in higher education and the workplace. We are committed to a cradle-to-career strategy that includes:

- Children entering school prepared to succeed
- Elementary school children having grade-level skills in math and reading
- High school students graduating on time
- Young adults gaining postsecondary credentials leading to jobs with labor market value

HEALTH

Good health allows children to be better students and adults to be stable, productive members of society. Access to health care, reducing risky behaviors, and decreasing obesity in children and adults are fundamental to improving the overall health of our community by decreasing school and work absenteeism and mitigating the financial risk created by poor health. We work toward:



United Way of Southern Cameron County advocates, supports, funds, leverages resources, and convenes the community to achieve measurable results that change lives.

- Increased access to health care for everyone in our communities
- Reduced risky behaviors of children and adults
- Improved health and fitness for everyone

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Creating and sustaining financial stability for individuals and families is a goal for United Way of Southern Cameron County. Our work is focused on:

- Crisis resolution and self sufficiency
- Financial education
- Workforce development



Collaborative Community Initiatives

VELLO

VELLO is a one-on-one online tutoring program that makes volunteering and community impact easy. The program was launched in the spring of 2017 and continues with the generous support of Brownsville Public Utilities Board. Through this program, employees use the power of technology to remotely tutor and build caring relationships with second grade students at Del Castillo Elementary School. The students and tutors read together through the online program and work to improve fluency, vocabulary, and reading levels to improve grade-level academic success. Our volunteers build transformational relationships and work as a team to ensure all students reach reading proficiency.

UNITED AGAINST HUNGER

United Against Hunger is a partnership led by United Way to tackle one of our community's biggest problems—food insecurity. During the COVID pandemic, we distributed over 100,000 bags of food to people who need it the most by employing over 1,200 furloughed restaurant workers through our Get Shift Done program. Get Shift Done brought



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GRMS Rules & Consequences

Dividers:
Reading Dividers
Worksheets
Writing Dividers

April Days: 1st
1st of Month (Unplanned)

United Way of Southern Cameron County mobilizes the caring power of communities to develop collaborative solutions to improve health, education, and the financial stability of individuals and families.

capacity to agencies joining the fight against hunger like soup kitchens, food pantries, community gardens, and the Meals On Wheels program. We got more food to more people more quickly by hosting food distributions in our community and adding capacity to local pantries and soup kitchens during this critical time. Now we are working to solve the larger issues of food inequity in our community.

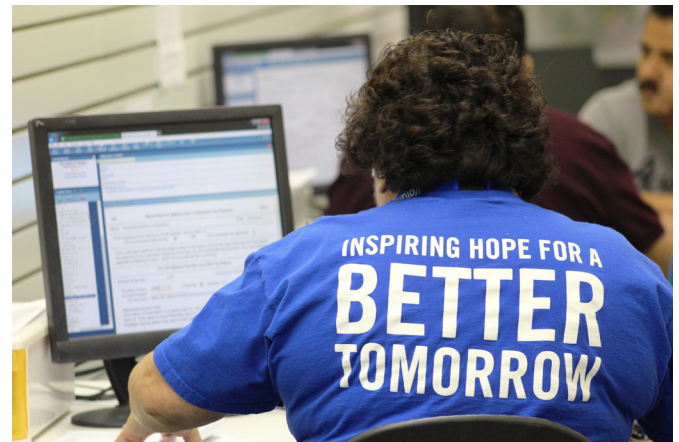
VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)

Since 2004, United Way has partnered with schools and community organizations to train and support over 300 volunteers across the county to provide working families with free tax preparation and e-filing. The VITA project helps working families access the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) which is the federal government's largest anti-poverty initiative. On average the project prepares over 5,000 tax returns and brings back over \$4 million in EITC each year. This is money that goes directly into the pockets of working families, making VITA an effective community economic development strategy.

UNITED AGAINST TRAFFICKING

In partnership with UPS and United Way Worldwide's Center to End Human Trafficking, United Way of Southern Cameron County was one of four United Ways in the United States selected to mobilize the community to fight human trafficking. In partnership with key stakeholders we educate people to recognize and prevent trafficking and we provide resources for victims and survivors. Through monthly network meetings, we identify opportunities to improve processes for responding to trafficking, maximize available community resources, and improve outcomes for victims and survivors. Training for social service organizations, law enforcement, and outreach to vulnerable populations helps the community members identify victims and enhances community response to trafficking. Lastly, victims and survivors have access to counseling, housing, and legal assistance as they move past their victimization.



Looking Forward—The Future Today:

United Way of Southern Cameron County is resolved to work as one to ensure strategic growth and development and make certain it remains an important partner for Cameron County and the Rio Grande Valley.

LOOKING FORWARD



Since 1955, the organization has worked tirelessly to make resources available and convene and mobilize organizational partners to help people live their best lives. The implementation of this strategic plan, through the guiding strategic priorities and goals, developed in community by the Strategic Planning Committee, will create a stronger organizational foundation for United Way of Southern Cameron County to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community to advance the common good for generations to come.



Strategic Goal 1

Evaluate and strengthen current programs and any new programs to maximize impact and effectiveness.

Goal Overview

United Way of Southern Cameron County will continually scan best practices and innovative models to deliver top quality programs and initiatives that fulfill the needs of the communities we serve. Internal and external assessment of programs and services will be undertaken diligently and intentionally for UWSCC to remain nimble and flexible to assist communities as needs arise.

Strategic Goal 2

Create a strategic funding model that ensures ongoing planning and long-term sustainability.

Goal Overview

United Way of Southern Cameron County recognizes that having a strong sustainability plan in place positions the organization to serve southern Cameron County now and in the future. UWSCC's leadership is committed to ensuring that appropriate financial resources are available to support and grow programs and initiatives, recruit and retain qualified talent, build a strong infrastructure to support operations, and expand impact in the community. While our current funding sources are diverse, achieving more intentional diversification will ensure resources are available to meet growing community and organizational needs.

Strategic Goal 3

Effectively communicate United Way of Southern Cameron County's story to enhance understanding of its mission and inspire greater community engagement, collaboration, and support.

Goal Overview

United Way of Southern Cameron County understands the opportunity to inspire greater stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and support by enhancing understanding of its mission and purpose. Finding more effective ways to affirm its identity, through intentional public awareness, communications, and marketing campaigns, will be sought.

Although its brand is well-known and well-regarded throughout the world, better public and stakeholder understanding of United Way of Southern Cameron County's mission will create meaningful and lasting community engagement, including greater financial support from funders and donors. Our mission to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities to advance the common good can be fully realized if there is a process of community education and clarity in messaging about who we are and what we do.

Strategic Goal 4

Promote organizational sustainability by developing an integrated, engaged, and highly effective team of staff, board members, and volunteers to cohesively deliver the mission of United Way of Southern Cameron County.

Goal Overview

United Way of Southern Cameron County's most important asset is its people. Without internal stakeholders serving as the main engine driving successful operations—including staff, board, and volunteers—the organization will not be able to fully deliver on its mission.

Building upon the existing commitment and dedication of its staff, board, and volunteers, United Way of Southern Cameron County's leadership will focus efforts to ensure adequate resources are in place to provide the necessary tools to develop, engage, and retain them. This will result in a cohesive team committed to upholding the highest levels of personal and professional accountability while delivering the organization's mission.



WINDVILLE
RESCUE



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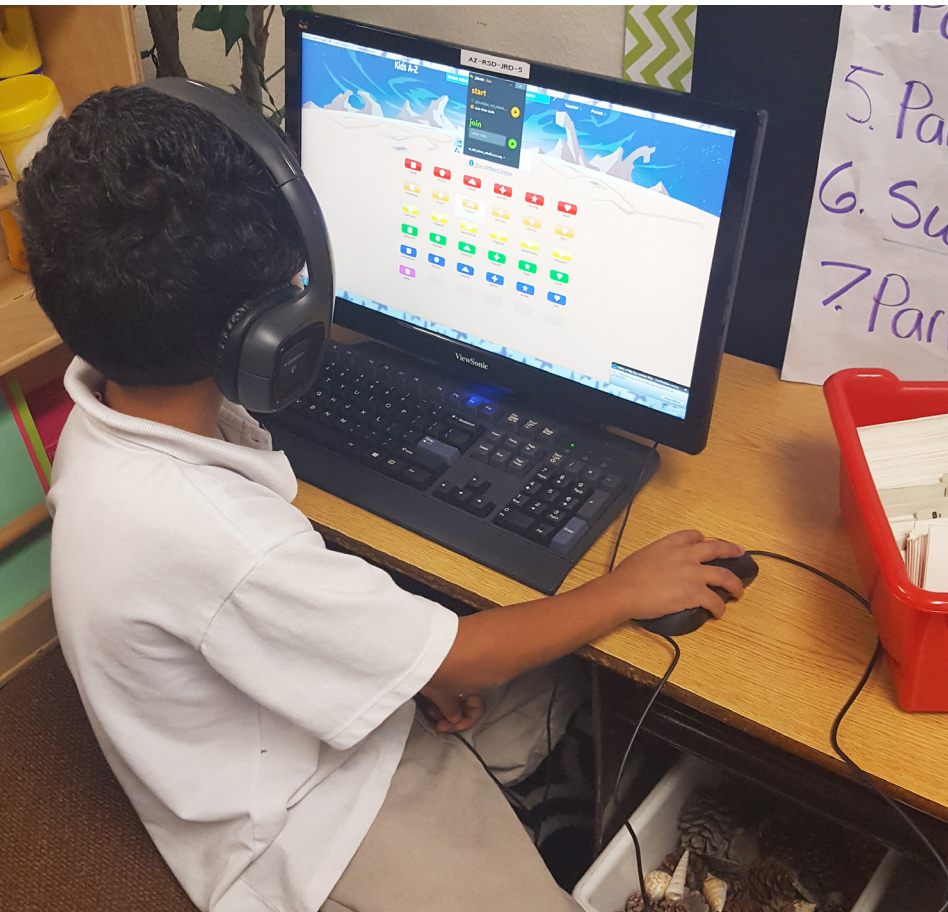
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Vision to Reality: The Operations Plan

The operations plan should remain flexible, understanding that objectives may change based on external and internal environmental conditions.

VISION TO REALITY



United Way of Southern Cameron County leadership has developed an operations plan to ensure timely implementation of strategic goals and objectives and imbue accountability throughout the process. The operations plan will remain flexible, understanding that objectives may change based on external and internal environmental conditions. Goals will remain as approved by the board over the duration of the three-year period of the strategic plan. Staff will finalize the operations plan with responsible parties and timelines.





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LIVE UNITED

United Way of Southern Cameron County

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