

# YOUR IMPACT



*In This Issue*

## BRITTANY'S STORY

# UNITED AGAINST POVERTY

Poverty looms as our region's great challenge. Philadelphia is the poorest big city in the nation, and our region is home to some of the most impoverished communities in southern New Jersey.

Often perpetuated in a cycle that passes from generation to generation, poverty affects families and limits children's potential before they have a chance to succeed. Research shows that one in every two children born in poverty will remain poor for the rest of his or her life.

Why? Children living in poverty are less likely to have access to quality early learning opportunities. Without that foundation, they likely won't enter kindergarten ready to learn, which affects their ability to learn to read on grade level by the end of third grade—a key indicator of on-time graduation. And if they drop out of high school, their options for finding good jobs decrease, while their likelihood of being incarcerated increases. And the cycle continues.

At United Way, we're fighting to break this cycle and are leading with solutions and interventions that will end poverty in our communities.

It's a monumental task, and one we certainly can't tackle alone. That's why through our Impact Fund, we invest in strong partners, innovative approaches and advocacy that targets systems change. One powerful example is the Workforce Solutions partnership with Uplift and Brown's Super Stores, highlighted in this issue of *IMPACT* newsletter. The program offers community members who are rebuilding their lives after incarceration a way forward through job skills and placement services, so that they can achieve long-term success.

When we LIVE UNITED against poverty, we empower our families to thrive. We position our children to succeed. Your support of United Way enables us to build a brighter future for us all. Thank you!



Bill Golderer  
President and CEO  
*United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey*



# JOIN THE FIGHT TO END POVERTY

Thousands of people across our region are just one opportunity away from a brighter future. Your support makes a difference.

**Join the movement in ending poverty by helping more families and individuals become self-reliant and financially stable.**



**“AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO IS NOURISH OUR COMMUNITIES. THAT GOES BEYOND JUST PROVIDING FOOD, BUT ALSO SUPPORTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO RISE ABOVE THEIR PASTS, EMBRACE THEIR POTENTIAL AND SUCCEED.”**

*–Jeff Brown*

*President & CEO  
Brown's Super Stores*

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# NEARLY HALF

of newly released offenders are re-arrested within the first year of release

**67.8%** OF ALL RELEASED OFFENDERS ARE RE-ARRESTED WITHIN THREE YEARS

**76.6%** ARE RE-ARRESTED WITHIN FIVE YEARS

**\$75 BILLION** IS SPENT EACH YEAR ON INCARCERATION IN THE U.S.

**\$100,000** IS SPENT ON HOUSING ONE OFFENDER EACH YEAR

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS BY THE NUMBERS

# 148

OF 187 PARTICIPANTS GRADUATED  
(AS OF JUNE 1, 2018)



# 96%

OF GRADUATES REMAINED FREE OF RE-INCARCERATION

**145** GRADUATES WERE PLACED INTO JOBS

**113** OF THOSE EMPLOYED OVER EIGHT MONTHS AGO HAVE RETAINED THEIR JOBS

**43** EMPLOYED HAVE BEEN PROMOTED

Poverty and incarceration are deeply linked, and without intervention, the cycle continues. Join the movement and help break the cycle of poverty and incarceration.

IN 2014, THE MEDIAN PRE-  
INCARCERATION INCOME FOR  
THE PRISON POPULATION WAS

# \$19,185

**50%<sup>+</sup>** OF CHILDREN WITH PARENTS WHO ARE INCARCERATED EXPERIENCE ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL ISSUES IN SCHOOL

CHILDREN OF  
INCARCERATED  
PARENTS ARE

**3X** MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM THEMSELVES



A single action or decision. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Sometimes, one single moment affects a lifetime. That was the case for Brittany, a recovering addict and single mom who, as a teen, spent time in prison. Determined not to let her past define her, Brittany worked to get her life back on track once released, but discovered that accomplishing that was harder than she ever imagined.

# BRITTANY'S STORY



"So many people couldn't look beyond my mistakes," she explains. "I was really discouraged—all I wanted was a second chance. I just didn't know where to turn."

Brittany found that second chance through Uplift's Workforce Solutions\*, a six-week job training and placement program for individuals returning to their communities after incarceration.

Getting accepted into the program "was a life-changing moment" for Brittany. "After being told I would always be defined by my mistakes, it was a chance to prove that I'm not chained to my past," she shares. "Most people just judge me on my background, on having been behind bars. But the Uplift staff looked beyond that to see me and my potential."

Uplift didn't just provide the chance to prove her doubters wrong—Brittany learned to see her own potential, as well. She thrived in the program, which she credits with giving her skills to navigate not just a job, but also life. Upon graduation, Brittany was immediately offered a job at a local supermarket, where she works nearly full-time and was recently promoted.

"I didn't just find a job—I found myself. I learned how to contribute to society and how to cope, carry myself and resolve conflict, at work and in my personal life. Other programs tell you what you need to know about a job, but Uplift taught me what I needed to know about being a person."

Her success has ignited a passion for more. She plans to complete her GED, continue moving up the ladder and focus on being a good role model for her young son.

"United Way and Uplift changed my life. It was the first time that I saw my real potential and that people will give someone like me a second chance. And because of that, I can provide for my son so he doesn't follow in my footsteps and turn to the streets, while achieving my own goals, too."

A single action or decision.

A second chance to be at the right place, at the right time.

The Impact of one moment can last a lifetime. For Brittany, it was your support of United Way that made all the difference.

**"I LEARNED HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY AND HOW TO COPE, CARRY MYSELF AND RESOLVE CONFLICT, AT WORK AND IN MY PERSONAL LIFE."**

\*A collaborative initiative supported by United Way, Uplift, Brown's Super Stores and the Nerney Family Foundation



“EMPOWERING FORMERLY INCARCERATED COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO CONTRIBUTE AND THRIVE IN SOCIETY IS CRITICAL TO ENDING POVERTY. BY CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO THRIVE PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY, WE’RE GIVING THEM A CHANCE TO PUT THEIR PAST BEHIND THEM AND EMBRACE A BRIGHTER FUTURE.”

—Atif Bostic

Executive Director, Uplift

## BUILDING STABLE FAMILIES

*Success is often passed from generation to generation.*

Building the foundations for lifelong financial stability—job skills, financial literacy and asset development—empowers working adults to earn and save more, creating solid financial footing for local families and their children. Self-reliant, financially stable individuals and families are the cornerstone of a thriving community, where everyone, including our next generation, is empowered to succeed.

In 2016–17, we invested more than \$4 million in our Financial Stability work through:



### **VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) PROGRAM**

Utilizes IRS-trained volunteers to provide free tax preparation services to qualifying tax payers. Last year through VITA, \$46 million was returned in refunds to eligible individuals and families.



### **LUBERT INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT (IDA) PROGRAM**

Helps working individuals save for a post-secondary education, a home or small business expansion through matched funds and financial literacy training. More than 645 individuals have graduated from the program, and participants have saved more than \$737,000.



### **JOB OPPORTUNITY INVESTMENT NETWORK (JOIN)**

Equips low-skilled adults with job skills training and career placement into high-growth jobs to build the regional workforce. In 2017, more than 360 job seekers and workers enrolled in job training programs.



### **UPLIFT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS**

Provides reentering citizens with hard and soft skills training and job placement to provide second-chance job opportunities. In 2017, 114 participants were placed in jobs at Brown's Super Stores throughout the region.



### **IMPACT GRANTS**

Provides three-year general operating support for nonprofits delivering measurable results in our Financial Stability Impact areas. Through our investments, 14,108 adults completed debt management, credit and housing counseling.

The more individuals and families in our region who become self-reliant and financially stable, the stronger our communities will be. We can only achieve that with your support and investment.

## THANK YOU FOR LIVING UNITED!



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of Greater Philadelphia  
and Southern New Jersey**

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**Inside:**

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