



## MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

*This was a year of change in leadership at the national and state levels, and within UCS. After more than 30 years, longtime UCS Executive Director Karen Wulfkuhle retired in May. A celebration of Karen and her many contributions to UCS and our community was held in conjunction with welcoming Julie Brewer as the new Executive Director.*

*With change comes opportunities and challenges. Nationally and especially for Kansans, we know that in 2017 healthcare will be a priority focus as well as addressing budget deficits. As federal and state funding continues to diminish, local government and elected officials are increasingly challenged with determining what their role and capacity will be in addressing the needs of their residents.*

*Rapidly changing social, political, and economic conditions impact access to health and human services in Johnson County, particularly for vulnerable populations. UCS provides the expertise and opportunity for the private and public sectors to join together and collaborate on effective solutions for health and human service needs.*

*UCS continues to grow its capacity as a backbone organization to support new and ongoing integrated health and human service efforts to achieve collective impact and in utilizing data as a tool for collaboration, advocacy, and systems change. A component of growing organizational capacity this year included transitioning UCS' temporary poverty project manager position into a regular full-time position.*

*UCS' mission of providing data analysis, leading collaborative planning, and mobilizing resources to enhance the availability and delivery of health and human services has evolved over the organization's 50 year history. But what has not changed is the organization's foundation of bringing community members together to plan and envision a brighter tomorrow.*



*UCS believes in the importance of supporting programs and services that are invested in the success of our community's most vital resource - its people.*

Michael Hockley, UCS Board President

Julie K. Brewer, Executive Director

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## ABOUT OUR WORK

United Community Services of Johnson County is committed to building a community where all people have the opportunity to achieve their individual potential. We believe in the importance of supporting programs and services that are invested in the success of our community's human resources. We do this primarily by working with public and private sector human service organizations, whose purpose is to build well-being. These organizations not only make repairs when well-being starts to break down, but also build a strong foundation, and maintain its strength over time.

### UCS Provides Support to Public and Private Sector Health and Human Service Organizations Through:

#### Convening/Planning

Facilitate planning activities that lead to improvements in human services availability and delivery.

#### Data Analysis

Provide information, trend analysis, and documentation to inform human service planning, and the policies and funding which affect them.

#### Convening/Planning

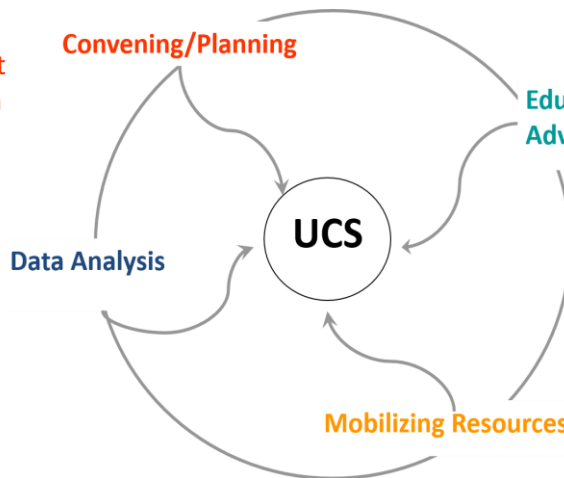
#### Education & Advocacy

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Develop annual Public Policy Platform and communicate policy choices that promote positive outcomes for people.

#### Mobilizing Resources

Secure funding for the community's human service organizations by applying for competitive grants and partnering with local governments.



## 2016 MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

UCS continued its work around the **Framework for Reducing Poverty and Creating Opportunity**. The framework includes three areas of focus: work, education and safety net. For each area of focus, UCS chose one call to action to the health and human service sector. The work initiated in 2015 continued through 2016.

- **Action #1 - Make every job a good job:**

- UCS completed its **"Good Jobs" workshop series** with a cohort of 10 human service nonprofits and published a summary report in June. The workshops focused on tools and strategies needed to implement a "good jobs" framework that includes a living wage, health benefits, predictable work schedules, paid time off, earned sick leave, strong work/life balance and advancement opportunities.
- Through a grant from the McGowan Foundation, UCS launched the **Employment Planning Project** to assess factors related to increasing access to training, education and employment opportunities for residents who work, but do not make enough money to meet basic needs and provide recommendations for expanding household-sustaining jobs for Johnson County residents. The final report will be released in 2017.

- **Action #2 - Promote "Talk, Read, Play":** UCS partnered with The Family Conservancy to promote **"Talk, Read, Play" (TRP)** with human service organizations. TRP encourages intentional interaction with children which impacts their healthy development. Johnson County Government printed and distributed 2,000 copies of TRP materials to residents and county departments. The Johnson County Department of Health and Environment held a training on how to use the TRP message, which was attended by department heads and other staff. UCS developed and shared a toolkit for faith communities to incorporate the TRP message into congregational activities. UCS launched a month-long book drive, in partnership with The Family Conservancy and Johnson County Government. Almost 500 books were collected and distributed to child care centers that serve low-income children in Johnson County.

- **Action #3: Increase access to safety net supports for adults without dependent children and transitional age youth:** With funding support from a grant through Kansas' 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, UCS conducted research regarding transitional age youth and published **From Foster Care to Independence**, an assessment of best practices to support youth who age out of foster care. This planning work will be expanded in 2017.

UCS continued to raise awareness around reducing poverty and creating opportunity through community presentation opportunities including the **Kansas Conference on Poverty** and a meeting of the **Northeast Kansas City and County Managers**. Additionally, UCS developed and distributed fact sheets throughout the year around key poverty and health and human service indicators.

To **recognize contributions** that improve the quality of life, UCS recognized Karen Wulfkuhle at her retirement celebration with the inaugural Bridge Spanner Award created in her honor. 2016 Human Service award recipients included Citizen of the Year, Brad Stratton; Distinguished Public Service, The Honorable Stephen Tatum; and Excellence in Community Service was awarded to a community collaboration of 21 public sector organizations and departments, social service agencies, faith communities, law enforcement, businesses and community volunteers who facilitate the Strengthening Families Program in Johnson County. Finally, one of UCS founders, Ben Craig, was honored posthumously with the Karen Wulfkuhle Bridge Spanner Award.

The **Trauma-Informed Care Project** continues as a committee of COMVAC (Johnson County Community Violence Action Council) meeting regularly and providing quarterly training. UCS produced a report documenting the project's history.

The **Homeless Continuum of Care** is convened monthly by UCS. The Continuum includes more than 40 service providers. UCS is responsible for submission of Johnson County's application for federal homelessness funding and the annual homelessness count. In 2016, local agencies were awarded more than \$675,000 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to support transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing projects.

UCS provided regional data support to **United Way of Greater Kansas City**, including trend data for six counties and provided technical assistance to United Way in the development of their Impact Agenda and outcome measurements. UCS managed the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program grant process for Johnson County.

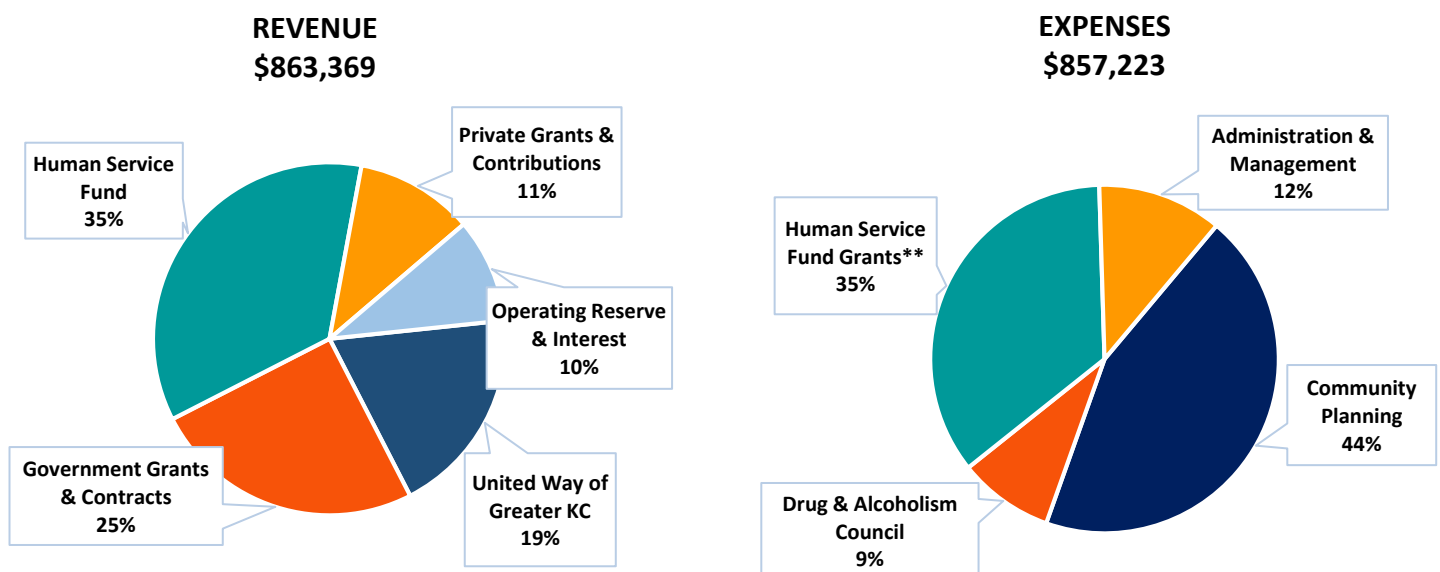
UCS convened the **Children's Coordinating Council**, a network of 30 service providers, quarterly to promote stronger relationships among organizations serving at-risk children and families.

UCS' 2016 **Public Policy Forum**, hosted by UCS, Kansas Action for Children and United Way of Greater Kansas City brought together 18 state policymakers from Johnson and Wyandotte counties to discuss budget and tax issues facing Kansas, needed KanCare policy changes and expansion, and repairing and expanding access to safety net programs. The event featured a panel of experienced legislators as well as speakers from Kansas Center for Economic Growth, Alliance for a Healthy Kansas, and Kansas Action for Children.

The **Human Service Fund** is managed by UCS to leverage resources for programs that support an array of safety net services that assist residents facing difficult circumstances and promote economic security and personal safety. With funding from 15 cities and the Board of County Commissioners, \$301,965 was awarded to 13 nonprofit agencies. More than 57,000 people benefited from these programs.

The **Drug and Alcoholism Council of Johnson County**, on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners and nine cities, oversees the allocation of local Alcohol Tax Funds to substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. More than 70,000 people benefited from programs funded in part by Alcohol Tax Funds. Jurisdictions allocated almost \$1.7 million to 24 programs for direct services.

## 2016 FINANCIAL REVIEW\*



\*Audited Financials for 2016 will be available July 2017.

\*\*Additional HSF grant dollars were remitted from a jurisdiction after the 2016 allocation process and will be allocated in the 2017 process

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## MAJOR FUNDING SUPPORT



United Way of Greater Kansas City

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## Alcohol Tax Fund and Human Service Fund Partners

**Alcohol Tax Fund participating jurisdictions:** Gardner, Leawood, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, Shawnee, and Johnson County Government.

**Human Service Fund contributing jurisdictions:** De Soto, Edgerton, Gardner, Leawood, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, Roeland Park, Shawnee, Spring Hill, Westwood, Westwood Hills, and Johnson County Government.

*UCS is a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions to UCS are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Every attempt was made to ensure the accuracy of this list. Please report any errors to us so that we may correct our records.*