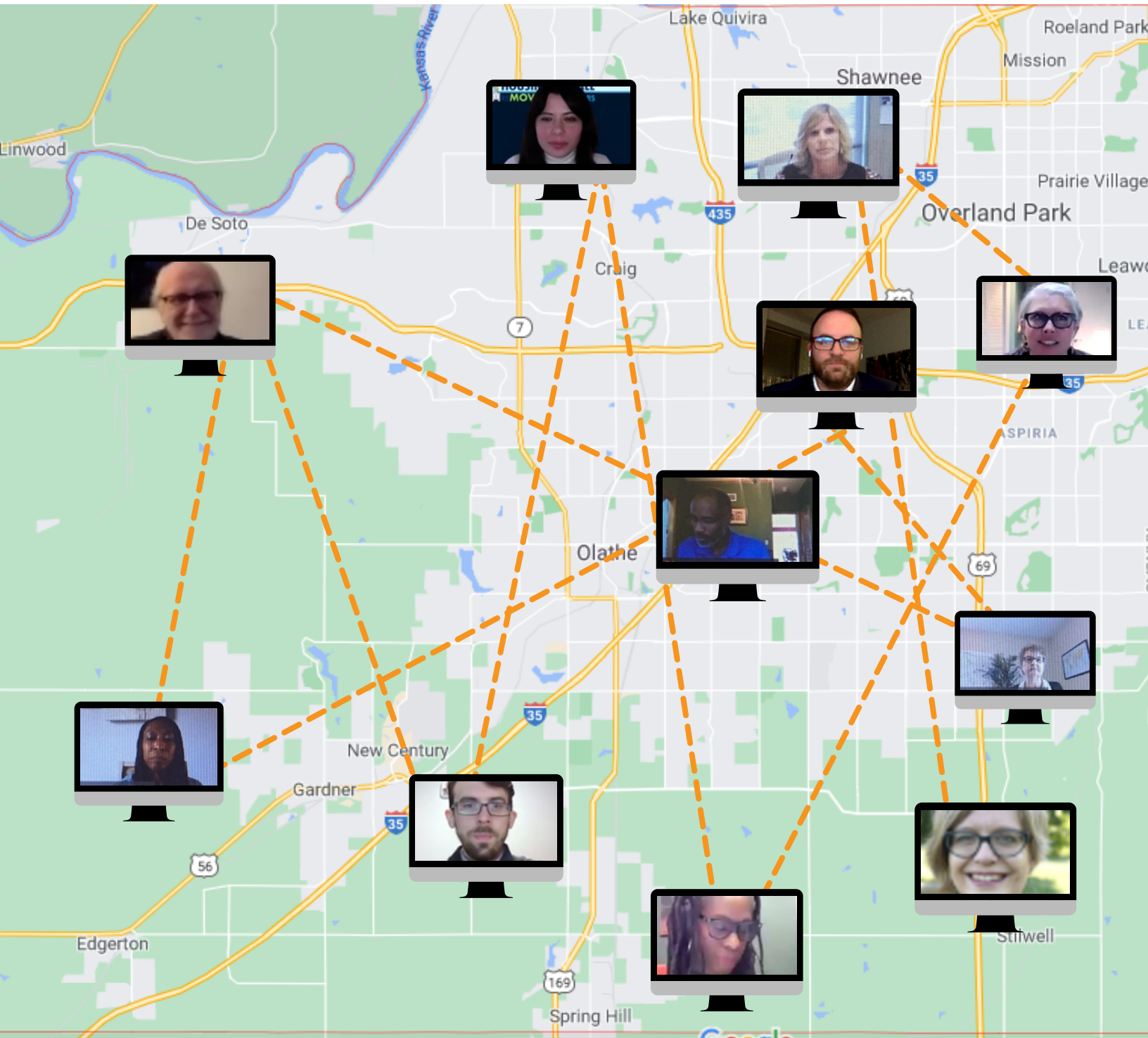


Stronger Community Together

2020 Annual Report



United Community Services of Johnson County

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Message to the Community

To say that 2020 was a challenging year is an incredible understatement. UCS, our County and cities, agencies and many others spent the year on the front lines of the pandemic response and recovery efforts. COVID-19 highlighted that an organization such as UCS is uniquely positioned to help craft solutions with partners to community needs in a time of crisis. Our Core Work—Education and Advocacy, Convening and Planning, and Targeted Resource Allocation—enables us to create a stronger community, together.

In some ways, the pandemic put a spotlight on the critical issues facing our community. We shared research and data detailing the pandemic's impact on income, employment, health coverage, childcare, and especially housing. Some of the very community members we lifted up as essential to keeping our communities open and functioning are the same residents for whom housing choice in Johnson County is a struggle.

We also highlighted that race and ethnicity make a difference in how people experienced the pandemic and other outcomes. In 2020, UCS more deeply explored the issues of racial equity, inclusion and belonging. A board-led Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee crafted a Theory of Action to move from documenting and tracking racial and ethnic disparity in our data to creating measurable responses.

This year we said goodbye to long-term staff members Marya Schott and Valorie Carson. Marya led our Resource Allocation area and worked with our County, cities, and agencies on the Alcohol Tax Fund and Human Service Fund, as well as facilitating our Children's Coordinating Council. Valorie led Johnson County's Continuum of Care on Homelessness, our trauma-informed care work, and many other data and planning initiatives during her time at UCS. We welcomed Christina Ashie Guidry as our new Director of Resource Allocation. UCS also moved its office after 20 years in the same location. We are now located in the Overland Park Chamber building, providing us access to more group meeting options to assist our convening and planning work.

Along with many of our community partners, UCS learned the world of virtual connectivity and embraced this technology to stay connected and responsive to many critical issues impacted by the pandemic. Even our Annual Meeting got the "virtual touch" this year.

UCS is more than an organization—it is a vision and a belief that, through research, education, advocacy, resource allocation, and most importantly thoughtful planning and collaboration, we can together impact and improve the well-being of our community's most vital resource—its people.



Julie K. Brewer

Julie Brewer
Executive Director

Kate Allen

Kate Allen
UCS Board President

UCS' annual Human Service awards recognize the profound impact we have in improving the human condition when we make the effort to *care, to help, and to connect* with those around us

UCS honored Pastor Sylvia Romero with the **Citizen of the Year Award**. Her leadership and service as the director of Center of Grace in Olathe has created a positive impact in our community. She is a long time advocate, working quietly and tirelessly for the past 20 years as a champion for equity and inclusion and serving the needs of vulnerable populations, especially within the Latino community. Her work connects families with a vast range of valuable services, including preschool for children, English classes for adults, free health screenings, a community garden, food pantry, and a clothing closet. She worked to reimagine services and strengthen partnerships throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to continue connecting residents to resources during a time when support was needed more than ever. "I am the eternal optimist, so my hope is that we can continue to work together so that we can keep building this community where everyone feels welcomed and affirmed," says Pastor Sylvia. "That's how we become a stronger and more loving community." Pastor Sylvia Romero's dedication and selfless service to our community has improved the lives of countless families in Johnson County.



The **Excellence in Community Service Award** was presented to the many organizations and individuals responsible for the Kansas City Regional COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and its great success. The fund was established by the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, United Way of Greater Kansas City, LISC Greater Kansas City, and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) to address the needs of our region's most vulnerable communities affected by the pandemic. Together with many partnering organizations and donors, the fund raised more than \$17 million to provide grants to nonprofit organizations that have experience supporting communities that are

disproportionately affected by the pandemic and its economic consequences. Hundreds of organizations across the Kansas City area have received grants to help support operations and increase their capacity to serve impacted populations, with a focus on critical needs such as housing support, food insecurity, access to health care and more. "We were able to uncover and find needs that we would not have found otherwise," said David Warm of MARC. "In the process, we were able to build up our civic capacity to withstand this kind of crisis in the future."

Dr. Lee A. Norman, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, was honored with the **Distinguished Public Service Award**. His work represents the ongoing COVID-19 response effort of all our state and local public health departments which played a vital role in the well-being of our community throughout the pandemic. Secretary Norman was a key public health figure providing public health information, regular press briefings, statewide leadership and opportunities for residents—including children—to ask questions related to the virus and public health. Secretary Norman was appointed to his current position by Governor Laura Kelly and unanimously confirmed by the Senate in March 2019. He served in the Air Force as a family physician, flight surgeon, and combat medicine instructor, and has been a chief medical officer for over 26 years, most recently at the University of Kansas Health System. "My role is as the field commander," said Secretary Norman. "The work is being done by the field soldiers...my own agency, other state agencies, and certainly local health departments."



2020 HIGHLIGHTS

A multiyear exploration of health equity includes a county-wide housing study

In partnership with Johnson County and 19 municipalities, UCS reached a milestone in 2020 with the implementation of the Johnson County Community Housing Study. The housing study was a central component of a multiyear Healthy Communities Initiative grant UCS received through the Kansas Health Foundation. Launched in 2017, the goal of the grant was to identify and address a health equity issue in Johnson County. To achieve this goal, UCS established the Johnson County Health Equity Network (HEN), a multi-sector group of more than twenty representatives from healthcare, mental health, human services, education, business, city and county government, and the faith community. Leading up to the implementation of the housing study, the HEN gathered input from community listening sessions, multi-sector champions, and analyzed compelling local housing and salary data that informed the focus on safe, stable, attainable housing as the foundation for healthy communities. This effort included additional support from the REACH Healthcare Foundation and investments from the jurisdictional partners in the Housing Study and Task Force.



With guidance from a Technical Committee including members of the HEN and County and city elected officials and administrative staff members, housing study consultant RDG Planning and Design began implementation of the housing study in early 2020. In addition to compiling and analyzing housing data, RDG collected insights and experiences from residents during 19 community listening sessions and designed and implemented a community housing survey that was completed by more than 4,600 people.

At the 2020 Human Service Summit, RDG provided an early look at data from the housing study and gathered additional information from attendees through small breakout listening sessions. During these sessions, Summit participants discussed the housing needs of various types of households across the County; what options currently exist in their communities for lower income families and seniors; what role they think their community is willing to play in addressing housing needs across all ages and stages of life; and how the pandemic has changed or reinforced their opinion on ensuring availability of a variety of housing options for families across all income levels.

During the implementation of the housing study, UCS and the Technical Committee began planning for the Housing for All Task Force, which will build on the outcomes from the housing study. Facilitated by Shockey Consulting Services, the Housing for All Task Force brings together public funding and private grant support which includes the Health Forward Foundation and Evergy. Composed of individuals from various sectors of the community, such as educators, employers, developers, residents, healthcare and social service providers, and community leaders, the Housing for All Task Force will use the data and recommendations from the Housing Study to identify and develop implementation opportunities that best fit identified goals and needs across the different cities. Goals for the Task Force include:

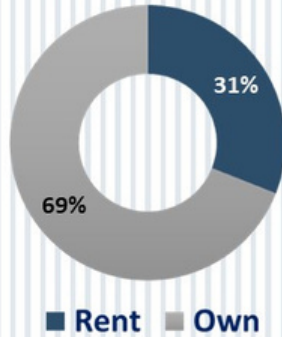
- Review and provide feedback on the findings from the Housing Study, including demographic and economic profile data, vision, goals, and strategies.
- Discuss barriers and opportunities related to safe, stable, and attainable housing in Johnson County.
- Explore and evaluate potential strategies to achieving safe, stable, and attainable housing in Johnson County, including potential tools and action steps.
- Develop the framework for the Housing for All Toolkit with recommendations customized for the various housing opportunities and challenges of each Johnson County municipality.



JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY HOUSING STUDY SNAPSHOT: JOHNSON COUNTY



CURRENT HOME CHOICE



COST BURDEN= SPENDING 30% OR MORE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON HOUSING

39%
of renters are housing cost burdened

Average Rent
\$1,109

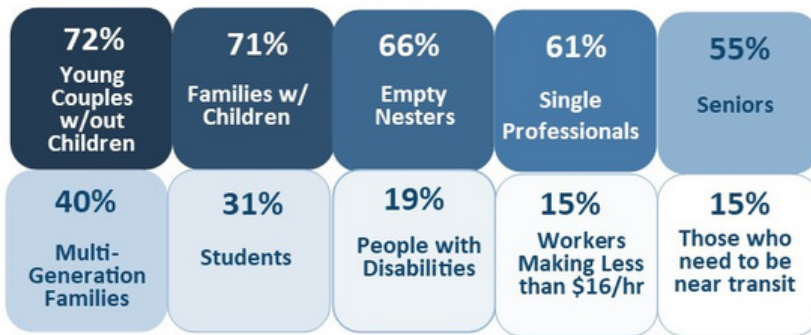


18%
of homeowners with a mortgage are housing cost burdened

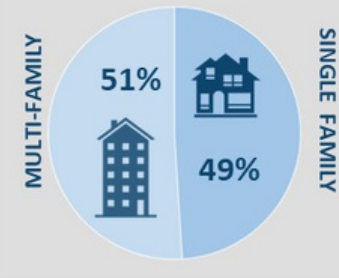
Average Mortgage
\$1,799

COMMUNITY HOUSING SURVEY FINDINGS

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO BELIEVE JOHNSON COUNTY HAS ADEQUATE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR:



CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY 2010-2019



2030 PROJECTED POPULATION

697,104

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO BELIEVE THESE HOUSING TYPES WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN JOHNSON COUNTY

MID-SIZE 3-BEDROOM HOUSE	92% See Successful	TOWNHOUSE OR DUPLEX	72% See Successful	ROW HOUSING	61% See Successful	DOWNTOWN UPPER STORY RESIDENTIAL	57% See Successful
SMALL 2-3 BEDROOM HOUSE	82% See Successful	COTTAGE COURT	65% See Successful	MIXED INCOME NEAR TRANSIT	58% See Successful	APARTMENT	54% See Successful
INDEPENDENT SENIOR HOUSING	78% See Successful	ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT	64% See Successful	LARGE 4+ BEDROOM HOME	58% See Successful	LARGE LOT RESIDENTIAL	43% See Successful

AGE OF WORKERS MAKING LESS THAN \$1,250/MONTH

AGE 29 OR YOUNGER	COUNT 22,984
AGE 30 TO 54	14,588
AGE 55 OR OLDER	10,255

150,004
Work in Johnson County, Live Elsewhere



104,413
Work Elsewhere, Live in Johnson County

173,906

Sources: Johnson County Community Housing Study; U.S. Census ACS 2019 5-year estimates; 2020 MLS Market Update

UCS facilitated the implementation of the Johnson County Community Housing Study with support from Johnson County and its municipalities, Kansas Health Foundation, Health Forward Foundation, REACH Healthcare Foundation, and Evergy.



2020 HIGHLIGHTS

Racial equity and inclusion becomes a core focus for UCS

The Racial Equity and Inclusion (REI) Committee launched in February 2020 with the objective of determining how UCS will engage in the work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Members of the committee were specifically recruited because of their professional expertise. Utilizing a 6-month process, the committee determined the core elements of the initiative, which are encapsulated in the REI "Theory of Action."

UCS promotes a vision and a belief that our efforts—research, education, advocacy, resource allocation, and most importantly thoughtful planning and collaborating—can impact and improve the well-being of our community's most vital and diverse resource: its people.

Our history tells us that this community has not always prioritized diversity and inclusion of all people. As White families were building their American Dreams in the new suburbs of Johnson County after World War II, families of other racial and ethnic identities were [strictly prohibited](#) from participating. There were several racially restrictive legal tools that developers, real estate agents, and government agencies used to ensure suburban neighborhoods remained all-white. From deed restrictions to home owners associations to FHA-subsidized communities, Johnson County, like many of the United States' new suburban developments, witnessed each of these tools in action. Structural racism played a significant role in Johnson County's early development.

We are not the Johnson County of the past, but we are living with the outcomes of the residential segregation that was at the center of Johnson County's early development. The legacy of residential segregation is written on the landscape; it created demographic patterns that maintain segregation even today.

A vast and growing body of research consistently shows that racism has the potential to create negative health outcomes for people in our community. A complex and interrelated set of individual, provider, health system, economic, societal, and environmental factors contributes to racial disparities in health. When these factors are distributed in unfair and unjust ways due to structural racism, they contribute to systemic racial and ethnic disparities in health and economic opportunity. Health outcomes specifically associated with residential segregation include adverse birth outcomes, increased rates of homicide and other crime among African Americans.

Notably in 2020, we observed health disparity in COVID-19 infections, according to Johnson County Department of Health and Environment. While people of color make up only 14% of the Johnson County population, Black and Hispanic residents were diagnosed with COVID-19 at a rate of up to three times higher than White residents. Racial and ethnic disparities have also been observed in the population of people experiencing [homelessness](#) in Johnson County.

Racial Equity and Inclusion (REI) Core Principles and Practices

Share Data

to help people understand the history and current state of racism and racialized policy in Johnson County

Tell Stories

that honor and acknowledge the lived experiences of people of color in Johnson County

Examine Individual Bias

by empowering participants to acknowledge and challenge implicit associations

Enable Dialogue

in intentional spaces to cultivate listening, healthy disagreement, and shared understanding

Recruit and Develop Leaders

from systematically marginalized communities and multiple sectors to invest in the REI work

Collaborate and Plan

with stakeholders to operationalize equity in Johnson County institutions

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

UCS responds to emerging community needs due to COVID-19

The pandemic highlighted that UCS is uniquely positioned to support and craft responses to a community disaster such as COVID-19.

As the lead agency for Johnson County's Continuum of Care on Homelessness, UCS worked with Johnson County Government and other partners to coordinate a COVID-19 response for people experiencing homelessness and requiring additional shelter options with social distancing and isolation space. UCS assisted with the development of standards and processes for safe parking spaces for those who shelter in their cars, and/or those who do not want to stay in a shelter. Additionally, UCS sought alternative resources and mechanisms for food distribution for those who are homeless.



UCS was part of the Kansas City Regional and Johnson County Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) collaboratives. When disasters take place, the COAD provides structure, making service delivery more effective with less duplication. UCS also participates in the Johnson County Human Services Coalition, which worked with the County's Emergency Operation center to coordinate needs and responses across the human services sector. UCS also represented Johnson County on the Advisory Board for the Kansas City Regional COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. Several UCS staff served on Johnson County's Phase 2 COVID-19 Recovery Funds \$35 million allocation process across six priority areas, and helped the county government determine gating criteria and how best to reopen business and public spaces after the stay-in-place orders expired.

Drawing on learning and collaboration with Johnson County partners, UCS created and managed both a COVID-19 landing page on the UCS website to provide updated information and resources to community partners on COVID-19 related issues, as well as the Johnson County COVID-19 Community Organization Resource Exchange Facebook group. Based on models of mutual aid networks, the Resource Exchange functioned as a site where real-time needs and resources could be connected and exchanged. Throughout 2020, UCS prioritized COVID-19 research and data analysis on the impact on vulnerable populations to help educate public jurisdictions, funders, and agencies to identify existing gaps and areas of need.

2020 Census efforts yield impressive results

UCS supported community efforts to ensure a Complete Count in the decennial Census. UCS relies on population data from the U.S. Census Bureau to analyze emerging health and human services trends in Johnson County. In 2020, UCS participated in an initiative focusing on low income households and households with young children in them, two population groups that had low response rates in the 2010 Census in Johnson County as identified by the Johnson County Complete Count Committee.



Count Me In JoCo
Everyone counts for the 2020 Census

UCS leveraged access to various community collaborations—including the Continuum of Care on Homelessness, the Children's Coordinating Council, and the Health Equity Network—to build capacity for outreach to these households and improve response rates. Organizations were trained and equipped to allay fears with households less likely to respond to the Census, explain the benefits of completing the questionnaire, and assist households with internet access in order to complete the questionnaire accurately. Our efforts as a part of the Johnson County Complete Count Committee contributed to a 79.9% response rate in Johnson County, the highest in the state of Kansas.

CORE WORK

Education & Advocacy

UCS illuminates needs and solutions through Education and Advocacy. UCS' 2020 [Human Service Summit](#) was unique in many aspects, gathering approximately 170 attendees on a highly interactive virtual platform that featured an early look at the Johnson County Municipalities



Community Housing Study—the first study of its kind for the county since 2004—and to listen to community concerns about safe, stable, and attainable housing. The [Kansas Public Policy Forum](#), hosted virtually and in partnership with United Way of Greater Kansas City, focused on health equity and political civility as well as the release of the 2021 Public Policy Platform outlining local, state, and federal [policy priorities](#) for the upcoming year. At the [UCS Annual Meeting](#), where the theme was Stronger Community Together, participants celebrated the unique ways our community and UCS responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by engaging partners, providing information and resources, and responding to emerging needs.

Mobilizing & Planning

UCS fosters a framework for collaboration through Mobilizing and Planning. In 2020, UCS hosted a speaker series to engage the community as part of the Transitional-Age Youth (TAY) Planning Project, with funding support from the REACH Healthcare Foundation. The three-part virtual workshops focused on Best Practices to Effectively Partner with Youth and covered research-based best practices, tips for implementation, and open dialogue. UCS convened meetings of the [Children's Coordinating Council \(CCC\)](#), a network of 30 service providers, to promote stronger relationships and best practices among organizations serving at-risk children and families. The CCC ended the year with a featured keynote by Melissa Rooker, Executive Director of the Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund and the 2019 recipient of the UCS Distinguished Public Servant Award, in which Ms. Rooker presented on the Kansas Kids Strategic Plan and discussed the needs of the early child care and education workforce, facilities, and services.

Targeted Resource Allocation

UCS prioritizes community investments through Targeted Resource Allocation. UCS facilitates the [Drug and Alcoholism Council of Johnson County](#) which, on behalf of the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners and nine cities, oversees the allocation of local Alcohol Tax Funds for substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. Well over 49,000 people benefited from programs funded in part by Alcohol Tax Funds in 2020. Jurisdictions allocated \$2,082,724 to 24 programs for direct services. UCS continues to manage the [Human Service Fund](#), an important city/County partnership that invests funding resources in nonprofit programs which provide our residents essential health and human services that promote self-sufficiency and build well-being. With funding from 14 cities and Johnson County, \$371,776 was awarded to 15 nonprofit agencies. Grantees provided over 168,000 units of service to more than 37,000 Johnson County residents. These "units of service" are measured through a full spectrum of programs, including medical and dental appointments, nights of safe housing, counseling programs, emergency rental and utility assistance, food pantries, hours of case management, employment training and more.

UCS is the lead agency for [Johnson County's Continuum of Care on Homelessness](#), engaging more than 50 organizations from the human service sector, local government, schools, and the faith community to respond to homelessness and poverty. In 2020, local agencies were awarded \$768,911 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to support transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing projects.

STRONGER COMMUNITY TOGETHER: SUCCESS STORIES

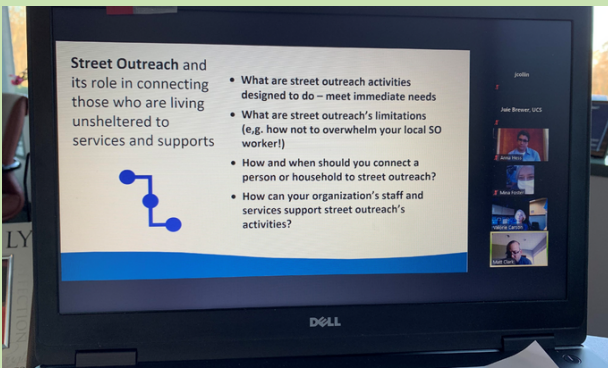
The work of UCS has real impact on the everyday lives of Johnson County residents and others in our region. These stories highlight the lived experiences behind the research, data analysis, collaboration, planning, and resource allocation.



The Smart Moves program at Boys & Girls Club of Greater Kansas City provides young people with skills, training, and mentorship to overcome peer pressure to engage in drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and unhealthy relationships. The agency shared a [story](#) of a teen girl in their program who had succumbed to peer pressure and felt scared. Because of her participation at the Boys & Girls Club located in Olathe, she was able to receive the support she needed from a trusted adult in the Smart Moves program. The program is funded by the Alcohol Tax Fund which is administered by the Drug and Alcoholism Council.

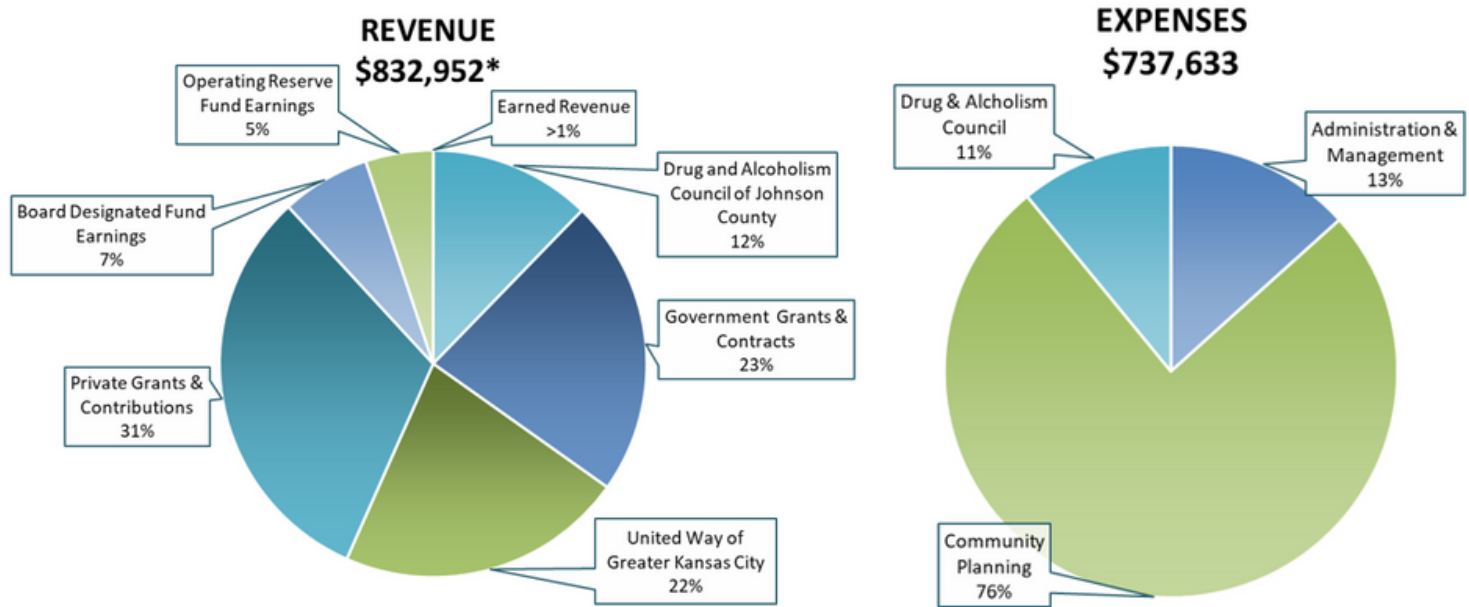


Health Partnership Clinic (HPC) provides quality health, dental and mental healthcare access to Johnson County residents, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay for services. HPC provides culturally-appropriate care including access to care in the patient's language of origin. In 2020, the Health Partnership Clinic's client satisfaction rate was 92.5% satisfied or very satisfied. Health Partnership Clinic is a grant recipient of the Human Service Fund administered by UCS. An HPC patient shared in her [story](#) how HPC is taking good care of her and keeping a close eye on her health issues. She noted how important having those connections to her healthcare providers is to her health and well-being.



UCS has facilitated the Continuum of Care on Homelessness (CoC) on behalf of Johnson County for almost twenty years. Addressing the needs of residents at-risk of or experiencing homelessness in our community is challenging—it takes all partners working together to make the continuum effective. In 2020, UCS received notification that the Johnson County's Continuum of Care (KS 505 CoC) tied for top-performing CoC in the national rankings amongst the 300 CoCs in UCS's category.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



* Revenue includes grant income received in 2020 intended for use in 2021.

** Human Service Funds are held by UCS in a separate account and paid out to grantees twice a year once collected from contributing jurisdictions. New audit guidance indicates UCS no longer recognizes pass through grant dollars on its revenue and expense balance sheet. 2020 Grant Allocations to agencies totaled \$371,776.

UCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kate Allen - President	Brian Brown	Robin Rollins Harrold	Justin Nichols
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Joe Sopcich				David Warm

UCS STAFF

Julie Brewer <i>Executive Director</i>	Christina Ashie Guidry <i>Director of Resource Allocation</i>	Cathy Goodwin <i>Administrative Coordinator</i>
Valorie Carson <i>Director of Community Planning</i>	Marya Schott <i>Director of Resource Allocation</i> Retired in 2020	Kathryn Evans <i>Manager of Special Projects</i>

**passed away in 2020

FUNDING PARTNERS

THANK YOU TO OUR PLANNING PARTNERS



United Way
of Greater Kansas City

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, GOVERNMENT AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

AT&T	Greater Kansas City Community Foundation	Johnson County Mental Health
Atonement Lutheran Church	Health Forward Foundation	Kansas Health Foundation
COBLE MCCUNE Wealth Management	Johnson County CDBG	Mid-America Regional Council
Church of the Resurrection	Johnson County Community College Foundation	Overland Park Chamber Economic Dev. Conc.
CrossFirst Bank	Johnson County Court Administration	Pickett, Chaney & McMullen, LLP
Evergy, Inc.	Johnson County Government	REACH Healthcare Foundation
	Johnson County Housing Coalition	United Way of Greater Kansas City
		Wichita State University

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

\$1,000 & above

Steve and Julie Brewer
Rev. Adam Hamilton
Thomas Herzog
Roxann Kerr Lindsey
Fred and Carol Logan
Beccy A. Swanwick-Yocham
Maury and Angie Thompson

\$250 - \$600

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JURISDICTION FUNDERS

ATF participating jurisdictions: Gardner, Johnson County, Leawood, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, and Shawnee

HSF participating jurisdictions: DeSoto, Edgerton, Gardner, Johnson County, Leawood, Lenexa, Merriam, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, Roeland Park, Shawnee, Spring Hill, and Westwood

WORDS OF SUPPORT FOR UCS

"When I moved here to Johnson County 28 years ago, we weren't talking about affordable housing, we weren't talking about workforce housing. And so I'm very encouraged that we're now talking about it with UCS. If people who are working in our community and who we need in our community can't afford to buy a home or rent an apartment in Johnson County, we're going to lose that richness to our life and our quality of life. We want our teachers and firefighters and nurses to be our neighbors and live next to us and be part of our community. I think we have a long way to go. But with UCS we're going to find solutions."

Janeé Hanzlick

Johnson County Board of County Commissioners for District 4



"As a member of the Shawnee Mission School District Board of Education, I have been interested in the education and advocacy initiatives at UCS that have a direct overlap with the work of our public schools. This includes public policy advocacy as well as convening the community around important human service needs that directly impact our students. A recent focus in our school district's decision-making process has been around data-driven decisions and outcomes. UCS provides valuable research, data, and insights that enhance the quality of important decisions made by our Board of Education."

Brad Stratton

UCS Council of Advisors and Former UCS Board Member



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