



United Community Services of Johnson County

9001 W. 110th Street, Ste. 100

Overland Park, KS 66210

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Message to the Community

In 2021, we saw so clearly that we are all the threads that make up a strong and resilient community. Our connectedness is our strength. Our ability to build, nurture and grow connections with each other and within the community has been challenged in recent years. Fortunately, UCS and partners worked together to *Weave a Strong Community*.

The very foundation of UCS is built on the belief all of us together play an important role in creating a healthy community. UCS' vision is that through research, education, advocacy, resource allocation and thoughtful planning and collaboration, we can impact and improve the well-being of our community's most vital resource – its people.

In 2021, UCS focused on weaving the fabric of the community with a focus on safe, stable, and attainable housing for all. Participating jurisdictions in Johnson County and UCS partnered on publishing the [Johnson County Municipalities Housing Study](#), and thanks to our Housing For All Task Force comprising more than 100 community members, we also released the [Housing Toolkit](#). Additionally, UCS and its partners worked with Kansas Housing Resource Center to connect federal funding for rental and utility assistance with those in need within Johnson County. We are so thankful to all our community partners, from the County and cities collaborating to address housing needs for residents to the more than 50 organizations, who actively participate in the Johnson County Continuum of Care for Homelessness, led by UCS.

Another important thread is the work UCS has done to promote racial equity, inclusion and belonging. Through innovative programs like Racial Equity in Communities (REIC) and elevating REI in our public policy platform, we continue to find ways to work with our partners to develop the skills to make the changes necessary to create the community we can be. Our very future depends on creating an inclusive ecosystem for all our residents.

Each of you are a thread in the fabric of our community. UCS is honored to partner with you as we all work to Weave a Strong Community.



Julie K Brewer

Julie Brewer
Executive Director



Roxanne Kerr Lindsey

Roxanne Kerr Lindsey
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.

The 2021 [Citizen of the Year Award](#) recipient, Mina Foster, brings more than 20 years of experience in serving underserved and vulnerable populations that are at low and extremely low income. In addition to her role as Director of Housing Services with The Salvation Army, Mina serves on the KS-505 Continuum of Care Board and co-chaired the Coordinated Entry and Lived Experience Advisory Board committees. She has also served as a Board Member of Health Partnership Clinic and as the Corps Council Board Member at The Salvation Army. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work from Kansas State University in 1996, is a certified Love & Logic facilitator and Life Coach with Advanced Certification from American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) as well as a speaker and author. Mina's experience and years of service are a true testament to the impact that can be made when we treat each other with dignity and respect—no matter the differences between us, the neighborhoods we live in, or the circles we come from.



The 2021 [Distinguished Public Service Award](#) recognized Hon. Carl Gerlach for his outstanding public service by a government official and who has advanced human services to improve quality of life for Johnson County citizens. After serving two terms on the Overland Park City Council from 1995 to 2005, he was elected Mayor of Overland Park in 2005 and completed his third term in 2021. He has maintained his community involvement, serving on the board of Shawnee Mission Medical Center, on the Johnson County Education Research Triangle (JCERT) Authority Board of Directors, and as a board member of Mid-America Technology, Inc. He is also a Johnson County Community College Foundation board member, served on the Overland Park Economic Development Council, the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce, and the Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau. Mayor Gerlach has served on the Friends of Johnson County Developmental Supports board, along with the Greater KC Chamber of Commerce board of directors, and as the chairman of the Kansas Lottery Commission, and served on the League of Kansas Municipalities Governing Body as past president.

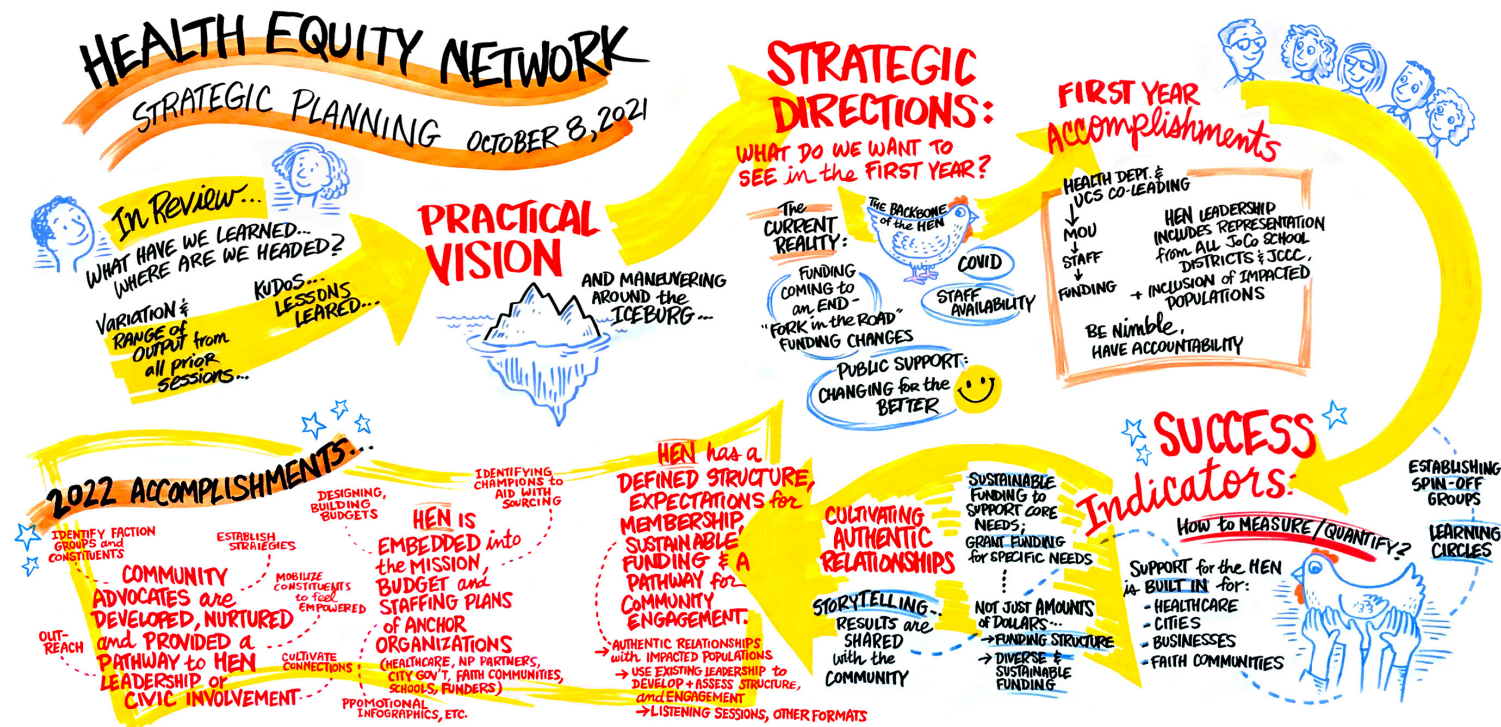
The 2021 [Excellence in Community Service Award](#) celebrated the collaborative partnership of NCircle, Johnson County Community College Continuing Education, Kansas City Community College, and Johnson County Department of Corrections through their work in the College of Trades program. Clients of this program are individuals currently residing at the Johnson County Corrections Adult Residential Center, or those on probation or parole. The College of Trades training program addresses challenges these clients experience by working within the Corrections system to provide career readiness and job retention programs, teach occupational skills and industry recognized certifications, and foundational life and vocational skills such as welding, culinary, digital literacy, construction, and mentoring. This collaboration helps clients of College of Trades identify their passions and gain skills that lead to career opportunities to end the cycle of incarceration, stabilize families, and reduce recidivism. Since its inception, this program has helped over 300 people rejoin their communities as productive citizens.



The 2021 [Karen Wulfkuhle Bridge Spanner Award](#) recipient, Ed Eilert, has dedicated his life to serving others and supporting his community—in roles ranging from teacher to financial consultant to longtime public servant. Prior to his twelve years as Chairman of the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners, he served as a commissioner, city of Overland Park councilmember, and twenty-four years as Mayor of Overland Park. Chairman Eilert has maintained an unwavering commitment to addressing the challenges of the county, not only for those who reside here today but for future generations. This is evident in the leadership roles he held with the Johnson County Education Research Triangle (JCERT) Authority, League of Kansas Municipalities, National League of Cities, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Counties, and the Criminal Justice Advisory Council. His unwavering support for the local business community in providing support services to foster economic development and maintain excellent quality of life has earned him recognition and awards. Chairman Eilert has committed to addressing the challenges of the county, not only for those who reside here today but for future generations.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

UCS Completes Four-Year Kansas Health Foundation Grant - The Catalyst for Safe, Stable, Attainable Housing in Johnson County Initiatives



At the end of June 2021, UCS concluded a four-year grant from the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) that was part of the Foundation's Healthy Communities Initiative (HCI). The broad goal of the HCI was to support leadership teams in cities, towns, counties, or regions in Kansas to engage in advocacy efforts to improve the health of people in Kansas. Ultimately, the KHF grant was the catalyst for the Johnson County Health Equity Network, the Johnson County Community Housing Study, the Housing for All Toolkit, and UCS' Racial Equity and Inclusion work.

During the first year of the grant, UCS recruited and convened the Johnson County Health Equity Network (HEN) Leadership Team, a multi-sector group of more than twenty representatives from healthcare, mental health, human services, education, business, local and state government, and the faith community. With information from community listening sessions, compelling local housing and salary data, and multi-sector champions, the HEN identified the issue of safe, stable, attainable housing as the foundation for healthy communities. In addition to the initial KHF grant funding, investments from our County and cities, funding support from REACH Healthcare Foundation, Health Forward Foundation, and Every supported the following efforts and accomplishments:

- To build the narrative, UCS and the HEN collected stories from community members throughout the 4-year project, including 24 listening sessions and responses from over 4,600 residents to the Johnson County Community Housing Survey.
- During the 2018, 2019, and 2020 election cycles, UCS and the HEN worked with partners to highlight challenges around safe, stable, attainable housing at state and local candidate forums.
- In 2019, Johnson County and 19 municipalities partnered on and invested in the implementation of a countywide housing study. The housing study was implemented in 2020 and released in early 2021.
- The Housing for All Task force, with over 100 participants, met for 4 workshops in early 2021, reviewing study findings and crafting toolkit recommendations. The Housing for All Toolkit was completed in June of 2021 and launched at UCS' Human Service Summit.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Community Task Force Develops a Housing for All Toolkit

In 2021, local jurisdictions and UCS published the Johnson County Municipalities Housing Study and released the [Housing Toolkit](#), developed with the input of the Housing For All Task Force. Facilitated by Shockey Consulting Services, the Housing for All Task Force brought together public funding and private grant support, which included Health Forward Foundation, local jurisdictions, and Evergy.



More than 100 individuals from various sectors of the community, such as educators, employers, developers, residents, city and County staff and elected representatives, and healthcare and social service providers, participated in the Housing for All Task Force. Participants used 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. The Task Force had the following goals:

- 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.

The task force met over the course of two months in early 2021, and greatly assisted the jurisdictions and UCS identify the different stages of housing residents need throughout their lives and whether our communities are really meeting those needs. According to the Community Housing Study Survey, 72 percent of respondents felt townhouses/duplexes would be a successful housing product within Johnson County. The biggest unmet housing need residents identified when responding to the survey is housing for workers making below \$16.00 an hour and households needing to be near transit services. The housing study and task force work was critical to understand some of the missing middle of housing needs within our county and individual cities.

BARRIERS

identified by the Housing Task Force

Ability to Age in Place	Financial Risk Over Time
Competitive Investment Buyers	Knowledge of Programs & Resources
Cost of Housing	Lack of Diverse Housing Types
Development Costs	Limited Supply of First-Time Home Buyer Options
Misinformation & Social Media	Political Will
Not in My Backyard (NIMBY-ism)	Quality of Existing Housing Stock
Overall Cost of Living	Systemic Racism
Restrictions & Regulations	Rehabilitation Costs

GOALS

to achieve safe, stable, and attainable housing for all

- 01 Preserve and rehabilitate existing housing stock
- 02 Reduce overall household expenses so housing is more affordable
- 03 Increase the variety of housing product types, especially middle density
- 04 Incentivize production of affordable and attainable housing stock by sharing risk, reducing gaps in the private market, and funding housing
- 05 Build affordable and attainable housing advocacy

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

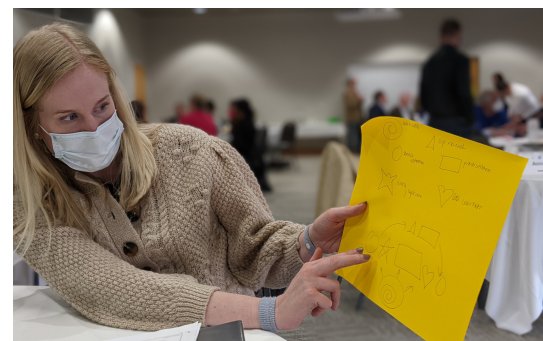
UCS Launches Innovative Pilot to Advance Racial Equity in County Jurisdictions

Over the last two years, UCS has elevated its work around racial equity, inclusion and belonging. The American Medical Association (AMA) in 2020 recognized that racism negatively impacts health outcomes among historically marginalized communities. The AMA noted without systemic and structural-level change, health inequities will continue to exist, and the overall health of the nation will suffer. UCS works on elevating racial equity and inclusion in our public policy platform, our education and advocacy, and finding ways to work with our partners to develop the skills to make the changes necessary to create the community we can be. We believe our very future depends on creating an inclusive ecosystem for all our residents. Wichita State University's Center for Economic Development and Business Research estimates that by 2066, 48 percent of Johnson County will be composed of communities of color. Across Johnson County, governmental jurisdictions are making a commitment to achieve diversity and racial equity, focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions to effect policy change and meet identified goals and priorities.

To support systemic change, UCS launched the Racial Equity in Communities (REIC) pilot in April 2021 thanks to funding support from Health Forward Foundation, The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and investments from participating jurisdictions. REIC provides education, planning services, and other supports to Johnson County jurisdictions that want to undertake racial equity initiatives in their organization and communities. Representatives from five jurisdictions participated in a series of six facilitated sessions (three sessions occurred in 2021, and three in 2022) as a "community of practice" and receive individualized technical assistance.

Prior to launching the sessions, the project's consultants from Critical Social Change Project (CSCP) developed an assessment of readiness for culturally responsive systems change. The research explored the evidence, context, and capacity for racial equity change in pilot jurisdictions, and results were used to design the curriculum of the REIC pilot program.

REIC is led by an REI Thought Partners Roundtable facilitated by UCS and includes leadership coaches and local educators such as those from the Public Management Center at KU, Kansas Leadership Center, and Critical Social Change Project. Using multiple perspectives of practice, REIC supports participants to plan and implement culturally responsive systems change in jurisdictions.



CORE WORK

Education & Advocacy

UCS illuminates needs and solutions through Education and Advocacy. In 2021, we brought together more than 150 community members, service providers, elected officials, and educators for the [2021 Human Service Summit](#) showcasing the recently finalized Johnson County Municipalities Housing for All Toolkit, and facilitated discussions focusing on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. Co-Chairs of Governor Kelly's Commission on Racial Equity and Justice, Dr. Tiffany Anderson and Dr. Shannon Portillo, shared a presentation on the work of the Commission. Following their presentation, Dr. Anderson and Dr. Portillo joined Sean Casserley, Director of the Johnson County Library which convenes Race Project KC, and Trey Williams, Race & Equity Editor for *The Kansas City Star*, for a panel discussion on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Action.



The [Kansas Public Policy Forum](#), hosted virtually and in partnership with United Way of Greater Kansas City, focused on challenges and opportunities facing access to quality childcare for working families in Kansas. UCS also released the 2022 Public Policy Platform outlining local, state, and federal [policy priorities](#) for the upcoming year. A unique policy concern following the dicennial census in 2020 focused on representative redistricting.

The 2021 [UCS Annual Meeting](#) theme, *Weaving a Strong Community*, focused on the importance of building and nurturing our connections to address challenges, reflected on successful collaborations, and honored the contributions of our Human Service Award winners. The keynote presentation featured a discussion on the importance of community and connectedness. UCS Director of Education and Planning, Kristy Baughman, and Manager of Special Projects, Kathryn Evans, shared experiences highlighting power of community, and discussed the ways in which connecting with those around us can create relationships that promote resilience in times of crisis.

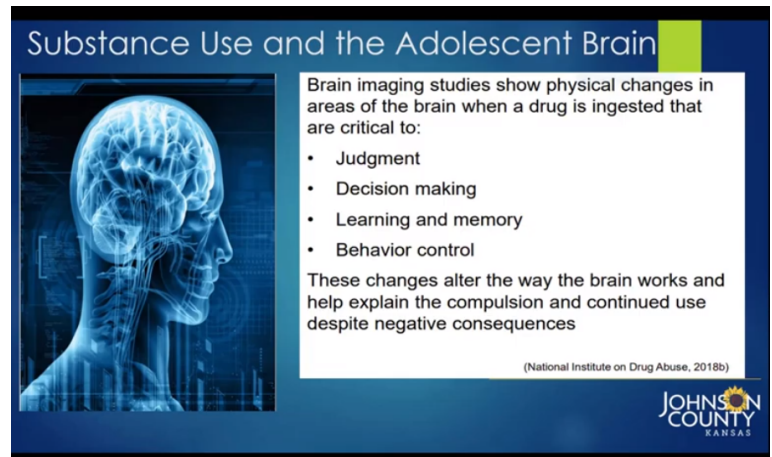


CORE WORK

Mobilizing & Planning

UCS fosters a framework for collaboration through Mobilizing and Planning. UCS convened joint meetings of the [Children's Coordinating Council \(CCC\)](#) and the [Transitional Age Youth \(TAY\) Planning Project](#) in 2021. In August, a presentation from Kansas Children's Services League provided an overview of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), outlining the long-term impact of the ACEs that are currently measured, as well as some experiences that are not included in the ACEs framework such as bullying, commercial sexual exploitation/trafficking, peer to peer violence, and racial disparities. The presentation then turned to how positive childhood

experiences might be used to mitigate the impact of ACEs and build resilience. In December, a speaker from the Johnson County Adolescent Center for Treatment addressed the impact of drugs on adolescent brains.



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. Nearly 49,000 Johnson County residents benefited from programs funded in part by the Alcohol Tax Fund in 2021 with jurisdictions allocated just under \$2 million to 22 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, \$372,276 was awarded to 14 agency programs. HSF grantees provided over 158,000 units of service to more than 44,000 Johnson County residents. These "units of service" included a full spectrum of programmatic interventions designed to offer support and build self-sufficiency and well-being. UCS also developed a new small grants program for 2022 to inclusively support small nonprofits.

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. For the 2021 grant year, local agencies were awarded \$888,125 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to support transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing projects. In addition to writing the collaborative application annually on behalf of local members, UCS is responsible for conducting regular meetings of the CoC membership and board, managing the CoC Rank and Review and the Point-In-Time count processes, and providing educational/best practices opportunities for all entities involved in serving our county's homeless population. Approximately 60 emergency shelter beds exist year-round for those experiencing homelessness in Johnson County, with almost 610,000 residents in 2021. In 2021, Lenexa and Shawnee responded to the need by instituting new ordinances, with proactive coordination with UCS and other CoC partners, to ensure their jurisdictions can be a part of efforts and effective responses for those who may experience homelessness in our community. Additionally, UCS, Johnson County Government, United Way of Greater Kansas City, and community agencies worked with the Kansas Housing Resource Center to connect federal funding supporting rental and utility assistance with those in need within Johnson County.

WEAVING A STRONG COMMUNITY: 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.



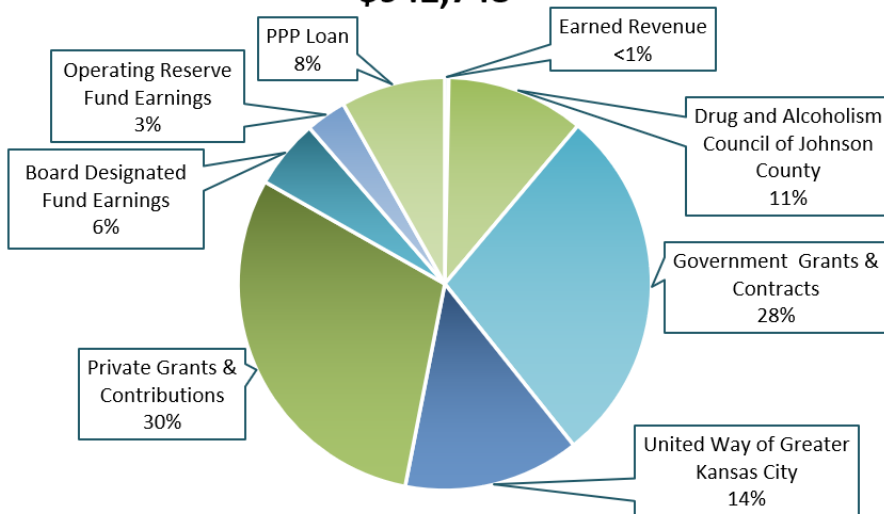
A single mother is currently raising a large family. Her youngest child attends the Wrap Around Care (WAC) program at **Growing Futures Early Education Center**, a **Human Service Fund** grantee. The mother works full-time to support the entire family on her own. She does not qualify to receive childcare subsidy from the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). She is always on time with pick up and drop off at Growing Futures, comes to all conferences and events and her child has excellent attendance. Because she does not qualify for a DCF childcare subsidy, she must pay the full WAC fees out of pocket, which is challenging some months. She has had a couple of months when she has needed some additional financial assistance in order to complete her fee payment. The scholarship support from the Human Service Fund has been a tremendous aid for this mother and her child and allowed them to continue to remain enrolled in the WAC program.



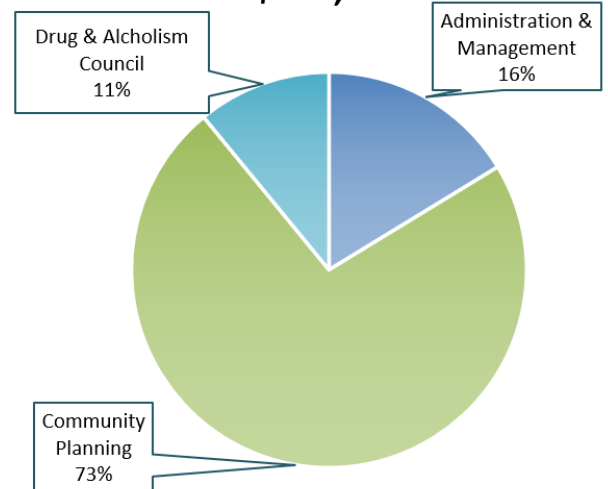
A mother had been living in a motel without running water with her husband and children for more than a month, working full-time as an employee of a railway system but unable to get ahead. She was working daily to juggle all of her responsibilities, but everything kept piling up until it became so out of control that she couldn't see a way out. Her youngest child had recently been removed from her custody. She would sometimes use methamphetamine to help her push through the day. She was referred to **KVC**, an Alcohol Tax Fund recipient, to complete a drug and alcohol assessment. During her 8-week treatment, she worked hard at her sobriety and at achieving her goals. Because KVC can offer flexible schedules with telehealth and in-home options, she was able to complete treatment without missing work, visitation, time with family, or any other obligations from her case plan. A couple of weeks after discharge from treatment, she was able to lease a house for her family.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Revenue \$942,748*



Expenses \$743,748



* Revenue includes grant income received in 2021 intended for use in 2022. Additionally, UCS received a PPP loan in 2020 which was forgiven in 2021, requiring the loan forgiveness to be reflected as 2021 income.

◆ Human Service Funds are held by UCS in a separate account and paid out to grantees twice a year once collected from contributing jurisdictions. Audit guidance indicates UCS no longer recognizes pass through grant dollars on its revenue and expense balance sheet. 2021 Grant Allocations to agencies totaled \$372,276.

✦ Audited Financials for 2021 will be available July 2022.

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FUNDING PARTNERS

THANK YOU TO OUR PLANNING PARTNERS



United Way
of Greater Kansas City

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CBIZ, Inc.	Johnson County CDBG	Mid-America Regional Council
CrossFirst Bank	Johnson County Community College Fdn.	Pickett, Chaney & McMullen LLP
Evergy, Inc.	Johnson County Court Administration	REACH Healthcare Foundation
The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation	Johnson County Mental Health	UMB Financial Corporation
Foulston Siefkin LLP	Kansas Health Foundation	United Methodist Church of the Resurrection
Health Forward Foundation	Kiewit	Wichita State University

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

\$1,000 & above

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Adam Hamilton
Thomas Herzog
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Charles and Angela Sutherland Fund
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Randy & Jona Vance
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Vanessa Vaughn West

JURISDICTION FUNDERS

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

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



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