



## **Advocating for ALICE 2018**

Celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, United Way of Frederick County (UWFC) fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community. Of particular interest is improving support systems for ALICE households throughout the region.

The January 2017 release of the ALICE Report for Maryland has changed the way that UWFC thinks about community needs. ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed) shows the true basic cost of living (otherwise known as the ALICE threshold) of each county in Maryland. The report suggests that Frederick County has the highest ALICE threshold of any jurisdiction in Maryland. Further, the data show that 32% of Frederick County households qualify as ALICE and are at risk of financial hardship, poverty and/or homelessness.

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### **Affordable housing options should be available to all Frederick County residents regardless of socioeconomic conditions.**

UWFC supports creative and effective programs and projects that will work to resolve Frederick County's affordable housing crisis. According to the Affordable Housing Council report, Frederick County is 5,700 affordable units short to meet current demand. The ALICE Report describes housing affordability in Frederick County as "Poor," the lowest possible rating. Furthermore, in future years, affordable housing credits through the QAP should be directed to Frederick County as a "Community of Opportunity."

### **The Frederick County community needs access to a 24-hour detox facility for drug addiction.**

UWFC supports the recommendation of the Behavioral Health Workgroup of the Frederick County Health Department's Local Health Improvement Plan to provide immediate and adequate access to detox services for Frederick County residents in crisis. Our communities continue to struggle with what has been declared both a state and national public health emergency of opiate abuse. Despite progress made introducing Naloxone to reduce the number of deaths by opiate overdoses in Frederick County, there has been a disturbing increase in deaths by overdose of synthetic opioids such as fentanyl (from two in 2013 to 49 in 2016).

### **Mandatory Opioid Addiction Treatment for Patients Treated with Naloxone Requires Thorough Review Before Proceeding.**

UWFC supports efforts by emergency responders to save lives by the utilization of Naloxone and supports efforts to ensure that appropriate treatment for individuals suffering from opioid addiction is provided. However, UWFC is concerned that mandatory treatment after a predetermined number of Naloxone treatments will have a counter effect and discourage calls to emergency services, thus increasing incidences of death from overdose. There is further concern about the location (with no detox facility in Frederick County) and cost of such treatment if it is required after a certain number of Naloxone treatments.

### **The Frederick County region needs a permanent family shelter.**

UWFC supports the Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs' search for a permanent location for its emergency family shelter. The current rotation of shelter between various church communities will be difficult to sustain into the future, and stability in shelter is critical for the families being served so they can identify permanent housing and needed supports as quickly as possible. A fixed, permanent location for the emergency family shelter would allow the Religious Coalition to serve more families and find permanent housing for an increased number of ALICE households.

### **Rural areas of Frederick County need increased access to affordable transportation options.**

UWFC supports increased bus routes to Emmitsburg, Thurmont and Brunswick thus enabling ALICE households to explore new employment and education opportunities, take advantage of public support mechanisms, support the needs of the growing senior population and receive appropriate medical care.

### **Maryland's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) should include access for younger workers and those not claiming dependents.**

UWFC supports lowering the state EITC age requirement to 18, increasing the income threshold to \$23,000 for single filers and increasing the state's EITC to 100% of the Federal EITC and 28% for filers with dependents. The policy would provide an average benefit of \$375 to 240,000 ALICE households.

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### **About United Way of Frederick County**

For nearly 80 years, United Way of Frederick County has been fighting for families and individuals to become self-sufficient by investing in the building blocks of a better life: education, financial stability, and health. Its work focuses on helping children and youth be successful in school and achieve their potential through education; helping people obtain the tools they need to become financially stable and independent; and ensuring our neighbors in need have access to healthy, nutritious food and healthcare.

UWFC partners include global, national and local businesses, nonprofits, government, civic and faith-based organizations, along with educators, health providers, senior citizens, students, and others. UWFC provides grants to local nonprofits, offers programs such as free tax preparation and matched savings, mobilizes volunteers, and engages in public policy advocacy.

UWFC strives to be a model of diversity, equity and inclusion. Our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and programs proudly reflect the Frederick County community, its many faces, cultures and walks of life without regard to socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and physical or mental disabilities. To learn more about United Way and how you can get involved, please visit [UnitedWayFrederick.org](https://www.unitedwayfrederick.org).

\* UWFC advocacy positions include, but are not limited to, those listed on this platform.