



United Way
of Central Carolinas

UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS

UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS MODEL

Launched in 2017, United Neighborhoods is changing the odds in disinvested communities by supporting resident-driven revitalization efforts that improve economic mobility, so that a person’s zip code no longer determines their future success in the Charlotte region.

RESIDENT EMPOWERMENT

We believe those most affected by a situation—neighborhood residents—are also best equipped to identify and advance solutions. Revitalization efforts are driven through community-specific strategies. Based on the needs identified by stakeholders within that unique community, it is the residents who:

- Identify support services needed
- Select organizations to provide services
- Allocate grant funds provided by United Way

COMMUNITY QUARTERBACKS

True neighborhood transformation requires a generational commitment. United Way offers flexible, multi-year support to each United Neighborhoods Community Quarterback, a local and embedded organization dedicated to engaging residents, building local leadership and coordinating partners and services. Community Quarterback organizations:

- Receive grant funding from United Way
- Have access to technical assistance
- Report on progress toward goals

BLOCK BUILDING GRANTS

United Way invests additional funds and provides professional development opportunities as “Block Building” grants. These grants support resident-led organizations that provide a voice through community engagement activities and resident-driven planning efforts to neighborhoods in the early stages of revitalization.



IN 2013, A HARVARD UNIVERSITY/UC BERKELEY STUDY RANKED THE CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG REGION 50TH OUT OF 50 IN ECONOMIC MOBILITY. MORE SPECIFICALLY, A CHILD BORN INTO POVERTY IN THIS AREA IS MORE LIKELY TO REMAIN IN POVERTY THAN IN ANY URBAN AREA IN THE COUNTRY.





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Nearly three dozen community partners are providing support to the residents of Grier Heights, Lakeview and Renaissance West, through the United Neighborhoods program. Responding to resident-identified community needs with place-based solutions, these partners offer everything from access to healthcare and legal advocacy, to afterschool programs and fresh fruits and vegetables.

RENAISSANCE WEST

Renaissance West is a community made up of newer mixed-income rentals (Renaissance) and a much older low-income rental complex (Little Rock Apartments). Over 80% of the 1,300 residents are young, single, African American women with young children. The United Neighborhoods Community Quarterback is Renaissance West Community Initiative (RWCI), which is focused on housing stability, economic mobility, youth education and community engagement.

- RWCI's Life Navigation case management program served more than 90 families in 2021
- Employment rate among Life Navigation participants increased from 63% to 71%, and for a portion of those participants annual income increased by an average of \$20,000

GRIER HEIGHTS

One of Charlotte's oldest African American neighborhoods, Grier Heights is home to more than 3,000 residents. With CrossRoads Corporation, Inc., as its Community Quarterback organization, this United Neighborhoods partner is focused on ensuring that the conditions comprising the social determinants of health – including education, health care, economic stability and the built environment – are in place in order to position the neighborhood for stability and success beyond revitalization.

- In 2021, CrossRoads provided more than 180 grants totaling \$146,000 to community residents to cover basic expenses like housing, food and utilities
- 89 students received academic support through the Grier Heights Community Center
- Two affordable housing units were developed for families living at or below the poverty line

LAKEVIEW

Located northwest of Charlotte's Center City area, Lakeview focuses on developing resident leadership through the work of its Community Quarterback – Lakeview Neighborhood Alliance (LNA). With its 3E Strategic Plan (Engage, Educate, Empower), the goals of the neighborhood include family stability, civic awareness, displacement prevention and economic opportunity.

- A newcomer to United Neighborhoods in 2022, LNA is piloting a Peer Learning Program which focuses on community organizational skill development, leadership, computer/technology skills, critical thinking, career development and racial equity
- Graduates of the Peer Learning Program are serving on LNA's board as well as the agency's staff

