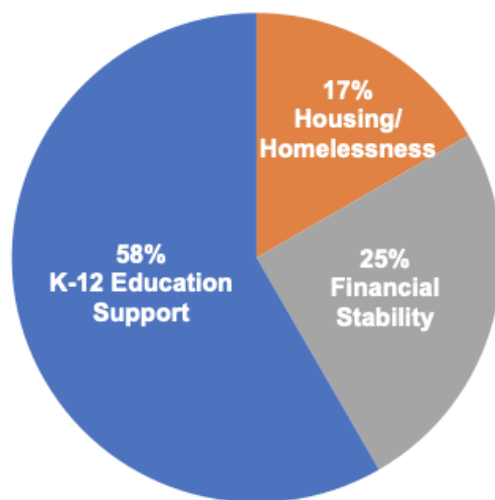


FY20 Opportunity Fund Overview and Highlights

United Way of Washtenaw County awards Opportunity Fund grants annually which supports programs, projects and initiatives benefiting people with low incomes, communities of color and groups deemed to be marginalized. In FY20, UWWC invested \$200,000 through this fund, and at the start of the pandemic in March, released restrictions on funding use to allow grantees to responsively attend to the impacts of COVID-19 on the people and communities in which they work.

Quick Facts

- **\$200,000**: Total awarded
- **13**: # of grants awarded
- **23%**: Grants to agencies led by people of color
- **62%**: Explicitly serving communities of color
- **54%**: Funding to Ypsilanti zip codes 48197/98
- **787**: # of people positively impacted



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For additional information about our Opportunity Fund efforts,
please visit uwgive.org or contact Bridget Herrmann, bherrmann@uwwashtenaw.org

FY20 Opportunity Fund Overview and Highlights

Narrative Questions Qualitative

Analysis and Summary

At the end of the project period, United Way staff meet with grantees to understand the impact of the funding that was granted. After qualitative analysis and coding, the following major and secondary themes arose from the Narrative portion of the final report.

What Grantees are most proud of when reflecting on their work made possible by this funding:

42% Ability to pivot services in response to the pandemic.

"I am most proud of thriving and surviving in a world of chaos, germs, and being able to keep our people afloat. We have continued life skills training and suicide prevention work. We did a series on racial injustice and healing, and equity. We have enhanced our EDI work for our mentors and will be helpful for the future and have helped our youth now." -Our House

"Most of all, we are proud of our flexibility. We were able to quickly pivot when the needs of our community changed and when our intended short-term transportation solution (Lyft Concierge) proved unreliable... The truth is that the crafting of solutions is an ongoing process, and we are confident we will continue to help more people with their transportation needs in more ways." -Friends in Deed

33% Increasing connection within the community.

"... There are tons of resources in our community and don't even tap into them. ATA gave \$17-\$20K worth of in-kind services. The bus seats would be empty anyway, and they let our kids sit there without fighting to get transportation. Phil Snyder gives away thousands of dollars and he bookmarked 15 for us. Everyone is doing a little more lifting and connecting resourcing."

-Neutral Zone

"... Most proud to be able to grow our programming and offer useful assistance for our clients as they work to find steady and meaningful employment... As a result of this grant and the commitment of staff time to this endeavor, we have both connected with some local businesses to receive regular job listings and connect with a professional job coach.."

-Faith in Action

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FY20 Opportunity Fund Overview and Highlights

Thinking about the future of this project/program/initiative, here's what lies ahead for next for Grantees:

68% Continue Programming

"The fall will look like virtual reads, distribution of boxes with partnership of 826, and launch of social enterprise activity." -Black Men Read

"... Continue fall 2020 in a hybrid fashion. We continue our commitment to employing staff members that possess life experiences that are relevant to youth." -UM-Telling It

17% Expand services

"BookPALS is expanding to include new schools in Detroit and Jackson. A new virtual model builds on last year's core elements and focuses on mitigating the academic and socio-emotional deficits resulting from the pandemic." -Children's Literacy Network

"... Develop more partnerships with garages, auto parts stores, and dealerships; find new methods of attracting more car donations; find alternative short-term transportation solutions by reaching out to local cab companies; and find a solution for those car donations that are far from scrap but are not candidates to be passed on for long-term reliability." -Friends in Deed

We ask Grantees to reflect on the most significant change is that they have observed through this funding:

58% Catalyze resources in response to changing needs

*"Listening to the community, responding to changing needs, coordinating new safety measures for volunteers, and delivering hospitality... If House Coordinator Sheri had needed to be out working elsewhere to pay her bills, then she would not have had the same time and energy to give to this."
-Journey of Faith Christian Church*

"The Covid-19 pandemic forced us to find new ways to communicate election information and other news that impacted our community, like the changing Census deadlines. The United Way funding allowed us to maintain an already important communication outlet and adjust it to fit a greater than expected need." -Ypsilanti District Library

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FY20 Opportunity Fund Overview and Highlights

17% Created deeper connections with community

"The funding provided by the United Way allowed us to help more people in more ways... We were able to help clients with car repairs beyond our previous \$200 threshold. We were also able to pass on more donated cars to clients because we had a budget big enough to repair more of the cars we received in donation to reliability. The monies also gave us the breathing room to create a full-fledged Transportation program in theory and in practice; find new solutions for our clients, and reach out in our community to find more partners. The monies also gave us the flexibility to respond to COVID." -Friends in Deed

"The most significant changes to the organization were 1) the ability to honor our commitment to DEI. The Telling It staff is more than ever reflective of the communities we serve, and 2) foundational to Telling It is a pedagogy that leads with a trauma-informed and strengths-aware approach to program delivery." -UM-Telling It

FY20 Opportunity Fund Grantees

A Brighter Way
Black Men Read
Children's Literacy Network
Faith in Action
Friends In Deed
Journey of Faith Christian Church

Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health
Neutral Zone
Our House
UM-Telling It
Washtenaw Intermediate School District
Ypsilanti District Library

For a full listing of Opportunity Fund grantees with descriptions of their work, please [click here](#).

For an overview of the investments made through the Opportunity Fund, please [click here](#).

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Last updated by J. Hoffman 11/23/2020