



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
- Determine grants through United Way funds

### 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 annually on progress of 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 50<sup>TH</sup> 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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From 2018-2020, nearly two dozen community partners provided support through the United Neighborhoods program. Whether helping families become financially stable and find affordable housing or preparing children to enter school ready to read and learn, the needs of these communities are unique.

## RENAISSANCE WEST

As a United Neighborhoods Community Quarterback, Renaissance West Community Initiative serves more than 1,300 residents through 334 mixed-income housing units and provides support services and programs that strengthen opportunities for career advancement, youth education, programs for seniors and access to economic mobility.

### EDUCATION



85% of children who graduated from the Howard Levine Child Development Center in 2019 were meeting developmental milestones in social emotional measures and early literacy



Third-Grade English Language Arts proficiency among children enrolled in the Renaissance West STEAM Academy increased from 11.6% in 2017-2018 to 23.6% in 2018-2019

### FINANCIAL STABILITY



80% of Renaissance West residents maintained employment; Little Rock Apartments resident employment increased from 42% to 71%



Working adults enrolled in the Family Self Sufficiency Program (available at Renaissance West) increased their median income from \$13,000 to \$22,000 in 2019



80% of Renaissance West residents retained housing, meeting the national average

\*Outcome data does not reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

## GRIER HEIGHTS

Today, Grier Heights is home to more than 3,000 residents. With CrossRoads Corporation serving as its Community Quarterback organization, Grier Heights is home to more than 3,000 residents. This United Neighborhoods partner is focused on engaging residents at all levels that position the neighborhood for stability and success beyond revitalization.

### EDUCATION



60 middle school children participated in "Bulldogs Matter" afterschool program



17 residents participated in HSE/GED classes held at the community center



Freedom School Partners doubled participation from previous years to 65 scholars

### FINANCIAL STABILITY



In response to community needs, CrossRoads completed construction on nine homes in Grier Heights, purchased and occupied by hard-working families there



Five residents and a member of another organization now serve in leadership roles between CrossRoads Board of Directors and Grier Heights Community Center Advisory Board



12 residents received certifications, job training and placement with support from Grace-Mar Services, Inc.

