

# Meet ALICE



## THE ALICE REPORT AND ITS PURPOSE

- ALICE refers to the population in our communities who are **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**. The *United Way ALICE Report: Florida*, conducted by Rutgers University, is the first statewide report to comprehensively illustrate the financial challenges of this population in each county.
- Researchers and policy makers know the federal poverty rate woefully underestimates the true scope of financial need in Florida yet they have struggled to identify a reliable alternative.
- Florida is quickly surpassing New York as the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest state yet that growth is coupled with an increasing percentage of families sliding down into poverty.
- United Way relies on research to understand the cause and scope of this financial slide. This Report provides objective data that can be used for serious policy and program planning in every arena and every community in Florida.

## KEY ALICE REPORT FINDINGS

- Nearly **1 in 3 Florida households** work hard, live above the Federal Poverty Limit and still cannot consistently afford the basics of housing, food, healthcare, childcare, and transportation.
- There are more than 3.2 million households in Florida who do not make enough to consistently afford the basics. This prevents them from saving to protect their family against an emergency.
- **46% of Volusia Households, 42% of Flagler Households** and 45% across Florida do not earn enough to consistently cover the basic living expenses highlighted by the ALICE Threshold.
- **Two thirds** of all **jobs** in FL pay **less than \$20 an hour** and most pay between \$10 and \$15 an hour. The jobs forecast shows that low-skill and low-paying jobs will dominate Florida's future if the economy continues on its current trajectory.
- There are systemic problems that will not be solved with a magic bullet – policymakers, academics, business and social service agencies need to work together to address long-term systemic change.

## ALICE POPULATION MATTERS

- **This is not a new population.** – We have always known hardworking people struggling to make ends meet.
- **Families are working hard and falling short.** – The Report sets an income threshold based on a Survival Budget. The health, safety and financial future of those below it are at risk every month.
- **Florida and our families need ALICE to succeed.** – ALICE educates our children, keeps us healthy and makes our quality of life possible. Our families, companies and economy cannot succeed if the number of hardworking families unable to afford the basics continues to grow.

## SUPPORTING MESSAGES

- **ALICE report provides a lens to better see working families.** – The Report helps us see and understand ALICE in our family, neighborhood, workplace and constituencies.
- **ALICE population leads Florida in giving and caring.** – Research on financial donations and caregiving continue to show that lower income families give a larger percentage of their discretionary income and act as unpaid caregivers more often than their wealthier neighbors.
- **Florida companies care about ALICE.** – Through philanthropy and volunteering with United Way, business leaders continue to demonstrate their concern and commitment to the ALICE population.
- **United Way has long worked with the ALICE population to build better lives.** – The Report brings donors, volunteers, businesses and others together to create even stronger strategies for success.

## WHAT IS UNITED WAY DOING FOR THE ALICE POPULATION ACROSS FLORIDA?

- Raising awareness that the ALICE population exists and is essential to Florida's economy.
- Utilizing data to evaluate programs, policies and systems that make it easier for ALICE to access opportunities to work hard and sustainably provide for their families and future.
- Collaborating with businesses, governments and community groups to identify and advocate for solutions addressing the underlying issues that hold our families, schools, businesses and communities back from the bright future our Sunshine State deserves.
- Florida's United Ways are joining together in a unified effort to advocate for State and Federal legislative issues of critical importance to the communities they serve throughout the state.

## WHAT IS UNITED WAY DOING FOR ALICE IN VOLUSIA & FLAGLER COUNTIES?

United Way of Volusia-Flagler Counties invests in the building blocks for a better life - Education, Income, Health, and Basic Needs which positively impacts people's lives. The ALICE Report is designed to help raise Awareness, Access and Advocacy for those in our community that United Way and its Partner Agencies are already serving and to help to the ALICE population from slipping into poverty.

### Educational Success

- ReadingPals – nearly 100 volunteers work in more than 6 sites through to help ensure prekindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup> grade students learn to read so they can read to learn in the coming years.
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library – United Way has lead the way to bring this program to Flagler and soon Volusia County to give parents and children free books; creating lifetime readers and learners.
- Thrive by Five – United Way collaborates with partners to support young children and their families to ensure that children thrive by age five and start school well cared for and ready to learn.
- Many other funded programs provide after school tutoring, supports for children with special needs, early education and other services that promote educational opportunities for all.

### Financial Stability

- United Way's Campaign for Working Families – a comprehensive prosperity initiative helping individuals and families progress along a path to prosperity by Earning, Keeping and Growing family income and assets.
- Other United Way lead programs include MoneySmart Classes, VITA Free Tax Program, BankOn Program, Assets for Independence and Emergency Food and Shelter Grant Distribution Program.
- Many other funded programs provide emergency services, temporary and transitional housing, job and life-skills training to help families and individuals get on the path to financial stability.

### Improving People's Health

- Improving access to health and wellness programs and services is a key priority for United Way. We have partnered with local governments and health care providers to expand our 2-1-1 to include more health and wellness services and programs.
- Healthy Flagler and Healthy Volusia Initiatives – working with local partners to help ensure local access to help education, programs and services.
- Health Care Program Referrals – those looking to improve their health can now dial 2-1-1 to get connected to smoking cessation, diabetes management, and other educational programs.
- Many other funded programs that help community members become physical and mentally healthy, provide substance abuse treatment and prevention, and encourage healthy living habits in children.

## GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

There are many ways to support those who are working hard and falling short. For more information about these initiatives and additional opportunities visit [unitedwayvfc.org/alice](http://unitedwayvfc.org/alice)