

# Executive Director Report

## **Alisha Friday, current Executive Director**

I had the honor to step into the executive director role for the United Way of Lincoln County in May 2021. The first month was spent working alongside Kathy Vinzant, former executive director, learning and training. While Covid-19 was still very prevalent, there was an effective system in place for United Way to equitably serve the needs caused by the pandemic.

My first 6 months with the United Way has primarily been focused on continuing to partner with local organizations to serve the current needs caused by Covid and how we reimagine and rebuild for the future. We have officially launched a Strategic Plan to guide our work over the next 3 years. This will include a full community stakeholder analysis, development of goals and objectives and a revitalization of our mission, vision, and values.

In a year of adversity, United Way served as the glue to bring Lincoln County individuals and organizations together to serve a common goal and care for people. I am honored and humbled to follow incredible leaders like Kathy Vinzant to continue this work!



Alisha Friday  
Executive Director

## **Kathy Vinzant, former Executive Director:**

When covid first hit Lincoln County, our schools were having a hard time meeting the needs of food insecurity; children who relied on the school lunch program as a singular source of food were now at home for virtual learning, leaving many families without transportation and food access. United Way stepped up to help set up a food drive at Lincoln County School's Central Office asking community members to donate needed food items for students and families. United Way later partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to collect additional food for the western part of the county. Once word got out through the media about the rising community needs, local businesses and churches stepped up and donated personal care items, supplies, food, and funding to help the United Way serve those in crisis. Through the community's generous donations, the United Way collected \$96,000, including \$50,000 that came from a board decision to move funds from our allocation fund into the emergency fund. United Way was able to partner with Food Lion, Ingles, Harris Teeter and Publix to purchase bulk food items, and were blessed to work with a local farmer that donated potatoes, strawberries and more. Several mass food distribution drives to provide food to students and families in need across Lincoln County were conducted in partnership with Christian Ministries, Lincoln County Schools, United Way of Lincoln County Partner Agencies, and the USDA to meet the emergency food needs of individuals and families who would not have otherwise had their needs met.

Due to the financial struggles brought on by the pandemic, calls began pouring in from those needing help with power bills, water bills, transportation, food, and insurance payments, and then people began reaching out for provisions to keep themselves safe from the virus including masks, hand sanitizer, and other cleaning supplies. The United Way and the community were blessed with generous donations from local churches and businesses that helped to fill many material needs. Through our previously held partnerships with other community organizations and non-profits, the United Way began distributing emergency funding throughout the county to help those in need. FEMA then began providing additional relief funding, so I led the EFSP committee and received funding for two of our partners.

It truly took the entire board, staff, and community to get through 2020 and 2021. We are blessed to have such great people that work and care for the United Way and the people we serve. Our board is strong, and we have great staff to continue the great work of the United Way.

## **A Word from the Chair of the Board.**

As we reflect back on 2020-2021 year at United Way of Lincoln County (UWLC), our hearts are filled with thankfulness. It takes special and generous people to improve the community we live in. The success we maintained during the continuing pandemic in our funding cycle proved that you are those kinds of people, people that invest in the well-being of our most vulnerable neighbors.

The 2020-2021 United Way annual year has been another difficult year still marred by the pandemic. While that's not news to anyone, it is important to acknowledge the continuing challenges that individuals, communities, schools, businesses, government, etc. are continuing to face due to Covid-19. Like all organizations, we planned how to affect the greatest positive change at the beginning of the year with the resources that unselfish people have provided the UWLC. Our continued response to the crisis, our agencies, other nonprofit organizations, those in need, and our ability to be resilient and creative in how we connect our community members and provide resources has been the true test of our commitment to our vision – to connect people, resources and ideas to create a thriving community characterized by financial stability, educational success, and healthy community members.

With the 2020-2021 year we entered into an executive director search driven by the retirement of Kathy Vinzant. Kathy provided nine years of strong leadership in strengthening the UWLC Board of Directors and engaging the businesses of the community in meeting the needs of the UWLC agencies. She always sought to make a healthier community by initiating impact programs and services such as the Asbury Resource Center (ARC)/West Lincoln ARC, Oak Lawn - community garden, basketball court, soccer fields, pavilion, and Boy Scout program, Stuff the Bus Campaign, and the Lending Library.

After several months searching for an executive director we selected Alisha Dameron Friday to be the next executive director. The board was confident in her selection and felt the UWLC would be well-positioned under her guidance and leadership. Alisha was employed by the YMCA of Greater Charlotte where she served in many leadership positions with her last position as Multi-branch Senior Director of Membership Experience. She attended Lincoln County Schools and earned a B.S. in Communications/Public Relations from Appalachian State University.

What's next for UWLC? We have begun a strategic planning process to ensure our most vulnerable neighbors achieve their full potential and that we continue to maximize the investment of donor dollars into the most effective basic needs of health, education and financial stability. The purpose of the strategic planning process will be to develop specific goals for the next three years to support maximizing the investment of our faithful donors and how we'll achieve those goals. The process we will be using involves stepping back from the UWLC day-to-day operations and asking where the UWLC is heading and what our priorities need to be.

Please review our annual report for a more in-depth picture of our year in review.

Your investment in UWLC is changing the lives of many people in our community, thank you.

With sincere gratitude,  
Fred Jarrett, Chair  
United Way of Lincoln County

## **Financial Report for Year Ended March 31, 2021**

The United Way of Lincoln County remained financially stable throughout the year ended March 30, 2021. It was a year of many unknowns due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The United Way ended the year with total net assets basically flat from the previous year at \$427,000. This speaks volume to the support we have received from our donors and the diligent work of our staff and board to keep management and general expenses down. Over 59% of the United Way support is given through employee workplace giving, 25% is from corporate gifts and over 4% from our community donors. Over \$45,600 was collected for our COVID-19 fund, \$35,600 collected during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021 and \$10,000 during March of 2020. These funds, along with funds set aside by the United Way, were used to support members of our community who were affected by COVID-19. A total of \$51,800 was used for this cause during the year ended March 31, 2021. Although, the year-ended March 31, 2021 was not a record setting year, it was a positive year financially for the United Way of Lincoln County in one of the most trying years for our community.

Lindsey B. Huffman  
Board Treasurer and Finance Chair