

**United Way of Kennebec Valley
KVCAP**

The following is a success story from KVCAP's **South End Teen Center (SETC)**, a partner program of United Way of Kennebec Valley. %

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Elliot began attending the SETC in 2014. The Teen Center provided Elliot with homework assistance and mentoring, and he took advantage of using scholarships through SETC to attend the Heritage Tour and to take driver's education. Elliot also was active in the Youth Outreach Program, working with the coordinator to get a worker's permit, design a resume, and obtain summer work opportunities. Elliot is now a senior at University of Maine, Augusta studying pre-law and is working as a youth worker at the Teen Center giving back to other teens in the community.%



Legal Services for the Elderly
United Way of Kennebec Valley

The following success story is from **Legal Services for the Elderly** (LSE), a partner program of United Way of Kennebec Valley. %

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A man in his seventies contacted LSE for help. The man had received a notice to vacate his home. His wife had handled much of their financial affairs, and she had recently died. The Elder Abuse Law Project attorney investigated and learned the man had deeded his home and land to a neighbor with the promise that the neighbor would help take care of him. The neighbor was now trying to evict him. %

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The Project Attorney contacted the attorney who represented the neighbor and explained the plan to fight the eviction and take legal action to reverse the transfer. Soon after, the neighbor agreed to deed the property back. The Project Attorney also assisted in a referral for a private attorney to establish an agent under a Power of Attorney to establish a trustworthy person who could help with bills and finances. Finally, the Project Attorney made a referral to the local area agency on aging for a benefits check-up to ensure this individual was getting all of the benefits he was eligible to receive. %

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UWKV and LSE would like to thank donors for providing this local man with the support he needed. %

**United Way of Kennebec Valley
Southern Kennebec Child Development Corp.**

The following success story is from Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation (SKCDC), a partner program of United Way of Kennebec Valley. %

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Donna was an expectant mother when she enrolled in SKCDC's home-based Early Head Start program. At the time, Donna was homeless and living in a local shelter. As a woman in recovery from a substance use disorder, Donna's needs were complex and regular visits from her home visitor supported a healthy pregnancy. She received education and support in areas such as parenting, housing, WIC (Women, Infants and Children), breastfeeding, safety, and legal issues. %

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Donna now is the mother of twins who have participated in full-day early care and education at SKCDC's Magic Years Center and are attending preschool at SKCDC's Webster Head Start Center. With personal determination and the comprehensive services provided by Early Head Start, Donna is living in an apartment and attending college. Through the years, Donna has participated in SKCDC Head Start program governance and served on the Parent Policy Council. %

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UWKV and SKCDC would like to thank donors for providing Donna with the support she needed.



Global Impact, Partners In Health



Tuberculosis Treatment Continue to Improve Lives, Well-Being in Lesotho

Itumeleng Nkhabu, a 48-year-old widow, contracted tuberculosis (TB) in 2003. Then again in 2011. That was not the last time she got sick.

In 2018, she was diagnosed with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), a severe form of the respiratory disease.

She soon began standard TB treatment, which typically includes up to two years of daily injections with a long list of side effects including acute psychosis and permanent deafness. The treatment is costly and often ineffective.

But there was more effective treatment on the horizon.

A few days later Nkhabu was admitted to Partners In Health (PIH)--supported Botšabelo Hospital in Maseru, Lesotho—the country's only hospital for people with MDR-TB. About three weeks later, she enrolled in the endTB study.

The goal of Expanding New Drug Market for Tuberculosis (endTB) is to improve treatment for patients with the deadly disease. UNITAID funds the collaborative effort, which is a partnership among PIH, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), and Interactive Research and Development.

Nkhabu is one of 81 patients who enrolled in the endTB study in Lesotho since 2018. Hundreds of additional patients are enrolled in eighteen countries, including Kazakhstan and Peru—where PIH

works.

While on the standard treatment plan, Nkhabu recalls taking 27 pills per day. In the endTB trial, she takes fewer pills with less side effects. She continued treatment for a year and 10 months.

Medication wasn't the only form of support Nkhabu received.

Providing support beyond medical care is a key component of PIH's work. It's called "social support" and includes essentials such as food, housing, and transportation.

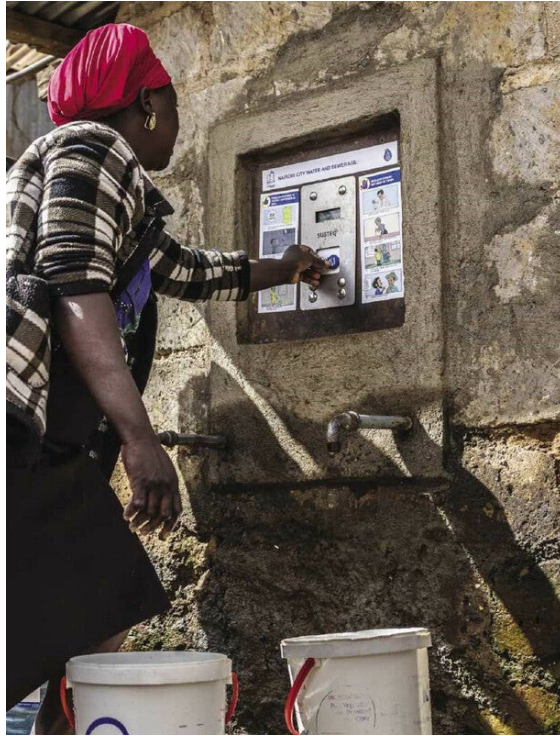
Upon being discharged from the hospital, Nkhabu continued with monthly check-ups. PIH provided free transportation to and from the hospital because she was too sick to drive herself. In between check-ups, nurses regularly visited Nkhabu at her home and provided food to take with her medications. Nurses would call her too.

"When I would receive a call, it gave me hope to continue to push and work together with the hospital staff to get well," says Nkhabu. "They believed that I could recover even when I had no hope."

Nkhabu recovered and is now leading a happy, healthy life again.

Since the introduction of oral medicines—namely bedaquiline and delamanid—TB treatment has greatly improved for many patients. endTB is leading the way in finding new treatment regimens. As the effort expands access and exposes demand, more patients will hopefully find relief from the disease in the coming years.

"When patients are valued, respected, and [heard], the results become outstanding," says Dr. Kunda Kwabisha Mikanda, DR -TB senior medical officer and site principal clinical investigator, who oversees endTB work in Lesotho.



Starting Small to Create Large Interventions

Oxfam America

Veronica Wambui, a water vendor in Korogocho, Kenya, was faced with a stark reality when the pandemic hit. Members of her community—an informal settlement with little infrastructure—could no longer pay for water, which put her livelihood at risk. But Wambui soon learned that Oxfam partner Koch Hope was providing water to her settlement as part of its COVID-19 response, and that Koch Hope needed vendors. Wambui signed on as a contractor, which not only kept her business afloat, but also allowed her to provide an essential service to her community.

Oxfam and Koch Hope began this work in April 2021 as part of a project called Tuko Pamoja (We Are in This Together). Tuko Pamoja is part of a larger effort supported by #StartSmall, a philanthropic initiative launched by Jack Dorsey, Block Head, Chairman, and cofounder of Block Inc. In the last year, funding from #StartSmall supported projects to address food security, health and hygiene, and livelihoods in Kenya and Burkina Faso.

Through a voucher system, people in Wambui's community secured a larger volume of clean water than before—up to four jerrycans per day for three months. Wambui's cash flow improved so much that she was able to open a bigger shop. "I was able to pay school fees ... for my child and put food on the table without much struggle," she said.

In addition to meeting humanitarian needs, Tuko Pamoja also addressed threats to the lives and livelihoods of survivors and people at risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Cases soared during the pandemic: data from Healthcare Assistance Kenya shows a 300 percent increase in reported cases between March and April 2020 alone. Now, more than 200 survivors in Korogocho and another settlement, Mukuru, have received counseling services and cash assistance that can be used for any purpose, such as paying medical bills. Program participants reported a greater feeling of dignity after receiving counseling.



PINE TREE SOCIETY

discovering abilities together

Back to School: Don't go it alone. Pine Tree Society's case managers can help.

Back to school is a major transition for all families with school-age children. For parents of children with special needs, good planning and consistent support can help make the transition run smoothly for the child and the entire family.

That's where case management can help.

"Z" Smith is a Children's Case Manager at Pine Tree Society and experiences firsthand every day the difference case management makes for families.



"Families often feel isolated and don't know what's available to them," Z said. "When parents come to us, they are happy to have someone to help. They've been doing it on their own for so long, we help take the pressure off and it's a relief."

Z helps parents learn about and acquire all the services their children need at school, at home and in their community.

"I go with parents to the various meetings and take notes. Families can feel anxious and there is a lot of information to process. I ask questions that the family might not think of and, as the school year progresses, I follow up all along the way."

Z coordinates and communicates with the child's team at school to ensure the IEP is being followed and visits during the year to monitor progress and provide educational observations of how the child is interacting and functioning in the school environment.

"I make sure everyone is on the same page and has the same goals. If something's not happening, I reach out and make sure that it does. Once a month, I meet face-to-face with the child, and often the family"

From simple things to more complex, Z does whatever she can to support the family.

"I have one mom who didn't know what she needed to get for school supplies," she recalled. "I took the load off by calling the school to find out, then reached out to a local organization to request supplies and back to school clothing."



Transitioning to Kindergarten is a particularly big moment in a family's life. Z sets up meetings with school staff and joins the family to walk around the school, meet the teachers and see the classrooms. She finds it helps families to have someone there to support them.

The transition from high school to adulthood is equally big.

"Planning the transition from high school to adult life is the perfect time to partner with Pine Tree Society's Case Managers," Z concluded. "We're experts in individualized planning for transition and are here to help break the process down into manageable steps. Our highly experienced team knows the resources available in Maine and New England and will support you through every step at school and beyond."

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF), to be featured. Below is a client story and a picture to go with it.

“Wow! Our students were so thrilled to choose their own books to keep. It was amazing to see how excited they were to take their books home and read them. Because of the books and resources my students received from RIF, every one of them, without exception, will be able to practice reading this summer. Not only that, but they will be motivated to do so because they will have access to books that they actually want to read.”



The Power of Collaborative Fundraising to Make Change

By the MWL Education Fund

August 23, 2023

MaineShare is not just an organization - it is at its heart a coalition, a group of partners working together toward a shared goal. That goal is a more just, more vibrant, and more equitable Maine. Our members recognize that while individually we may work on environmental health, or anti-violence, or racial or gender equity, collectively, we work on justice. And when we do that work together, we all benefit and build a stronger Maine.

That's part of what makes the MaineShare model so powerful. MaineShare may seem like a simple workplace giving campaign. What it really is though is an acknowledgement that when we each chip in a small amount over time and pool it with the contributions of others, it adds up to more than any of us could imagine or build alone.

This is how our work for social change happens too. Our organization - the Maine Women's Lobby Education Fund - focuses on gender equity. We do this through coalition building, such as the Maine Paid Leave Coalition, which just convened 40 partners to help build a system of paid leave for all Mainers, and programs like Girls Day at the State House, which has opened the doors of the State House to girls and gender expansive youth for over 27 years. We know our work is important, but we also know that it doesn't happen separately from issues like climate change and racial equity. Being a partner in MaineShare helps us be part of a connection of diverse organizations which together ARE building that brighter Maine across all of these intersecting issues.

That's also why most of our team members make gifts to MaineShare. We know that one small contribution adds up to a tremendous force, which fuels our own work, the work of our partners, and provides a model for action and activism across our state. MaineShare is an inspiring example of shared power and a collaborative approach to fundraising. This aligns with our values and our vision for how we build more equity in Maine, and we're so proud to be a part of it as both a workplace and a beneficiary. We hope you will join us, and help fuel the work toward our shared future.

Wreaths Across America

Last December, Wreaths Across America Day took place today at 3,702 participating locations across the country. Our nation's heroes were remembered as each name was said aloud and honored as over two million volunteers, a third of whom were children, helped place more than 2.7 million veterans' wreaths on headstones of our fallen across the country. At Arlington National Cemetery specifically, 257,000 veterans' wreaths were placed by more than 28,000 volunteers.

Wreaths Across America continues to grow - more than 15% each year, consistently - because of the support of local communities, dedicated volunteers, generous sponsors, essential truck drivers, area officials, and members of the media who come together in unity throughout the year to support those who have protected our freedom. Each person has played an important part in the mission to Remember the fallen, Honor those who serve, and Teach the next generation the value of freedom.

This year's National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023.



United Way
of Southern Maine



United for Child Care: Molly's Story

Like many families, Molly and Sam started their search for child care before their daughter was born. After two years of waiting, Sam decided to stay home as Violet's primary caregiver while Molly continued to work full-time. However, sudden health complications meant Sam could no longer fill that role. They needed to find a spot for Violet—fast.

Fortunately, Youth and Family Outreach (YFO) had a place for them. YFO provides high-quality, reliable child care to 58 children, six weeks to five years of age. They prioritize enrolling families that are at or below the federal poverty line, born to teen parents, are unhoused, or are from immigrant or refugee families. With support from United Way of Southern Maine, 60% of their spots are for children from low-income households while 40% are for non-low-income households. The skilled teachers at YFO nurture children with rich interactions, anti-racist practices, and high-quality early learning experiences.

"Having my child at Youth and Family Outreach has provided safe, high-quality child care and education. It's plugged us into the YFO community. I've met so many other people and children at YFO who we would not normally be connected to," says Molly.

Having child care meant that Molly could continue to pursue her career and Sam could seek treatment. It meant that Violet could get critical social-emotional development and be better prepared to enter school. Because of YFO, their family was connected to a wider community of neighbors that they would otherwise not have been connected to.

The benefits are vast, but the reality is that high-quality child care is out of reach for many families. 50% of child care centers in Maine have waiting lists. YFO's waiting list is now more than 150 children long. At the same time, nearly 60% of child care centers have staff shortages. YFO currently has one classroom closed because they cannot hire new staff.

“Our teachers are doing the most important job in the world,” says Camelia Babson-Haley, Executive Director of Youth and Family Outreach. “When someone invests in early childhood, we reduce the likelihood that someone will be imprisoned. We reduce the likelihood that somebody will be a homeless adult and we increase the chances that these little people will graduate from high school.”

United Way of Southern Maine invests in YFO, and other child care centers and programs, so that more children in Southern Maine can get a strong start. 80-90% of brain development happens in the first five years, so early learning sets the foundation for a child’s future development and success. United Way also advocates for better pay and benefits for educators at the state level and invests in professional development so that more individuals can enter the workforce. Last year, 81 local individuals received their Certificate in Child Development, thanks to United Way support.

[Watch Molly’s story.](#)

All Maine families deserved access to high-quality, reliable child care. Help us make that a reality for our community with a [contribution today.](#)

Led the Fight for Greater Utility Accountability

For months, Acadia Center worked with the Governor's Office, legislators, the Public Advocate, environmental groups, and others to expand the scope and impact of An Act Regarding Utility Accountability and Grid Planning for Maine's Clean Energy Future. Acadia Center introduced language that implements our RESPECT regulatory reform framework which seeks to end conflicts of interest in energy planning and orient decisions towards comprehensive review of viable clean energy options through a process involving stakeholder review and transparency. RESPECT recommends that states should:

- Conduct independent and comprehensive distribution system planning that incorporates meaningful stakeholder input, including voices that have been ignored to date; and
- Separate "planners" and "owners" by creating a separate, neutral planning entity that is designed to look for solutions beyond utility boundaries and across fuels.

Acadia Center believes that an independent planning authority, responsible for coordinated planning to electrify and decarbonize, would be the best option for states to achieve ambitious net zero greenhouse gas emissions reduction requirements and meet consumer and equity goals. LD 1959 represents considerable progress in holding utilities accountable to consumer, climate, and public interest goals and initiating serious integrated grid planning for a reliable, clean, and affordable electricity grid.

Maine has set the example by embracing an all-encompassing, longterm, strategic grid planning process to modernize the state's electricity and engaging communities in designing, building, and operating a clean energy grid of the future.

