



UNITED FOR ALICE: INFORMING DIALOGUE, IMPACTING LIVES

Modest Beginnings

Morris County, New Jersey, is widely recognized as one of the wealthiest counties in the country. But in 2009, United Way of Northern New Jersey was hearing and seeing a different story. Digging deeper, this United Way revealed a struggling demographic of all ages and ethnicities, hidden in plain sight.

ALICE® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) sheds light on the workers who are the engine keeping our nation's economy running, despite not affording the basics themselves. Comprising nearly one-third of U.S. households, they earn income above the Federal Poverty Level – which disqualifies them from most types of government assistance – but less than what it costs to make ends meet. While such hardship is pervasive, households of color are disproportionately ALICE.

Enter United For ALICE

It was clear that action needed to be taken to improve life for these financially fragile ALICE households – and [United For ALICE](#) accepted the challenge. Founded and fueled by United Way of Northern New Jersey, United For ALICE is a U.S. research organization driving solutions to financial hardship since first sounding the alarm in 2009. Since then, more than 600 United Ways, corporations, nonprofits, and foundations have joined what has become a grassroots movement in [31 states and the District of Columbia](#).

Products Designed to Empower

To inform the dialogue about the growing ALICE crisis and how it affects us all, United For ALICE produces a number of [national](#) and [state-level](#) reports, [fact sheets](#), and [interactive tools](#). The culmination of rigorous data collection and analysis, these products are based on unbiased data that is replicable, regularly updated, sensitive to local context, and, importantly, actionable. Its newest products include:

- [ALICE in the Crosscurrents: An Update on Financial Hardship in the U.S.](#), which explores how ALICE households fared in 2022 amidst competing economic forces, as well as trends in hardship over time
- [ALICE Economic Viability Dashboard](#), which reveals the economic and community conditions of people struggling financially at national, state, and local levels



[UnitedForALICE.org](https://www.UnitedForALICE.org) | [@United4ALICE](https://twitter.com/United4ALICE)

By securing racial and economic equity for ALICE we can improve life for all.



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- [ALICE Essentials Index](#), which tracks over time the rising cost of essentials, including housing, child care, food, health care, transportation and a smartphone plan
 - [United For ALICE Wage Tool](#), an interactive tool that illustrates the mismatch between wages and the cost of living across the country

A Proven Methodology

Unlike the one-size-fits-all model of the Federal Poverty Level, the ALICE data reflects the actual costs of a Household Survival Budget at the county level and how many households earn below that amount. The budget consists of the [lowest cost options](#) for housing, food, child care, health care, a smartphone, and transportation.

The [ALICE methodology](#) was originally developed by National Director Stephanie Hoopes, Ph.D., who continues to lead a [team of research experts](#). It is reviewed and updated biennially by United For ALICE and a [Research Advisory Committee](#) in each of the partner states, which totals more than 300 external experts.

Impactful Partnerships

In addition to the United Way partners in more than half of the United States, United For ALICE has proudly partnered with a number of government entities, local health care systems, schools, nonprofit organizations, and businesses nationwide. Fueled by the ALICE data, these partners are working to make a significant impact on the lives of low-income households. They include, to name just a few:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- Entergy Corporation
- Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
- FEMA
- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Independent Sector
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Virginia Community Colleges
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation

ALICE on the National Stage

The ALICE movement has built strong momentum. ALICE has been covered in such major media outlets as [The Wall Street Journal](#), [CBS News](#), [Business Insider](#), and [The Washington Post](#). In addition, Dr. Hoopes was invited to testify during a 2021 [Congressional roundtable](#) about food insecurity and the benefits cliff.

Expanding Reach Through New Programs

This growing movement has sparked innovative programs with the potential to break ground in securing equity for low-income households. [United In Care](#) is a philanthropy-driven, data-based pilot designed to make quality, affordable child care accessible to ALICE families in New Jersey. [United For ALICE@Work](#) builds dynamic workforce strategies with employers that foster successful outcomes for their businesses and employees. And the [National ALICE Advisory Council](#) is leading the way for change on a broader scale, with members who are trailblazers for policy change and community impact nationwide.

Working Together for a Brighter Future for ALICE

United For ALICE is challenging norms to advance a future in which ALICE households can thrive. By uniting with visionary leaders and influencers across the United States, we are making ALICE a household name and helping ensure that all workers are afforded the opportunity to realize financial stability, lead healthy lives, and access a quality education for their children.
