

45
YEARS



Urban League of
The Upstate



2017

Annual Report

Dear Urban League of the Upstate Supporter,

Our 45th year has been filled with excitement and successes. We're excited by the opportunities we see for our program participants. Graduating students are entering a better economy, and as a whole, we're seeing rapid job growth of the Upstate.

Yet, we've been given new sets of challenges. Gentrification can create new neighborhoods but also displace residents. Affordable housing needs are at an all-time high. And as many companies look to develop in the Upstate, more qualified workers are needed to fill in-demand positions. Housing, Education, and Workforce Retraining programs are growing needs in our community.

The Urban League of the Upstate is needed now more than ever. Our Right Step program for juvenile diversion has been featured by local media and honored by Greenville Women Giving as we aim to nearly double the program's capacity going into this year. And, we awarded \$200,000 in scholarships through the MLK Dream Weekend.

We were honored to host the Opening Reception of the Clemson University: Men of Color Summit, a national education event highlighting the challenges African-American males face in achieving higher education goals, featuring National Urban League President Marc Morial. Our Whitney M. Young, Jr. Vintage Hollywood Gala had one of the highest rates of attendance in recent years. And our Spartanburg office celebrated their 20th year of helping our community by relocating to the C.C. Woodson Community Center where our staff could be closer to those who need our help most. We introduced two summer camps called Urban Girls Rock that support high school African-American females to find career paths, social connections, and celebrate heritage.

Our future depends on the investment you make today. Your membership and support allows us to serve more individuals, stabilize families, and invest in their future. Follow us on social media. Join us at our events. Help us to give a hand up to those most in need.

Yours in the Movement,



Jil Littlejohn
President & CEO



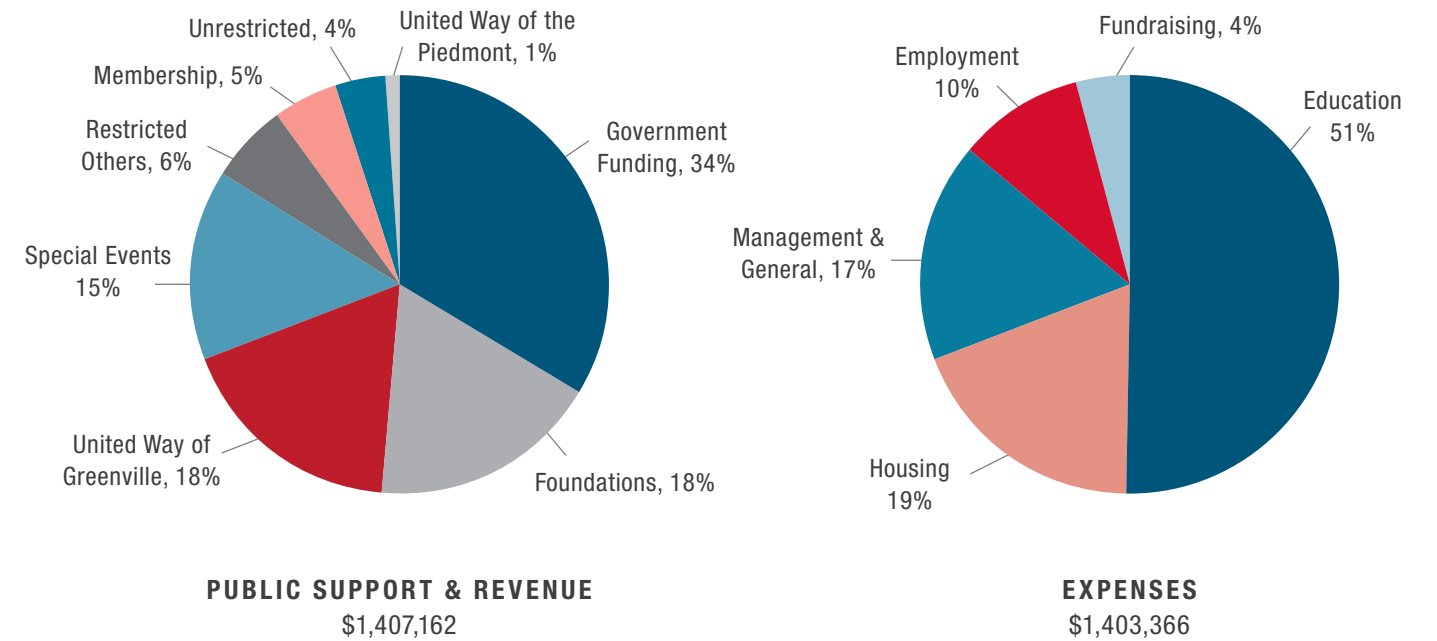
Dr. Keith Miller
Board Chair 2016-17

Our Board Members

The following business are represented on the Urban League of the Upstate Board. We thank them for their support.



Financials



Who We Help

The Urban League of the Upstate has offices in Greenville and Spartanburg, serving approximately 2,000 youth and adults from across the Upstate annually. Research from MDC's Network for Southern Economic Mobility underscores the importance of the Urban League's programs and services in helping people move out of poverty and aid at-risk populations. Our core services help in areas of Education, Housing, and Employment.

EDUCATION SERVICES

Our education programs provide year-round educational and mentoring services, tutoring, enrichment, and college application support to students ages 14-18 who are at risk for school failure. Project Ready works with at-risk high school students for college and career-readiness to provide tutoring and mentoring to complete high school and their career path post high school. On Saturdays, Level Up adopted and foster children who have special needs gather for assistance and socialization. In Union, our 21st Century After School Learning program guides 3rd – 5th graders who are struggling with grades, truancy, discipline issues and more. Right Step is a juvenile diversion program. For students who have their first misdemeanor, we provide mentoring and guidance to progress positively out of the legal system.

HOUSING

Home ownership provides family stability and protects against rising costs in rent. We offer first time homebuyer education and financial education workshops. We also assist with foreclosure prevention by helping families to restructure finances, stay in their home, protect property value and avoid loss. We provide affordable housing options to seniors in need through Gandy Allmon.

EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Our job readiness program is designed to ease the transition into the workplace for those unemployed or underemployed. Our participants are often individuals who are re-entering the workforce after a period of time or new graduates entering the job market. We offer a variety of workshops including Resume Creation, Interview Skills, and Conflict Resolution. We also offer Fiber Optics and CAST workforce development programs.



Urban League's Community Impact



PROJECT READY COLLEGE & CAREER

300

STUDENTS MOVED TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL



304

HOURS OF EDUCATION TRAINING PROVIDED TO AT-RISK STUDENTS



135

TEENS PARTICIPATED IN TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS

RIGHT STEP JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAM

199

ONE-ON-ONE COUNSELING SESSIONS PROVIDED TO JUVENILE OFFENDERS



100%

OF JUVENILES DEMONSTRATED MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN ATTITUDE AND/OR LEARNING



0

JUVENILES WHO RE-OFFENDED WITHIN 1 YEAR OF PROGRAM COMPLETION

21ST CENTURY AFTER SCHOOL LEARNING



613

HOURS OF EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDED TO 133 STUDENTS



95

LEARNING-BASED ACTIVITIES OFFERED

277

PARENT COUNSELING SESSIONS HOSTED

100%

OF STUDENTS ENROLLED MOVED TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL



EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

150+

CLIENTS CONNECTED TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



144

HOURS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THROUGH OUR FIBER OPTICS AND C.A.S.T. CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS



192

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT COACHING PROVIDED

LEVEL UP (FOSTER CARE & TANF SUPPORT)

172

HOURS OF PRE-EMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYMENT READINESS AND JOB TRAINING PROVIDED



80

FOSTER CARE AND TANF STUDENTS SERVED

HOUSING COUNSELING & FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES

8.5

MILLION DOLLARS IN FORECLOSURE MITIGATED



23

FREE HOMEBUYER & FINANCIAL EDUCATION WORKSHOPS HOSTED



50

SENIORS PROVIDED AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH GANDY ALLMON



63

HOMEBUYERS PURCHASED PROPERTY THROUGH OUR HOMEBUYER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Success Stories



Takyra Hawkins

Like many high-school students, Takyra Hawkins found herself struggling to keep up in school and without the option of paying for a tutor. Instead, she turned to the Urban League of the Upstate for help. Takyra had already been involved with the Urban League's 'Level Up', a program which provides local disadvantaged youth and foster care children with workshops, mentoring, and employment and career shadowing guidance. Feeling the desire to improve, Takyra signed up for summer tutoring under the recommendation of an Urban League Level Up employee.

Four days a week for three hours a day, Takyra and other local high school students are tutored by a college volunteer who assess their struggles. Then she, along with her peers, receive individualized curriculum and attention based on weaknesses, along with supplies such as workbooks and practice tests. Over the course of several weeks of hard work and without missing a day, our tutor could see definite improvements in Takyra's math and English skills.

A rising sophomore at Riverside High, Takyra Hawkins is now more prepared to take on the year. She feels "More confident [she] will pass with a great grade. And we are, too.

Lantesel Melaku

Lantesel Melaku is a full-time truck driver who has been helped immensely by Urban League of the Upstate's Workforce Development Program. Several obstacles prevented Lantesel from being able to find employment, but through a friend he was connected with Whitney Harris at Urban League. Initially interested in fiber optics but unable to get into the program because of his history, Lantesel was hoping to find some training so that he could find proper employment.

Through careful evaluation by Whitney Harris in the Workforce Development Program, Lantesel received a \$5,000 grant for a truck driver's training program with the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Four months later, Melaku graduated with top grades and a Commercial Driver's License, Class A. Now he is employed with a truck company in Piedmont, SC, and has big plans for the future. The job he now has is allowing him to save for his own house, and ultimately Lantesel hopes to buy his own dump truck. He has learned networking skills and is meeting important leaders in his industry, giving him a leg-up to go far in the third-party logistics.



Abdul Karkour



Thousands of South Carolinians are in fear of foreclosure every day, but the Urban League of the Upstate works tirelessly to help prevent that. Abdul Karkour is one individual that has been helped immensely by the work of the Urban League in this area. After immigrating to South Carolina in 1984 and ultimately becoming an American citizen, Abdul devoted his life to helping others. There came a time, however, when Abdul found that he himself needed help. In 2013, he unexpectedly lost his business and felt broken and unsure of what the future might hold.

Abdul was referred to Urban League of the Upstate and found immediate assistance. After meeting with Jeanne Vernon, the Urban League helped him avoid foreclosure and regain stability. Today, Abdul is the proud owner of a bakery in Pendleton, all because of the work of the housing department at the Urban League of the Upstate.

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There are many ways to support us here at the Urban League of the Upstate. With programs that span our community, there is always the need for further investment in our work.

1. Donations can be made through our website: www.urbanleagueupstate.org

2. To volunteer, please fill out a registration form on our website: www.urbanleagueupstate.org

