



# 2025 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT REPORT





# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO & CHAIRMAN

TO OUR INVESTORS, PARTNERS, AND NEIGHBORS,



At United Way of Acadiana, we believe community investment is about more than funding programs: it's about building systems that strengthen families and expand opportunity.

Across Acadiana, many hardworking ALICE households are doing everything right, yet remain one unexpected expense away from instability. By bringing together partners, nonprofits, businesses, and community leaders, we are able to translate shared concern into measurable action. Through strategic investment and collaboration, we are helping organizations expand services, support children and families, and create stronger pathways to stability for our entire region.

## HEATHER BLANCHARD

United Way of Acadiana President / CEO



If you've spent any time around the United Way of Acadiana team lately, you've probably felt it: there is real momentum building across our region.

What once began as a foundation for progress has grown into a collaborative effort that is driving meaningful change across all five of our parishes. Through strategic partnerships, thoughtful investment, and a shared commitment to our community, we are working to ensure that where someone lives in Acadiana does not limit what they can achieve.

This report highlights the data behind that work, but at its heart, the story is about people. It is about children finding stability, teachers receiving the support they deserve, and families gaining opportunities that create brighter futures. None of this happens alone. It happens because a community of neighbors, partners, and supporters believes in lifting one another up and investing in the strength of Acadiana.

With gratitude and momentum,

## MARSHAL REGGIE THOMAS

United Way of Acadiana Board Chair, 2025-2026



# COMMUNITY REALITY

## WHY INVESTMENT MATTERS

### ACADIANA

An average of **50% of households** in the service area of United Way of Acadiana are either in poverty or living as **ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)**.

**ALICE households** earn above the **Federal Poverty Level (FPL)**, but still struggle to afford basic necessities like housing, childcare, food, transportation, and healthcare.



ACADIA PARISH

57%

LIVING BELOW ALICE

LAFAYETTE PARISH

45%

LIVING BELOW ALICE

VERMILION PARISH

48%

LIVING BELOW ALICE

ST. MARTIN PARISH

53%

LIVING BELOW ALICE

IBERIA PARISH

49%

LIVING BELOW ALICE

### ALICE

Of Louisiana's **1,799,695 households**, **51%** of them were **ALICE** or below the **Federal Poverty Line** in 2022.



49%

LIVED ABOVE THE HOUSEHOLD SURVIVOR BUDGET LINE

32%

WERE ALICE

19%

EARNED BELOW THE FPL

Across Acadiana, many households are working but remain financially vulnerable. A significant portion of our region reflects the ALICE population. **These are working families who support the local economy yet live one unexpected expense away from instability.**

# COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

OUR MISSION IS TO UNITE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS WITH PASSION, EXPERTISE, AND RESOURCES TO CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER LIFE

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

Community needs are translated into measurable regional strength through intentional collaboration, disciplined investment, and continuous improvement.

## WE ARE THE EXPERTS IN IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY NEEDS

We invest, solve problems, and use collective impact strategies to create partnerships and networks in the community that may otherwise not have happened, combining our efforts for bigger impact.





## FINANCIAL SECURITY

With a focus on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), we're helping hard working families make ends meet while connecting them with the financial tools to empower them to create a better, more sustainable future for themselves and loved ones.



## YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

We help children get off to a good start and empower youth to reach their full potential by breaking down barriers to success. We advance what works, including early childhood education, family engagement, and equipping our teachers with what they need to succeed, fostering a future where every young person can realize their dreams.



## HEALTHY COMMUNITY

We work with hospitals and community partners to help families overcome barriers to healthy living and provide resources for healthy early brain development. We want to help ensure that a healthy life is accessible to every neighbor, regardless of their zip code.



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Working with our neighbors, we help build resilient communities that are ready for any challenge. Through initiatives in social programs, community resources, and nonprofit building, we are strengthening the foundations of Acadiana for a more sustainable and secure future.

# INVESTMENT THAT MOVES ACADIANA FORWARD

OUR VISION IS AN EDUCATED, PROSPEROUS, AND SAFE ACADIANA WHERE ALL INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL

40 ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED OVER \$430,076.26 IN 2025

- 232 Help/211
- Acadiana Cares
- Acadiana Renaissance Charter Academy High School
- Alice Boucher Elementary School
- American Red Cross
- Assist Agency
- Autism Society of Acadiana
- Beacon Community Connections
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Acadiana
- Boy Scouts of America - Acadiana
- Camp Challenge
- Carencro Catholic School
- CASA of SOLA
- Catholic Charities of Acadiana
- Chez Hope Inc.
- Christian Service Center (Abbeville)
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
- Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Elementary School
- Dreams Come True of LA
- Dreams Foundation of Acadiana
- Earthshare Gardens
- Edgar Martin Middle School
- Empowering the Community for Excellence
- Faith House
- Fightingville Fresh Market
- Hearts of Hope
- Hospice of Acadiana
- James A. Herod Elementary School
- Lafayette Council on Aging
- Lafayette High School
- Loreauville Volunteer Fire Department
- Maddie's Footprints
- Milton Middle School
- Myrtle Place Elementary School
- Nehemiah Projects of Acadiana, Inc.
- Rusty R Ruiz Memorial Foundation
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- SMILE Community Action Agency
- St. Martinville Junior High
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette Teacher Tank
- WD & Mary Baker Smith Career Center
- Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults
- Westgate High School

# COMMUNITY STORIES

FROM ACROSS ACADIANA

## EDUCATION INNOVATION GRANTS



Thanks to the support of United Way of Acadiana, 15 students will have access to Driver's Education that they would not otherwise be able to afford. This opportunity removes a major barrier and opens the door to employment, independence, and a brighter future.

Just as importantly, **students are reminded that they are valued and worthy of opportunities like this, and they take great pride in showing off their newly earned driver's licenses.**

» Ann Dubois



## COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES OF SoLA (CASA)

For two years, a young boy in the foster care system faced a revolving door of change. During that time, five different DCFS workers were assigned to his case, each transition bringing new uncertainty to the child who needed stability the most. But through it all, one person remained constant. **Denae Hebert, a dedicated CASA volunteer with CASA of SoLA**, stood beside him every step of the way.

» Denae Hebert

**LOUISIANA'S 2025 CASA ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR**  
In recognition of her extraordinary commitment

CHANGE A  
CHILD'S STORY.™



Her story is a powerful reminder of the difference one committed volunteer can make in a child's life. United Way of Acadiana is proud to partner with CASA of SoLA and support advocates like Denae who are helping change the trajectory for children in foster care across Acadiana.



It's an honor to have the opportunity to uplift the needs and voices of children to help ensure they find the safe and loving home that every child deserves.

# COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

FROM ACROSS ACADIANA

## VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)

**3,000 Residents Served:** Nearly three thousand of our neighbors across Acadiana used our free tax service to navigate the complex tax landscape.

**\$3 Million in Refunds:** We helped these hardworking individuals claim more than \$3 million in tax refunds—money that stayed right here in our parishes.

**\$600,000 in Savings:** By providing professional, IRS-certified filing for free, we saved our clients an estimated \$600,000 in predatory filing fees.

## REENTRY COALITION MANAGEMENT FOR THE 15TH & 16TH JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

In 2025, the Lafayette Reentry Coalition brought the idea of second chances to life through strong community collaboration.

Partners from the justice system, education, employers, nonprofits, and local government worked together to remove barriers for justice-impacted individuals through legal clinics, Second Chance Month recognition, and public education events like the Beyond the Bars Reentry Simulation. The coalition also expanded workforce pathways through career readiness workshops, skilled-trade training, and multiple job and resource fairs, connecting incarcerated individuals with employers and critical resources for their successful reentry into society. **Together, these efforts helped create pathways to employment, stability, and renewed belonging in the community.**



# COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

FROM ACROSS ACADIANA

## RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPING MINDS (RFDM)

We define a **Healthy Community** not by the illnesses treated, but by the network of support surrounding families across our five parishes. Our **Resources for Developing Minds (RFDM)** initiative bridges clinical research and everyday parenting, focusing on the earliest stages of brain development to help every child in Acadiana start life astrong.

**300 families are equipped with the tools to support early learning and growth.**

## STRATEGIC EXPANSION: IBERIA MEDICAL CENTER & THE BEACON PARTNERSHIP

Building on successful partnerships with Ochsner and Our Lady of Lourdes, RFDM expanded into Iberia Parish this year. Now, families welcoming a newborn at **Iberia Medical Center** leave the hospital with resource bags filled with books, parent guides, and tools that reinforce healthy development and early learning at home.

**Through a partnership with Beacon Community Connections, families also have access to case management and additional support services.**

## HIGH-TECH, LOW-BARRIER

Our **Parent Text Program** delivers age-appropriate developmental tips and health reminders directly to parents' phones. This simple, accessible tool provides families with reliable information in real time, helping ensure the right guidance reaches parents exactly when they need it.

**Together, these efforts create a wraparound support system for Acadiana families, helping build a healthier community from the very beginning.**





# 15 YEARS OF EARLY HEAD START

## A LEGACY OF MOMENTUM

### More Than Childcare: A “Whole-Family” Philosophy

We began with a clear mission: to break the cycle of poverty by intervening during the most critical window of human development: from birth to age 3. What started as a vision for community equity has scaled into a vital lifeline for 103 children and their families annually.

**That’s 1,545 families over 15 years.**

Out of our 47 United Way of Acadiana staff members, 23 of them are a part of Early Head Start:

- » 10 Lafayette Teachers
- » 3 Home-Based Teachers
- » 9 Abbeville Teachers
- » 1 Food Service Worker

# EARLY HEAD START PROVIDES:



High-quality early childhood education



Home / center-based services



Health & developmental screenings



Family goal setting & stability support



Parent engagement & leadership opportunities

## Lanchlion's Story

Fifteen years ago, I began my journey with United Way of Acadiana Early Head Start as a home-based teacher, then a center-based teacher, and today I serve as the Nutrition Coordinator. Watching my role grow over the years has been such a blessing.

Early Head Start is more than a job to me, it's family. I trusted the program with my two children, and along the way the families, students, and coworkers I met truly became part of my life.

Through UWA, my husband was encouraged to find his voice and step into leadership as President of the Parent Committee. That support meant so much to our family.

Early Head Start has shaped not only my career, but my heart. I am grateful to be part of something that makes such a difference in the lives of children and families every day.



## Makyras Story

When I became a high school mom, I was unsure of my future. Joining the home-based program was the turning point in my life. They didn't judge me, they believed in me, walked beside me, encouraged me to finish school, and reminded me that I was capable of more. Because of that support, I graduated. Today, I'm in college, working, and building a future I once thought was out of reach.

Now my oldest daughter attends the Lafayette Early Head Start Center, and my youngest is in the home-based program. Watching them grow in the same loving, supportive environment brings me to tears.



# OUR DONORS

## TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY

»» John & Mary Butcher

»» Jim & Charlotte Doyle

»» Mr. & Mrs. Roland Dugas

»» James Prince

»» Donna & Greg Landry

For over 15 years, we've proudly invested in United Way of Acadiana. Through service and board involvement, we've witnessed the lasting impact of this work. Join us in sustaining that legacy of impact!



## LEGACY LEADERS

Howard Dupuis ♦ Mark Herpin ♦ Jamie Joseph ♦ John Wright

## LEADERSHIP GIVERS

Dr. & Mrs. Carl Alldredge  
Clifton Allen IV  
Spencer Anderson  
S. K. Antoine  
Elizabeth Ardoin  
Justin Back  
Terry Bailey  
Lexi Baldridge  
Cindy & David Barry  
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Aaron Webb  
Joe Weber  
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Jesse Wilkerson  
Frank Wittenberg  
Joseph Zuschlag

# OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS

## COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



## IMPACT PARTNER



## COMMUNITY BUILDERS

**Pugh Family Foundation** ♦ **Stuller Family Foundation** ♦ **William C. Schumacher Family Foundation**

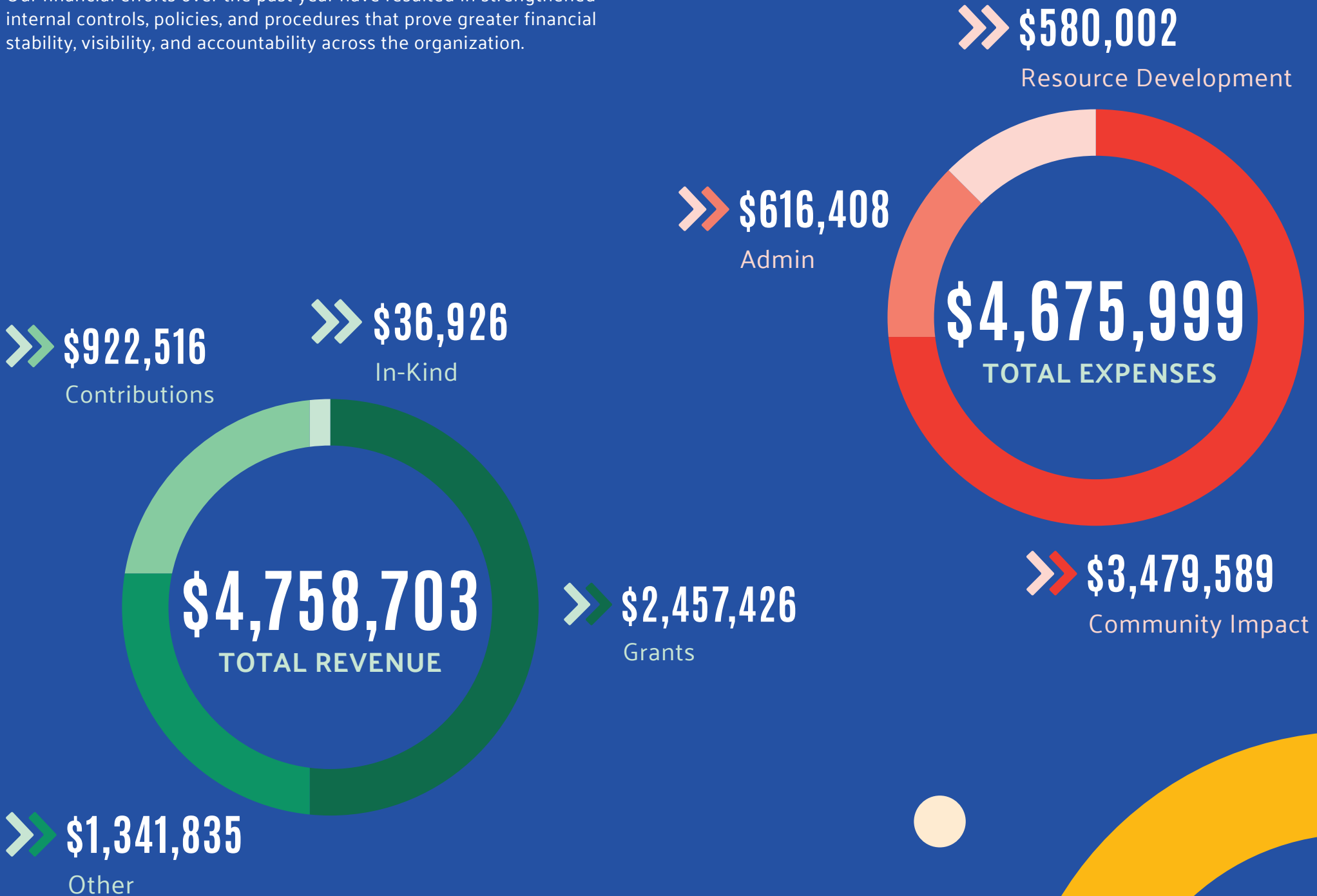
## SUPPORTERS

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**Core Clinical Partners** ♦ **Costco** ♦ **Cox Communications** ♦ **EisnerAmper** ♦ **Entergy** ♦ **First National Bank** ♦ **Foster Marketing**  
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**SWLA Center for Health Services** ♦ **The E.W. Scripps Company KATC TV** ♦ **VieMed**

# 2024 AUDITED FINANCIALS

GROWTH CAN ONLY HAPPEN WHEN OUR FOUNDATION IS SOLID

Our financial efforts over the past year have resulted in strengthened internal controls, policies, and procedures that prove greater financial stability, visibility, and accountability across the organization.



# OUR TEAM

## OFFICERS

»» **Reggie Thomas**  
Board Chair

»» **Robert Tasman**  
Incoming Board Chair

»» **Karl Meche**  
Secretary / Treasurer

»» **Taniecea Mallery**  
Past Board Chair

## BOARD MEMBERS

Larry Attenhofer ♦ Aimee Barber ♦ Hayes Berthelot ♦ Stuart Breaux ♦ Christi Carter ♦ Kraig Cason  
Chris Cook ♦ Brian Crews ♦ Mary Desormeaux ♦ Anne Falgout ♦ Ruben Henderson ♦ Nanette Lavergne  
Thomas Leonards ♦ Anita Levy ♦ Desirée Provost ♦ Carrie Templeton ♦ Gretchen Vanicor

## STAFF

Heather Blanchard ♦ Tiffany Comeaux ♦ Nichole Dorsey ♦ Annette Harrison-Victor ♦ Kade Turner  
Marissa Winters ♦ Dana Young ♦ Michelle Bogen ♦ Margie Horn ♦ Raquel Malveaux  
Macy Augustine ♦ Madison Vidrine ♦ Fatima Brown ♦ Abigail Pelloquin ♦ Yolanda Armstrong  
Kayla Boyher ♦ Lanchlion Broussard ♦ Caitlin Guidry ♦ Shanel Jackson ♦ Cameron Hulin  
Stephanie Larriviere ♦ Loni Morgan ♦ Andrane Tauriac ♦ Niki Tran

# FUEL THE MOMENTUM

Acadiana is on the move. From the heart of Lafayette to the farthest reaches of our five-parish region, the “engine” of change is running at full speed. But a high-performance system only goes as far as the fuel we put into it.

Whether you are a corporate leader looking to scale your impact, a professional ready to share your skills as a volunteer, or a neighbor who wants to see your community thrive, we have a seat for you.

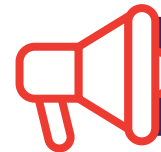
## HOW WILL YOU HELP US MOVE THE NEEDLE?

### INVEST IN ACADIANA



#### Invest in the Mission

- >> Workplace Campaigns
- >> Corporate Contributions
- >> Product Donations



#### Stay Informed & Advocate

- >> Subscribe
- >> Follow
- >> Share



#### Invest Your Time & Talent

- >> Volunteer
- >> Share Your Skills
- >> Support Initiatives

#### READY TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT?

Choose your path and keep Acadiana moving forward at [unitedwayofacadiana.org](http://unitedwayofacadiana.org)

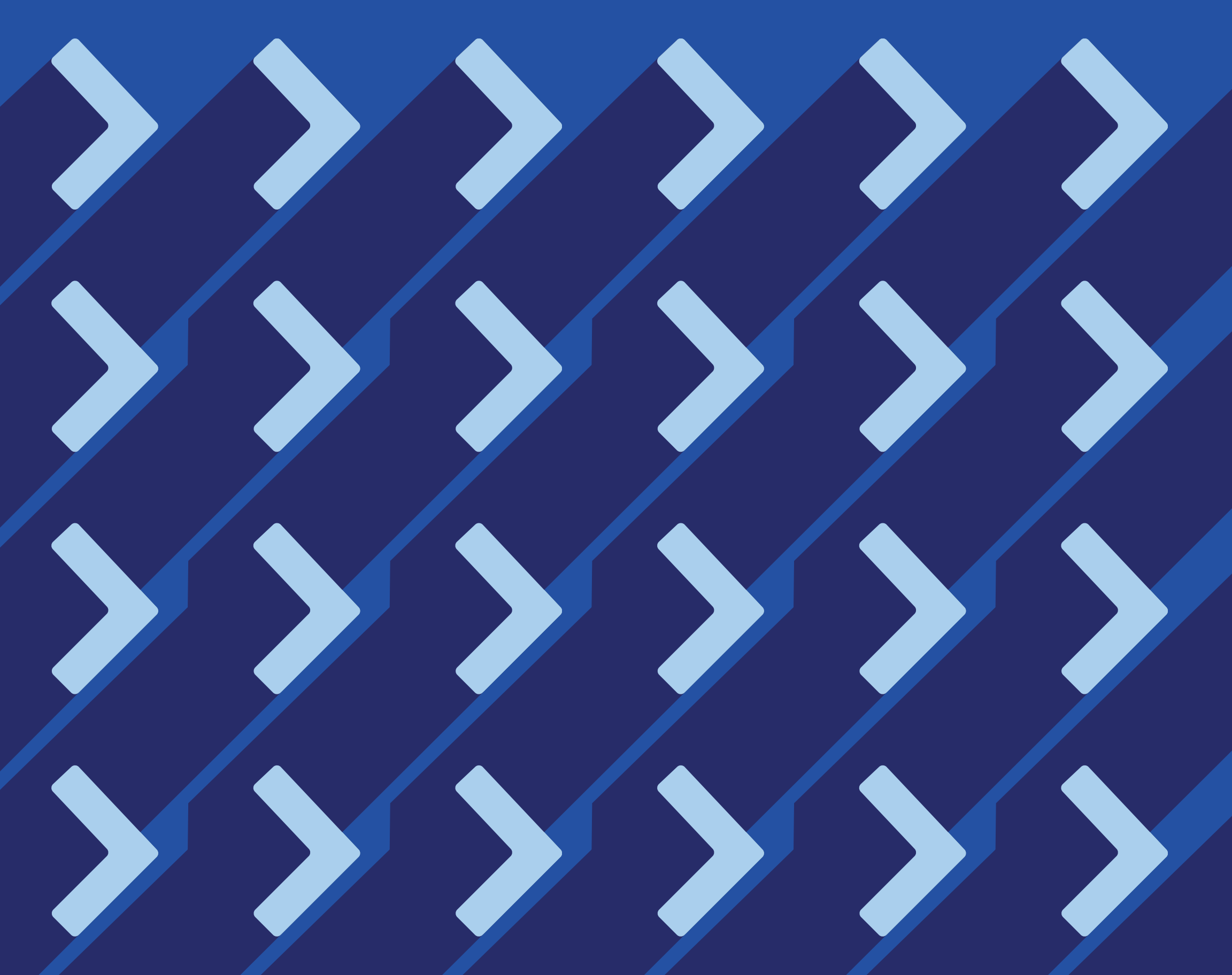




## ATMOS ENERGY IS FUELING SAFE AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Compassion to give back to the communities we serve is woven into the culture of Atmos Energy. We are committed to supporting education, showing appreciation to our hometown heroes, and providing assistance to our neighbors in need. We are proud to play a vital role in the communities we serve with our time, talent, and resources.







(337) 233 - 8302  
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