



**United Way**  
Prince Edward Island



# REPORT TO COMMUNITY

[PEIUNITEDWAY.COM](http://PEIUNITEDWAY.COM)

**2023-24**

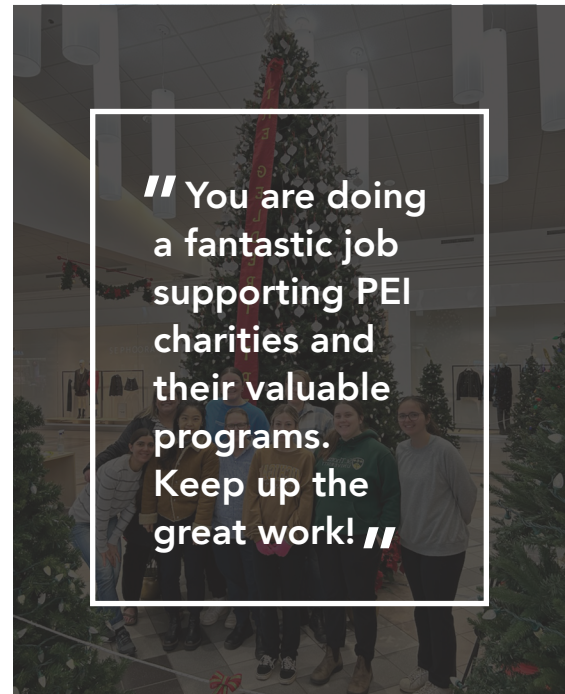


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# CEO & PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are thrilled to present this Report to Community reflecting on an incredible year of achievements and impact for the United Way of PEI. After three years of intense challenges, 2024 was a year of forging new partnerships, connecting with community, supporting and strengthening the social sector, and focusing on our mission of reducing the impacts of local poverty.

Thanks to the generous support of our donors and partners, United Way of PEI was proud to announce a significant funding investment in 13 community organizations over the next two years. Each of our new funded partners is doing transformative work in communities across the Island: moving people out of poverty, supporting those experiencing food and housing insecurity, helping kids succeed in and out of school, breaking the cycle of domestic violence, providing mental health support, promoting social inclusion, and ultimately changing local lives.

United Way of PEI continued our important work of strengthening PEI's social safety net through convening and capacity building of the sector. We hosted the "Creating Collective Care" conference, in partnership with the Community Sector Network and the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women, we launched the second cohort of the ED Academy after the success of the inaugural program. United Way brought together organizations on future emergency response planning and communication, and our 211 PEI service continued to help Islanders connect to critical local programs and services, addressing a wide variety of needs.

Another highlight saw our signature event "United by Song" return to the main stage of the Confederation Centre, bringing stories of resiliency, impact, and transformation to life for our donors. Four courageous individuals who participated in United Way-funded programs shared their struggles and triumphs, and four talented local artists debuted original songs based on these journeys. It was a magical night that showcased the power of community and the importance of our work.

**To each of our donors, thank you;** your unwavering support played an integral part in each of our successes over the past year. Your generosity reflects the deep-rooted spirit of compassion and dedication that is central to our work and mission. Your support has changed lives, and we are so grateful. We also want to acknowledge and celebrate our staff and Board of Directors, whose commitment, passion, and drive form the backbone of our United Way.

**As we venture into 2024 and beyond, we are excited for what's to come, and look forward to continuing this journey of community building with you!**

With your generous support we will be able to help **13 community organizations** over the next two years.



**ANDREA MACDONALD**  
CEO UNITED WAY OF PEI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea MacDonald".

**LEA BRYDEN**  
PRESIDENT UNITED WAY OF PEI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lea Bryden".



We know that for a community to be great, it has to be great for everyone.

## ABOUT US: What we do

The United Way of Prince Edward Island has been changing lives and strengthening communities for over **60 years**. Established in 1962 with a vision of creating a stronger, more inclusive PEI where everyone can thrive, we have been harnessing the power of collaboration and community support to address complex social issues. With a deep-rooted commitment to enhancing the well-being of individuals and families, the United Way of PEI has become a trusted catalyst for positive change.

Each year, we work tirelessly to mobilize resources and engage the community in our efforts to eliminate poverty. Through strategic partnerships and fundraising campaigns, the United Way of PEI provides critical support to a diverse range of charitable organizations, programs, and services that directly impact the lives of thousands of Islanders.

**We believe that we are stronger united. By bringing people together, we move people out of poverty by:**



Increasing access to mental health services



Addressing food insecurity



Keeping seniors connected & engaged



Breaking the cycle of domestic violence



Helping kids & youth succeed



Supporting Islanders experiencing homelessness

# HOW WE WORK

## INVEST



United Way of PEI sustains a network of local agencies that deliver essential services and programs. We provide financial support and mentorship to local organizations that are innovative, collaborative, and that create measurable impact.

## ADVISE



We offer strategic advice to companies, individuals, and other investors who want to make the greatest impact possible on the issues that matter to them most.

## BUILD



We build and foster community by connecting community leaders with the training, mentorship, and resources they need to excel at what they do.

## FUNDRAISE



We ignite a network of passionate and engaged donors - businesses, unions, foundations, and individuals - to get to the root of local issues and support long-term solutions.

*Thank you*  
to all of our donors for supporting this important work!



We provide **funding, support & mentorship** to  
**12 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**  
across PEI through our **Community Investment Grants**.

# LOCAL IMPACT: 2023 Funded Partners & Programs

In 2023, we provided funding, support, and mentorship to **12 local organizations** across PEI through our **Community Investment Fund**. The impact of these United Way-funded programs is reflected in the many inspiring stories of recovery, growth, and transformation, and it's all thanks to your generous support!

## Big Brothers Big Sisters PEI: Teen Mentoring Program

The Teen Mentoring Program **matches elementary school children with teen mentors weekly throughout the school year**, providing the opportunity for participants to build confidence and form new positive, healthy relationships. The program helps encourage achievement at school while engaging in a variety of fun and educational activities.



**441**  
GRADE SCHOOL  
YOUTH

received one-on-one mentorship during the year, **helping improve socialization skills, confidence, and school attendance**

**“ Every moment in my experience as a mentor felt like a highlight. I enjoyed the times my Little opened up and started showing more affection. My favourite thing was seeing her interactions with other people becoming gentler and kinder. She has such a huge heart and is so smart; it was the greatest experience to see her shine. ”**

- Teen Mentor

## The Black Cultural Society of PEI: BPOC Peer Support Program

The Black Cultural Society of PEI's BPOC Peer Support Program offers **mental health support for PEI's Black and People of Colour communities**, while simultaneously **running an anti-stigma campaign** around mental illness within BPOC communities.



**200**  
BPOC INDIVIDUALS

received support, resources, and tools to support their **mental health**

## BGC Charlottetown & Montague: Great Futures Bursary Program

The Great Futures Program **aims to remove financial barriers and provide high-quality educational, social, and recreational based programming to kids ages 5-14**, regardless of household income. The aim is to introduce kids to their communities, instill the value of giving back, and showcase the value of being part of a community.



**100%**  
OF KIDS

who needed financial support to participate in club programming received a **Great Futures Bursary, funded by United Way of PEI**

## BGC Prince County: Nutritional Breakfast Program

The Nutritional Breakfast Program operates Monday - Friday from 6:30 AM - 8:30 AM year-round, **providing kids with a healthy breakfast, physical activity, time with friends, learning and mentorship opportunities, and homework support**. The Club also provides transportation to and from the Club and school, along with healthy food for lunches when needed.



**92%**  
OF KIDS

reported having an **adult/mentor** at the Club they can turn to for support, fostering significant emotional and social growth

**// I wish there was more of this when I was growing up here on PEI. //**

- BCS women's group participant

**// As a newcomer, it is quite tough, especially for my kids. BGC Charlottetown gave our kids new opportunities, relationships and friendships. They now have a sense of belonging and feel empowered. //**

- Parent, BGC Charlottetown

**// Life-saver for mornings! Seeing them happy and well-cared for makes my mornings so much less stressful. //**

- Michelle, Parent

## Blooming House: First Step Program

The First Step Program **helps women navigate services** such as housing, mental health and addictions, transportation, and community programming, while also developing practical life skills to minimize the risk of chronic homelessness and find long-term solutions.



**100%**  
OF THE WOMEN

who remain engaged with the **Resource Coordinator** (a position funded by United Way of PEI) **have kept their long-term housing**

## Native Council of PEI: The Reconciliation and Healing Initiative

Reconciliation and Healing will bring off-reserve Indigenous women, youth, and 2SLGBTQ+ community members affected by residential schools and poverty **together to provide group healing activities, Elders support, and education on traditional practices and intergenerational poverty**, and will raise awareness of the NCPEI programs and services available to end poverty.



**150**  
INDIGENOUS  
WOMEN, YOUTH,  
& 2SLGBTQ+  
INDIVIDUALS

participated in United Way-funded programming, allowing them to feel a stronger connection to their culture and community

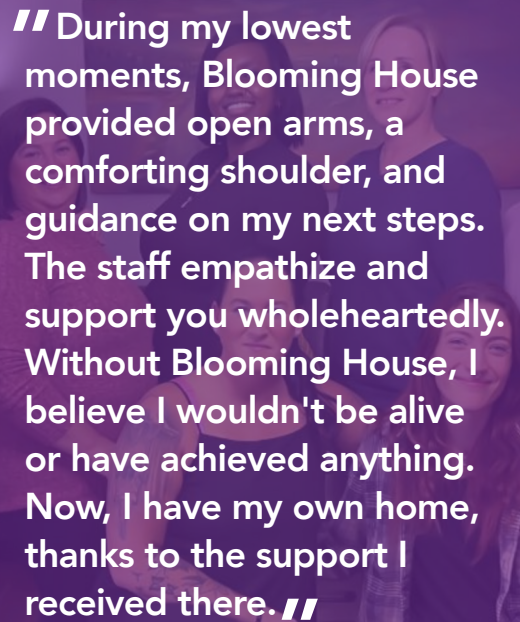
## PEERS Alliance: Rainbow Youth Collective

The PEI Queer Youth Collective is a **low-barrier social support initiative** designed to promote community and social connection, community leadership, resiliency, and psychosocial well-being among 2SLGBTQ+ identified youth and youth allies. Group meetings are currently held in Summerside, Montague, and Charlottetown.



**100%**  
OF YOUTH

surveyed feel less isolated when attending **Rainbow Youth Collective**, funded by the United Way of PEI



**// During my lowest moments, Blooming House provided open arms, a comforting shoulder, and guidance on my next steps. The staff empathize and support you wholeheartedly. Without Blooming House, I believe I wouldn't be alive or have achieved anything. Now, I have my own home, thanks to the support I received there. //**

- BH Guest



**// What a beautiful women's retreat! Thank you for your teachings, strength, and wisdom shared with us. //**

- Participant



**// Rainbow Youth Club is a great escape for me, and I always look forward to it. //**

- RYC youth



## PEI Family Violence Prevention Services: Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives Program

The program supports the **mental and emotional wellness of women fleeing violence**. Funding improves and increases training and staff time dedicated to supporting Anderson House clients.



**66%**  
OF WOMEN

surveyed reported  
**feeling more balanced  
and emotionally strong**

## PEI Literacy Alliance: Ready Set Learn Program

The Ready Set Learn program **provides one-to-one tutoring during the summer to children in grades K-6** who are enrolled in English, French, and EAL language programs. Ready Set Learn is the only free Island-wide tutoring program for children ages 5-12 who struggle in the areas of reading, writing, and math.



**93%**  
OF STUDENTS

learned strategies to **keep trying when learning becomes challenging**



**Our funded partners are required to measure program impact.**

Besides funding, we provide them with mentorship, training, and support to help ensure success.



**“Anderson House gave me the ability to draw on my inner strength, to overcome the challenges I was facing. With the materials I was provided, I learned self-compassion. I thank all of you for helping me with everything! I will always remember my time here, with the fondest of memories and strength. Thank You!!”**

- AH Guest



**“It's better to make mistakes and keep trying than to give up.”**

- RSL Participant



## Sierra Club (Wild Child PEI) & Women's Network PEI: Wild Hub Program

Wild Hub is a **weekly program for teens designed to build peer connection and support, inspire youth leadership, and assist youth in developing and learning about healthy relationships.** At Wild Hub, participants will cook food together, play on the land, learn from guest speakers, host discussion groups, create art, and learn more about themselves.



**100%**  
OF PARTICIPANTS

reported **feeling more connected** to peers, their community, supportive adults, and mentors

**“I love all the fun stuff we do at Wild Hub, sometimes we play outside, or we cook food, or we do an art project. My favourite day was when we went to the park and I climbed trees and saw a muskrat.”**

- Z.R. (14 years old) participant

## Family Service PEI: Increasing Access to Mental Health Services

Family Service PEI **provides mental health counseling to Islanders** regardless of their ability to pay. United Way funding supports the ability to provide fee subsidies and waivers to low-income clients, ensuring barrier-free access to mental health support.



**105**  
INDIVIDUALS

received **reduced-fee or fully subsidized** counseling services and resources





The United Way of PEI has been **proudly serving** Islanders and Island communities since

**1962**

That's over **60 years** of changing lives!



**Cost of living continues to be the highest area of concern for callers.**

## 211 PEI

Many exciting steps have been taken to expand the 211 PEI service over the past year! The 211 PEI team has grown to include the first on-island 211 PEI Community Resource Navigator and a 211 PEI Educator. The 211 PEI Educator, through a partnership with Health PEI, will be delivering presentations and engaging in outreach across the Island to create awareness of the 211 PEI service, helping to make 211 PEI an integral thread of the Island's social fabric.

### YEAR IN REVIEW

From April 1st 2023 – March 31st, 2024. There were:

**3,664**  
CALLS RECEIVED

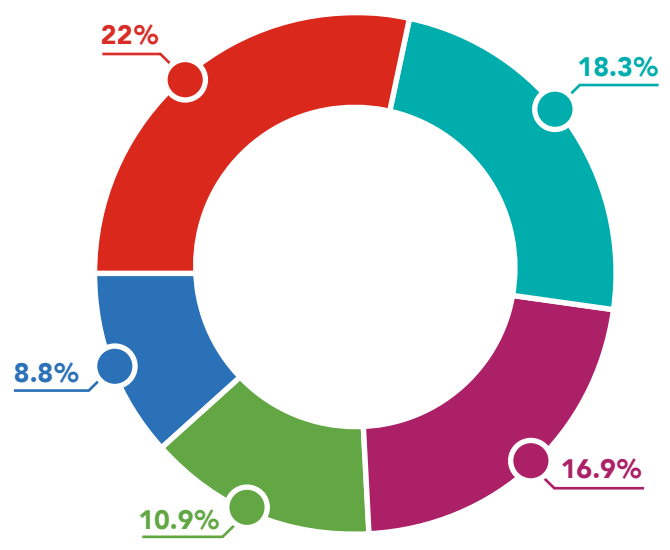
**3,339**  
REFERRALS PROVIDED TO CALLERS

**68,775**  
WEBSITE SESSIONS

**106,991**  
WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

### TOP NEEDS OF CALLERS:

- Income support/financial
- Food programs
- Health programs
- Mental health/substance use disorders
- Housing programs



Approximately  
**36% of calls**  
related to  
struggles  
affording the  
cost of living.

Free | Confidential | Available 24/7  
365 days a year | Accessible in over 240 languages  
Dial 2-1-1 or visit [www.pe.211.ca](http://www.pe.211.ca)

*“ Thank you for all of  
the great work that  
you are doing to help  
Islanders in need. ”*



The United Way of PEI operates PEI's  
**211 service**, helping Islanders connect  
quickly and easily with community, social,  
government and health programs and  
services across the province.



# ED Academy: Coaching, Mentorship & Training for Executive Directors in the Community Sector.

The United Way of PEI is excited to have developed a coaching, training, and mentorship program for new Executive Directors in the not-for-profit community sector. The goal of “ED Academy” is to help develop advanced leadership skills and provide a supportive network for those stepping up to lead.

**ED Academy is a 12-month program** that is facilitated by leadership coach Sara Roach-Lewis of SRL Solutions. The program includes online training modules focused on fundamental leadership skills such as strategy and governance, financial management, human resources, and communications. Participants of ED Academy also benefit from monthly group coaching and mentoring sessions with valuable opportunities to network with other Executive Directors from the community sector.

Last year, the program trained **16 Executive Directors**. In February of 2024, we welcomed the second cohort of the ED Academy. This new group includes Executive Directors from the following community organizations:

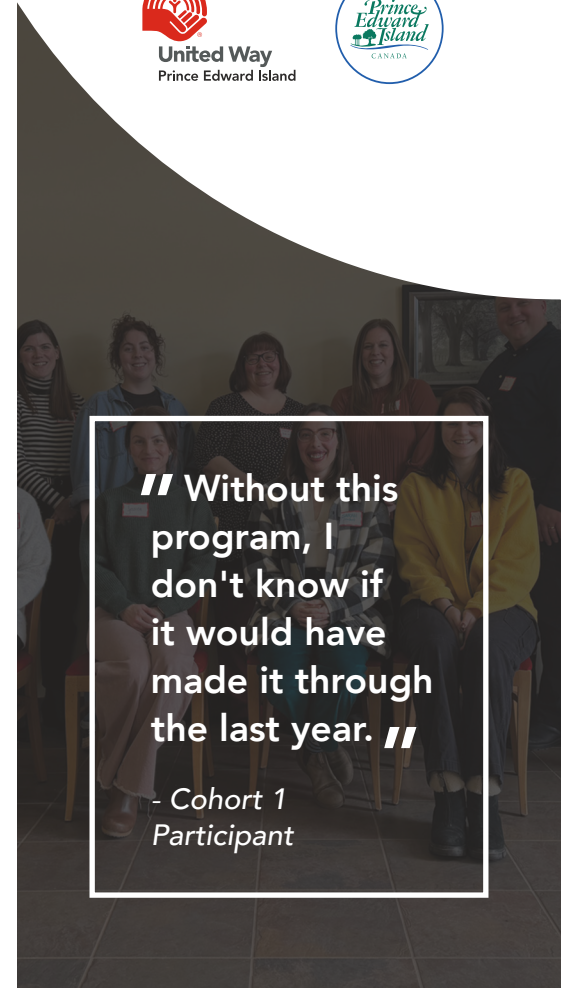
- Alzheimer Society of PEI
- Canadian Organic Growers
- Central Coastal Tourism Partnership
- Central Region Sport and Recreation Council
- Charlottetown Farmers' Market Coop
- Early Childhood Development Association of PEI
- go! East PEI
- Harbourfront Theatre
- JA Prince Edward Island
- Kings Playhouse
- Life House Summerside
- PEI Coalition for Women in Government
- PEI Hog Commodity Marketing Board
- PEI Transgender Network
- Pride PEI
- Ringette PEI and 55+ Games Host Society
- Western Region Sport and Recreation Council



COACHING, TRAINING, AND MENTORSHIP  
FOR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



United Way  
Prince Edward Island



**// Without this program, I don't know if it would have made it through the last year. //**

- Cohort 1 Participant



We want to thank this **incredible group of local leaders** for stepping up to join us on this journey of learning and growth!

**“ The vulnerable conversation between participants is powerful. I really appreciate the opportunity to learn from each other. ”**

*- Cohort 2 Participant*



Atlantic Canada  
Opportunities  
Agency

Agence de  
promotion économique  
du Canada atlantique

Canada



## CREATING COLLECTIVE CARE CONFERENCE

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The Creating Collective Care conference, a collaboration between the United Way of PEI, the Community Sector Network of PEI, and the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women, addressed the multifaceted challenges facing PEI, including the impact of the global pandemic, Hurricane Fiona's aftermath, high inflation rates, food insecurity, a housing crisis, and economic inequality.

These difficulties have strained community organizations and their staff, leading to burnout, particularly among caregivers who bear disproportionate responsibilities in care-giving roles. These organizations are also increasingly relied upon to provide essential aid to vulnerable groups in the community.

The conference united professionals and volunteers from various organizations across PEI, fostering a sense of collective energy and commitment to community transformation. It hosted **130 attendees** from diverse backgrounds and community organizations. Participants praised the conference's engaging panel discussions, insightful keynote presentations, and breakout and plenary sessions.

**We were so glad to be co-hosts for this valuable and impactful gathering!**







## EMERGENCY KIT DISTRIBUTION

The United Way of PEI was happy to partner with the Government of PEI to provide emergency preparedness kits to community organizations in the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona. Through this initiative, essential resources were distributed to low-income and vulnerable Islanders to prepare them for future hurricanes or severe storms, recognizing the need to ensure everyone is prepared for future disasters, regardless of household income.

Through research and consultations, UWPEI and its partners determined the contents of the emergency kits, which included essentials for 72 hours and tailored items for families. A huge thank you to our key partner, Kays Wholesale, who played a significant role in procuring, assembling, and distributing these kits to **35 community partners** across PEI.

This collective effort led to the distribution of emergency supplies to **1,570 individuals and families**, highlighting UWPEI's impactful role in supporting emergency preparedness and response and the dedication of community partners in supporting vulnerable populations during challenging times.



// United Way makes a significant difference within communities on PEI. //

# UNITED BY SONG

On October 19, 2023, our signature event, **United By Song**, returned to the main stage of the **Confederation Centre of the Arts**. **United by Song** is a memorable and moving night of music and stories celebrating the resilience of the human spirit, the power of community, and the generous support of **United Way** donors.

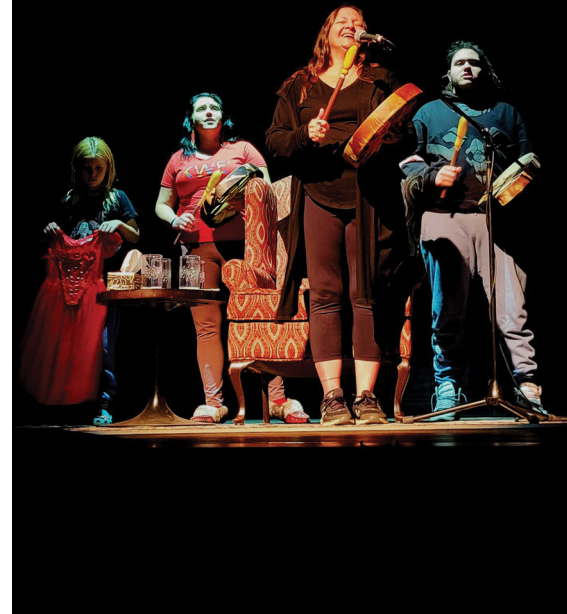
Close to **800 people** got to hear life-changing stories from individuals impacted by programs funded by the **United Way** of PEI. Accompanying these stories were four original songs written by talented local songwriters.

This year, the original songs were written and performed by **Alicia Toner, Lawrence Maxwell, Luisa Guiza, and Tian Wigmore** from **War Horses**. The audience heard stories from **Faye Williams-Wood** (Family Violence Prevention Services), **Eddie Daley** (PEERS Alliance), **Josh Rice** (BGC Summerside), and **Julie Pelissier-Lush**. Our host was **Ocean 100 Morning Show's Jill Chandler**, and there were special performances by **Richard Wood and John Connolly**.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Our presenting sponsor **BMO Private Wealth**, production sponsor **Confederation Centre of the Arts**, media sponsor **Ocean 100 & Hot 105.5**, and our community sponsor **DALMAC PEI** for making this event possible!

# United by Song



// There are tears of sadness. There are tears of joy. Rarely do the two roll down your cheek at the same time.

United by Song - celebrates community through storytelling and song. When I read that description, I knew this was going to be a must-see event for me. I do love storytelling, especially stories from our own community. As I made my way to my seat, I had no idea what to expect. What happened on that stage last night was, in my opinion, truly magical.

Four very powerful stories shared by Eddie, Josh, Faye, and Julie – each one of them a personal account of unthinkable painful experiences. As each one took their turn in the storyteller chair, the audience fell completely silent, listening intently to every word. These were not professional storytellers, though you'd never know it. They spoke from the heart and transported the audience to some dark, unsafe, and horrific times and places in their lives. Tears were shed. There were tears of sadness as I was transported to school hallways littered with bullying, to an unliveable home environment, to an escape from a monster, and to the side of a remote Manitoba highway where a "missing" indigenous girl lay dead in the ditch.

And then I noticed it. There was an unmistakable contrast between the painful stories being told and the safe, comfy chair from where the storytellers spoke so courageously on this night. The chair represented a safe happiness. It represented triumph.

As some of the most talented Island musicians played the final tune, I stood for the final ovation. Tears of sadness were now outnumbered tears of joy.

To the United Way of Prince Edward Island – THANK YOU! These were only four stories. Your incredible support directly impacts thousands of Islanders, giving them a future where happier stories are possible. //

- Testimonial from attendee, 2023



**In 2023**  
the United Way of PEI had a bustling & impactful year!

## UNITED WAY IN THE COMMUNITY

Our team was actively engaged in the community, participating in volunteer fairs, events like the Pride Parade, Black History Month, Emancipation Day, Red Dress Walk, Indigenous Peoples Day celebration, and more. We partnered with UPEI Athletics and hosted United Way Day during their December men's and women's basketball games. On Giving Tuesday, we took over Upstreet Brewery's Instagram and hosted a lively Bingo night at their Allen St. location. We also had the opportunity to attend lots of fun special events hosted by our partners spearheading United Way Employee Giving Campaigns!



“ I believe in the importance of supporting organizations that work towards positive change. United Way's commitment to making a difference aligns with my core values and business mission. I am happy to contribute to your cause and be part of the positive change you're creating. ”

DATE DEC 2023

PAY TO THE ORDER OF **United Way of PEI** \$ 3,500

THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED 100 DOLLARS

MEMO 211 PEI PEI MUTUAL

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## WHERE THE MONEY WAS SPENT



Partner Agency  
Funding & Donor  
Directed Gifts



Sector Training  
& Support



211 PEI



Fundraising  
Costs



Emergency  
preparedness  
for vulnerable  
populations



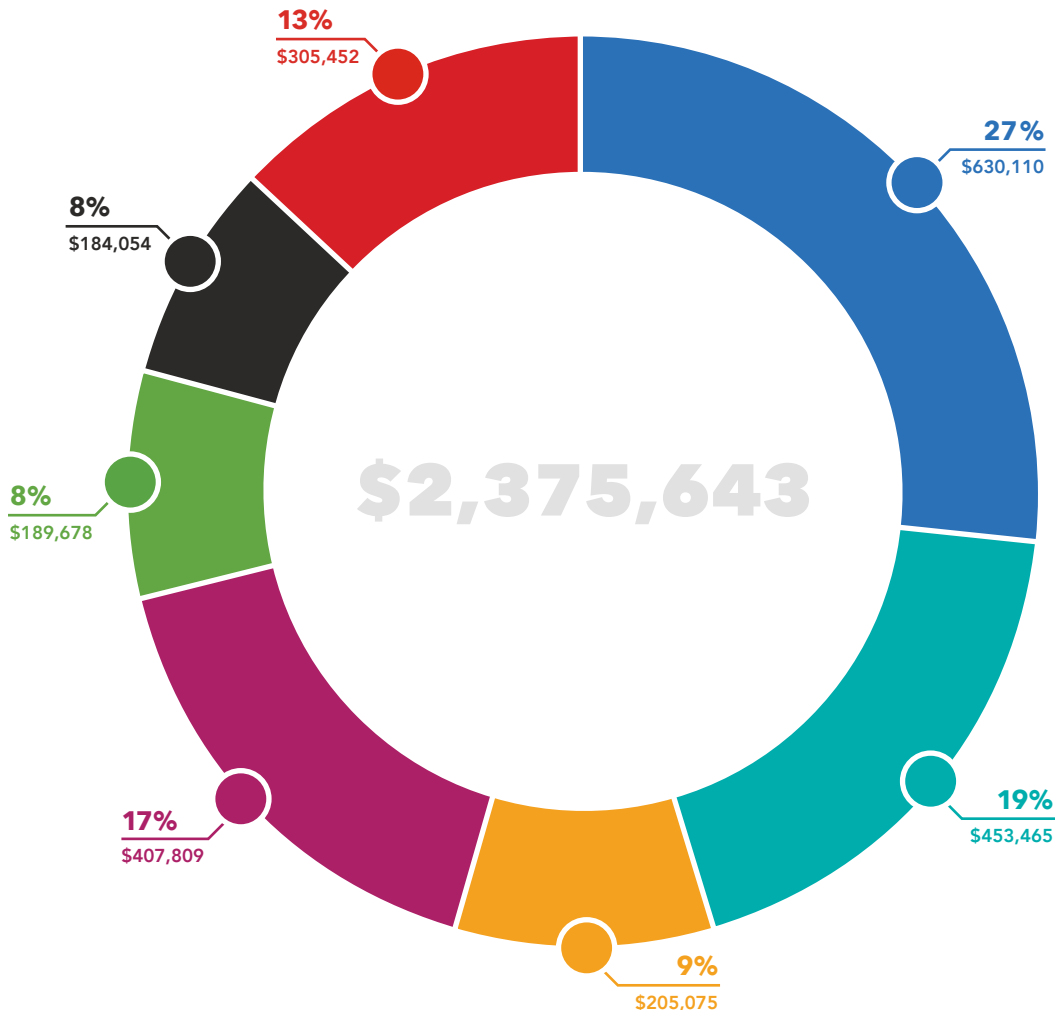
Community  
Services  
Recovery Fund



Community  
Development

**We value  
the trust of  
our donors  
& partners.**

We are committed to  
financial transparency  
& accountability.



For the full 2023/24 financial statements, visit [peiunitedway.com/reports](https://peiunitedway.com/reports)



**Accredited**  
IMAGINE CANADA

Investing  
**\$670,000** of  
 funding into  
**13 organizations**  
 over the next  
 two years!



## INVESTING IN PEI COMMUNITIES

The United Way of PEI was thrilled to announce that we will be investing **\$670,000** of funding in **13 organizations** over the next two years to support critical work being done to reduce the impacts of local poverty. This funding investment is made possible thanks to the generous contributions of our donors.

These grants support our goals of helping children and youth thrive both in and out of school, supporting individuals struggling with homelessness, improving mental health of the province's most vulnerable individuals and families, and creating strong inclusive communities where everyone can thrive.

Recipients of the funding include PEERS Alliance, Blooming House, BGC Prince County, BGC Charlottetown, PEI Literacy Alliance, PEI Family Violence Prevention Services, Family Service PEI, Big Brothers Big Sisters PEI, Sierra Club (Wild Child PEI), BIPOC USHR in partnership with Cooper Institute, and South East Environmental Association in partnership with Friendly Circle Seniors Club Murray Harbour.

In addition to program funding, United Way of PEI has introduced an operational funding stream to support the health and sustainability of our partner organizations. UWPEI will also support all funded partners with training and professional development opportunities and will work with them to measure the individual and collective impact of their work.





## 2023-24 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The United Way of PEI is governed by its Board of Directors, a group of diverse and dedicated community leaders who provide vision, strategic leadership, accountability, and stewardship. We invite you to visit our website at [peiunitedway.com/board-of-directors](https://peiunitedway.com/board-of-directors) to learn more about each member.



**LEA BRYDEN**  
PRESIDENT



**RANDY CANNON**  
PAST PRESIDENT



**ASHLEY CHEVERIE**  
TREASURER



**JULIE PELLISSIER-LUSH**



**NINDIYA SHARMA**



**ANDREW MACDONALD**



**SYDNEY RIGGS**



**JODI MARRIN**



PEIUNITEDWAY.COM

We are  
**#StrongerUnited**



**United Way**  
Prince Edward Island