



# THE EQUITY INNOVATION FUND



## Equity Innovation Report 4



United Way  
of Racine County

# ► Equity Innovation Report 4 Grantees

**Payne Consulting**  
**Project: Next Level Mentoring Program**



**Racine Unified School District**  
**Project: Access for All**



**Baby Express**  
**Project: Baby Express Transportation**



**Professional Women In Trades**  
**Project: She Can Do It Too**



**Education Empowerment**  
**Project: Youth Aspiring Towards Excellence**  
**Remedial Reading Program**



**5 projects** totaling over **\$330,000**.

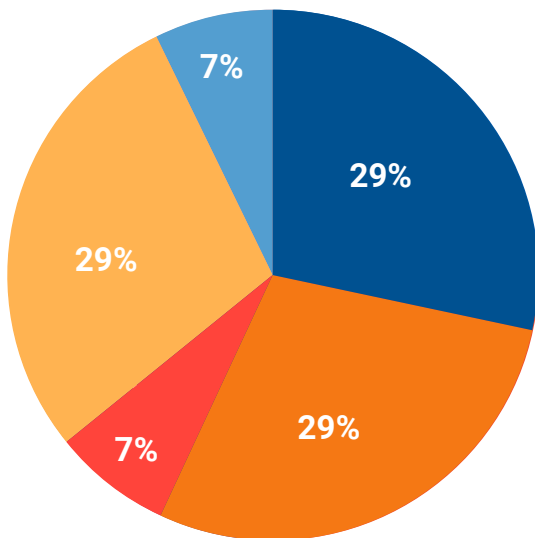


**578 individuals** served.



**5 projects** are directed by BIPOC, women, LGBTQIA+ community members or other marginalized individuals.

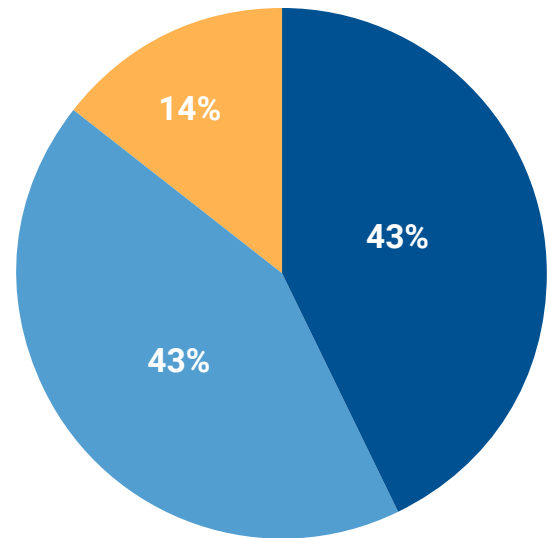
**Marginalized Populations Served by Projects**



- African American
- Latinx/Hispanic
- People of Color
- LGBTQIA+
- Economically Disadvantaged

Grantees indicated in their application which marginalized population their projects will serve. Projects may serve more than one population.

**Areas Addressed by Projects**



- K-12 academic and/or social emotional success
- Individual Independence
- Individual and/or family stability

Grantees indicated in their application the focus area addressed by their project.



## Baby Express Project: Baby Express Transportation

Baby Express was developed to increase access to quality health care and reduce the high infant mortality rate and the Black maternal death rate in the city of Racine. Baby Express Transportation provided transportation to pregnant women and households with infants to medical services, community services and employment. Nichole Urquhart, founder of Baby Express, brought the project idea to WISN-TV's "Project Pitch It" show and won \$10,000 for the project.



### By the Numbers

- 9 successful births
- 313 total participants
- 245 prenatal care rides
- 580 rides to job
- 33 clients retained employment through probationary period



*"Baby Express saved our life! Without Baby Express I don't know how we would have been able to get to our medical appointments." – Client Olivia Gonzales*



## Professional Women In Trades Project: She Can Do It Too

The She Can Do It Too program aimed to raise awareness among women of non-traditional careers, such as construction, energy, HVAC, IT, manufacturing, transportation and more. The project offered two six-week workshops, "Manufacturing Skills to Pay the Bills," where participants learned how to navigate and program a CNC simulator, read and use precision measuring instruments, apply shop math, and read and understand blueprints. Participants also learned more about CNC tooling and programming and completed online safety training. The goal of the program was to prepare participants for employment as entry-level CNC operators. The She Can Do It Too program also utilized funds to host a Women in Trades Day to introduce non-traditional careers to middle- and high-school girls.

The workshop classes also included men after Professional Women in Trades discovered a high demand for the classes, particularly among men looking for post-incarceration employment.



### By the Numbers

- 201 people served
- 49 "Manufacturing Skills to Pay the Bills" graduates
- 5 women obtained employment in the trades/nontraditional careers

*"The instructor was funny and serious at the same time. She taught us to address ourselves as machinists and not operators. She helped the ladies see they belonged in machining, too. Overall, I learned a lot. This is a great program!" – program participant*



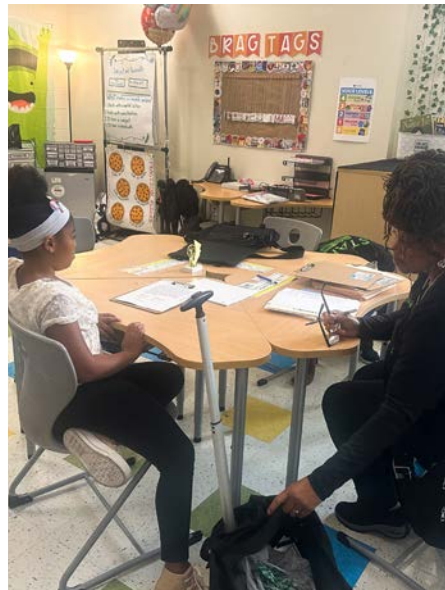
## Education Empowerment

### Project: Youth Aspiring Towards Excellence Remedial Reading Program

Education Empowerment developed a remedial reading program to address reading deficiencies in students who have progressed beyond third grade. Participants were assigned to a team that was able to address their individual needs and provided one-on-one tutoring and intervention. The project established a two-hour instructional session that occurred twice a week. In addition, the program worked to address any wrap-around services needed to assure holistic attention of the student and family dynamic.

#### By the Numbers

- 10 participants showed an increase in MAP scores
- 92% of participants in the summer session did not show a summer decline in skills
- 14 participants were connected to at least one wraparound partner



*"Another parent was so impressed that they asked if they could bring a neighbor. When that neighbor came, he too asked if he can tell others." – Pastor Ernest J. Ni'A, Wayman AME Church*



**Racine Unified School District  
Project: Access for All**

Access for All was developed by Racine Unified School District to help families pay for outpatient mental health services at RUSD's school-based mental health clinics. RUSD saw that high insurance deductibles were preventing families from engaging in the school-based mental health program. Families were able to apply for the funds to receive up to 15 counseling sessions. Access for All project's goal was to improve access to mental health services, reduce barriers to care, increase earlier identification and treatment interventions, improve school climate toward mental health issues and improve overall functioning of students.

*"The United Way Equity Innovation Fund allowed us the ability to address the financial barrier that was being experienced by our families. .... Our families expressed their gratitude that this program was in place to support their child accessing mental health services when they needed it." – Julie Hueller, Manager, Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health, Racine Unified School District*

**By the Numbers**

- 442 sessions provided
- 8 students have been discharged from therapy and have met at least 1 treatment goal
- 67% of participants showed improvement in standard math scores from fall to spring
- 60% of participants showed improvement in their standard reading scores from fall to spring





**PAYNE**  
CONSULTING

## Payne Consulting Project: Next Level Mentoring Program

The Next Level Mentoring Program offered a multitude of services to at-risk youth ages 9 to 13 in the city of Racine. Participants were paired with adult mentors from diverse communities with similar lived experiences. Participants received a comprehensive curriculum to foster a greater sense of community with anticipated outcomes of decreased high-risk behaviors, improved academic leadership, and increased personal and social skills, as well as opportunities for career exploration, stress release and improved self-esteem through boxing. Youth were provided with various experiences including tutoring, technology experience, boxing, community speakers and more.

Next Level Mentoring received a second grant from the Equity Innovation Fund to offer a program in fall 2024 because of the popularity and demand for the program.

### By the Numbers

- 28 youth participated in the program
- 42 total mentoring sessions
- 100% of participants' parents said they would recommend the program to others
- 94% of parents were very satisfied with their child's participation in the program



*"The funding was a game changer in terms of us being able to run a high-quality program for vulnerable youths and families without having to worry about where the funding would come from. The program helped the participants and their families immensely by serving as a safe additional support that promoted exploration, learning, growth, and community connections." – Dr. Kimberly Payne, Payne Consulting*



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*“Being on the Equity Innovation Fund Committee has been a highlight of my professional career. Thanks to the generous support of MacKenzie Scott and Racine County and the leadership of the United Way of Racine County, this committee had the vision, stewardship, and dedication to ensure that the process of dispersing \$2 million was equitable and impactful. The process was followed so new and established nonprofits could apply for these game-changing equity grants. I believe the diversity of Racine has been represented and supported by these grants and is a model for how to have a direct impact on our community.”– Barb Farrar, Equity Innovation Fund Committee member*

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From its launch in January 2022 to the completion of the grants included in this report, United Way of Racine County’s Equity Innovation Fund has awarded 20 grants to organizations, totaling more than \$925,000. More than 3,040 people have been served by the projects supported through these 20 Equity Innovation Fund grants.

Future Equity Innovation Fund reports will detail the impact of grants that have been awarded in subsequent rounds of funding.

## ▶ Stay Up to Date

If you have any questions about the Equity Innovation Fund, please contact Special Projects Manager Katie Tuttle at [ktuttle@unitedwayracine.org](mailto:ktuttle@unitedwayracine.org)



To learn more, and to see other Equity Innovation Fund reports, scan the QR code or visit: [UnitedWayRacine.org/EIF](https://UnitedWayRacine.org/EIF)



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