

UR Community Cares



Connecting Older Adults & Disabled Residents with Volunteers



Annual Report 2021

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IF YOU FOSTER THEM, THEY WILL FLOURISH

Building Thriving Communities

For over twenty years, Michelle Puzzo was an in-home physical therapist. She quickly realized her patients required many daily needs and began addressing those more than providing physical therapy services; this sparked the birth of an innovative idea. After spending her career working with a diverse group of patients with disabilities, having a medical background and an in-depth understanding of the numerous challenges arising for older adults as they age, she not only saw people needed assistance at home, but were unable to pay for it because they didn't qualify for state programs.

In 2019, Michelle joined forces with co-founder, M.D. Birmingham, a man who understands the complexity of living with a disability, to map out the website. In June of that year, URCommunityCares.org launched on a path to improve community connections so every town could better directly support people in their homes.

They set out on a mission to provide an intergenerational road-map connecting local volunteers with community members allowing them to age in place. UR Community Cares (UCC) mobilize residents to connect with one another, town by town, linking those who can help with those who need help.

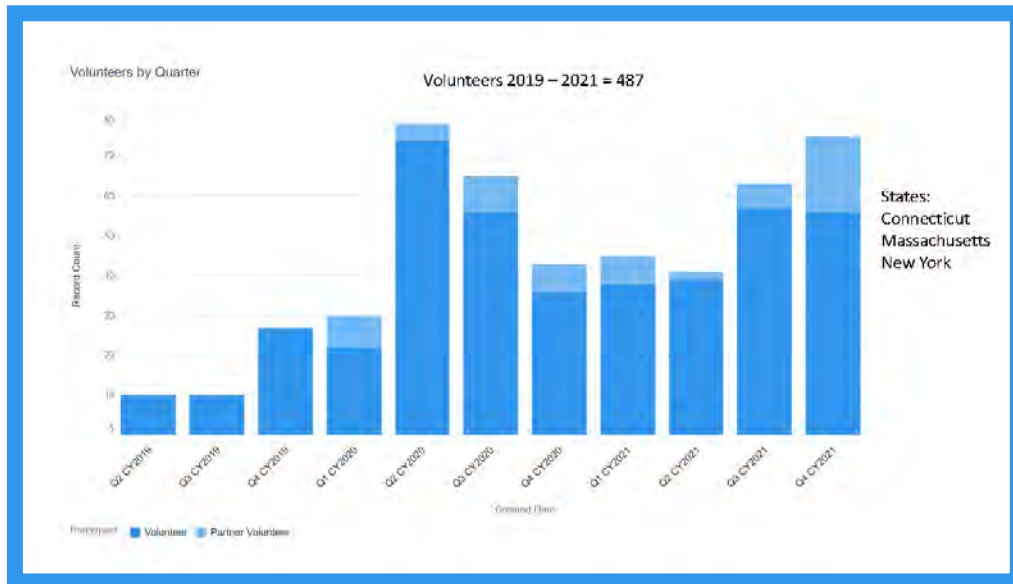
UCC, a registered 501(c) (3) non-profit, serves 169 towns in all counties throughout Connecticut and are expanding into New York, and Massachusetts.

Since their launch in 2019, UCC was preparing for the more severe economic, healthcare, and living crises that will face our aging population by 2042 due to social security depletions, and barriers to healthcare costs and availability of caregivers, as examples, by eradicating the desperation of our elderly. By 2060 our aging population will make up 94.7 million U.S. citizens and outnumber our youth. UCC understands human touch and technology are powerful when combined in combating one's lack of family support; they are working to address needs for the chronically ill, disabled veterans, populations of blind and those with dementia.

With the COVID pandemic being declared a permanent fixture in the lives of Americans, and the aging and individuals with disabilities populations being more undeserved vulnerable. UR Community Cares can address an expanding need and desire to provide services and thereby, seeks to expand nationwide.

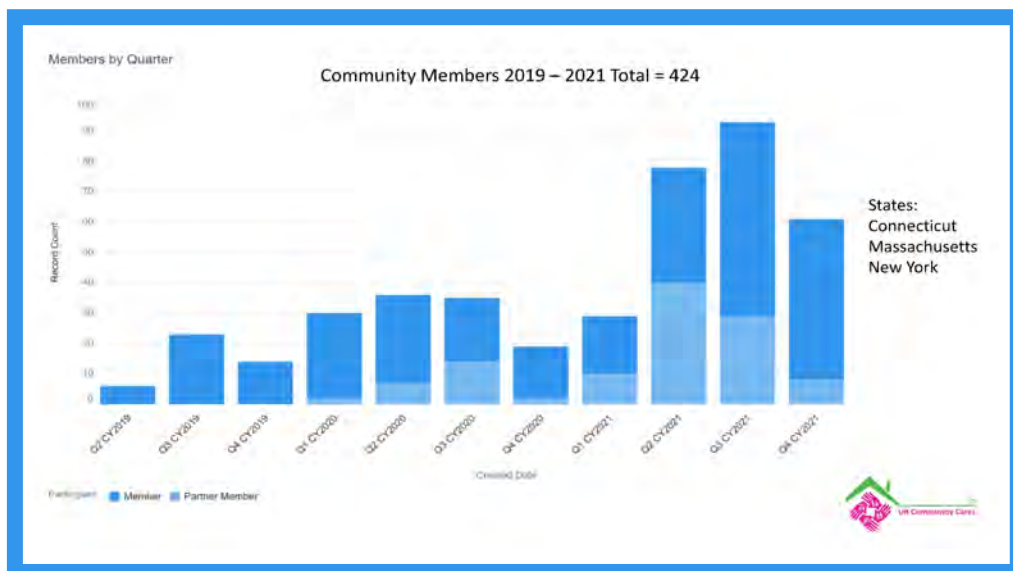
VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

URCommunityCares.org was launched in 2nd quarter 2019 and by the 4th quarter of 2021, UCC's volunteer base grew to a total of 487 members across Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. We have been so inspired by the people who have signed up to volunteer and help a neighbor. So many people are developing friendships and being a true support system when they need it the most. Connections are formed, smiles are shared, and hope is spread through URCommunityCares.org. Time is the most precious gift you can give.



MEMBER STATS

URCommunityCares.org was launched in 2nd quarter 2019 and by the 4th quarter of 2021, UCC's volunteer base grew to a total of 424 members across Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. Due to the volume of sign-ups, in Q4 2021, we began to target enrollments; to increase community engagement in the towns we have funding.



COST SAVING STATS

The time our volunteers donate, save our members thousands of dollars that they would have to pay in hiring cleaning services, transportation services, caregivers, etc. People on a fixed income are so grateful for the assistance they receive throughout the year and due to COVID-19 as the world transitioned to being virtual, we were ready to better support residents directly in their homes. Independence is vital, staying at home is the goal for many but aging is complex, and we are a free resource in every community.



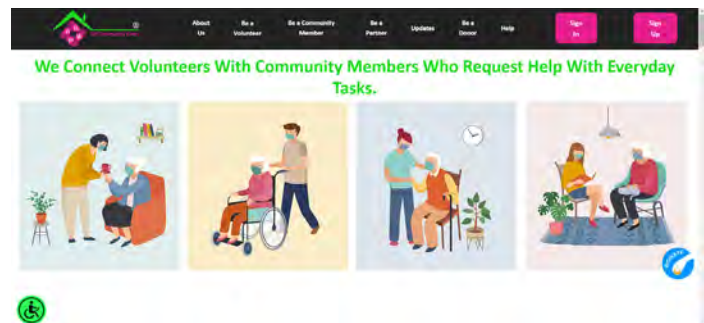
UCC'S SOLUTION TO A PROBLEM

The Problem: Need for equity, inclusion and decrease disparities within all communities, especially for the socially vulnerable population.

The Solution: UR Community Cares launched in 2019 to create a scalable solution for better community connections for the aging and disabled population for all towns. We oversee enrollments, provide technical support for users, program development, we use our proprietary website database and give reports to partners on user data.

People call us to manage their account if they do not have devices (computer or smartphone) or Internet to provide digital inclusion.

Digital equity is equally important for those that don't have Broadband/Internet. We use technology to benefit low income/illiterate individuals, so they can have same opportunity for better mental and health outcomes. We provide digital equity for aging and disabled residents that don't have local family support.



Easy Sign Up/Sign In for Members to Request Services

- Community Member logs into URCommunityCares.org
- Schedule in their profile for Assistance –pick day/ time and the category with which they need help
- Email goes to Volunteer within a 15-mile radius/ town
- After volunteer receives notification, they log into their profile and accept appointments that fit their schedule.

PROGRAM COSTS TO PROVIDE

Critical Issues

The cost per member per year for UR Community Cares to provide services is \$100.00. The most **CRITICAL ISSUES** facing our organization are technology, staffing, and program costs. Currently, Michelle and other volunteers can help register members who lack access to technology or technology skills. Members' largest need is transportation. Because UR Community Cares is 100% volunteer, the grants/donations cover the program costs for members and volunteers including insurances, background checks, and technology. As evidenced, we saved community members thousands of dollars, but spent over \$30,000 completing required background checks. We think security and safety is critical for the demographic of people we serve.

Security Measures

Insurance

- Auto
- General Liability
- Board & Directors
- Worker's Comp

All Participants Background Checked (except high school students)

- Driving history for transportation
- 7-year federal/state history

Technology

- Web Developer
- Security
- Software/Subscriptions
- Support
- Hosting/Domain

Each participant costs approximately \$100/year

- **Background Check**
- **Website**
- **Insurance**
- **Admin**

Community members receive unlimited assistance

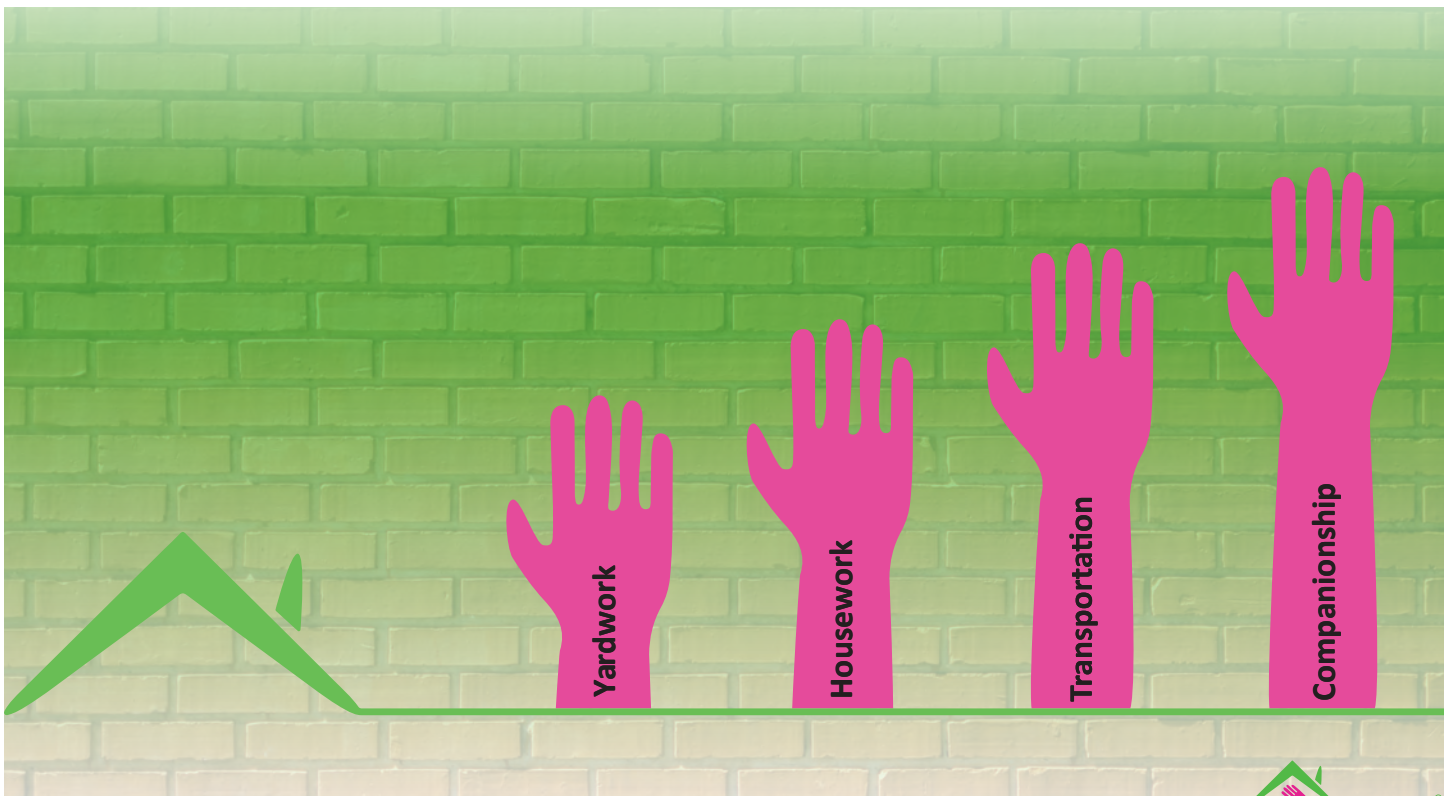
Volunteers have completed over 1,200 Good Deeds.

Acts of Kindness in over 115 towns in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY VOLUNTEERS DIRECTLY TO PEOPLE IN NEED



- **Companionship** - Teach technology or telehealth with ongoing training to improve learning, play games, chat, respite relief to caregivers, pet care when in the hospital or recovering
- **Housework** - Laundry, cleaning, organizing, decorating, petcare
- **Yardwork** - Shoveling, trash, raking, mail, gardening, petcare
- **Transportation** - Medical procedure/ appointment, personal appointments, faith organization, errands



STATS SINCE 2019



We are a scalable solution to communities supporting their aging and disabled residents directly in their homes.



952 Followers



806 Followers



179 Followers



900+ Participants



900+ BKGD. Checks



1200+ Community Deeds

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

LEADERS, COLLABORATORS, AND VOLUNTEERS working together to refer UCC as a resource, referring and registering residents, advocating for online group enrollments, engaging groups/individuals to learn about UCC's services, encouraging Member and Volunteer enrollment, and enrolling and accepting home visits and deeds provide a free resource to **MEMBERS** who have requested assistance with transportation, errands, or housework or yardwork, or simply asked for some companionship.

LEADERS

Local Officials
Healthcare Providers
Outreach Coordinators
Social Services Agencies

COLLABORATORS

Public Libraries
Schools & Universities
Local Businesses & Donors
Civic Groups & Associations

VOLUNTEERS

18 and Older
Age 15-17 (w/ parental consent)

MEMBERS

Age 70 and older and/or
Temporary Disability/ Permanent
Disability after an injury or illness

WE ARE THE ROAD-MAP TO CONNECT UR TOWN BY

Supporting the aging in place and living independently
Building intergenerational connections
Increasing community resilience
Ensuring accessibility of services
Using technology "for the good"
Valuing dignity and respect



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

As towns age, communities revitalize, utilizing technology on a large scale. Many of the members UCC serves are unable to register for services on their own because they lack technology or technology skills. UCC volunteers make all this happen by teaching members.

Population Aging: For the first time in U.S. history, the number of people aged 65 and older:

- Surpassed the number of people under 5 years old in 2019
- Will Surpass the number of people under 18 years old in 2034

Benefits to Communities:

- Mentally and physically healthier
- Establishing intergenerational connections
- Transportation allows voting, paying taxes, shopping, and going to the library
- Improved town departments' coordination of services
- Caregivers perform primary forms of care

Benefits to Members:

- Improved quality of life
- Remains in home with social connections
- Maintains neighborhood
- Improved physical/mental health and wellness
- Pride in home and appearance
- Improved conditions for pet care
- Members no longer endanger self or others

Launched 1st Community Assistance Team (CAT) and can be established in any town

Clinton launched 1st CAT in August 2021 by Police Dept. and Human Services Dept.

Current #'s

Volunteers = 25

Community Members = 24

Clinton Nonprofit Donation (not municipal) to cover annual enrollments: \$8,500

- A joint venture for any town in Connecticut to use the URCommunityCares.org website to allow town depts, nonprofit organizations, local businesses to collaborate.
- Police/Fire Dept can provide basic training for volunteers.
- UCC website connects the CAT Partner groups to help enroll and manage the delivery of services to those in need.



Presentations with Council of Governments to discuss including us in their regional plan for Aging, using ARPA funding or in municipal funding.



VOLUNTEER IMPACT IS POSITIVE AND PRICELESS

Members no longer feel broken, ashamed, defeated, or helpless. Volunteers have renewed their spirit and sense of pride in themselves and their community. **OUT OF THE FABRIC OF LONELINESS, UR COMMUNITY CARES QUILTS FAMILIES.** Then, the volunteers spoke, “We get WAY more than we give.”

“I’ve been volunteering for several months. I’ve really enjoyed being able to meet a variety of people, helping from everything from driving them to appointments or shopping for them, doing their housework to yardwork, or just visiting. All the members I’ve served have been so grateful; it’s a great feeling to be able to do a small thing to help make things a little easier for them.”

Lori T., Volunteer, Manchester, CT

“Walking into Sheri’s home felt open, warm, and cozy. After proper formalities, she asked me to help her go through her mail by reading it to her. We sat at her kitchen table and went through her mail. She needed a new state insurance card, so I called the proper number and got the run-around. We called this number and that number trying to get her help in ordering a new card, the phone on speaker the whole time. When Sheri had enough, she called her social worker and left a message. I hope he has gotten back to her. We made a few other phone calls pertaining to her mail and then filed them in an organized manner. After that Shari showed me her computer and how it worked, we sorted a few files on and then it was time for me to leave. She looks forward to seeing me again and is deeply appreciative with all the help. Sheri can’t wait to see how much she accomplishes with the proper help, and I look forward to being that person who helps her reach her goals. I feel essential to her plan and a sense of gratification with helping her.”

Alexis Averett, Volunteer

“My first encounter with Mr. McKiver I didn’t even get to see him. It was after a bad storm, and he had lost electricity for a few days. I heard his voice on the other side of the door saying that there wasn’t much I could do. As I walked away, I felt disappointed but glad that I had showed up just in case. On my way home, he called to tell me I had “restored his faith in humanity;” that was the beginning of our friendship. Since that time, I’ve volunteered weekly at Mr. McKiver’s home. I quickly learned he is a man of many stories, or, in his words, he’s blessed with the “gift of gab.” Whether he is talking about the bible, his father “Big Wheel,” or a childhood memory, Mr. McKiver is captivating and willing to impart his wisdom and life experiences. Mr. McKiver is witty and as sharp as a tack. When I began volunteering, I thought Mr. McKiver would be the one who benefited from the deeds I completed. I had no idea the impact he would have on me. As much as he appreciates the deeds that I complete, it is me who is truly blessed.”

Kathleen, Volunteer



VOLUNTEER IMPACT IS POSITIVE AND PRICELESS

INDEPENDENCE, NOT
LONELINESS.



PRIDE,
NOT SHAME



“My experience with your community cares helps me to be able to stay in my home. I am a widow, 85 years old, with a variety of health conditions and limited income. I am not able to take care of my home as I once did. Your volunteer service has added so much comfort and well-being to my life. I think so highly of my volunteer, Beth, who has given her time every week to help around the house with laundry, dishes, cleaning, and a variety of projects, and to visit with me. Thank you!”

June S., Community Member, Manchester, CT

Christine is a volunteer who knew her time is limited, as she is a theology professor and wanted to give someone a ride to church. When she saw a request come in that someone was looking for a ride to church, she accepted it and began her journey with UR Community Cares. She now has a great relationship with Lorice whom she takes to church weekly, weather permitting.

Impact Story - Christine

COMMUNITY EVENTS

UR Community Cares participates in many events and activities throughout the year including the Youth Hero Contest, Giving Tuesday, Silk City Festival, Northwest Park Fairy Door Project, and the Main Street Butterfly Event.

We were even 3rd Place Winner in the Columbia, CT July 4th Parade.

Two of our most favorite activities were being Christmas Elves when we created a **Giving Tree** for community members to gift to our members at the holidays, and having the distinct honor of celebrating **Frank Sacco's 107th** birthday with him. Pleased to view the excitement on his face when we presented him with a Proclamation from Governor Lamont. His face during his drive-by **Birthday Celebration** was full of joy. A link to both videos can be found on our Instagram Page.



**Manchester Main Street Event:
Scarecrow Contest**

Giving Tuesday A Global Day of Giving



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIRST 3 YEARS

- 100% Volunteer run
- Growing and passionate diverse board and advisors
- 900+ Website users on URCommunityCares.org
- Integration of Sales-force for all reporting
- 1,250+ Community deeds performed by volunteers
- Included in 2 municipal budgets
- Received over 10 Grants from Community Foundations
- Granted use of Catchafire.org by Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and have saved over \$200,000 on 54 projects and calls with pro bono professional support
- MaturityWorks collaboration with many trainees' administrative support
- Hosted 1st Youth Hero Contest showcasing high school student achievements
- Launched 1st Community Assistance Team in Clinton, CT
- Launched 1st UR Pet Community program with ECHN in Manchester, CT
- PRO BONO Project with INFOSYS.com to add additional website features

What's To Come In 2022 and How We Can Collaborate

- **Seeking Fundraisers** – Your Business can perform a fundraiser with UR Community Cares – restaurants, dress down day, “No BAKE”
- **Your business can be a Sponsors** – we link you information on our website highlighting your businesses services
- **Post a flyer, include us in your newsletter, share with your staff**
- **PRO BONO Project with INFOSYS** – Relaunch of our mobile friendly website with new features to improve user experience and capability for partners and sponsor opportunities. Spring 2022



PARTNERS

Town Departments | Nonprofit Organizations Businesses | Hospitals | Civic Organizations | Municipalities

Partners assist members who lack technology skills register for services.
Multiple town departments can make Partner accounts to connect residents.

To be a PARTNER, go to URCommunityCares.org and sign up.
Then, enroll community members for services who don't have Internet, a computer or smartphone or are illiterate to schedule volunteers to perform needed deeds weekly or monthly.

Partial List of our Partners:

ECHN

South End Wellness Senior Center

Newington Dept. of Human Services

Clinton Community Assistance Team

Manchester Human Services

Cheshire Senior Center

Bolton Senior Center

Florence Mills Apartments and Delamere Woods Residential Facility

Hartford Healthcare – Center for Healthy Aging

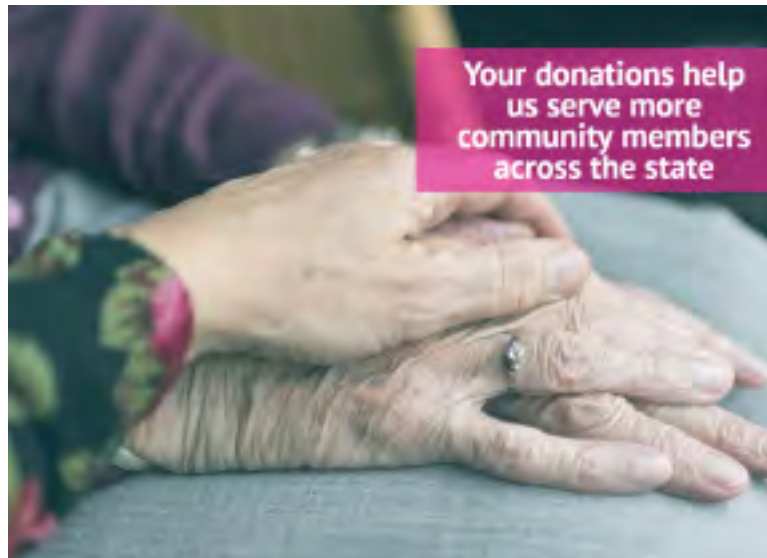


THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Proud recipient of funding from:

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving COVID-19 Response Fund
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Greater Together Community Funds in Avon, East Granby,
Ellington, Hebron, Newington, Somers, Vernon
Town of Manchester FY 20/21 and FY 21/22
Town of Bolton FY 21/22
Connecticut Community Foundation
Families Helping Families
Farmington Bank Community Foundation
Liberty Bank
Walmart
South Windsor Jaycees
Fairfield Country Community Foundation
Arnel Charitable Fund
Cruisin' On Main Street Philanthropic Committee
The Brawny® Giants Initiative

**We are thankful to all the individual donors; your contributions help us connect
NEIGHBORS to NEIGHBORS!**



SUPPORT OF UCC'S FUTURE PLANS FOR GROWTH

UR Community Cares connects background checked volunteers to older adults/physically disabled residents in need of help via URCommunityCares.org. 10,000 people are turning 65 every day, the world is dealing with so many health crises we are here to help towns plan for the rise in older adults.

In 20 years, the possible lack of retirement savings, possible depletion of social security, less pensions, less employees, and less 401k savings which will create many social/economic issues. We need to prepare.

Common barriers to health access include cost, lack of time, transportation, available caregiver, and volunteers are a free local resource to help with a variety of these issues in every town.

UR Community Cares welcomes PARTNERS and COLLABORATORS. Adding to our community partnerships will allow us to add more technology, expand our volunteer base, hire personnel to support our operations, and allow our leadership team to run the and expand the organization and its services.

Invest
Donate
Be a Sponsor

UR Community Cares has great goals for future development as outlined below. We would like to:

1. Relaunch our mobile friendly website in 2022 with new features to improve new user experience and capability for partners and sponsor opportunities. Pro Bono Project with Infosys – Spring 2022
2. Grow staff to support Connecticut residents as we are growing statewide, utilizing the American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment, and Jobs Act
3. Increase municipal funding; we are community technology for any to better connect their residents
4. Increase Sponsors to allow our programming to expand to a call center and have a location for technical support/training
5. Create a Mobile App. allowing us enhance user experience, add additional features, be visible to users at all times and improve engagement between users.





THANK YOU to our team!

Please contact us if you are interested
in joining our board, consider a
donation or sign up on our website!

UR Community Cares, Inc.

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