



ALICE+ Library

HEALTH

Name of Client, Mary A, Program: InterFaith Hunger Project (IFHP)

Please share an impactful client story.

She asked that we not share her last name.

One of the most impactful stories I've witnessed at InterFaith Hunger Project is the story of Mary, a woman who lives alone and is homebound. I'll never forget the first time we met her—when we brought food to her house, she began to cry. She had been without consistent food for a long time, and the sight of the groceries brought her an overwhelming sense of relief. She asked us to put everything in her kitchen, and as we started stocking her refrigerator, freezer, and cabinets, we were struck by what we found: the only thing in her freezer was a bottle of frozen water. Mary shared that until we arrived, she didn't know when or what she would eat next. That moment was a turning point in her life, and it showed me just how important the work we do really is. Since then, Mary has been receiving food from us every month, which has been transformative for her. The monthly food deliveries have eased her stress and given her the peace of mind that she won't have to worry about where her next meal is coming from. But our support didn't stop there. We also helped Mary get an eye exam and a new pair of glasses, which made a huge difference in her ability to navigate her home and feel more independent. A few months later, she called us again with a new concern—her refrigerator had stopped working. Thanks to a generous volunteer, we were able to connect Mary with someone who not only purchased a new refrigerator for her but also installed it, ensuring she could safely store the food we were providing. Now, both Mary and the volunteer who brings her food each month look forward to their visits, and she no longer feels isolated or uncertain about her future. This story resonates deeply with the mission of the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, which seeks to support individuals in building better lives and creating lasting changes in the community. Mary's story shows how our program addresses not only immediate hunger but also helps provide long-term stability and dignity to individuals who are struggling. The continued funding from organizations like United Way of Amarillo & Canyon is essential for us to continue offering this level of support. With that support, we can continue providing food, resources, and connections that truly transform lives, helping people like Mary live with hope and security. Without that funding, many would be left without the essential services they rely on.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

It's crucial for InterFaith Hunger Project (IFHP) to receive funding from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon because this support allows us to continue providing vital services to individuals and families in need. United Way's funding helps ensure we can supply nutritious food, connect people with additional resources and meet other critical needs within our community. With United Way's backing, we can expand our reach and serve more people—whether they're working parents, elderly individuals, or families facing unexpected hardships. The funding also helps us maintain the infrastructure we need, such as the ability to purchase food in bulk, which ultimately allows us to deliver more consistent, reliable support to those who need it most. Without this crucial funding, IFHP would struggle to meet the growing demands for assistance in our community, leaving many without the resources they need to thrive. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon investment is an investment in the well-being and future of our entire community.



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HEALTH

Name of client: Anonymous, Name of Program: Family Care Foundation

Please share an impactful client story.

We have numerous stories regarding the elderly receiving extractions and dentures. They all share the same issues and daily problems, namely being able to eat. It is truly a quality-of-life issue for them. Most of our clients do not have many teeth left and those remaining teeth are usually broken or abscessed, making their day-to-day painful and impacting their overall health. Medicare does not pay for dental treatment. Family Care Foundation is currently the only organization with an ongoing program to help with their dental needs. The individuals are always so overwhelmed and tearful when they are notified that the funding is available to be able to provide their dental services.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

The funding provided by United Way of Amarillo & Canyon allows us to provide additional dental services that would not be possible without the funds.

Name of Client: Anonymous, Program Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)

During the hard times of adapting to motherhood and having to learn about all the responsibilities and commitments to being a first-time young mom is hard and stressful. The nurse-family partnership was one of the programs I benefited from, and it helped me the most. I can't thank this program enough for saving me during this hard process of being a first-time mom. This program has helped me understand the health and development of my child. Whether that was me having a silly simple question like why my son's poop was a certain color or when I was genuinely concerned about my son's well-being. , They had all the answers, resources, and references to all of my concerns. As a first-time mom you have so many questions and things you don't understand when you take home a child of your own and you feel alone. But This program has helped me understand how to safely care and raise my child. Both my nurses that I have had, Nazarely, and my current nurse Ashley, have made me feel comfortable with this transition of being a first-time mom in the comfort of my own home. These nurses have always responded to my questions and listened to my concerns. This program has lowered my anxiety and stress that comes with caring for a baby. This program not only cares about your baby's well-being but yours as well. After having a baby people tend to forget about the mother and focus on the child, but this program has proved they genuinely care about both equally. Seeing Ashley engaged with my child, and I have created a bond that makes me feel comfortable and feel as if I have someone to lean on during motherhood, not only is she my nurse but now she feels more like a friend. I am always happy to see our nurse Ashley come to the convenience of our home and provide resources, answer any concerns, and interact with my family. I would truly recommend this program to anyone interested and anyone questioning whether they should participate. Not only does this program keep your information private (which was my heaviest concern), they are there for you and your little one to lean on. I am genuinely grateful and appreciative of everything this program has done for me and how they go out of their way for my family and me. It felt like a weight lifted off my chest to have this support. I am confident in being a mother now and have support thanks to Nurse Family Partnership. I will truly never forget this experience I was blessed to have. Thank you.



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EDUCATION

Name of Client: Blake, **Name of Program accessed:** Golden Spread Councils Scoutreach Program
Please share an impactful client story.

The Golden Spread Councils Scoutreach after school program is predominantly low-income, at-risk broken home youth, and Blake was no exception. He was an elementary student and would often get in trouble at school. Keeping Blake's attention was also a challenge for his teachers and his after-school site leaders. He was a very intelligent young man who seemed to get bored easily and was always seeking attention. Getting bored resulted in Blake not necessarily making the best decisions and therefore, resulted in some behavioral stigmas. In 2019, Blake joined Cub Scouts in his after-school program under his Scout leader, Mr. Chris. Blake bonded to Mr. Chris immediately who in turn bonded with Blake. Mr. Chris understood Blake and worked to keep him engaged and keep his attention on the activity that was on the schedule for that week. Blake liked to be busy, and he liked Cub Scouting; however, sometimes he wanted to stay and play with his friends. When Mr. Chris found him, there might have been a little protest, but when he got busy, he always seemed to be having fun! Blake went from rolling his eyes at the repetition of learning the Scout Oath and Scout Law which starts off every meeting to now, 4 years later, leading the charge and helping all the new youth learn the Scout Oath and Law. Blake has become a leader in his unit, and even his teachers are excited to his positive changes and being helpful leaders in the classroom. His site leaders turn to him to help keep the crowd under control and he comes running when we come in the door to find out "what are we doing that's fun today?". Cub Scouting is about having fun while learning good character development, leadership skills, and connection with peers. It is about giving kids recognition and attention for positive achievement. Scouting has given Blake the confidence and moral support to become a better student, Scout and ultimately a better citizen. Blake has come a long way and yet he isn't finished. Blake has stated that he wants to continue his journey in Scouting by moving into Scouts BSA and getting to experience opportunities that he might not otherwise get to have. Blake is continuing to grow and thrive in school and in life thanks to Scouting. The activities, awards, and recognition received through Scouting is exactly what Blake needed to motivate him and help guide his decision making. The Scoutreach program is a zero cost to the client program, thanks to the support of United Way of Amarillo & Canyon. All of the paid staff, program supplies, insurance, awards, and registration fees are paid for by UWAC. We strive to keep this life-changing program at zero cost. With UWAC's help we tear down barriers to keep this program alive and well. Together we can continue making today's youth their best future selves.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

The Scoutreach program is a zero cost to the client program, thanks to the support of United Way. All the paid staff, program supplies, insurance, awards, and registration fees are paid for by UWAC. We strive to keep this life-changing program at zero cost. With UWAC's help we tear down barriers to keep this program alive and well. Together we can continue making today's youth their best future selves.



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EDUCATION

Client Name Maricela, Name of Program Utilized Joseph's Project

My name is Maricela, and my husband and I would like to share a story that is deeply personal to our family. Our son came into this world far too early, born prematurely at just six months. His tiny body fought valiantly, and he was immediately transferred to Dallas Medical for the critical care he so desperately needed. Every moment we spent with him during those five precious weeks was a gift we will forever treasure.

During this unimaginably difficult time, my husband and I faced not only the heartache of seeing our baby in the NICU but also the overwhelming burden of trying to keep our home and life intact. This is where Charities of the Texas Panhandle- Joseph's Project stepped in as a lifeline. They covered our rent and utilities, relieving us of financial worries so we could focus solely on being by our son's side.

Thanks to the generosity and compassion of Joseph's Project, we were able to pour all our love and energy into our baby when he needed us the most. Their support gave us the strength to endure and the hope to keep going. We will be forever grateful for the calls and the prayers we received from all your staff.

*Note, the participants in Joseph's project enroll in parent education services in order to participate in the program

Name of Client: Member K, Name of Program Accessed: Maverick Boys and Girls Club of Amarillo

Please share an impactful client story.

Every year we have a wait list of more than 200 children that need a place for the summer months when school is out. To answer the call of need in the community, we partnered with local church New Light Ministries to open a free Performing Arts Camp to target talented youth in our community that seek an artistic outlet and a safe space for exploration.

Member K joined Performing Arts camp as a very standoffish and reserved young lady. She was a foster child that had bounced around and struggled with her identity. She was extremely shy and hid behind her hair and clothing. Through various activities to explore artistic talents and interests in singing, dancing, drawing, acting, and writing we were able to draw out her talents of playing guitar, poetry writing, and singing. She was able to blossom into a leader, mentor, and drew back the "curtains" of finding herself as a leader, accepting her differences are embraced and welcomed, and that she does have a voice that people want to hear.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

Funds received from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon make it possible for us to serve the children in our community that need us most. More than 89 percent of the children we serve are below poverty, hungry, struggle academically, and/or missing a male figure in their lives. According to AISD, we are only serving 3 percent of the children that need our services, and funding from the United Way makes it possible to continue to make our program and activities more accessible. We would not be able to keep our doors open without the generosity of United Way.



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FINANCIAL STABILITY

Name of client: Jessica Robles, Name of Program: Goodwill Career, Job Training and Placement
Please share an impactful client story.

Jessica Robles came to the Goodwill Career Center in August 2023 after the mechanic shop she owned with her husband closed due to the pandemic. With limited skills, she aimed for a part-time office or sales position, focusing on improving her computer proficiency. Jessica found the Career Center's resources invaluable. The classes boosted her confidence and comfort with various applications. She attended three levels of computer classes and specialty classes like Building Self Esteem and Exploring Canva. She was one of the first to receive her Employment Development Series certification. Her top takeaways included improved typing speed, knowledge of Microsoft programs, and tools for handling interpersonal situations. Jessica praised the staff for being friendly and supportive. After completing the advanced computer class in December, Jessica applied for an HR clerk/receptionist position at the Goodwill Career Center. She was hired on January 16 and has since been a great asset, enhancing her skills in scanning applications, data entry, using the Outlook calendar, and leading portions of New Employee Orientation. Jessica's manager, Jahnel, says, "Jessica has been a great addition to the HR team. She is dependable, positive, and demonstrates Goodwill's Core Four Values. Her translation skills have helped non-English speaking employees participate in company meetings, contributing significantly to Goodwill's DE&I initiatives. We're excited to see her future growth with the agency."

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

The Career Resource Center (CRC) staff worked closely with participants to identify employment barriers, implement solutions, and provide cross-referrals with partner agencies to meet basic needs without duplicating services. These CRC services significantly impact low-income and ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) individuals by offering digital and soft skills training, job search assistance, resume writing, job interview training, and career seminars. Our programs empower participants to achieve their career goals and improve their job prospects, fostering hope and economic mobility within the community.



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FINANCIAL STABILITY

Name of Client: Daylin, **Name of Program:** Buckner FYi Program

Please share an impactful client story.

Daylin has been a participant in our TWC (Texas Workforce Commission) program through Buckner since 2020. Throughout the program, he has been consistent with maintaining employment and continuing his education. He is a client that rarely asks for assistance, other than helping purchase his textbooks for school, or boots for work that wear out regularly since he works at a truck wash. Through our Buckner services, we can help with anything work or school related. Daylin is enrolled at AC and is majoring in criminal justice. He aspires to become a police officer one day. We have also been able to provide support for this young person during a time that he was not able to work for a while. He ended up injuring his thumb and was out of work for a few weeks, so we were able to step in and help him with rental assistance and other needs during this time since he was not getting paid. Due to the community support and resources available, we were able to make sure Daylin stayed on track to being successful and not stressed out about finding a way to pay bills or continue his education.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

Since we are a non-profit organization, we rely on community support and donations to aid our youth. We rely on other funding to continue to provide services to the youth that our grants do not always fund, such as groceries, hygiene items, school supplies, transportation assistance and other basic household necessities. It is through funding from United Way United Way of Amarillo & Canyon that we can provide these clients with assistance.



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BASIC NEEDS

Client Name: Erika Robinson, Program Accessed: Amarillo Coming Home Project
Please share an impactful client story.

In 2021, Erika Robinson found herself lost in darkness—both figuratively and literally. A strong and independent woman, she had always hidden her struggles beneath a brave facade. But when the weight of depression and past trauma became too much to bear, she turned to drugs as a means of escape. What began as self-medication soon spiraled into addiction, consuming her life. She lost her job, her stability, and before she knew it, she was homeless. Days blurred into weeks, then months. Erika realized she couldn't do it alone. She had heard about the Coming Home team and knew they hosted a weekly lunch at the North Hillside Christian Church, a place known as the Development Center. Desperate for support, she decided to go. There, she was met with warmth and kindness—caring individuals who offered her a hot meal, a listening ear, and, most importantly, hope. For the first time in a long while, she felt seen. Erika quickly bonded with the team and was overjoyed to learn she was eligible for their services. Over the next few months, she worked closely with the outreach team, slowly rebuilding her life one step at a time. They helped her gather the necessary documents to secure housing, walking beside her through every challenge. She vividly recalls the day she received the key to her new apartment. Overcome with emotion, she cried, knowing that for the first time in a long time, she would be safe and warm. More than anything, she felt a renewed sense of dignity, something the Coming Home program prioritizes for every client. She often shares how the team met her where she was in life, without judgment or unrealistic expectations, empowering her to set and achieve her own goals. Determined to turn her life around, Erika embraced sobriety. Free from drugs and alcohol, she spent the next two years working on herself, healing from the inside out. As she grew stronger, she realized she was ready to reenter the workforce. That's when she learned about PREP Academy, a job-readiness program offered through Coming Home. She applied, eager for a fresh start. Erika thrived in the program, quickly becoming a model participant. Her positivity was infectious, lifting those around her. Upon graduating, she secured a full-time position at the city call center, where her supervisors have nothing but praise for her dedication and work ethic. Today, Erika is thriving. She loves connecting with people and never misses an opportunity to share how the Coming Home program changed her life. When asked what advice she would give to new clients, she says, "Trust the process, keep the faith, and stay H.O.T.—Humble, Open, and Transparent." That, she believes, is the true recipe for success.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

The Coming Home program is more than just a housing initiative—it is a life-changing force for individuals experiencing homelessness. By offering compassionate outreach, housing navigation, and long-term supportive services, the program helps people rebuild their lives with dignity and stability. However, this vital work cannot happen without financial support. Funding from the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon ensures that Coming Home can continue providing essential services to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. These funds help cover costs for critical outreach efforts, housing assistance, case management, and workforce readiness programs like PREP Academy. Without this financial backing, many individuals' facing homelessness would be left without the guidance and resources needed to secure and maintain permanent housing. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon's investment in the Coming Home program directly translates into success stories—like Erika Robinson, who, with the right support, transformed her life from homelessness to stability and meaningful employment. Every dollar contributed helps bridge the gap between crisis and self-sufficiency, offering not just shelter but a renewed sense of hope. By supporting the Coming Home program through the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon, donors are making a tangible impact, ensuring that no one is left behind and that more individuals can find their way home.



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BASIC NEEDS

Name of Client Othelia Bass, **Name of Program Accessed:** Area Agency on Aging, FoodNet Program
Please share an impactful client story.

The people coming to my home to deliver the meals have made a big difference in my life. It encourages me and even though we don't share a lot of words, it's the encouragement I need. I enjoy the communication and look forward to them bringing me a delicious meal each day. The food helps me to eat a more balanced diet. Sometimes the portion is large enough that I can split it and have enough for my lunch and dinner, which I really appreciate. Prior to Transformation Park working with FoodNet to provide meals through the Hilltop Senior Citizens, I did not always have lunch, so this has been a big benefit to me. I would appreciate you considering the continued funding for this feeding program which impacts not only myself but a large number of elderly in our community.

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

To continue providing meals for people in need like me.



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BASIC NEEDS

Client Name: Eloisa, Program: Guyon Saunders Day Room

By providing food and water daily we lessen the burden of our clients needing to find sustenance and allow them to focus on bettering their lives through pursuing housing, work, or the care they need. One client, Eloisa, utilized our daily food/water and was able to focus on getting herself an apartment. She is currently housed but sometimes runs low on funds and finds herself at our shelter to get food/water that she would otherwise be unable to pay for.

Client Name Anonymous, Name of Program accessed: Amarillo Area CASA

"Foster care is a whirlwind of people, emotions, homes, new places, trash bags and boxes filled with your things. What can calm the whirlwind of foster care and make it a slight breeze are the people you know and are comfortable with. For many kids it can be a teacher, parent, grandparent, or even a sibling. But for foster kids we don't always get the luxury of those people. A lot of times it's there Caseworker, therapist, CASA, and Case managers. As a foster kid a lot of times you have a feeling of being unworthy, unwanted and unloved. CASA helps to make them not feel like that. All of the organizations that help or work with foster kids help with this feeling. I was in foster care, I had a CASA worker. I still talk to her to this day even though I have been adopted for 6 years and I am 20 now. She definitely had a hand in making me the person I am today. Due to this I hope that CASA is always a part of foster care because foster kids need them." – TP

Client Name, Starla, Name of Program Accessed: Area Agency on Aging, FoodNet Program

Starla, a new participant in the FoodNET program for the last two months, shared how it has quickly become a vital part of her daily life. "I joined because it helps cut down on food costs, and I don't have to worry about preparing meals for myself. It's hard to cook for just one person," Starla explained. She praised the variety and quality of meals, mentioning her favorites like Chicken Teriyaki, Chicken Pot Pie, and Buffalo Chicken Wraps.

The program has made a noticeable difference in her life by providing balanced nutrition and reducing the stress of meal preparation. Additionally, Starla highlighted the social benefits of the program, noting that it helped her connect with others in her community. "It is so helpful for everyone at Independence Village both financially and socially," she shared.

When asked what she would say to those considering supporting or funding the program, Starla offered a heartfelt response: "God bless you—very grateful. Please continue to provide funding so the elderly can receive the food."

Starla's experience underscores the significant impact of FoodNET in addressing not only the nutritional but also the emotional and social needs of older adults, making it a program truly worth supporting.



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BASIC NEEDS

Client Name: William, Program Accessed Interfaith Huger Project:

The InterFaith Hunger Project isn't just about giving food; it's about making a real difference in people's lives, especially for those facing tough situations. One family that comes to shop once a month has a child with a disability. Only one parent is able to work, and the other stays home to care for their child. This makes it hard for them to afford all the things they need, including food. When they come to IFHP, they're able to pick out nutritious options that help stretch their limited budget, so they can focus on taking care of their family without worrying as much about where their next meal is coming from. This kind of support helps ease their stress and gives them more peace of mind. The majority of our clients are either currently working or have been a part of the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population their whole working lives and are now retired, making it even harder for them to meet basic needs like food on a fixed income.

William, an elderly veteran who has diabetes, comes to our pantry daily. He doesn't have any family in the area and wants to drink coffee and visit with others every morning. By getting food from the pantry, he is able to pay for other essentials like rent and bills, giving him some peace of mind and helping with his health needs. He is able to eat regularly and has daily social interactions. Lastly, there's the story of grandparents raising their grandkids. Many older adults face financial challenges, especially when they unexpectedly become caregivers. Through IFHP, these grandparents are able to feed their grandkids without having to choose between food and other necessities. These stories show how IFHP helps people from all walks of life, creating a stronger and more supportive community for everyone.

Together with many partnerships, the InterFaith Hunger Project made a huge impact in our community by distributing 659,123 pounds of food, which is the equivalent of 549,268 meals or groceries to prepare that many meals. While we don't cook meals ourselves, we focus on providing fresh, nutritious groceries for people in need, helping families and individuals put food on the table. This food helped support thousands of people, ensuring they had access to the essentials they needed to thrive. The work done by IFHP in 2024 shows how vital the program is in combating hunger and making sure no one in our community has to go without.



ALICE+ Library

BASIC NEEDS

Client Name: S, Program Accessed: Amarillo Area CASA

Please share an impactful client story.

Names and ages have been changed to protect confidentiality. S- age 16 years old S was placed in a Houston RTC (residential treatment center) when she first heard about CASA. S advocated for herself during a court hearing and asked for a CASA after a peer in her RTC had a visit from a local CASA. S was appointed a CASA by the Judge. During their conversations a grandmother would often come up. Grandmother would also visit and had unsupervised visits and had been a part of S's life the entire time she was placed in care but never considered as a placement due to some significant criminal history. It wasn't until 4 to 6 months into the case that the CASA advocate built a rapport with grandmother and learned more information. She started to question her past and why she hadn't been considered for placement of S. She learned she had criminal charges from more than 40 years back when the grandmother was a young adult 18-19 years old. She served 8 months of an 8-year sentence in prison. Now, Grandmother held a state job and had been married to a pastor of their church for more than 25 years, she also was placement of several of her relatives who were in care in the Houston area and had paperwork to prove it. The CASA advocate quickly let the ad-litem on the case know and then a meeting was held between CASA, Ad-litem, and grandmother. Ad-litem used her Thanksgiving Holiday to sort out the boxes of paperwork grandmother provided. A special hearing was held to ask for a final hearing so that grandmother could become S's permanent placement. It was due to S asking for a CASA that S was able to reunite with her grandmother. CASA supports children and families involved in the child welfare system. Every child has a chance- it's you!

Why is it important that your organization receives funds from United Way of Amarillo & Canyon?

United Way of Amarillo & Canyon funding is crucial for our organization because it provides essential financial support to sustain our mission of advocating for abused and neglected children in the foster care system. Here's why it's so important: United Way funding is often a source of income that allows CASA to plan and implement long-term programs without the uncertainty of inconsistent donations. With United Way of Amarillo & Canyon funding, CASA can recruit, train, and support more volunteers to advocate for children in court. This is critical, as each advocate typically works with only one or two cases to ensure high-quality support. Advocacy requires extensive training for volunteers and operational support for staff. United Way funding often covers these crucial, behind-the-scenes needs that are harder to fundraise for directly. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon's partnership lends credibility to Amarillo Area CASA, demonstrating to the community that it's a trustworthy and impactful organization worthy of support. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon's community-focused funding model aligns with CASA's mission by addressing broader systemic issues that impact children in foster care, such as poverty, education, and family support. This synergy amplifies CASA's impact.



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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Youth Cabinet-The Youth Leadership Cabinet is a program facilitated by United Way of Amarillo & Canyon of Amarillo and Canyon, but the leaders of the program are representatives from local high schools (AISD schools and other districts). The Youth drive this program, they host an annual "Youth Leadership Day" which over 300 high school students attend, participate in service projects, and meet service providers. They have been able to build and give over 7 bicycles to 2nd graders in our community. In Partnership with various non-profits and the City of Amarillo they helped to make and distribute over 800 care kits to those experiencing homelessness. The Youth Cabinet is especially unique in it's structure, money raised by kids is allocated to grant applicants for various projects in the community. They Youth Cabinet allocates these funds raised by Youth all over Potter and Randall Counties acting as peer representatives and ensuring young people have a voice in community impact. These funds are allocated through the United Way Youth Cabinet grant application process, through this program the Youth Cabinet members are leading the charge in community impact and growing into philanthropic young adults. This year through high school fundraising campaigns and change 4 change programs the Youth in Amarillo and Canyon raised over 53,000.00 and allocated this funding to 19 different community impact projects at 13 different organizations, impacting roughly 150,070 individuals in the community. At United Way of Amarillo & Canyon we are extremely proud of this program and want it to continue to grow, there is not another program like this in the area, it is unique and powerful. Young people often have no voice, no power, and are forgotten as change makers and members of their own community. This program gives young people a way to directly engage with the community and the skills to make decisions that affect the lives of their peers. The Youth Leadership Cabinet teaches participants that they can make lasting impactful changes regardless of age, background, or class and it creates a space to explore leadership skills they will use for the rest of their lives.



ALICE+ Library

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Hi, my name is Miyah Chavez, I am a senior at Amarillo High School. To get to know me, you'd have to know that I love getting to meet new people, and hearing their stories. You'd have to know that I strive to become the friend that truly sees people, leaves them better than they came, and is a safe place for all. I love taking risks, especially in settings that call for uniformity and formality, and I am capable of nothing less than being my true and genuine self. This past year I have had the opportunity to be involved in many community service projects across Amarillo and Canyon, the things I see most similarly in all the community leaders I've met are authenticity, passion, and creativity. Without authenticity people see right through you and sooner or later you will lose connection. Without passion, hard days are suffering in vain and you won't have drive to keep going, and without creativity, problems will just stay problems, and the best and hardest solutions will not be sought out. Through the United Way of Amarillo & Canyon Youth Cabinet, I have learned much more than I will probably learn in the next few years to come. The biggest of all my takeaways though, has been how important your 'why' is. Every place we visited, every group we talked to, and every story we heard was backed with a reason. Each speaker had a story that led to where they are today, and that story and experience is the reason for getting through the hard times, the tough people, and long days. That is what will lead you to make the most difference.

My name is Addison Failes, and I am a senior at Bushland High School. I believe a strong community leader must have the characteristics of humility, communication skills, dedication, and the ability to inspire others. A leader who is humble enough to put others before themselves makes a leader. When a person is aware of their weaknesses and is not afraid to make them known, it shows others that they have imperfections like everyone else. The ability to communicate with others means not only speaking but also being able to listen. A good leader can hear different ideas and work to achieve what's best for the community. I believe a leader should dedicate themselves to the community.



ALICE+ Library

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

I have learned about so many different things while in the youth cabinet. I was fortunate to grow up in a stable household. I never had to worry about whether or not I would have food on the table, a place to sleep, and clothes to wear. United Way of Amarillo & Canyon has shown me the importance of the programs we support and how important it is to invest in those programs. I have also learned how to work better with others to make profitable decisions. My communication and teamwork skills have improved significantly while working with the other cabinet members. I intend to volunteer at places we visited this year over the summer and in the future. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be involved in the youth cabinet, and I will forever remember its impact on my life.

My name is Haleigh Nash, I am 18 years old, and my greatest desire is to serve others in any way that I can. Since I was young, I have felt a calling to help others, not for the recognition it may bring, but rather for the impact I can make on even one person's life. Every single choice causes a chain reaction, and by focusing my choices on others and their growth, I believe I can make a difference in this world.

Adaptability, compassion, and determination are the 3 most important characteristics of a community leader. Being able to pivot at any moment to overcome obstacles and still produce a similar or better outcome is important because you never know what a situation could throw your way. Having a desire to help others, not for your own benefit, but for theirs is vital to providing the best care you can to someone in need. And lastly, pushing through boundaries to ensure that no matter what someone in need comes out on the better side of a situation will spark inspiration in yourself and those around you to continue fighting battles and helping others.

Youth Cabinet has not only shown me that there are people out there who share my same desire to help others, but also that there is always a reward to your efforts, even if you don't get to see it first hand. Seeing how non-profits in our area make a difference using the funds youth cabinet delegates to them has inspired me to push harder and to meet more people where they are, because it will always be worth it in the end. Helping one person can change their day, and they can turn that into changing another's day– the impact of service is endless