Often we see a tapestry and marvel at the beauty of the patterns and colors. Rarely do we think of the individual threads that are interwoven, each doing its part to add to the strength, beauty, and usefulness of the fabric. The pandemic reminded us of how interwoven and interdependent we are, especially in a time of crisis. Community organizations and individuals joined forces and rose to the challenge of meeting our neighbors’ needs.

Ayana Bias, our Advocacy and Volunteer Services Director, told a BBC reporter, “Seeing how quickly organizations like UPO answered the call was an eye-opener for many people.”

We reallocated resources because community members shared their needs with us. Then our donors and partners eagerly joined us to help our beloved community.

As we served thousands of people, it was the care from Team UPO – the kind word, the fist bump, the smiling eyes – that let whoever graced our doors know that they were not alone. We were in the struggle together.

We also kept our eyes on long-term, ongoing community development work. UPO staff are on the steering committee of the Ward 6 Community Economic Development Plan. And throughout the pandemic, UPO and our partner TM Associates continued to (literally) build a foundation for more people, by constructing the first new affordable housing in SW in over a decade.

During the pandemic, Team UPO not only met our neighbors’ needs but also helped them realize their resilience and resourcefulness – the building blocks of self-sufficiency. As one customer said, “I used to be a hustler. Then I wanted to do right. UPO not only helped me, they encouraged me to never give up. I got hands-on help with resumes and job placement, and I landed a job that fit me. Never give up!”

This resilience was possible because of our donors and volunteers. They are our lifeblood. Together, even in the midst of a pandemic, we weave together to create something beautiful – hope.

We continue to lift up our neighbors.

We keep going no matter what.

We are UPO.
MISSION
Uniting People with Opportunities

VISION
UPO’s Washington: A city of thriving communities and self-sufficient residents

**OUR IMPACT**

Pro-Work
**JOB SECURITY**
447 customers placed in jobs during the pandemic

Pro-Community
**FOOD SECURITY**
4,565 people fed during the pandemic
**FINANCIAL SECURITY**
$3.46 million in customer tax refunds secured with UPO’s help

Pro-Education
**LARGEST**
Early Head Start provider in DC
$1.4 million in college scholarships and awards since 1990

OPEN FOR TESTIMONIALS
We cared by...

EDUCATING THE CHILDREN OF FIRST RESPONDERS

“I wanted to share the absolutely terrific experience that I’ve had at UPO. I honestly didn’t understand the benefits of children attending an ‘education center’ as opposed to a ‘daycare.’”

With my twins, I learned the difference. I cannot even begin to describe how wonderful the center was for my twins (3-year-old boy and girl). In less than 2 weeks, I could see a measurable change with them. In that short amount of time, their vocabulary jumped noticeably.”

- Ryan Evans

Early Learning

Educates, empowers, and supports children and their families; as DC’s largest Early Head Start provider, we operate 17 centers, oversee 14 others, and have 7 Home Visitors.

Youth Services

Drives student success in college and careers through hands-on, project-based learning.

We asked customers,

“Why was it important for your child to receive a computer?”

“The teachers are doing a good job of community building within the lesson, so that gives her a sense of community...She gets really excited to see her friends virtually.”

“We’re creating routines around our home just like school...I started telling my son that if he wants to do extracurriculars, he has to learn something new every day. So being able to explore on the web, it helps support learning outside of the classroom.”

We cared by...

RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC

Funding from the CARES Act was the key

1,407 Computers distributed
1,644 Families supported
4,565 People fed

UPO distributed 1,407 computers to help children attend school online and to reduce the social isolation of senior citizens.

We cared by...

MOVING MOUNTAINS FOR THE CENSUS

Team UPO got creative to reach hard-to-count areas of DC. (The city wound up with a 92% response rate.)

Community Reinvestment

Helps customers build on their assets during a time of trouble

Affordable Housing

Delivers affordable homes and improves housing equity

UPO’s emergency child care is “a savior” for first responders

- The Washington Post
She was at the end of her rope. We saw potential.

Janae was living in her car... even while working part-time. When the pandemic arrived, her hours were cut, then she was laid off. “UPO was my lifeline. I had nowhere else to turn,” she said. “I don’t know what you saw in me. I was hopeless and you saw potential.”

Team UPO helped to sharpen her resume: “This helped improve my writing skills and readied me for an unexpected career change.” When she saw an opening for a receptionist, Janae quickly sent her new resume and was hired immediately. She has since been promoted.

Now she is going back to school and is a community leader. As Janae says, “A person without a plan, plans to fail. UPO has a brilliant plan for the community: use their resources wisely and as often as needed. They guided me through one of the most vulnerable times a young woman could have, homeless and alone. Hats off to the UPO staff. I am forever grateful.”

**Advocacy & Volunteers**
Changes lives and strengthens communities through opportunities to lead, serve, and engage

**Community Impact**
Reduces the causes and conditions of poverty through place-based strategies

**Foster Grandparents**
Help children grow through mentoring by seniors

**Workforce Institute**
- **Job Training**
  Develops customers’ skill sets and powers their careers
- **Job Placement**
  Accelerates, transforms, and expands career opportunities in high-demand fields

**Community Health**
- **Shelter Hotline**
  Protects people who are living on the streets
- **Comprehensive Treatment Center**
  Supports health and well-being through education, treatment, and outreach
- **Permanent Supportive Housing**
  Helps people move into permanent stable housing through intensive case management services
- **Electronic Benefits Transfer**
  Ensures that families have food on their tables even during the pandemic.

**Family Strengthening**
Empowers staff, customers, and community organizations to build their inner strengths and reach their goals

**UPO Inspire**
Gives strivers the skills and confidence to transform their motivation into money

“UPO is Washington, DC’s nonprofit Community Action Agency. We tear down barriers so that people can build themselves up.

This report shows our impact on residents and summarizes our programs.”

To extend our reach, UPO has hundreds of partners, including 8 community-based organizations that form a Network of Service Providers for Community Service Block Grant programs.

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- **Ab Jordan, Ward 8 Commissioner (Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8D03) and President of the Southern Hills Tenant Association**