

# Meeting Community Needs Together



## Urban Alliance Engagement Opportunities 2025

Urban Alliance (UA) equips Christian churches, organizations, volunteers and donors to positively impact communities and change lives.

[www.urbanalliance.com](http://www.urbanalliance.com)

	Page
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About Urban Alliance</li> <li>• Partnership Opportunities</li> </ul>	
<b>Collective Impact Opportunities</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Partnerships</li> <li>• Food Insecurity</li> <li>• Reentry</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Unified Prayer and Worship</li> <li>• UAServe (Volunteers)</li> <li>• Community Outreach</li> <li>• Health Screening and Education</li> </ul>	
<b>Program Partner Support</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UA’s 5 Initiatives</li> <li>• UA’s 5-C Framework</li> </ul>	
<b>UA’s On-Site Distribution Center (World Vision):</b> Access supplies to strengthen your program.....	<b>11</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Essential Supplies Program (ESP)</li> <li>• Teacher Resource Center (TRC)</li> </ul>	
<b>UAServe Volunteer Program:</b> Connect your program with individuals with a heart to serve.....	<b>11</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening your Volunteer Base</li> <li>• Volunteer Appreciation Events</li> </ul>	
<b>Training and Equipping :</b> Strengthen your program through training and consultation.....	<b>12</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Communities and Specialized Cohorts</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Professional Services</li> </ul>	
<b>Grant Opportunities:</b> Explore grant opportunities for network partners.....	<b>13</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity Grants (5-C Grants)</li> </ul>	
<b>Toolkits:</b> What are toolkits and what types are available?.....	<b>14</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources Guides</li> <li>• Ages and Stages</li> <li>• Coaching and Case Management</li> <li>• Community Garden</li> </ul>	
<b>Navigating the UA Website</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>UA Staff and Contact Information</b> .....	<b>18</b>

# ABOUT URBAN ALLIANCE

LEVERAGING STRENGTHS TO CHANGE LIVES

## WHO WE ARE

Urban Alliance (UA) is a non-profit organization located in East Hartford, CT. As people of faith and hope, motivated by the love of Christ, we have a deep desire to serve the Greater Hartford Community in unity with others to provide the help, hope and love that we all need.

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

By working together to meet needs, ministries and other community partners accomplish more together, than alone. Collective impact opportunities provide platforms for unity partners and community allies to work together to meet community needs. UA serves as the backbone organization by connecting, equipping, mobilizing and guiding these collaborative efforts.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to create opportunities for people to achieve lasting change in their lives through the collaborative work of churches and organizations in our local community.

## PROGRAM SUPPORT

There are countless churches and organizations with ministries that offer ongoing programming to meet needs in the community. Programs such as food pantries, community meals, residential programs, youth groups, care and counseling ministries, health programs, and preschools receive training, volunteers, program supplies, grants and consultation through Urban Alliance's program support.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is to see people become spiritually, physically, economically and socially healthy and whole as God intended.

All program support is informed by community data, resident feedback, and research-informed best-practices. By supporting existing programs, Urban Alliance increases their reach and impact.

## OUR APPROACH: HOW WE DO IT



### CONNECT

people through network relationships & communications.

### EQUIP

organizations with knowledge & skills through research & training.

### MOBILIZE

volunteers & resources for collaborative action.

### GUIDE

throughout the process to transform action into results.





# TYPES OF URBAN ALLIANCE ENGAGEMENT

We are better together when we collaborate to make an impact!

	COMMUNITY ALLY	NETWORK PARTICIPANT	PROGRAM PARTNER
Engage in Collective Impact Opportunities	✓	✓	✓
Volunteer through UAServe	✓	✓	✓
Participate in Free UA Training & Networking Opportunities		✓	✓
Receive Essential Supplies and Ministry Toolkits			✓
Receive Volunteer Support			✓
Receive Grant Funding			✓

UA works with many community partners and has a variety of partnerships, including:

- **Community Allies:** Community organizations with a mission that aligns with one of Urban Alliance’s initiatives or collective impact opportunities.
- **UA Network Participants:** Christian churches and organizations with 501(c)(3) status that desire to work in collaboration with others to impact the community.
- **Program Partners:** Specific programs operated by UA Network Participants with goals that align UA’s mission to serve. Leaders will be invited as program partners after their church or organization becomes a Unity Partner.

visit [www.urbanalliance.com](http://www.urbanalliance.com)  
for more information



# URBAN ALLIANCE COLLECTIVE IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES



## SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Partner with a Title 1 school to support students' academic success



## FOOD INSECURITY

Partner to fight hunger, by providing food and support to increase life stability



## MENTAL HEALTH

Decrease stigma, increase mental health support in churches



## UASERVE

Volunteer with a UA Network program partner



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Meet needs through a unified outreach effort



## REENTRY

Meet needs through a unified outreach effort

### School Partnerships: Supporting Academic Success



UA believes in creating opportunities for students, teachers and community schools to thrive, especially in under-resourced schools.

- In collaboration with World Vision (WV), the Teacher Resource Center (TRC) provides teachers with access to free supplies and resources. Each year, the TRC serves over 1,200 teachers, distributing more than \$807,000 in supplies.
- UA connects willing churches and network partners to school support opportunities. Partners can help meet a specific school need or establish longer term relationships with specific schools.
- Each year, in partnership with WV, hundreds of school bags filled with supplies are made available to local students and schools.

We want our teachers to know that they are valued. UA has been able to provide teachers at select schools with teacher care packages throughout the year. Partner with us as we continue to identify needs and partners willing to assist the development of our next generation of leaders.

#### Ways to Engage:

- Support a school in need or volunteer at a school partnership event
- Provide financial assistance for UA to support the Teacher Resource Center
- Spread the word so more eligible schools receive this valuable resource



### Food Insecurity: Providing Food and Improving Life Stability

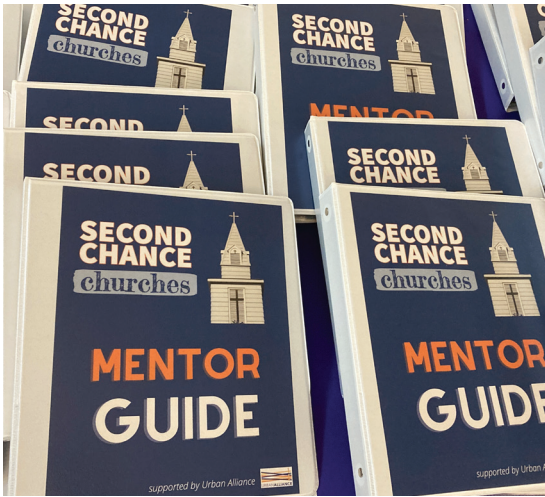
In CT, 11% or 490,000 residents, struggle with hunger and more than 131,000 children are food insecure. UA meets the crisis need of hunger by providing food while addressing root causes of hunger through referrals, coaching and financial literacy education.

UA partners with Midwest Food Bank and other partners to host monthly food distributions. Additionally, we equip volunteer coaches to help residents set goals that will increase food security, offer warm referrals, and help them achieve greater life stability.

#### Ways to Engage:

- Host a food distribution event or volunteer at an existing event
- Establish your own basic needs program. UA will assist with ongoing training and support.
- Share resource guides to help food insecure household access needed support
- Host or offer UA sponsored classes or a workshop on topics that promote economic mobility

## Reentry: Supporting Returning Citizens



A Second Chance Church is a church that desires to show the love of Christ to people reentering the community after a period of incarceration by intentionally providing mentoring, support, and resources.

UA identifies and equips willing partners and supports them by providing training, resources, networking opportunities and other tools that are supportive to returning citizens.

We also build bridges between churches and community partners, such as existing Welcome Centers, re-entry programming and probation resources throughout the state.

Get involved and support collective efforts to help reentering citizens rebuild their lives.

### Ways to Engage:

- Become a Second Chance Church
- Support returning citizens through mentoring, classes or supportive programming
- Distribute back bags with basic needs items to returning citizens



## Mental Health: Raising Awareness and Connecting to Support

Each year 1 in 4 people struggle with diagnosable mental illness and only half receive treatment. UA supports mental health through education, referrals and program support to churches and organizations that offer support groups, pastoral care, and professional Christian counseling. These efforts decrease stigma, raise awareness and increase the quality of care offered to people who are struggling.

UA provides Unity Partners with mental health resources to share with congregants, a listing of Christian counselors and support groups at [www.charisnetworkct.org](http://www.charisnetworkct.org), and speakers on various topics to increase awareness and decrease stigma. Urban Alliance also offers networking and training opportunities to licensed professional Christian counselors.

### Ways to Engage:

- Share mental health resources at your church or organization to raise awareness
- Host a mental health seminar or workshop
- Offer new mental health care or counseling opportunities and share them on the Charis website

### Collaborative Community Outreach: Unite to Meet Needs



UA church and community partners are invited to participate in collaborative community outreach efforts.

Unity Partners work together to prepare and distribute resource bags and host outreach events. Additionally, unity partners are invited to share about summer outreach events on the Summer of Hope website.

#### Ways to Engage:

- Participate in our annual Outreach Day on June 8
- Help prepare resource bags at the Packing Party on May 17
- Share summer outreach events on the Summer of Hope website - [www.summerofhope.org](http://www.summerofhope.org)

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY IS JUNE 7, 2025

Outreach Day is an Annual city-wide outreach in the Hartford community where UA and our partners share produce vouchers and information about community and ministry programs that serve residents. This is an opportunity to meet practical, emotional and spiritual needs!

### IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

#### Community Outreach Day Orientation

Thursday, March 13 • 5:30 - 7:00pm

This orientation will provide everything your church needs to participate in the Outreach Day.

#### Community Outreach Day Packing Party

Friday, May 16 • 5:30 - 7:30pm

Help us prepare resource bags for Hartford residents. Each bag contains information about community resources, local churches and tracts.

#### Community Outreach Day

Saturday, June 7 • 9:30am - 2:00pm

Share resource guides, farmers market coupons, prayer and the love of Christ with Hartford residents.



URBANALLIANCE

COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH

DAY



## Volunteer with UAServe: Make a Difference in the Community



Churches and organizations can mobilize volunteers to serve at network participant programs. Volunteers are matched to meaningful opportunities that align with their talents, skills and interests and most importantly, help people and programs in our local communities.

### Ways to Engage:

- Share about UAServe volunteer opportunities
- Inquire about personal volunteer opportunities
- Spread the word



## Do you want help promoting your summer outreach & community events?

The Summer of Hope website is a community resource to connect your friends & neighbors with UA Network summer events for free! You can list your block party, vacation bible school, concerts and more!

Be sure to watch your inbox for more details as summer approaches!  
or visit

[urbanalliance.com/summer-of-hope](http://urbanalliance.com/summer-of-hope)

### What are UA's 5 Initiatives?

UA's 5 initiatives provide affinity groups for our program partners, allowing them to strengthen and multiply the impact of their outreach programs as they are demonstrating Christ's love through practical service. Our initiatives provide networking opportunities for partners as they collaborate with other like-minded programs to address practical, emotional, relational and spiritual needs. Together, we help people achieve lasting change in their lives.

### Which of UA's 5 Initiatives align closely with your ministry or program?

Each of UA's 5 initiatives focuses on a specific area of need.



**Beyond the Basics** reaches people who are lacking food, clothing or housing so they meet their basic needs and gain greater stability in their lives.



**Revitalize** enables people struggling with health conditions to better care for their physical health needs so they are able to experience and maintain a lifestyle of wellness.



**Charis** serves people who are facing difficult mental, emotional or relational struggles so they are able to cope with life's challenges and heal.



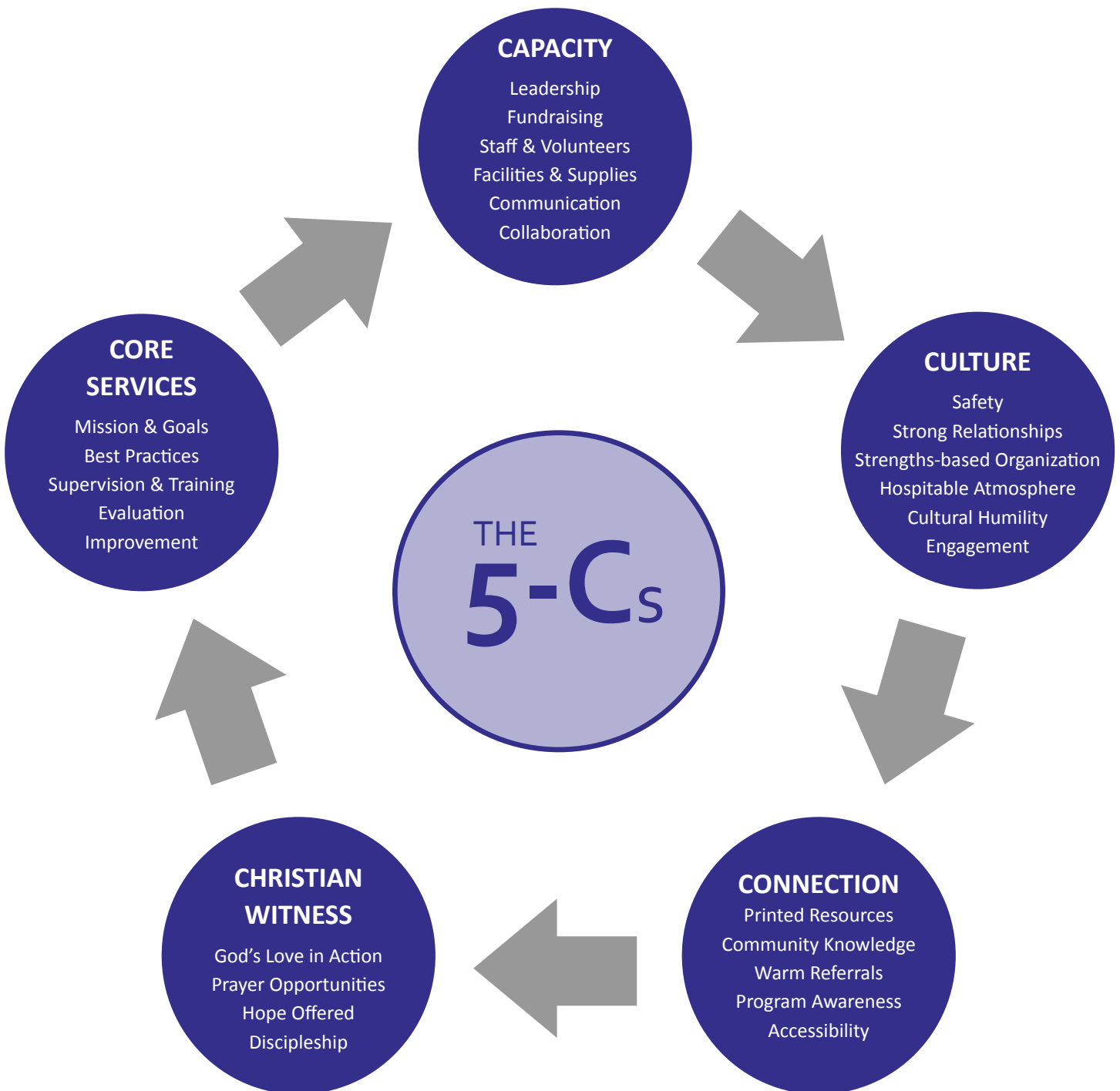
**Generation NOW!** engages children and youth so they develop the character, relationships and skills needed to succeed in their schools and communities.



**Thrive** assists young children and their caregivers during critical developmental stages so children develop strong foundations for learning and growth.

**What are Your Strengths and Opportunities within the 5-C Framework?**

UA has created a comprehensive strategy for partner program growth. As you identify support opportunities that you desire to participate in, consider how these opportunities allow your program or ministry to grow in these 5 key areas.



UA encourages you to be intentional about growth in each area. This is why we continue to serve by creating opportunities for you and your ministry to expand your reach and scope. Some PDOs focus on one area of growth. Others increase proficiency across categories. As you grow, we invite you to share your experience.

## THE ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES PROGRAM (ESP)

### Accessing Resources at our On-Site Distribution Center:



UA partners with World Vision to offer supplies to programs. On a monthly basis, participating programs shop at World Vision's ESP for free supplies that directly serve peoples' needs or offset program costs.

To participate, programs must attend an orientation and complete a registration process. Program leaders receive ESP orientation invitations.

5-C Category: Capacity

*Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*

## UAServe: Volunteer Program Offerings

### Strengthening Your Volunteer Base:



UAServe provides consultation and volunteer matching to help programs engage volunteers in meaningful service that strengthens program impact. UAServe recruits, matches and runs background checks to support program volunteer programs.

To qualify for UAServe, at least one program leader must complete a host site orientation.

5-C Category: Capacity

*Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*

### Volunteer Appreciation Events:



Program leaders have the opportunity to partner with UA to offer a volunteer appreciation event for their volunteers. Program leaders can invite up to 50 volunteers to an appreciate event held at the UA office.

UA will provide light refreshments, certificates, and facilitate ice breakers or games. Program leaders will have the opportunity to share and celebrate each volunteer in attendance.

5-C Category: Capacity

*Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*

## Learning Communities and Cohorts:



Learning communities are groups of program leaders who are committed to gathering regularly to build relationship and learn from one another through group dialogue and training. There are five different learning communities (one for each initiative) that meet multiple times each year on relevant topics.

Program leaders will receive reminders about learning community meetings that best align with their programming.

Additionally, Urban Alliance facilitates specialized cohorts to help leaders sharpen their skills through peer consultation, group discussion and relationship. We currently facilitate groups for senior pastors, prayer ministry leaders, professional counselors, and resource coaches/mentors.

5-C Category: All

Available to any program partner leader. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).

## Program Consultation:



Through this opportunity, program leaders meet with an UA staff who provides consultation to support leaders in understanding their program’s unique strengths and challenges, and to help them establish strategic goals for growth and greater impact. Programs may contact an UA staff at any time to schedule a consultation meeting.

5-C Category: Capacity, Core Services

Available to any program partner senior leader. For more information contact [jessica.sanderson@urbanalliance.com](mailto:jessica.sanderson@urbanalliance.com).

## Professional Services:



Urban Alliance staff provide professional services such as program evaluation, strategic planning, workshop facilitation, public speaking, needs assessments, DISC training, and communications support. This support is available based on staff capacity.

5-C Category: Capacity, Core Services

Available to program partners based on UA capacity. For more information contact [jessica.sanderson@urbanalliance.com](mailto:jessica.sanderson@urbanalliance.com).

### Capacity Grants (5-C Grants):

5-C Capacity Grants are grants of \$500 awarded to program partners to support efforts that strengthen one or more of Urban Alliance's 5-C areas. Urban Alliance's 5-C areas includes:

- Program Culture:** Offering a welcoming, dignified, caring experience for people receiving support  
*Example efforts:* furniture or artwork to create a more welcoming environment, paint or new carpeting, decorations with strength-based messaging, efforts that increase positive interaction between guests and staff/volunteers
- Program Capacity:** Essentials needed to operate a program and enhance sustainability  
*Example efforts:* Supplies needed for programming, projects that enhance volunteer retention, new fundraising efforts, new communications efforts
- Core Services:** Efforts most directly linked to positive change in people's lives  
*Example efforts:* workshops and classes that implement evidence-based curriculum, support groups, efforts that increase program impact or implementation of best practices, coaching, mentoring, program evaluation, or needs assessments
- Connection:** Ensuring people's needs are holistically met by connecting them to additional programming  
*Example efforts:* Efforts to raise residents awareness about your program, enhanced signage, youth scholarships to THP or YX Movement, resource center enhancements, warm referral strategies
- Christian Witness:** Sharing the love of Christ through programming  
*Example efforts:* Sharing bibles, tracts or devotionals with people served, creating materials that integrate faith into programming, discipleship opportunities for people served

Grants are competitive and awarded on an annual cycle. Grant applications are due April 1st and September 1st and the number of grants awarded is commensurate with Urban Alliance fundraising. Efforts that are sustainable after the 1 year grant period will be given priority.

Visit [urbanalliance.com/grants](https://urbanalliance.com/grants) to submit an online grant application, view the UA Grant Guide and to learn more.

5-C Category: All

Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).



## What are Ministry Toolkits?

Urban Alliance makes available different collections of resources and materials, paired with training to help programs develop and grow in the 5-Cs: Capacity, Culture, Connection, Christian Witness, and Core services.

Though some toolkits are limited to specific programs, most are available to all programs that are part of the UA Network.

## Printed Resources and Resource Centers:

### Printed Resources

Urban Alliance provides programs with printed resources about programs meeting the most commonly felt needs in the community such as food, utilities, housing, mental health services, education, childcare, youth enrichment, and services to seniors, returning citizens, and immigrants.

### Resource Centers

Program partners are encouraged to display resources at a resource center. Resource centers are visually appealing displays of printed materials accessible to people served. Staff and volunteers can receive training from Urban Alliance to offer warm referrals to community programs

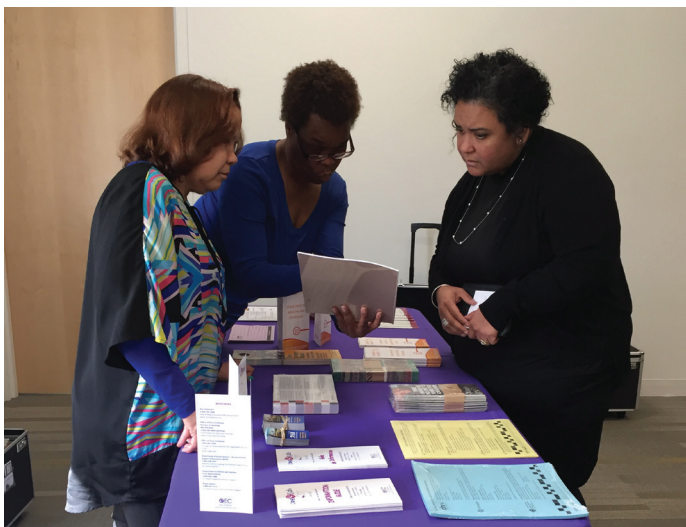
After operating a resource center for 1 year, Urban Alliance helps programs enhance resource centers by including:

- the use of tablets to collect feedback from people served
- mounted televisions with scrolling information about events and resources
- cell phones to offer follow-up after a warm referral is made
- computers for job searchers or to complete benefit applications

Program leaders may contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com) for more information.

### 5-C Category: Connection

*Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*



email [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com) or

Visit [urbanalliance.com/toolkits](http://urbanalliance.com/toolkits) for more information on each toolkit

### Community Outreach Toolkit:



UA provides program partners with training and printed resources to ensure residents have up-to-date information about community programs. Program partners receive bags packed with printed materials about resources in the community and a tract. Program partners can add information about their services or special events to each bag.

Programs are invited to contribute to a collaborative community outreach effort and/or distribute the resources through regular program services. To participate in this opportunity, program leaders and/or other program staff or volunteers must attend the Community Outreach Training, and must be prepared to distribute outreach bags. Program leaders will receive more information about this opportunity when they attend the Community Outreach Day Training.

5-C Category: Connection

Available to any program partner. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).

### Ages and Stages Developmental Screening Toolkit:

The Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) can be used as a developmental screening tool to educate parents about child development and assess if a child is experiencing a delay. The ASQ-3 detects delays across five areas of development (physical motor, fine motor, communication, intellectual, or social- emotional). Additionally, the ASQ: SE-2 can be used to detect social and emotional delays or concerns. When a possible delay is detected program staff and volunteers can connect families to early intervention services.



The ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 toolkits each include questionnaire sets, a CD-ROM with printable PDF questionnaires, the User's Guide and a free Quick Start Guide. Additionally, each program will receive a tote bag containing the supplies needed to administer the questionnaires and ASQ Learning Activities CD-ROM. These items provide everything needed to implement the Ages and Stages questionnaires.

5-C Category: Core Services and Connection

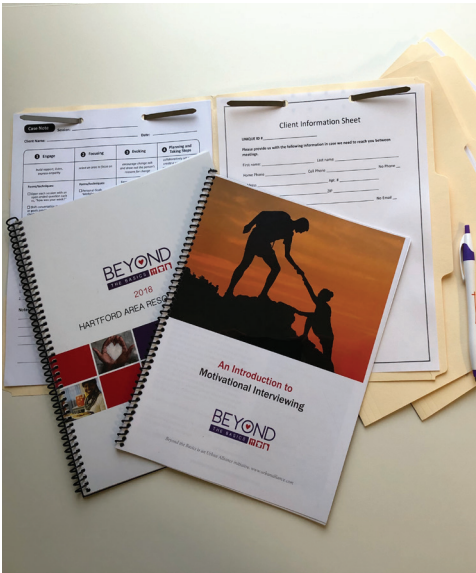
Available to any program partner working with children 0-5 years old.

For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).



email [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com) or

Visit [urbanalliance.com/toolkits](http://urbanalliance.com/toolkits) for more information on each toolkit



## Coaching and Case Management Toolkit:

Through the process of coaching, guests are supported as they set personal goals, create a plan to accomplish their goals and take action to see change in their lives. Coaches offer practical support and encouragement as guests take steps towards positive life changes. Urban Alliance offers training on coaching, Motivational Interviewing and offering referrals; as well as case files packed with consent forms and case notes, Motivational Interviewing handouts, certificates for guests who complete the program, note cards to support closure sessions and questionnaires that can be used to document positive life change.

5-C Category: Core Services

*Available to any program partner offering coaching. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*

## Community Garden Toolkit:

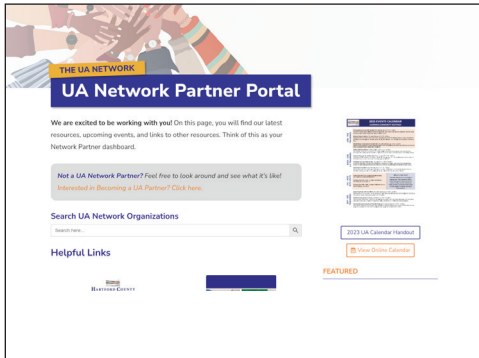


A community garden is a piece of land shared by a group of people where fruits and vegetables are grown. Community gardens provide the ideal context for people to gain the knowledge, skills and experience needed to grow and prepare their own fruits and vegetables, which are foundational to a healthy diet. Community gardens also offer the added health benefits of physical activity and exposure to nature. UA provides training, toolkits and consultation to programs that are positioned to use community gardening to help people they serve learn how to grow and use fresh produce to support their long-term health and wellness. To request a training and toolkit for your program visit [urbanalliance.com/toolkits](http://urbanalliance.com/toolkits).

5-C Category: Core Services

*Available to any program partner working toward health outcomes. For more information contact [initiatives@urbanalliance.com](mailto:initiatives@urbanalliance.com).*

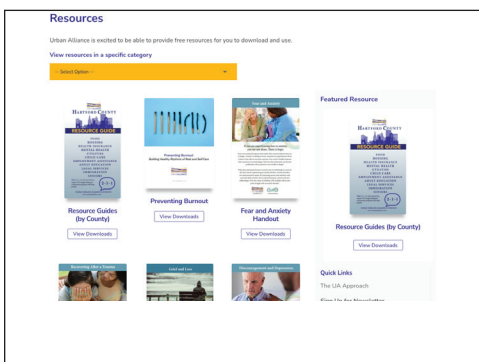
The Urban Alliance Website is the most up-to-date resource for Program Development Opportunities and other resources. Below, we highlight a few of the most frequently requested pages and resources.



## UA Network Resource Dashboard:

We've collected all of the most relevant links for Urban Alliance Network Partners in one place. This is the page to go to for downloading a copy of this catalog, view the UA Network events calendar, link to grants and grant resources, find out more about available toolkits and more. If you are going to bookmark an Urban Alliance web page, make it this one!

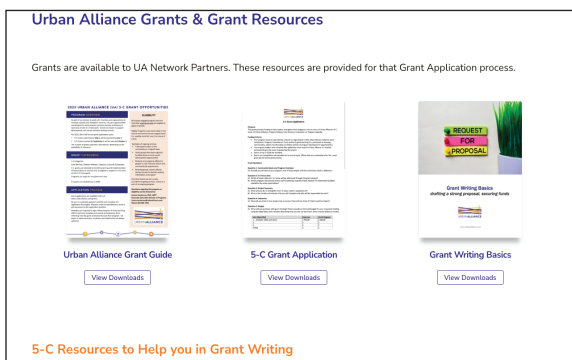
[urbanalliance.com/ua-network-resources/](https://urbanalliance.com/ua-network-resources/)



## Free Resource Library:

Launched at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to share critical and timely resources, this section of our website has now grown to encompass most of the free resources that Urban Alliance has produced. Whether you are looking for resources to share with individuals you work with, or if your organization is looking for resources to help you serve better, they all can be found here.

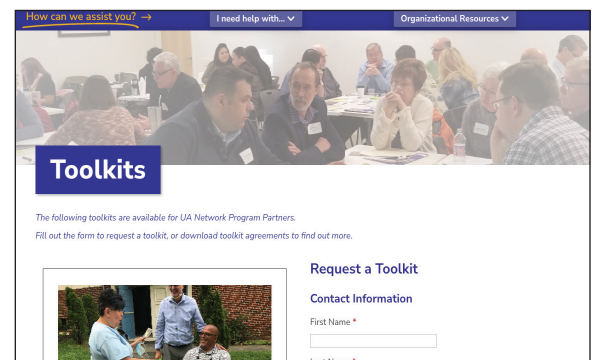
[urbanalliance.com/resources](https://urbanalliance.com/resources)



## Grants:

Find the current UA Grant Guide, a grant writing resource booklet, and other UA grant materials here.

[urbanalliance.com/grants](https://urbanalliance.com/grants)



## Toolkits:

Toolkit agreements and descriptions, as well as an online request form are available on the UA website.

[urbanalliance.com/toolkits](https://urbanalliance.com/toolkits)



**Joel Cruz, Jr., MTh**

Executive Director

joel.cruz@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x101 | Direct: 860.986.7664 | Fax: 860.986.6017



**Jessica Sanderson, PhD, LMFT**

Associate Executive Director of Programs

jessica.sanderson@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x103 | Direct: 860.986.7461 | Fax: 860.986.7674



**Joanne Perry**

Director of Finance and Operations

Joanne.Perry@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x113 | Direct: 860.709.9809 | Fax: 860.986.6021



**Rosa Santiago**

Director of Community Outreach

rosa.santiago@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x108 | Direct: 860.986.6033 | Fax: 860.986.6017



**Rosaicela Rodriguez**

Manager of Initiatives

rosaicela.rodriguez@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x105 | Direct: 860.986.6052 | Fax: 860.986.6021



**Bill Kracke**

Manager of Communications and Technology

bill.kracke@urbanalliance.com

Main: 860.986.7724 x110 | Direct: 860.899.1136 | Fax: 860.986.6021

#BETTERTOGETHER



62 Village Street • East Hartford, CT 06108  
urbanalliance.com • 860.986.7724