



ALICE PRIMER INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

WELCOME ABOARD!

Congratulations! Today marks an exciting moment for your state, for the United Way system and for **ALICE** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) – our families, neighbors, and colleagues who work hard, earn above the federal poverty level, but not enough to afford a basic household budget.

With the unifying mission of ensuring prosperity for ALICE households, you are joining United Ways from 19 states as part of **United For ALICE**. Together, we are developing innovative strategies to remove obstacles and change the course of this economic crisis in our communities. This effort is also stimulating a fresh understanding of United Way, galvanizing new partnerships with funders, politicians, and the wider community.

Based on a decade of experience, a successful rollout of ALICE in each new state is driven by a well-organized and active statewide effort. Recognizing that there are many ways to conduct this, the following “best practices” may be useful in organizing and executing the launch and use of ALICE in your state:

- **Sign on!** If your Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has not yet been signed, that is the first step! Once this document is freshly minted, it sets the project in motion for your state.
- **Appoint a project leader.** It is helpful if each state designates one person to be the principal contact for the project.
- **Recruit local experts.** Lead the recruitment of the ALICE Research Advisory Committee and ensure that two meetings are scheduled with the research team for the project.
- **Establish a committee.** In addition to the leader, a committee is critical to the successful implementation and rollout of the project. This group should be comprised of representatives from local United Ways with varying functional expertise such as Community Impact, Resource Development, and Marketing.
- **Form a marketing workgroup.** This committee will be responsible for the execution of the press launch, the dissemination and use of marketing templates and presentations, adaptation of templates to meet the unique needs of your state, and training about adherence to brand guidelines.
- **Create a platform for statewide communication.** Schedule regular meetings/conference calls with local United Ways and to keep them informed about project developments, overall rollout schedule and plan, and how they can support that effort.
- **Get educated.** Participate in the ALICE Learning Community webinars.

TOOLS FOR YOUR USE

- Familiarize yourself and your state colleagues with the United For ALICE brand guidelines. It is critical that we all stay on message if we are going to raise this issue to the public eye
- Join the ALICE Google Group to be sure you stay apprised of things as they happen
- Review and utilize existing marketing templates and press materials
- Familiarize yourself with the project's FAQs to ensure we are all saying the same thing about this work

ALICE PRIMER

ALICE, an acronym for **A**sset, **L**imited, **I**ncome, **C**onstrained, **E**mployed, is a way of defining our families, neighbors, and colleagues (men and women) who work hard, earn above the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford a basic household budget. ALICE educates our children, keeps us healthy, and makes our quality of life possible. But these low-wage jobs, often in the service sector, do not pay enough for ALICE to live on. These families are forced to make tough choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent, which have long-term consequences for ALICE and our communities. The future success of our communities is directly tied to the financial stability of ALICE households. Download the reports at UnitedForALICE.org

This collaborative effort aims to improve the lives of vulnerable, low-income ALICE households. Based on the overwhelming success of the research in identifying and communicating the needs of ALICE households, the project has grown exponentially from its Morris County, New Jersey debut in 2009. The project spans 19 states representing nearly fifty percent of the households in the U.S. The partners in this grassroots effort are working together to give ALICE a national voice.

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

United For ALICE represents a grassroots movement to raise awareness about an essential but previously hidden part of our community. Through a framework of new language and measures, stakeholders can better understand and ultimately implement changes that improve the lives of ALICE. With more than four in ten households in the United States trying to manage their household with an income that falls short of covering their basic necessities, many policies and programs must be reassessed or even reconsidered. To inform the dialogue about this growing crisis and how it affects us all, this project:

- **Produces Current Research:** United For ALICE presents the highest quality, unbiased data to measure financial hardship and understand why so many households struggle to make ends meet. Our methodology is reviewed biennially by outside experts and each state report is supported with an independent Research Advisory Committee of local data and subject-matter experts.
- **Leads a Learning Community:** The network of stakeholders who care about ALICE participate in regular forums to learn and share new ideas, policy innovations, and best practices with each other.
- **Inspires Action:** Armed with knowledge and best practices, the ultimate goal is to stimulate action that will improve the financial stability and well-being of ALICE families.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

The launches of ALICE Reports in participating states have been very successful, garnering significant media and public attention. Visit UnitedForALICE.org/inthenews.php to see highlights of all the press coverage. A few examples include:

- David Cay Johnston, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist: "Our understanding of poverty is starting to undergo a transformation, thanks to new research..."
 - Miami Herald Editorial: "...the report's findings are disturbing and should be a call to action."
 - Andrei Cherny, Washington Post Op-Ed: "...the story of future elections will, in fact, come down to a single name – in this case, a female first name. No, it's not Hillary. It's Alice."
 - U.S. Senator Cory Booker @CoryBooker "890,000 working #NewJersey households can't get by. #MeetALICE communities"
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