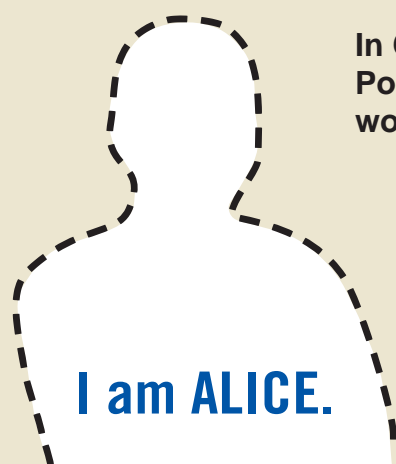


# HAVE YOU MET ALICE?

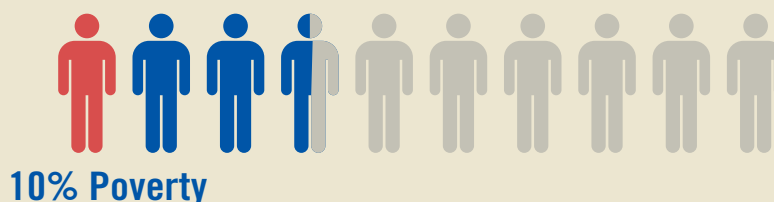
ASSET LIMITED, INCOME CONSTRAINED, EMPLOYED

## A Study of Financial Hardship in Connecticut



In Connecticut, 1 in 4 households have earnings above the federal Poverty Level but below a basic cost-of-living threshold. Despite working hard, these households struggle to make ends meet.

25% ALICE



United Way calls this newly identified demographic **ALICE**, an acronym for **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**. The report documents that the number of ALICE households in Connecticut far exceeds the number of households with income below the Federal Poverty Level.

### CONNECTICUT'S MANY HARD WORKING HOUSEHOLDS THAT STRUGGLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET

Connecticut has a higher percentage of affluent individuals and families than most other states which often overshadows the fact that far too many of our residents face a very different reality. They are **hardworking people who are struggling to make ends meet**.

**Connecticut's United Ways** are partnering with United Ways in five other states and Rutgers University to provide an in-depth research study that measures the true scale of financial hardship across Connecticut (and the nation), and the impact this has on these struggling families and on our communities as a whole.

**Connecticut United Ways**

<http://alice.ctunitedway.org>

**LIVE UNITED**



# THE ALICE REPORT SEEKS TO PUT A FACE ON ALICE

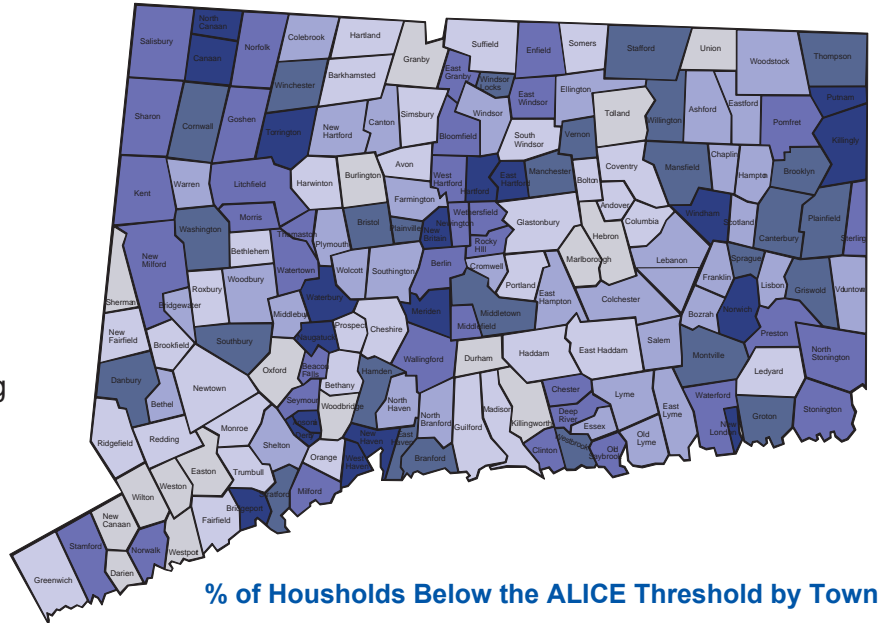
Thousands of people who are so vital to the state’s overall social and economic well-being. While it is true that ALICE has existed long before this study, the release of this Report enables us to more meaningfully discuss the scope and the personal and community-wide impact of financial hardship in Connecticut.

## ALICE LIVES IN EVERY COMMUNITY

In Connecticut there are more than **330,000 households living in our urban, suburban and rural communities with income above the Federal Poverty Level but below the state’s basic cost-of-living threshold as defined in the United Way ALICE Report.** We want to put a face on ALICE.

ALICE represents the many men and women in Connecticut’s households of all ages and races who get up each day to go to work, but who aren’t sure if they’ll be able to put dinner on the table each night. ALICE is your nursing assistant, childcare worker, home health aide, car mechanic, security guard, teaching assistant, store clerk, and office assistant – workers essential to every community’s success, but who struggle to survive on what these jobs pay.

**We all know ALICE.** ALICE could be our neighbors, friends, co-workers, and family members.



## ALICE OCCUPATIONS IN CONNECTICUT

**Retail Salespersons**  
**Teacher Assistants**  
**Administrative Assistants**  
**Janitors and Cleaners**  
**Office Clerks**  
**Personal Care Aides**  
**Nursing Assistants**  
**Customer Service Reps**  
**Security Guards**  
**Food Prep Workers**  
**Cashiers**

## TOO MANY HOUSEHOLDS LIVE PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK

**ALICE lives in every Connecticut community.** The challenges faced by the ALICE population are not rooted in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals or families. While each ALICE family has its own set of unique circumstances, two primary factors emerge from this study that reflect a systemic social and economic challenge that impacts our state and the nation - - the cost of living and the lack of family-sustaining jobs.

The Household Survival Budget is a new tool to assess the scale of financial hardship for ALICE households. Based on the Household Survival Budget, it costs \$64,689 for a family of four to afford the essentials in Connecticut.

A single adult would need a full-time job earning \$10.97 per hour and a family of four would need full-time work with an hourly wage of \$32.34 to afford the basics.

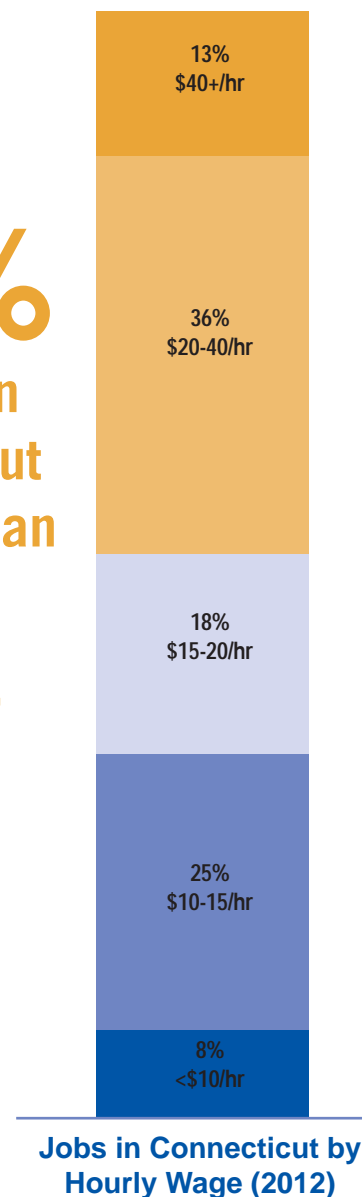
Even with one of the highest median hourly wages in the country, 51 percent of jobs in Connecticut pay less than \$20/hour (\$40,000/year if full time).

**Housing and child care are two of the biggest factors contributing to financial hardship for ALICE families in Connecticut.**

Household Survival Budget in Connecticut		
MONTHLY EXPENSES	SINGLE ADULT	FAMILY OF FOUR*
Housing	\$786	\$1,143
Child Care	\$0	\$1,518
Food	\$196	\$592
Transportation	\$117	\$467
Health Care	\$315	\$624
Miscellaneous	\$166	\$490
Taxes	\$249	\$556
Monthly Total	\$1,829	\$5,391
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>\$21,944</b>	<b>\$64,689</b>
<b>Hourly Wage</b>	<b>\$10.97</b>	<b>\$32.34</b>

\*A family of four is two adults, one toddler and one infant.

**51%**  
of jobs in  
Connecticut  
pay less than  
**\$20**  
per hour



### WHAT IS THE HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL BUDGET?

The Household Survival Budget uses the minimum cost option for each of the five basic necessities – Housing, Child Care, Food, Transportation and Health Care – to develop a monthly budget that covers the essentials plus taxes and a 10% miscellaneous contingency. It is a conservative estimate of the monthly costs to get by, and does not account for savings or large emergency expenses.

## HOW CONNECTICUT UNITED WAYS ARE HELPING ALICE AND STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

Just as effects of ALICE households' everyday hardships ripple throughout our communities, so too will the effects of helping ALICE get ahead. Through our work on Education, Income, Health, and Basic Needs/2-1-1, Connecticut United Ways and our many great community partners are helping ALICE and strengthening our communities.

### EDUCATION

Child care is the most expensive item in the ALICE Household Survival Budget for a family of four. United Ways invest in promoting quality child care and support additional slots for families in need. Last year alone, Connecticut United Ways more than \$4.8 million into child care and early learning, allocating an additional \$615,000 to efforts that promote on-time high school graduation. Together, United Ways provided community leadership and support in many activities including in Campaigns for Grade Level Reading, Early Childhood Councils, and local Discovery Initiatives. United Ways engaged their communities in this work, recruiting hundreds of volunteers for reading programs, mentoring, and other supports.



### INCOME

United Ways support and promote financial stability for ALICE families in a number of ways. These include volunteer budget coaching programs, asset-building resources, assistance with tax return preparation and claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit, work supports, access to benefits, and job training/career advancement strategies. Last year, Connecticut United Ways invested more than \$1.6 million in these strategies in communities across the state.



### HEALTH

Good health is the foundation upon which better educational outcomes, improved job performance and long-term financial stability are built for ALICE and for all of us. United Ways promote access to health care and promote healthy living programs.



### BASIC NEEDS

When ALICE families encounter an unforeseen problem – a significant illness, car trouble, or home repairs – it can trigger a real financial crisis. Last year, Connecticut United Ways allocated more than \$3.8 million to meeting a variety of basic needs, including food, shelter, emergency repairs, utility assistance, and emergency funds.



### 2-1-1

United Way 2-1-1 is Connecticut's 24/7 access to a range of health and human services, many benefitting ALICE households. Supported by Connecticut United Ways and the State of Connecticut, 2-1-1 helps ALICE by connecting people with financial stability supports, housing resources, quality child care, and assistance with basic needs. United Way of Connecticut also manages Connecticut's child care subsidy program for lower-income working parents on behalf of the State Office of Early Childhood.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP ALICE

ALICE families' everyday hardships impact the wider community. More affordable housing and child care options can help ALICE families make ends meet. Job training can help prepare ALICE families to successfully move up the ladder to better-paying jobs. More opportunity for high-quality education will ensure school and career success for their children.

By raising awareness about ALICE, sharing ALICE's story, and stimulating an informed discussion among residents and leaders, we can improve the wellbeing of ALICE households and our communities together.

## GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

To learn more and download the full Connecticut ALICE Report, go to <http://alice.ctunitedway.org>.