



EMPOWER YOUTH

Jacob was only eight when his mom, LaCasha, reached out to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Berks County, hoping for a positive male role model for her son while she worked multiple jobs. While he waited, Jacob stayed connected through the COUL group mentoring program, supported by United Way of Berks County.

In 2023, he met Greg—a connection LaCasha says was “worth the wait.”

The pair’s bond grew quickly, and when Jacob’s grades began to slip, Greg stepped in with steady encouragement and support to help Jacob find his footing. The right match and mentor can change everything.

“I wanted somebody who likes sports and I could hang out with. We practice basketball, we go out to eat, we talk about sports, we sometimes go to his house and cook. “Without Big Brothers and Big Sisters, I would have never met him, so I’m happy for that.”

— Jacob, Little Brother



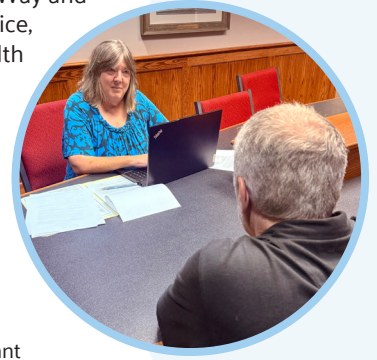
STRENGTHEN HEALTH

A second chance.
A path to stability.
A comeback story for people in crisis.

With support from United Way and Boyertown Area Multi-Service, this neighbor turned a health crisis into progress.

“If it weren’t for this job connection, I would have been jobless. It’s been amazing—my supervisor says I am setting the gold standard for other employees. It’s unbelievable. I can’t thank you enough.”

— Local BAMS Participant



LOVE GOOD NEWS?

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WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Visit uwberks.org/changinglives to explore how you can help build a Better Berks.



BUILD STABILITY

Opportunities grow when a community comes together.

As a single father navigating a divorce, Doug Dimmig believed finishing school, and building financial stability, was out of reach.

That changed when he connected with the Literacy Council of Reading-Berks, for help made possible through United Way of Berks County. In just eight months, Doug earned his GED, something he once thought was impossible. Fast forward, he earned dual associate degrees in business management and accounting, opening doors to greater opportunities for himself and his family.

This is what happens when a community shows up for one another.

“I came from a family that no one ever graduated high school. I didn’t want my kids to go down that path. I’m now one of the first ones in my family to earn my GED, and I wanted to better myself to better my family. I’m now working on my bachelor’s degree and growing my career – thanks to the Literacy Council programs, supported by United Way.”

— Doug, Literacy Council



SUPPORT IN CRISIS

Compassion is more powerful when it’s coordinated.

When a devastating fire left 38 Reading neighbors homeless, the Red Cross Pennsylvania Rivers Chapter and United Way of Berks County didn’t just respond—we participated in a coalition.

By teaming up with 10 local partners, we provided food, clothing, and financial aid, strengthening a coalition that supports neighbors in crisis.

“You have a fire and your home was there an hour ago and now it’s gone. For a lot of people, it’s an extremely traumatic experience. But when families feel the outpouring of support from the Red Cross and United Way and see their kid with a winter coat the day after a fire, it sends a positive message that the community cares about them and truly wants to help.”

— Peter Brown, Executive Director,
Red Cross Pennsylvania Rivers Chapter



WANT TO EXPLORE HOW UNITED WAY IS IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY?

Visit uwberks.org/changinglives to read inspiring stories.

INSPIRED?

Visit uwberks.org/changinglives to read more about how we’re changing Berks for the better.