



**United Way
Centraide**
Stormont, Dundas
& Glengarry



We want to share three stories with you.

"Don" is a senior whose wife was no longer able to work after being diagnosed with MS. With additional medical expenses and a loss of income, they fell behind on their bills and were living in a cold home. **"Gina"** is on Ontario Works and works part-time at a local grocery store. She lives on so little that she couldn't afford to pay her hydro bill and was hooking up to her neighbour's electricity, giving her use of only three lights in a home she owns. **"Paul"** was struggling to heat his home. He had an old propane space heater that was over 20 years old and no longer safe to use. The cost to replace his heating system was an expense he couldn't afford, and those costs didn't fit into any other government subsidy programs.

These are not isolated experiences. More than 40% of people receiving pensions, subsidies, and/or working in Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry earn less than \$33,337 annually. In Cornwall, it's over 50%.

\$33,337 is the 2022 calculated living wage for our region – the amount that reflects what people need to earn to cover the actual cost of living locally. So, nearly **half** of the people living in our region can't afford to live here.

While our community organizations are doing everything they can to keep up with the increased demand for food, financial support, housing, and mental health, true progress happens when we get to the root of an issue and understand why it's happening.

That's why we're here. We are not tackling poverty from one angle. We're making the necessary connections with people, organizations, government, and businesses to invest time and money in local initiatives that are making the **RIGHT** impact to reduce the burden of poverty. We are helping people who need it now while also working on longer-term and preventative solutions.

The people in the three stories we shared have one thing in common: they were all helped by the United Way Centraide SDG's Last Resort Fund. Covering one bill – heat, hydro, rent, mortgage, or even first/last month's rent – has changed more than 240 lives in SDGCA in the past three years and helped restore hope for those in financial despair. It helped families and single adults one bill away from losing their home safely remain, and it helped those in transition or experiencing homelessness cover the large upfront expenses to move into a new home.

When you donate to the United Way, you are part of a network of interconnected solutions that are impacting lives locally and ensuring no one falls through the cracks. Your gift supports people like Don, Gina, and Paul who had run out of options and were living in cold, dark homes. It supports over 12,000 individuals in our region access programs that tackle poverty on several fronts from 13 local nonprofits, including free job training, a rural warming centre, after school clubs, mental health supports, food delivery, and specialized programs for our most vulnerable.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for supporting us. While we've seen a lot of hope restored through the programs we lead and fund, we still have so much more work to do. But we can't do it alone.

United is the way forward. Whatever you can give – however you can help – thank you for working with us to transform Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Cornwall and Akwesasne into the communities that we **ALL** deserve to live in.

Juliette Labossière,
Executive Director