Black Leaders United (BLU) cultivates, promotes and fights for racial equity for the Chicago region’s Black community. BLU members help amplify United Way’s impact by addressing pervasive issues within our communities through a combination of fundraising, community engagement and strategic investment.

Make an Impact with United Way of Metro Chicago

We work with the top business, community, philanthropic and civic leaders across the region and invest in the most effective nonprofit agencies who are making an impact in four key areas:

- **EDUCATION**: Ensure middle school students enter high school on track to graduate.
- **HEALTH**: Help connect people to preventive healthcare services.
- **FINANCIAL STABILITY**: Create economically stable households through employment training and financial literacy education.
- **SAFETY NET**: Meet the basic needs of approximately 1 million people each year through food, shelter and safety from abuse.

The United Way Difference

We leverage expertise, connections and resources to transform the lives of individuals, families and entire neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Network Initiative is our regionwide strategic plan to address local community challenges by driving focused collaboration to achieve lasting change. These coalitions in 10 Chicago-region neighborhoods consist of community stakeholders who identify the challenges that the collective group works toward solving.
COMMITTED TO FOSTERING GREATER RACIAL EQUITY ACROSS THE CHICAGO REGION.

Why should you join Black Leaders United?
Dedicated to supporting policies, practices and attitudes that eliminate differential outcomes for Black communities, BLU is an opportunity to serve as an arm of advocacy, a channel of communication, and a catalyst for resources that support communities across our region. We’re a professional network of innovators, connectors and collaborators who have the passion and drive to fight against systematic disinvestment to build stronger communities for a stronger Chicago region.

What We Do
BLU seeks to advance stabilization of Black communities by improving access to resources that enhance education, health, safety net and financial stability outcomes. By partnering with neighborhood agencies, we serve to amplify the needs of Black individuals and families across the Chicago region.

CHALLENGES IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY
In 2017, only 17% of Black students in School District 65 met or exceeded performance standards on their annual assessment, compared to 70% of their white peers.

One out of three residents of South Chicago live in poverty.

Blue Island/Robbins falls within a food desert, an area of low-income residents with limited access to quality food sources within a half mile radius.

ENGAGEMENT
With leaders from diverse backgrounds spanning a wide range of industries, we provide a wealth of opportunities for professional development and career advancement.

FUNDRAISING
We host fundraising events and annual giving campaigns to support essential programs and services for our neighbors across the region.

ADVOCACY
Sharing the challenges and needs of the Black community is a key element of what we do. We continuously advocate for policy that creates positive change for Black communities.

CHAMPIONING FOR CHICAGO’S BLACK COMMUNITIES.

Want to Know More?
Excited to help United Way of Metro Chicago unleash the potential of greater Chicago... neighborhood by neighborhood? To learn more about how to get involved, visit us online at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/BlackLeadersUnited or email BlackLeadersUnited@uw-mc.org.

“MY HUMANITY IS BOUND UP IN YOURS, FOR WE CAN ONLY BE HUMAN TOGETHER,”
—DESMOND TUTU, SOUTH AFRICAN ANGLICAN CLERIC AND THEOLOGIAN