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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**A Tale of Two Pandemics:
ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Marylanders
are Experiencing More Hardship as a Result of the Pandemic**

***United Way of Frederick County releases results from COVID-19 Impact Survey
outlining challenges facing local ALICE households***

Frederick, MD (August 20, 2021) – United Way of Frederick County announces the results of the COVID-19 Impact Survey for Frederick County. The results of this survey provide important insights into the issues households in Frederick County are facing during this time of profound need. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the ALICE Report showed that 37% of families in Frederick County couldn't afford a basic cost of living in 2018. Today, the COVID-19 Impact Survey shows that 48% of local ALICE families with children who responded are concerned about paying basic household expenses such as food, rent and utilities.

Respondents were asked to report on the concerns their households were facing during the pandemic. Across all respondents, 82% said that contracting COVID-19 was their biggest concern. Of all Frederick County respondents, 33 percent of which had income below the ALICE Survival Threshold, the top COVID-era concerns have been contracting COVID-19, mental health, childcare, education, other medical issues and paying off debt and housing expenses.

The findings show more disparity among ALICE and non-ALICE households and speaks to residents experiencing two very different pandemics with ALICE households experiencing more challenges as a result. Respondents of the survey who were below the ALICE Threshold were significantly more likely than respondents above the ALICE Threshold to say they were concerned about paying household expenses (43 percent vs. 11 percent), paying off debts like car payments or credit card bills (42 percent vs. 18 percent), childcare/education (45 percent vs. 41 percent), a reduction in hours/wages for household members who were working (29 percent vs. 15 percent), providing enough food for the household (34 percent vs. 7 percent), loss of one or more jobs (26 percent vs. 16 percent) and mental health issues like depression or anxiety (62



percent vs. 53 percent). The only item that non-ALICE respondents rated as more of a concern than ALICE respondents was contracting COVID-19 (84 percent vs. 76 percent) In addition, 72 percent of all respondents with children said that they had experienced issues or had concerns related to childcare and education during the pandemic.

“This survey has shown us where the needs are in the community,” said Ken Oldham, President and CEO, United Way of Frederick County. “As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we see the biggest concerns were fear of contracting COVID-19, mental health issues, access to childcare and food. It is essential that we continue to address these burdens placed on ALICE households and help these families recover their health, their education and their financial stability.”

Thanks to the outstanding support of thousands of contributors from throughout Frederick County through the United in Recovery and other campaigns, United Way of Frederick County has been able to focus its resources on supporting ALICE households with Pathways to Financial Stability, on providing resources to the nonprofit community, and providing critical information, like the ALICE Report and the COVID-19 Impact Survey, to decisionmakers throughout the county.

In addition, United Way’s COVID-19 Emergency Relief Campaign raised over \$300,000 to support nonprofits who directly helped those adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Programmatic impacts include, but were not limited to, emergency shelter, financial stability programs, transportation needs, prescriptions and medical supplies, food and food supplies for seniors, and suicide prevention and other mental health services.

More recently, United Way has committed itself to equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine. It is helping to coordinate the nonprofit community to remove all barriers for ALICE households to gain vaccine access. In July, United Way of Frederick County announced a free rideshare program that eliminates the transportation barrier for those seeking the COVID-19 vaccination.

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About United Way of Frederick County

Since 1938, United Way of Frederick County has been fighting for health, education and financial stability for every person in the Frederick County community. United Way produces the ALICE (Asset- Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) Report which shows that approximately nearly 40% of households can no longer afford to live in Frederick County. Our investments and programs are aligned to support and increase the financial stability of these households.

United Way of Frederick County partners include global, national and local businesses, nonprofits, government, civic and faith-based organizations, along with educators, health providers, senior citizens, students, and others. The organization provides grants to local nonprofits, offers programs such as free tax preparation and matched savings, mobilizes



volunteers, and engages in public policy advocacy. To learn more about United Way and how you can get involved, please visit UnitedWayFrederick.org.

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