



UNITED WAY
Meriden and
Wallingford



POWERUP



IMPACT REPORT:

JULY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2026

**Building career pathways, financial stability,
and a future-ready regional workforce!**



LEARN THE BASICS OF **POWERUP**



The PowerUp Program is a comprehensive workforce development initiative focused on empowering community members to secure sustainable careers and improve financial stability. The program offers personalized guidance, skill enhancement, job placement assistance, and various support services to help participants overcome barriers and achieve success.



KEY SERVICES:

- Develop a personalized career pathway plan
- One-on-one Navigator support
- Job search and application assistance
- Résumé development
- Education and training enrollment support
- Tuition and financial aid assistance
- Job coaching and employment retention support
- Emergency basic-needs assistance

5 MAIN PURPOSES & GOALS

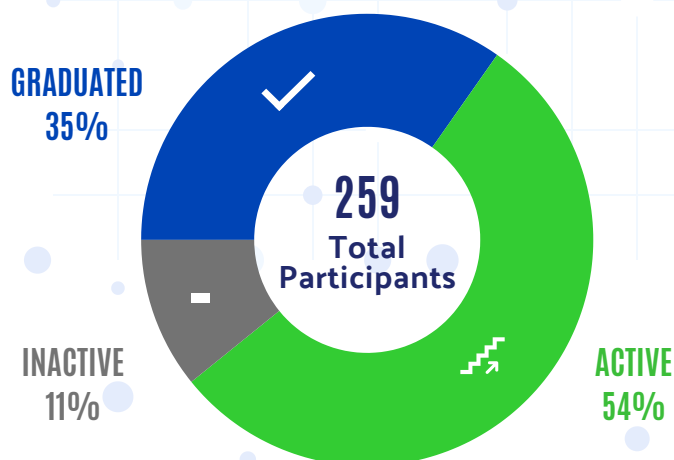
1. **Increase Financial Stability:** Provide guidance for creating upskilling career paths with clear, attainable goals.
2. **Improve Job Retention:** Offer support for job searching, applying, and securing positions aligned with participant goals.
3. **Increase Access to Education:** Facilitate access to training, certificates, and educational programs.
4. **Reduce Barriers to Success:** Assist clients in securing support services to help them stay on track.
5. **Access Existing Resources:** Help clients connect with existing resources available to them.

POWERUP NAVIGATORS & SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- **Beat The Street Community Center:** Career Development for Youth
- **New Opportunities of Greater Meriden:** Navigator Services
- **Spanish Community of Wallingford:** Navigator Services & ¡Adelante! America Youth Leadership
- **Women & Families Center:** Navigator Services
- **United Way of Meriden and Wallingford:** In-House Director of Workforce Partnerships

PARTICIPANTS' SUCCESS!

The program has achieved significant milestones, including high job placement rates, successful training program completions, and substantial financial assistance for housing, tuition, and other essential needs.



- ✓ **Active-** Working with Navigator(s) for connections to Basic Needs, Training/Education Guidance and/or Placement, and/or Job Search Guidance
- ✓ **Graduated-** Completed Training/Education, found a Sustainable and Better Job, or completed both program requirements
- **Inactive-** No longer enrolled in the program
 - Includes all the people the program connected at outreach events but became unresponsive after the first intake, people who couldn't commit to the program anymore, and/or do not fit the qualifications, etc., but are always welcome to come back

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS?

PowerUp serves individuals from all walks of life, with a particular focus on those within the ALICE threshold—individuals and families who are working but still struggle to make ends meet.

Through partnerships with local nonprofits, PowerUp reaches youth facing challenges to success, working adults, and individuals of all ages and ethnic backgrounds who need support accessing education, employment, career advancement, and greater financial stability.

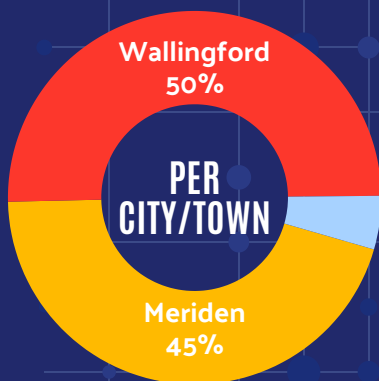
THE ONLY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



Be motivated



Be a resident of
Meriden or Wallingford



Out of Town
5%

AGE GROUP



BETWEEN 13 & 17



BETWEEN 18 & 29



BETWEEN 30 & 64

65 & OVER

AMOUNT

40%

18%

39%

3%

ETHNICITY

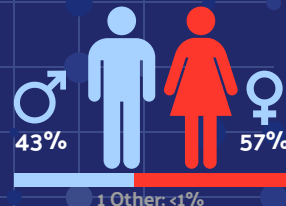
Hispanic — 80%
Black — 10%
White — 9%
Asian — <1%
Other — 1%

INCOME LEVEL

82% reflect ALICE (Asset, Limited, Income, Constrained, Employed) or live below the Federal Poverty Level

*ALICE: Households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level (\$15,960 per person in 2026) but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget.

GENDER

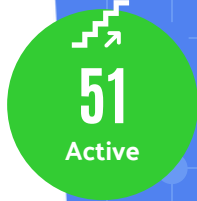


SUPPORT SERVICES PARTICIPANTS NEED TO STAY FOCUSED:

- **Rent/Housing:** Financial aid stabilized participants' living situations.
- **Basic Needs:** Support for food, clothing, and other essentials.
- **Tuition Assistance:** Scholarships and funding for educational expenses.
- **Transportation:** Bus passes, gas vouchers, and vehicle repairs to ensure commuting to work or school.
- **Childcare:** Support for participants attending work and training sessions.
- **Driver's Education:** Courses and funding for participants to obtain a driver's license.
- **Document Translation:** Assistance with job applications and enrollment processes.
- **Other Supports:** Additional services included technology literacy support, unemployment benefit assistance, mental health referrals, and afterschool enrichment programs.

DIVE INTO OUR CITY & TOWN

The following data reports how Meriden residents and Wallingford residents progressed through the program.



Employment — 15
Training/Education • 15
Both — 13

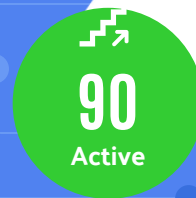


Employment — 8
Training/Education • 8
Both — 35



Employment — 15
Training/Education • 20
Both — 2

Employment — 2
Training/Education • 87
Both — 1

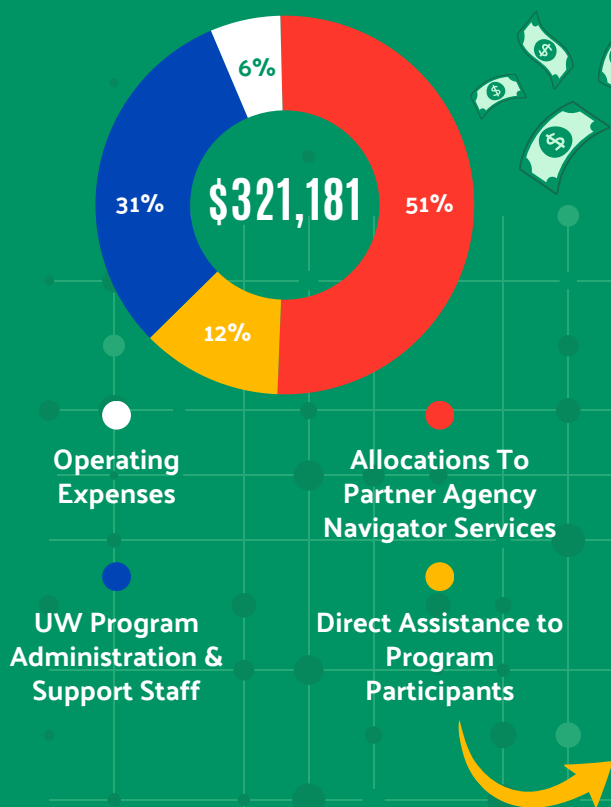


12 Out of Town Participants: 10 obtained employment or completed a training. 2 became inactive.

MORE PROGRAM OUTCOMES & PARTICIPANT IMPACT

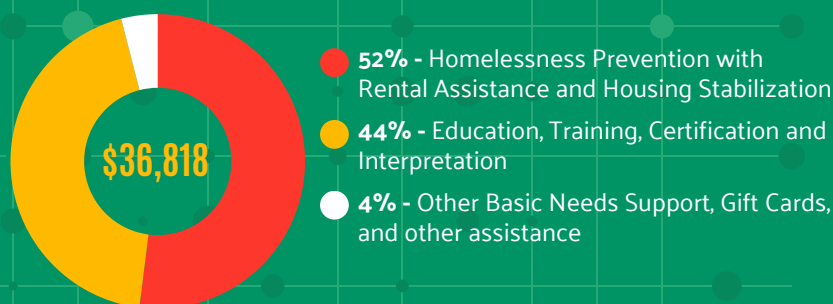
- 65+** Training enrollments and active training in manufacturing, trades, education, healthcare, culinary, entrepreneurship and related pathways
- 22** Industry-recognized credentials including health and safety, Paraeducator, CNA, Medical Assistant and ServSafe
- 17** 90-day retention milestones confirmed in reporting streams with standardized time-based follow-up. Over half-a dozen more with 30-60 day milestones.
- 180+** Confirmed access to wrap-a-round/basic-needs support for adult and youth cohorts
- 79** Sessions of youth engagement - 86 iAdelante! America Youth; 24 service projects, 502+ community service hours

HOW ARE THE FUNDS SPENT?



FUNDERS

- Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
- The Cuno Foundation
- Eversource Energy
- Hartford Healthcare Central Region
- The James H. Napier Foundation
- Liberty Bank Foundation
- Meriden Community Development Block Grant
- The Meriden Foundation
- The Regan Foundation
- Webster Bank
- Workforce Alliance



SPECIAL EVENTS

United Way of Meriden and Wallingford hosted 4 eye-opening, informative, and educational PowerUp events for over 120+ members of the community:

- **April: Train the Trainer - AI Training Session** provided by Burns & McDonnell for United Way, Navigators and their agency teams to learn how to use Artificial Intelligence as a support tool for daily work and to equip their PowerUp participants with the knowledge and skills to leverage AI effectively.
- **May: Two Sessions of “Career Pathways 101” Panels** at the Meriden Public Library co-hosted with Meriden Public Schools and the Meriden Economic Department and at Choate Rosemary Hall co-hosted with Wallingford Public Schools and Wallingford Economic Department with panelists who shared insight about the local workforce available to students after graduation in Manufacturing, Hospitality, Food Service, and Healthcare:
 - Ashlar Village at Masonicare
 - Batista Companies, Dunkin’
 - Chick-fil-A Wallingford
 - CT State Middlesex
 - DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Hartford - Bradley Airport
 - Flynn Systems Group
 - Hartford HealthCare
 - Ulbrich Stainless Steels & Special Metals
- **June: Building a Future Ready Workforce: Artificial Intelligence Round-Table** co-hosted with Senator Paul Cicarella with panelists from Choate Rosemary Hall and CT Workforce Strategy and Governor’s Workforce Council for local business leaders to learn more about how AI is shaping the business world and how they leverage it in the workplace.

TESTIMONIALS & SUCCESS STORIES



M.D. participated in SCOW's Pasos iAdelante! America and iAdelante! Youth Leadership programs from 8th grade and all throughout high school.

She received college preparedness education, help enrolling in community college and information about the resources she needed to succeed in her post-high school education.

She requested assistance through our PowerUp program when she was looking to upskill in the workforce. We assisted her in interview practice for her three rounds of interviews, as well as guidance as she applied for an officer position in the Meriden Police Department.

She successfully completed the interview process and secured the officer position.



This high school student attended the Meriden PowerUp "Career Pathways 101" event with his mom where he was inspired to join the medical field in the future.

Since then, he received a certificate of completion for 104 hours of CNA Program learning with Northeast Medical Institute. He is entering his senior year and his goal is to attend community college before applying to medical school to become a doctor.



When I first came to the program, my family was really struggling. I was unemployed, behind about \$6,000 in rent, didn't have SNAP benefits, and had even received a utility shutoff notice. We were also missing basic things we needed at home.

My [New Opportunities] Navigator helped me apply for SNAP, connected me with an employment opportunity, and provided food from the pantry. Once I found a job, they helped us address our rental arrears with \$2,000 in PowerUp assistance. They also helped me work out a payment plan with my landlord for the remaining balance.

They didn't just help us with rent. We received hygiene products, diapers, wipes, and box springs so our mattresses weren't directly on the floor anymore. Having all of that support made such a difference for my family. It helped us stay in our home, avoid eviction, and start getting back on our feet.

I'm really grateful that we had someone there to help us through such a difficult time.

-ANONYMOUS



When I first came to the program, I was working a minimum-wage job and wanted to build a better future for my family. I wanted to pursue a career in healthcare, but the cost of school and childcare made it difficult.

My [New Opportunities] Navigator helped me enroll in a Medical Assistant program and connected me with Energy Assistance, SNAP, Care4Kids, and holiday support through the Adopt-a-Family Program.

With their support, I completed my classroom training and am now finishing my clinical practicum. They helped remove barriers that were holding me back and brought me one step closer to a career in healthcare.

-ANONYMOUS

“

iAdelante! and PowerUp helped me connect with new people when I got involved into the program. It helped develop my interpersonal relationships through teamwork, working with new people, and giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts and ideas without being afraid of judgement (which improved a lot of my communication skills).”

-J.R.

“

PowerUp has taught us how to correctly fill out forms with information for applications. They have also given us tips on how to act in a workforce to ensure that when we get jobs, we have an idea of what to expect and how to make a good, professional first impression.

-A.A.



P.S. is a small business owner who wanted to grow her business.

She participated in a three-week, bilingual, small business education workshop called “Eleva”, offered at SCOW, in collaboration with the Connecticut Economic Development Fund, where PowerUp participants learned to advertise and promote their business, how to use digital tools for financial administration, gained marketing skills, and learned to build a professional network online.

Through this training, P.S. was able to expand her knowledge and grow her business. Her experience during the workshop inspired her to create a networking group, where local business owners meet regularly to share information and resources to help each other grow their businesses



C.T. participated in SCOW’s Pasos iAdelante! and iAdelante! Youth Leadership programs supported by PowerUp starting from 8th grade and all throughout high school. She’s currently a senior in high school. She participated in extensive community service projects and held an officer position in our youth leadership program.

C.T. received assistance and guidance through the PowerUp program when trying to secure her first employment. We helped her apply and secure her first employments at the Wallingford YMCA, Colony Diner, and Bruegger’s Bagels. She is an active member of the SCOW School of Music advanced folkloric dance group, Baile Folklorico Alma de Mexico. This year, C.T. was awarded the Presidential Community Service Award by the Town of Wallingford, as well as one of the High School Citizens of the Year Award from the Wallingford Rotary.





“

I wanted to send you this email to thank you SOOOO much.

I was hired and will be doing live-in care on weekends and I can still pick up hours during the week as they become available.

I wanted to take this time to truly thank you for your time for helping me drastically find employment. You are truly a blessing, and I appreciate you and your time.

You have helped me and my children in ways I can't thank you enough.....I truly thank you so very much and your team.

-K.T.



“

When I first connected with the Women & Families Center and PowerUp in 2024, I was looking for help finding employment and building a better future for myself and my family. At the time, I had significant personal and family responsibilities that needed my attention, so I had to step away from the program to take care of my loved ones.

When I returned to WFC in 2025, I was still unemployed, but I was determined to make a change. As a parent of three children, I knew that investing in my future was important not only for me, but for my family as well. I became actively involved in the career services available to me and worked closely with my case manager. I updated and strengthened my resume, applied for jobs consistently, and took advantage of the resources and guidance WFC provided.

The process wasn't always easy, but I stayed committed and didn't give up. The support and encouragement I received helped me stay accountable and continue moving forward toward my employment goals. I'm grateful that I had the opportunity to return to the program and have the support I needed to keep working toward a better future for myself and my children.

-ANONYMOUS



After working part-time at Walmart, the client sought greater career stability and opportunities for growth in the healthcare field. Through the support and employment services provided by the WFC Navigator, she successfully transitioned into a new career as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at Silver Springs Care Center.

Her successful transition from part-time employment to a rewarding healthcare career demonstrates the impact of workforce development services and her commitment to achieving long-term employment goals. This accomplishment highlights how targeted support, determination, and access to career opportunities can help individuals secure meaningful employment in high-demand industries. Client is currently looking into LPN training.