

# United Way of Tompkins County

313 North Aurora Street  
Ithaca, New York 14850  
Phone: 607.272.6286  
[www.uwtc.org](http://www.uwtc.org)



Contact: **Allison Hartman**  
Director of Communications & Engagement  
[ahartman@uwtc.org](mailto:ahartman@uwtc.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 14, 2023

## **United Way Hosts Annual Donation Drive for Tompkins County Pantries**

**Ithaca, NY** – September marks "Food Security Month," and United Way of Tompkins County (UWTC), Wegmans, and other dedicated community partners are teaming up for the annual **Stephen E. Garner Week of Caring** now through September 21<sup>st</sup> to ensure that the shelves of Tompkins County's food pantries remain fully stocked. Gregg Houck, UWTC's Senior Director of Community Impact shares that, "many local pantries have already exhausted their annual budgets due to rising food costs and significant levels of need as more residents have been pushed into poverty." According to a [2023 United for ALICE report](#), of Tompkins County's 44,469 households in 2021, 20% earned below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and 21% were ALICE (asset-limited, income-constrained, employed) households that earned above the FPL but not enough to afford the basics in the communities where they live. Together, 41% of households in Tompkins County were below the ALICE Threshold (poverty + ALICE divided by total households).

As part of UWTC's commitment to food security in Tompkins County, Week of Caring is held to engage and organize the community to support impacted households by collecting food and other essential items. In addition to shelf-stable food, UWTC is encouraging the donation of baby care supplies, personal care and hygiene items, and laundry/cleaning products. On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, volunteers will gather at Cass Park from 8:30am – 11:30am to sort and equitably divide all the donations for distribution to area pantries and community cupboards. This will be followed by a public Campaign Kick-Off event at noon to launch UWTC's annual Community Campaign.

Donations will be accepted through Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. To find a participating donation collection site or to learn more about how you can help, visit [www.uwtc.org/weekofcaring](http://www.uwtc.org/weekofcaring). Donations can be dropped off at the United Way office at 313 N. Aurora St. in Ithaca, Monday-Friday from 8:00am-4:00pm. The office will remain open until 5:30pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> for any last-minute donations. Businesses interested in making a bulk product donation or individuals wanting to volunteer for donation sorting and distribution should email Houck at [ghouck@uwtc.org](mailto:ghouck@uwtc.org).

UWTC encourages everyone to come together during this "Week of Caring" to transform the lives of those facing food insecurity in Tompkins County. Community members can also make a dedicated financial gift to support local food security efforts by calling (607) 500-GIVE or by visiting [www.uwtc.org](http://www.uwtc.org) and selecting the "GIVE" button.

###