

**Morris County Advisory Committee on Women**  
**April 20, 2021, 5:30pm to 7:00pm**  
**Via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Kasey Errico, Pam Bennett-Santoro, Eileen Specchio, Karen O’Keeffe, Donna Boyce, Elaine Muller, Liz Kisatsky

**Guests:** Anna Marie Hess, Xiomara Guevara, Miranda Kawiecki, Molly Rennie

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. O’Keeffe called the meeting to order at 5:32pm and welcomed attendees and guests. Introductions were made.

**2. Review of March Meeting Minutes** – The Committee reviewed the March 16, 2021 meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Specchio, seconded by Ms. Bennett-Santoro.

**3.**

**Presentation on the ALICE Project** – Molly Rennie, United Way of Northern NJ, and Director of Strategic Partnerships at United For ALICE, conducted a comprehensive and insightful PowerPoint presentation on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), statistics for Northern NJ. Every two years, United For ALICE undertakes a full review of the ALICE Methodology to ensure that the ALICE measures are transparent, replicable, and current in order to accurately reflect how much income families need to live and work in the modern economy. In 2019, more than 40 external experts — drawn from the Research Advisory Committees across United For ALICE partner States, participated in the review process. The information contained within the PowerPoint highlighted how difficult it is for many residents living just above the Federal poverty level. Currently, 23 States are ALICE and the numbers are growing.

*Q and A*

Ms. Errico liked that you can get so much information broken out to municipalities.

Ms. O’Keeffe stated it’s good to know there are services for this population. However, she was concerned with gaps in services. Ms. Rennie didn’t know what the percentage of the Federal Poverty Level is in Morris County. Generally speaking, many people are working and don’t qualify for assistance.

Ms. Rennie recommended reviewing United in Care, which is a pilot program for child care, based on ALICE data. Ms. Rennie stated that increasing the income tax credit rate for all families that fall into that tax bracket goes a long way. Caregiving is another matter that disproportionately falls to women.

Ms. Specchio asked what are the main initiatives United Way is involved in regarding child care for the ALICE population. Ms. Rennie stated that the most current program is United in Care. It’s a pilot program, which is a collaboration of entities, including State Government, on how to deliver more child care opportunities inexpensively, where they live. Sussex, Morris and Hudson Counties are the pilot program’s locations.

Ms. Rennie also mentioned the United Way’s Caregiver Coalition, which has over 2,000 members. It’s meant to provide information and resources to caregivers. The Coalition has been very successful in supporting people in a caregiver’s situation.

Ms. Rennie stated that at the beginning of the pandemic, United Way was able to raise money for the ALICE COVID Relief Fund. The United Way usually does not provide direct funding. However, they felt that it had a real impact beyond what was happening with government assistance.

Ms. Boyce was very impressed with all this ALICE information. Regarding the United Way COVID Relief Funding, there is State level advocacy, is there any County level advocacy? Ms. Rennie was not sure, the Community Impact colleagues would be better able to answer this question. This funding is very specific and goes directly to individuals, not programs, and it may be for rental assistance. CARES funding has been allocated to Morris County to be used for rental assistance.

Ms. Errico stated that we do have Emergency Rental Assistance and we are partnering with the State to administrator the funds.

Ms. O’Keeffe thanked Ms. Rennie for her participation and PowerPoint presentation.

The Committee debriefed after the ALICE presentation.

\*A copy of the PowerPoint presentation and 2020 ALICE Report for New Jersey are attached.

**4. New Business/Announcements -**

- Discussion on contributing to County newsletter on a regular basis.

The Committee agreed to submit E-Newsletters on a bi-Monthly basis regarding Committee events, status updates, projects, etc. Ms. Muller and Ms. Bennett-Santoro will work on this project.

**5. Adjourn -** The meeting was adjourned at 7:01pm. The next meeting will be held on May 18, 2021.