

HOW YOU CAN HELP?



JOIN UNITED WAY AS AN AMBASSADOR FOR ALICE

Please join your United Way in advocating for **ALICE** and finding ways to help these struggling families so they have opportunities to succeed.

HOW WE CAN HELP ALICE TOGETHER

What **ALICE** needs is a way to increase income and/or reduce expenses: Affordable housing, sources of healthy, affordable food, transportation, child care, support for ill/elderly relatives, loans, and access to good employers.

Raise Awareness about ALICE is

- Share **ALICE**'s story with your colleagues, neighbors, friends, family, and in your places of worship. United Way is happy to provide a speaker for the presentation.
- Write a letter-to-the-editor or an op-ed piece for your local paper or share **ALICE**'s story with your network of friends on social media.

Advocate for ALICE

- Work to change policies to help **ALICE** with affordable housing, child care, transportation, education, better jobs, etc. Introduce an **ALICE** to your legislators. Explain who **ALICE** is...health aides, security guards and teacher assistants.

Volunteer

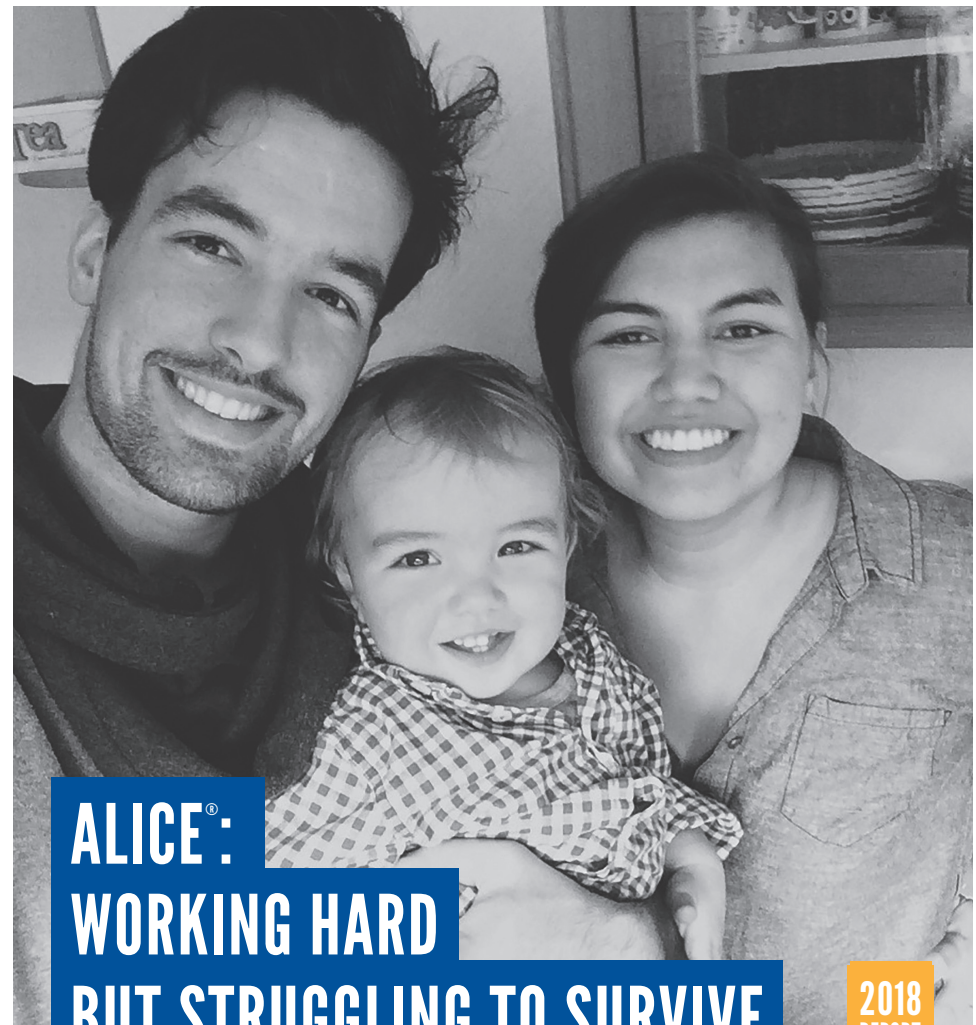
- Become a volunteer tax preparer.
- Tutor a child, especially in reading proficiency which predicts later success.
- Volunteer for a food pantry to get healthy food to **ALICE** families in your area.

Donate

- Give to United Way and the programs that provide **ALICE** with a needed helping hand during times of crisis.

You Can Make a Difference

Each individual action you take will help increase public awareness about **ALICE**. When combined with similar actions taken by others, our collective effort will help rebuild the ladder of opportunity for thousands of **ALICE** families living in New York. **Thank you for helping spread the word about ALICE.**



**ALICE®:
WORKING HARD
BUT STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE
IN NEW YORK**

2018
REPORT



STUDY OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Download the Report today at UnitedWayALICE.org/NewYork

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

uwnys.org



WHAT IS THE UNITED WAY ALICE PROJECT?

A STUDY OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Since its inception, the **United Way ALICE Project** has shed light on a hidden population: hardworking households earning more than the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford the basic cost of living. United Way calls this demographic **ALICE**, an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed.

The **United Way ALICE Project** has ignited a grass roots movement that is catching on. United Ways in multiple states are joining forces to change the dialogue about financial hardship. **ALICE** is more than a demographic; in every state, **ALICE** is a critical part of the fabric of our economy and our communities.

United Way of New York has revealed its updated **United Way ALICE Report** for New York State, a data-driven, comprehensive research project that upends the conventional view of the state. On many levels, New York is an affluent state – one with high median incomes, quality schools, and prosperous corporations. But the fact is that across New York, 45 percent of households cannot afford basic necessities. This is an increase of 30,000 households since 2010.

ALICE represents the men and women of all ages and races who get up each day to go to work but aren't sure if they'll be able to put dinner on the table each night. They are our preschool teachers, home health aides and retail salespeople – workers essential to keeping all our communities and economies humming, yet who struggle to pay their own basic bills.

Visit UWNYS.org to view and download the entire updated **United Way ALICE Report** and join the community conversation about these issues. By raising awareness about **ALICE** and stimulating a fresh dialogue between community members and leaders, we can, together, provide **ALICE** with an opportunity to succeed.



HOW IS UNITED WAY HELPING ALICE

SHINING A LIGHT ON A HIDDEN POPULATION

The second edition of the **United Way ALICE Report** shows a growing number of people who are working, yet cannot afford basic necessities. This update shows that the economic recovery of our state is leaving many hard-working people, like Meshessna behind. This study offered a way to accurately quantify these households and to talk about the challenges that they face.



Meshessna is a single mother of two daughters, doing the best she can to retain a sense of normalcy after her divorce two years ago. "I want my kids to be able to stay in their same school, still be close to their friends, live as close to the same life they were living before the divorce," she explained.

"While I was married, with two incomes, I didn't really struggle to pay my bills. Now that I'm a single mother, with only one household income, it's more challenging to get by," she said. Despite working full-time, Meshessna, like many of those whose income falls under the **ALICE** threshold for survival, realized she needed help when it came to affording all of her monthly expenses.

When the weather turned cold, and her oil use went up, she found herself compromising on the temperature of the house in an effort to conserve her resources. Recognizing that this was not a healthy situation, Meshessna reached out for help, that's when she learned about United Way of Long Island's Project Warmth Emergency Fuel Fund.

"To be able to get this assistance is just a blessing," Meshessna shared. "I tell everyone I know about Project Warmth, that help is out there and it's not a handout. It's offered to hard working people, to senior citizens, it's out there to help you when you need it. It allows you to be able to budget for your other expenses, to turn your heat up a bit more so you don't have to worry about being cold just because you can't fill your tank."

United Way brings together people, resources and ideas to create a quality life for everyone, including **ALICE**. We hope you share our concern for this growing segment of our neighbors whose everyday struggles reach beyond personal trials to impact the wider community. We all have a vested interest in improving conditions for **ALICE** – and we all have a part to play in the solution.

WHY DOES ALICE MATTER?

WE ARE ALL INTERCONNECTED



We all have a vested interest in improving conditions for **ALICE**. When **ALICE** can't afford the basics, the costs are high both for these families and for the wider community.

ALICE Households Suffer Without Sufficient Income

When **ALICE** households do not have enough income, they have to make difficult choices to reduce their expenses. They may be forced to skimp on child care, healthy food, or car insurance. These "savings" threaten their health, safety, and future.

If a family cannot afford child care in an quality facility, they may substitute with an inexperienced relative, jeopardizing their child's safety and learning opportunities. To reduce housing costs, **ALICE** may move farther away from work, resulting in a longer commute as well as additional travel and child care expenses.

Other short-term survival strategies such as skipping preventative health care or a bill payment also have long-term penalties, such as poor health, fines, and larger bills in the future.



The Whole Community Suffers When ALICE Has Insufficient Income

ALICE's existence has long-term implications for all of us. When **ALICE** workers cannot afford an emergency, let alone invest in their neighborhood, communities may experience instability, higher taxes, or a decline in economic growth.

When **ALICE** children are not ready for school, they add a burden to the education system. When **ALICE** households cannot afford preventative health care, they are more likely to place future strain on the health care system, increasing insurance premiums for all. When **ALICE** is forced to move further away from work, it results in more congestion and possible traffic accidents for all commuters.

When **ALICE** struggles, we all suffer.

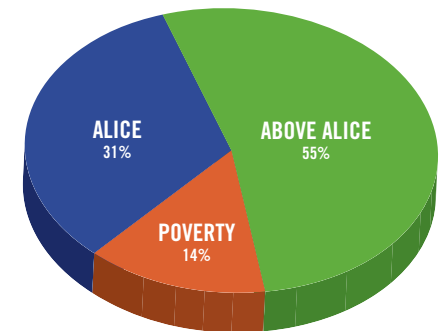
WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALED

ALICE CONTINUES TO STRUGGLE



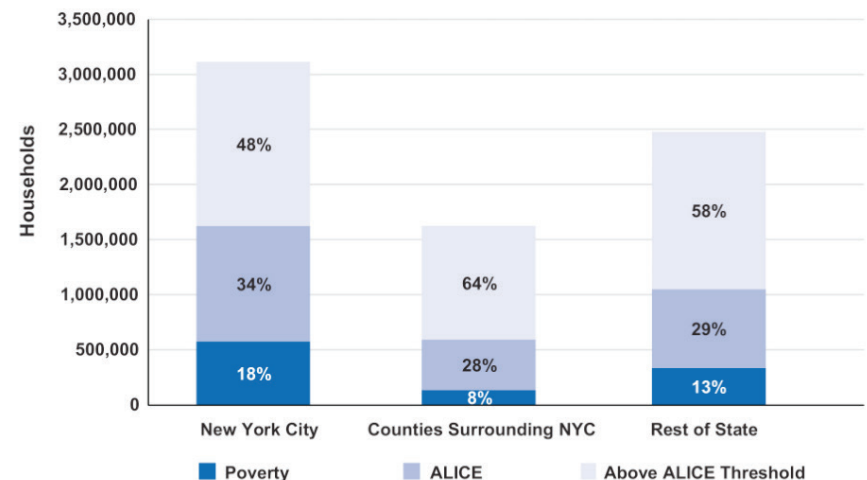
There are over 2.2 million **ALICE** households in New York – households with income above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) but below a basic cost-of-living threshold. This is almost double the number of households counted in the official poverty rate (1,038,710 households). In total, 3,262,043 million households in New York – 45 percent, more than four in ten– are walking a financial tightrope, unable to afford this state's high cost of living.

Household Income, New York • 2016



These households struggle to afford even the most basic necessities of housing, child care, food, health care, and transportation. By using new methods for measuring financial hardship, the **United Way ALICE Report** reveals a far broader and more serious problem than previously thought.

Percent Households Below the ALICE Threshold By County , New York Regions, 2016



Source: American Community Survey, 2016, and the ALICE Threshold, 2016

WHO IS ALICE?

EVERY COMMUNITY HAS ALICE HOUSEHOLDS



ALICE can be anybody. The number of **ALICE** households increased in all age, race and ethnic groups from 2010-2016.



Age

ALICE households exist in all age groups, even in households headed by someone in their prime earning years, 25 to 64 years old. This updated report shows that NY is experiencing the national trend of a decrease in young households overall. Even though the population of millennials is increasing, the number of households headed by them is decreasing. There is an increase in the number of **ALICE** households in NY driven by older households- both seniors and those 45-64 years old.

Race and Ethnicity

The number of **ALICE** households increased in all race and ethnic groups between 2010-2016. However, with changes in total population for each group, the percentage of households below **ALICE** fell for African-Americans and Caucasian households under 45 years of age and for Hispanic households under 25 years of age. The largest increases were among households of 65 years and older, with Asian senior households seeing the biggest increase.

Household Type

For a variety of factors, the household made up of a married couple with two children is no longer typical. In NY, the largest group of household type is composed of single or cohabitating adults under the age of 65 with no children under the age of 18, at 48% of all households. This group also makes up the largest number of households below the **ALICE** Threshold. This is a change from the previous report.

MANY ALICE IN MOST COMMON JOBS

TOP 20 NYS OCCUPATIONS IN 2016 BY EMPLOYMENT WAGE

Only three of the top 20 occupations — general and operations managers, accountants and auditors, and registered nurses — paid enough to support the Household Survival Budget for a family of four, a minimum of \$34.40 per hour.

OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF JOBS	MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE
Retail Salespersons	322,970	\$10.73
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	197,920	\$18.68
Janitors and Cleaners	196,790	\$13.99
Cashiers	193,860	\$9.68
Office Clerks, General	188,240	\$14.96
Registered Nurses	180,730	\$38.65
Home Health Aides	173,830	\$11.20
General and Operations Managers	162,870	\$58.90
Combined Food Prep (inc. Fast Food)	158,160	\$9.59
Customer Service Representatives	157,100	\$17.37
Personal Care Aides	156,830	\$11.45
Waiters and Waitresses	155,540	\$10.94
Teacher Assistants	125,830	\$13.72
Bookkeeping and Auditing Clerks	115,270	\$20.24
First-Line Supervisors of Administrative Support Workers	114,040	\$29.87
Stock Clerks or Order Fillers	112,890	\$11.15
Security Guards	112,750	\$14.37
Laborers and Movers, Hand	109,570	\$12.59
Accountants and Auditors	108,800	\$38.67
Maintenance and Repair Workers	102,010	\$20.29

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Survey—All Industries Combined, 2010 and 2016

WHY DOES ALICE EXIST?

LACK OF HIGH-PAYING JOBS

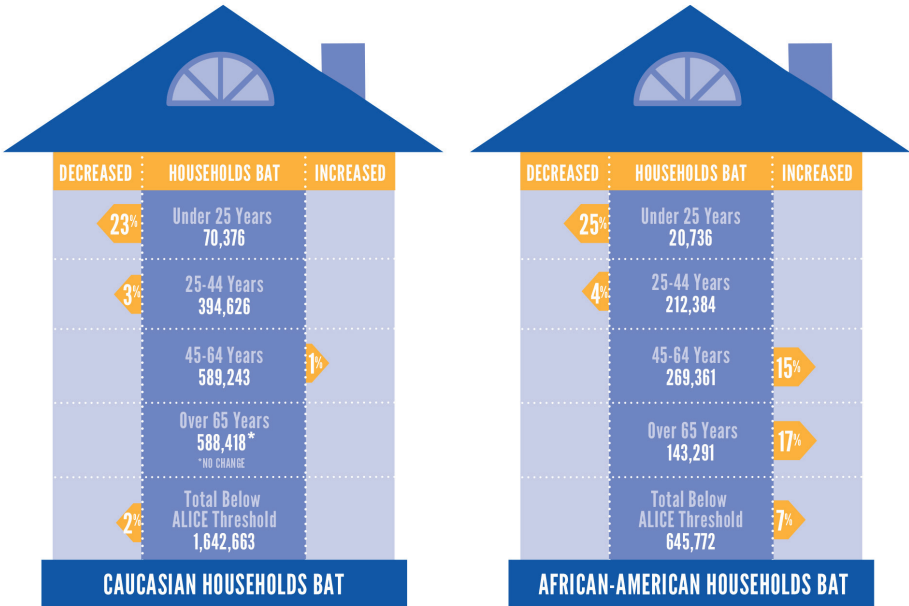
Low-wage jobs continue to dominate the economy in New York, making it challenging for workers to find jobs with wages that can support even a basic household budget.

The growth in job creation since the last ALICE New York Report, shows growth in jobs that pay wages below the ALICE Threshold. The services ALICE provides, in jobs such as health aides, retail salespeople, and teaching assistants, are vital to the New York economy, yet they do not pay enough to cover the state’s high cost of living.

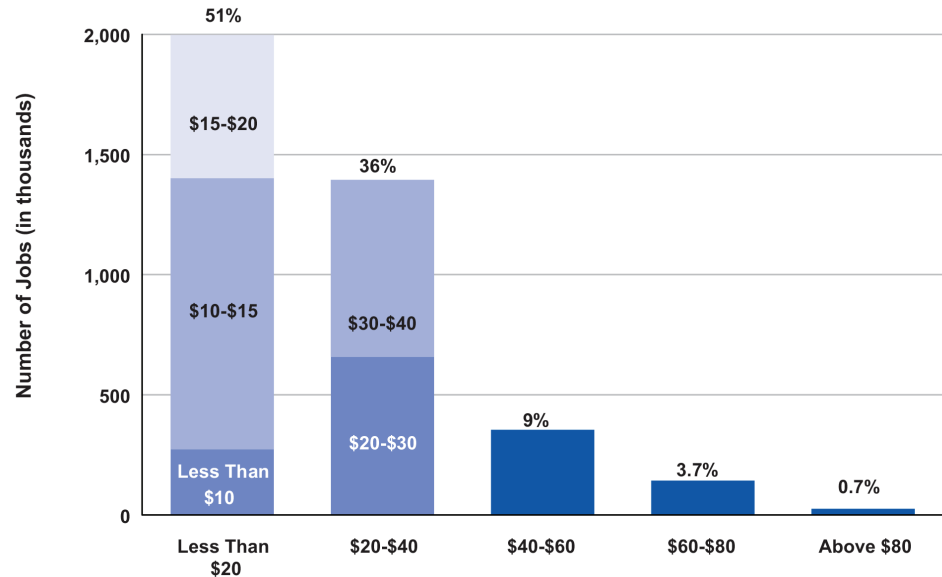
More than half of all jobs in New York pay less than \$20/hour (or \$40,000/year if full-time). At this rate, these workers can only afford two thirds of the Household Survival Budget for a family of four (\$68,808).



Households Below ALICE Threshold (BAT) by Age and Race/Ethnicity, New York • 2016



Number of Jobs By Hourly Wage, New York • 2016



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Survey – All Industries Combined, 2016

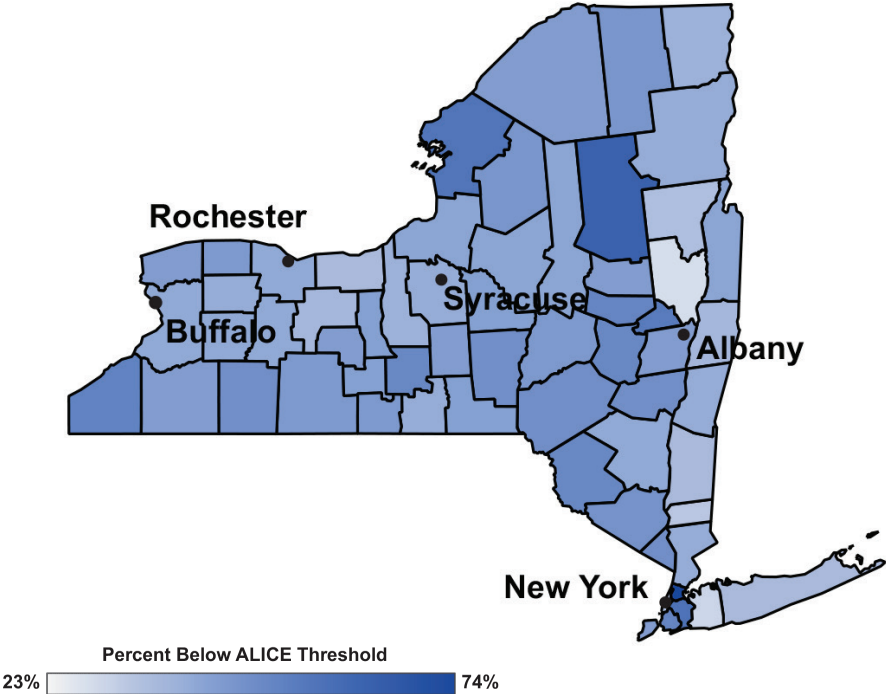
Sources: American Community Survey, 2010–2016 and the ALICE Threshold, 2010–2016

WHERE DOES ALICE LIVE?

ALICE EXISTS IN EVERY COMMUNITY

All but one of New York’s counties, have 30% or more households earning less than what is needed to afford the basics. There is enormous variation among the counties; the percentage of households below the **ALICE** threshold ranges from 28 percent in Saratoga County to 74 percent in Bronx County. Although the cost of living and wages differ across the state, the number of households with income below the **ALICE** Threshold increased across most counties from 2010-2016.

Percent Households Below the ALICE Threshold By County , New York Regions, 2016



Sources: American Community Survey, 2010 and 2016, and the ALICE Threshold, 2010 and 2016. Details on each county’s household income and ALICE demographics, as well as further breakdown by municipality, are listed in the ALICE County Pages and Data File at UnitedWayALICE.org.

WHY DOES ALICE EXIST?

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING IN NEW YORK

There are many factors contributing to and perpetuating conditions for ALICE. While some circumstances are individual, a few systemic problems affect the majority of ALICE households: the high cost of living, income not keeping pace with costs, and continued growth of low-paying jobs.

Based on the Household Survival Budget, more than four in ten New York households can’t afford the basics of housing, food, health care, technology, child care, and transportation.

Using the thriftiest official standards, it takes an average of \$68,808 for a family of four (two adults, an infant, and a preschooler) to afford the basics – more than double the U.S. poverty rate of \$24,300. The Household Survival Budget for a single adult is \$23,148, also more than double the U.S. poverty rate of \$11,800.

The cost of household basics in the New York State Household Survival Budget increased by 12% for a single and 22% for a family of four (2010-2016). This is due, in part, by rising costs of child care, healthcare and the addition of a technology line, which was driven by the cost of a basic smartphone as it has become a necessity to work in the modern economy.

Household Survival Budget • 2016

Household Survival Budget, New York Average, 2016			Percent Change from 2010-2016	
	SINGLE ADULT	2 ADULTS, 1 INFANT, 1 PRESCHOOLER	SINGLE ADULT	2 ADULTS, 1 INFANT, 1 PRESCHOOLER
Monthly Costs				
Housing	\$688	\$953	-4%	6%
Child Care	\$-	\$1,440	N/A	11%
Food	\$182	\$603	1%	10%
Transportation	\$310	\$614	4%	4%
Health Care	\$210	\$779	96%	83%
Technology*	\$55	\$75	N/A	N/A
Miscellaneous	\$175	\$521	11%	22%
Taxes	\$309	\$749	14%	48%
Monthly Total	\$1,929	\$5,734	12%	22%
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$23,148	\$68,808	12%	22%
Hourly Wage**	\$11.57	\$34.40	11%	22%

* New to budget in 2016. ** Wage working full-time required to support this budget.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2016; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2016; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016; Internal Revenue Service; Tax Foundation, and New York State Office of Children & Family Services, 2016. For the Methodology Overview and additional data, see our website: UnitedWayALICE.org