

WHO IS ALICE?

ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed and it refers to a large percentage of our population that work hard and earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but not enough to afford the basic household budget of housing, child care, food, transportation, and health care. ALICE households include women and men, single adults and families, young and old, urban, suburban, and rural, and all races and ethnicities, and they live in every county in the Pacific Northwest.

WHAT IS THE ALICE REPORT?

The ALICE report is an in-depth and more accurate measure of individuals above the poverty line that are still struggling to make ends meet. This groundbreaking report from United Way reveals a closer look at this population in the Pacific Northwest - Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. The report provides state, county, and city specific data.

CORE STATISTICS:

	Washington	Whatcom County
% Households below ALICE but above poverty	19%	24%
% Households below Poverty line	13%	18%
Total ALICE and Poverty	32%	42%
Survival Budget family of 4	\$52,152	\$57,672
Survival Budget single adult	\$17,280	\$18,396
Stability Budget family of 4	\$98,340	

HOW IS THE ALICE RESEARCH CONDUCTED?

- The report uses publicly available data from available sources including the U.S. Census, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- The lead researcher is United Way ALICE Project National Director Stephanie Hoopes, Ph.D., who works from the Project's home base at United Way of Northern New Jersey and is on the faculty at Rutgers University-Newark's School of Public Affairs and Administration.
- Each state has an ALICE Research Advisory Committee that is part of the research team and is comprised of top experts from that state representing academia, government, business and nonprofits.

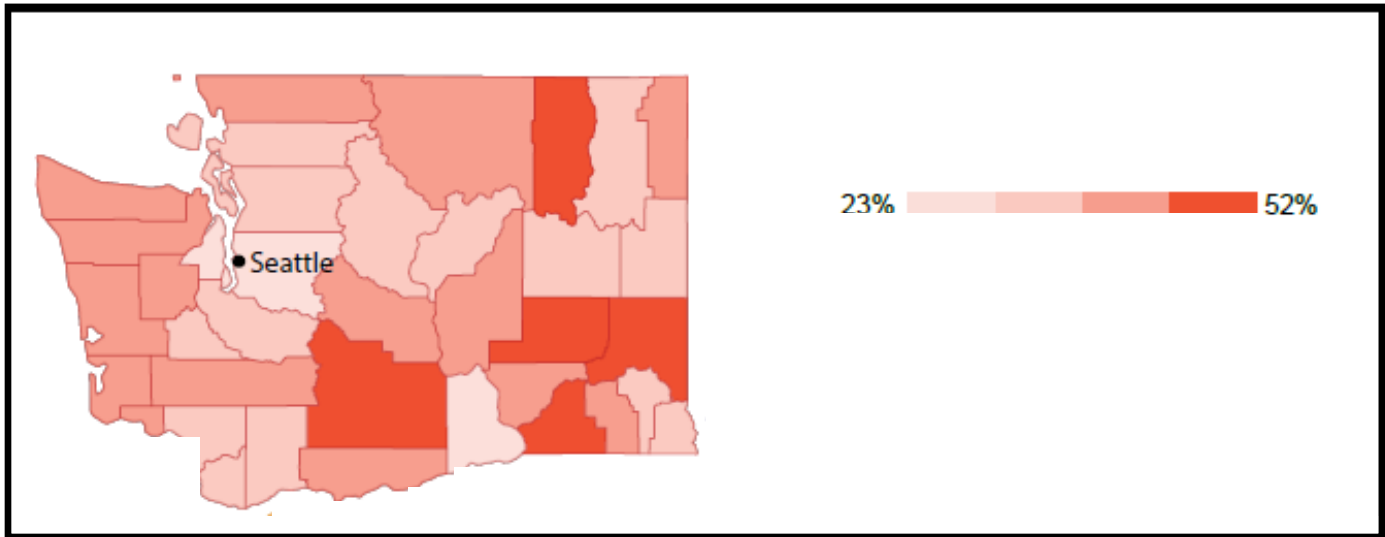
WHY UNDERTAKE THE ALICE STUDY?

- Our region had an opportunity to partner with this research group which has conducted this study with other United Ways across the country
- The federal poverty rate measures a particular group in our society but does not necessarily measure individuals who are struggling outside of that group
- The study provides objective, comprehensive data that can be used for driving community progress while supporting ongoing work to build a stronger community

Key Facts and ALICE Statistics for Washington Municipalities, 2013

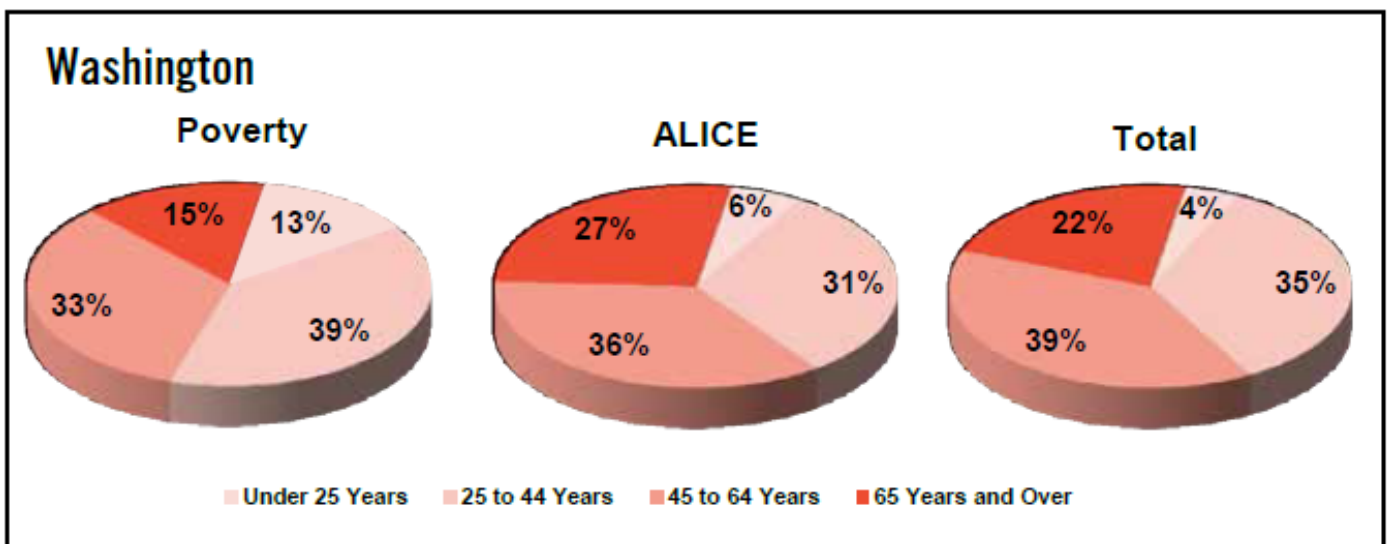
Municipality by County	Population	Households	Poverty %	ALICE %	Above ALICE Threshold %	Gini Coefficient	Unemployment Rate	Health Insurance Coverage %	Housing Burden: % Owner over 30%	Housing Burden: % Renter over 30%	Source, American Community Survey estimate
Bellingham CCD, Whatcom	111,248	45,133	19%	25%	56%	0.46	10.0	82.4	31%	55%	5 year
Bellingham city, Whatcom	82,635	34,018	25%	24%	51%	0.47	6.9	83.3	25%	58%	1 year
Birch Bay CDP, Whatcom	8,054	3,541	12%	29%	59%	0.41	8.8	86.7	32%	52%	5 year
Blaine CCD, Whatcom	20,033	8,138	12%	25%	63%	0.43	7.5	85.4	30%	54%	5 year
Blaine city, Whatcom	4,779	2,130	13%	25%	62%	0.48	7.2	83.8	22%	65%	5 year
Custer CDP, Whatcom	861	247	0%	40%	60%	0.23	3.0	72.6	30%	100%	5 year
Deming CDP, Whatcom	346	103	22%	37%	41%	0.29	12.6	100	49%	0%	5 year
East Whatcom CCD, Whatcom	9,121	3,190	16%	30%	54%	0.40	11.4	71.7	36%	47%	5 year
Everson city, Whatcom	2,518	875	16%	30%	55%	0.43	11.5	72.9	38%	35%	5 year
Ferndale CCD, Whatcom	30,376	11,102	11%	22%	67%	0.39	8.9	80.8	34%	40%	5 year
Ferndale city, Whatcom	11,766	4,355	15%	21%	63%	0.40	11.7	81.0	32%	44%	5 year
Geneva CDP, Whatcom	2,578	882	6%	11%	84%	0.34	14.0	92.1	32%	53%	5 year
Lummi Island CCD, Whatcom	1,098	524	8%	15%	76%	0.41	6.1	78.9	34%	40%	5 year
Lummi Reservation CCD, Whatcom	4,705	1,635	17%	26%	58%	0.49	13.4	72.2	26%	47%	5 year
Lynden CCD, Whatcom	17,147	6,155	7%	27%	67%	0.38	5.8	82.9	26%	52%	5 year
Lynden city, Whatcom	12,334	4,749	8%	26%	66%	0.39	6.9	82.5	29%	55%	5 year
Maple Falls CDP, Whatcom	354	155	0%	58%	42%	0.33	NA	81.1	18%	81%	5 year
Marietta-Alderwood CDP, Whatcom	4,030	1,625	20%	37%	43%	0.50	7.2	71.4	29%	62%	5 year
Nooksack city, Whatcom	1,326	416	11%	16%	72%	0.30	6.8	81.7	44%	66%	5 year
Peaceful Valley CDP, Whatcom	4,021	1,432	20%	35%	45%	0.38	13.1	59.6	39%	52%	5 year
Point Roberts CCD, Whatcom	1,287	652	23%	24%	54%	0.54	0.5	71.0	34%	63%	5 year
Point Roberts CDP, Whatcom	1,287	652	23%	24%	54%	0.54	0.5	71.0	34%	63%	5 year
Sudden Valley CDP, Whatcom	6,417	2,645	8%	13%	79%	0.33	10.6	86.0	33%	40%	5 year
Sumas CCD, Whatcom	8,196	2,785	14%	22%	64%	0.53	12.7	74.8	35%	35%	5 year
Sumas city, Whatcom	1,206	422	9%	30%	61%	0.35	12.3	63.9	35%	41%	5 year

Figure 4.
Percent of Households below the ALICE Threshold by County, Pacific Northwest, 2013



- Whatcom County is similar to counties on the peninsula and eastern Washington than to counties along the I-5 Corridor.

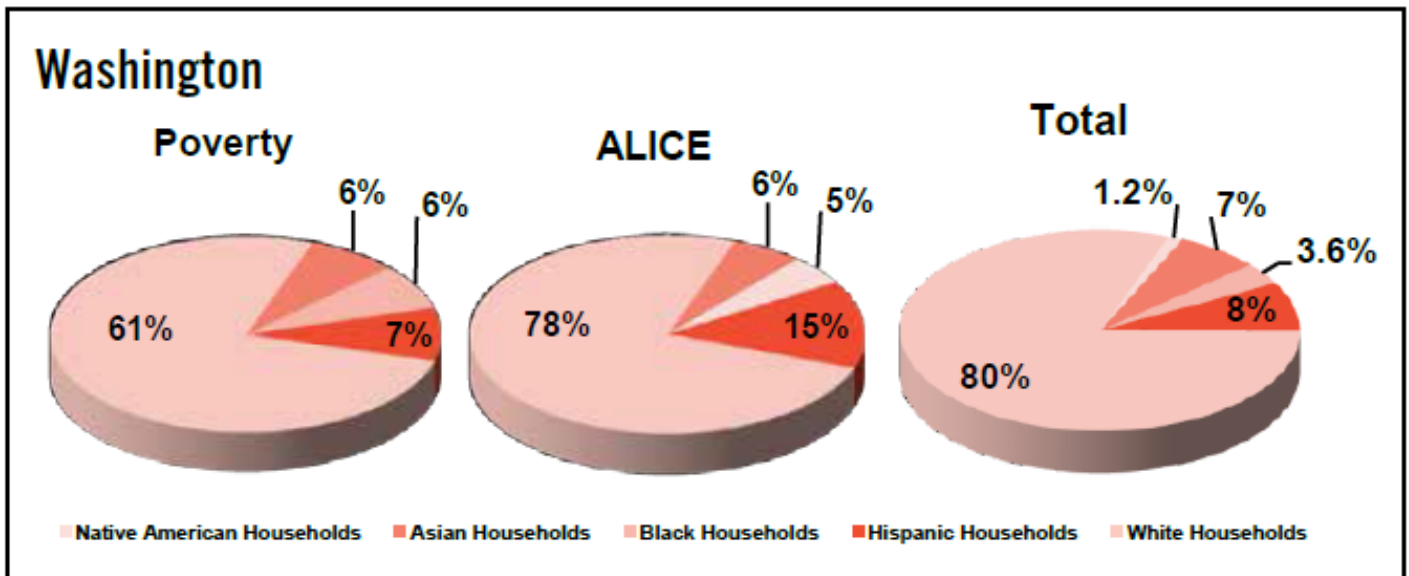
Figure 10.
Household Income by Age, Pacific Northwest, 2013



Source: American Community Survey, 2013, and the ALICE Threshold, 2013

- ALICE is men and women, young and old, of all races, largely mirroring the state’s basic demographic make-up. More than one third are within their prime wage-earning years of 45 to 64 years old.

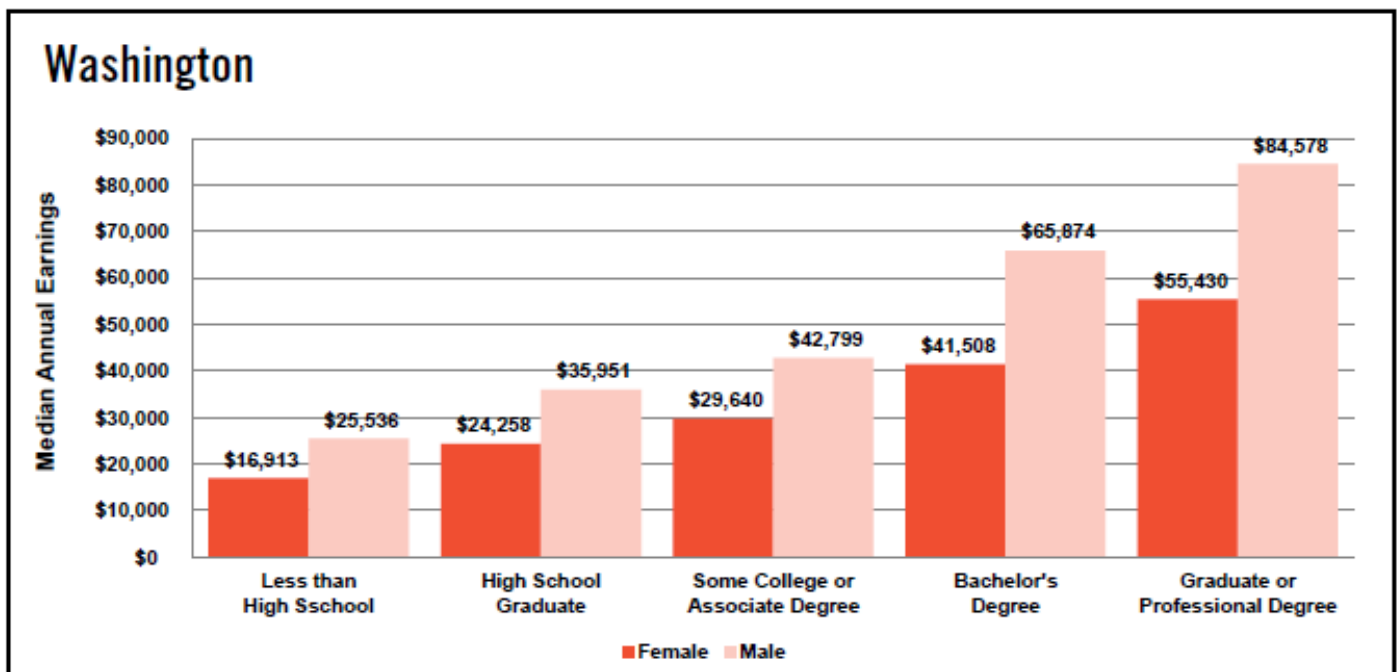
Figure 12.
Households by Race/Ethnicity and Income, Pacific Northwest, 2013



Source: American Community Survey, 2013, and the ALICE Threshold, 2013

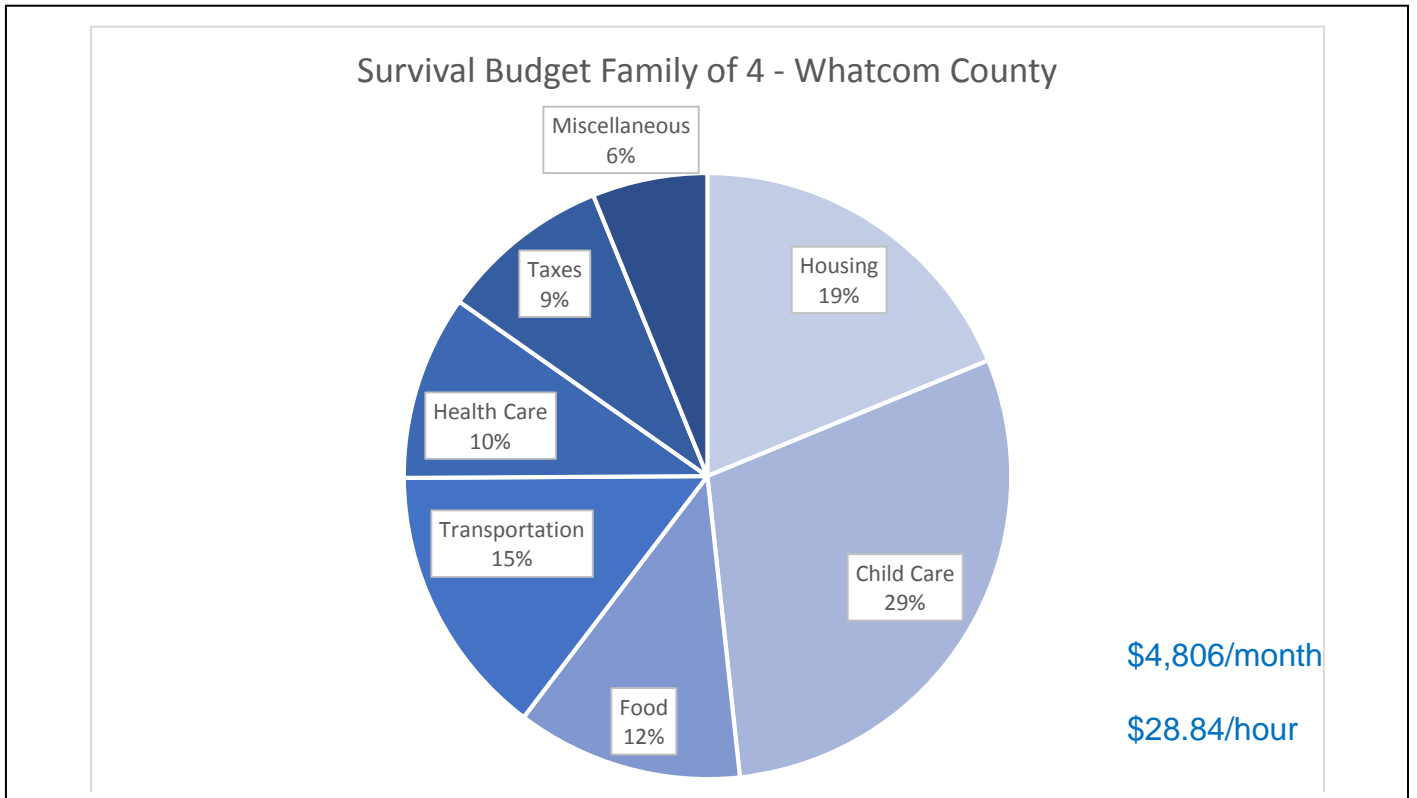
- The percentages of different ethnicities that are ALICE mirror the percentages of the population in general in Washington – largest percent are White Households

Figure 18.
Median Annual Earnings by Education and Gender, Pacific Northwest, 2013



Source: American Community Survey, 2013

- Individuals of both genders earn more the higher their education level. This is one of the reasons why United Way focuses so heavily on early learning and increasing the high school graduation rate



- Total monthly survival budget for family of 4 is \$4,806 or \$28.84 per hour. Childcare represents a families greatest expense (which is why United Way helps to support programs that provide access to early learning and childcare on a sliding scale). The survival budget is bare minimum and does not have a cushion for savings, automotive costs, emergencies, cable and cell phone bills. Miscellaneous could cover one of those but is used for overflow costs to balance out the other categories

Figure 24.
Number of Jobs by Hourly Wage, Pacific Northwest, 2013



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013b

- More than half of all jobs in the Pacific Northwest pay less than \$20 an hour (\$40,000 a year) and most pay between \$10 and \$15 an hour. The jobs forecast shows low-paying jobs dominating the economy into the future.

Occupations by Employment and Wage, Washington, 2013

OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF JOBS	MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE
Retail Salespersons	99,570	\$11.36
Cashiers	66,060	\$11.06
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	57,300	\$9.47
Registered Nurses	53,060	\$36.30
Software Developers, Applications	52,000	\$52.92
Waiters and Waitresses	42,960	\$9.57
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	42,180	\$13.64
Office Clerks, General	41,280	\$14.52
Customer Service Representatives	39,980	\$16.67
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	39,480	\$18.50
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	38,380	\$17.75
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	37,950	\$13.42
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	35,990	\$13.37
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	34,970	\$28.61
Teacher Assistants	33,280	\$15.01
General and Operations Managers	30,780	\$50.88
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	28,340	\$19.72
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	27,540	\$18.51
Accountants and Auditors	27,440	\$32.16
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	26,280	\$32.40

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Wage Survey – All Industries Combined, 2013

- With the combination of ALICE's wages and some public assistance, ALICE households still face an average 25% income gap, across the region, in order to reach financial stability. But thanks to support from United Way Funded programs more ALICE families are able to stay above the poverty line.

Income Assessment for Washington

“The total annual income of poverty-level and ALICE households in Washington is \$14.2 billion, which includes wages and Social Security. This is only 42 percent of the amount needed just to reach the ALICE Threshold of \$33.8 billion statewide.”

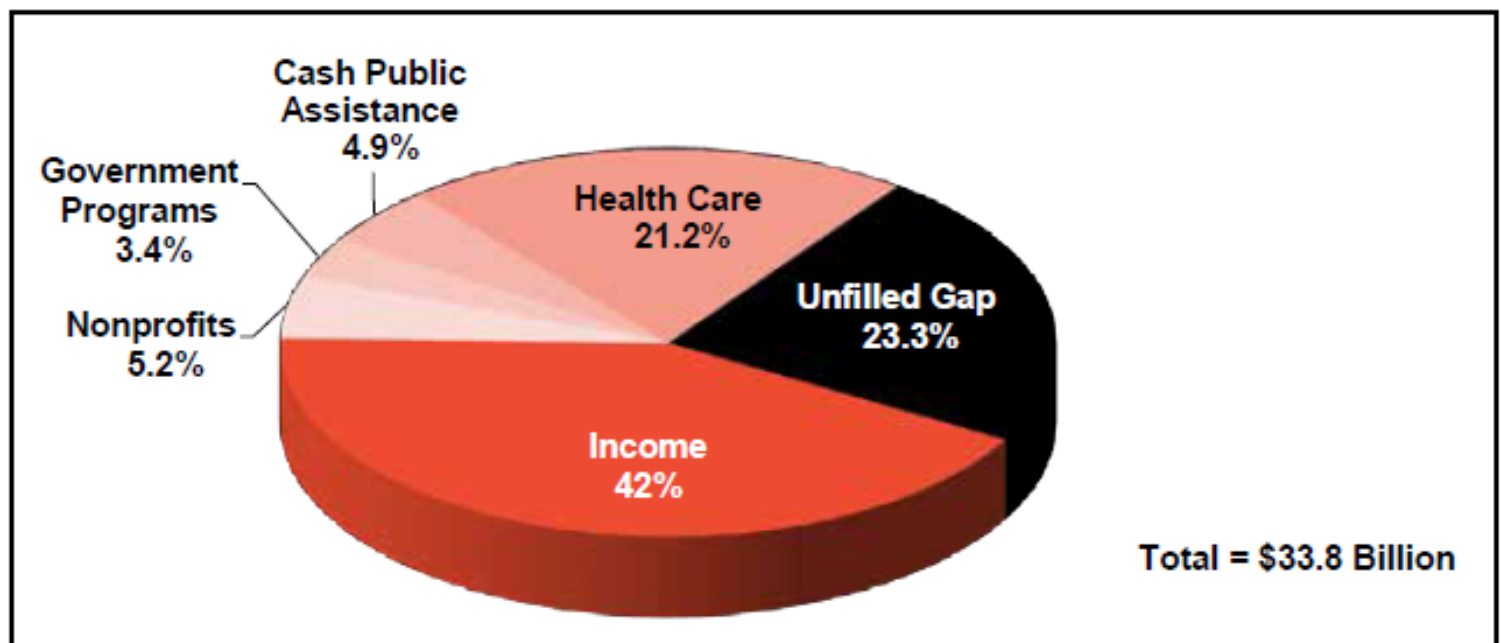
Washington ALICE Threshold – Earned Income and Assistance = Unfilled Gap			
\$33.8 billion	–	\$25.9 billion	= \$7.9 billion

The total annual income of poverty-level and ALICE households in Washington is \$14.2 billion, which includes wages and Social Security. This is only 42 percent of the amount needed just to reach the ALICE Threshold of \$33.8 billion statewide. Government and nonprofit assistance makes up an additional 34.7 percent, but that still leaves an Unfilled Gap of 23.3 percent, or \$7.9 billion. The consequences of the Unfilled Gap for ALICE households are discussed in Section VI.

The total annual public and private spending on Washington households below the ALICE Threshold, which includes families in poverty, is \$11.7 billion (Figure 34), equal to 3 percent of Washington’s \$407 billion Gross Domestic Product (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2014). That spending includes several types of assistance:

- Health care assistance is \$7.1 billion, the largest single category, and adds another 21.2 percent
- Government programs spend \$1.1 billion, or 3.4 percent
- Cash public assistance delivers \$1.7 billion, adding another 4.9 percent
- Nonprofit programs spend \$1.8 billion, or 5.2 percent

Figure 34.
Aggregate Resources to Reach the ALICE Threshold, Washington, 2013



Source: Office of Management and Budget, 2014; Department of Treasury, 2015; American Community Survey, 2013; National Association of State Budget Officers, 2014; NCCS Data Web Report Builder, 2010

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE ALICE STUDY?

- ALICE is a vital part of our community and economy. We are all interconnected and our success depends on ALICE's ability to reach his or her potential. Strengthening ALICE strengthens our entire community\

WHEN ALICE IS DOING BETTER WE ALL WIN:

	Impact on ALICE	Impact on our Community
HOUSING		
Live in above standard housing	Increased health and safety, less maintenance costs	Workers less stressed, more productive at work
Live closer to job	Shorter commute, costs decrease, more time for other activities	Less traffic on road, workers show up on time
Consistent and stable home	Less disruptive to job, family, schools, etc..	Reduced costs for homeless shelters, foster care system and health care
CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION		
Above standard child care	Increased safety and learning, less health risks, increased future employment opportunities	Less burden on education and social services, more productive workers
Child Care	Both parents can work, increased immediate income and future promotions	Even less of a burden on education and social services
Above standard public education	Reduced learning risks, increased earning potential/mobility; increased career opportunity	Less stress on parents, reduced future burden on social services and criminal justice system
FOOD		
Healthier food	increased health, reduced obesity	More productive workers/students; less future burden on health care system
Enough food	increased overall daily functioning	productive workers/students; less future burden on health care
TRANSPORTATION		
New car	Reliable transportation; less risk of accidents; decreased ongoing maintenance	Worker is less stressed, on time, and has good ongoing attendance
Insurance/registration	No risk of fines, covered for accidents, less risk of having license revoked	Lower insurance premiums, safer vehicles on the road
Short commute	More time for other activities, less spending on gas	Less traffic on road, all workers show up on time, less burden on social services
Car	increased employment opportunities and access to health care/child care	Increased economic productivity; lower taxes for special transportation; less burden on emergency vehicles
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE		
Increased Insurance	Easily access preventative health care, less out-of-pocket expense	Workers are healthy and miss less work, do not spread illness, more productive and less absenteeism
Insurance	Access preventative health care, less use of emergency room for non-emergency care	Lower premiums for all; less expensive health costs, less clogged emergency rooms

INCOME		
Higher wage	Shorter work hours; less pressure on other vulnerable family to work or drop out of school, more savings	Less stressed and happier workers, even more money being spent in our economy, lower taxes to fill smaller gap,
Wage	Does not have to spend time and money in looking for work or finding social services	More productive society, lower taxes to fill gaps, more money going back in to community
SAVINGS		
Increased Savings	Less overall mental stress, less risk taking and crises, does not have to use costly alternatives to financial systems to bridge the gaps	Less workers in crisis mode, more stable workforce, less community disruption and more spending in general
Savings	Crises dealt with rather than leading to homelessness, hunger and illness	Reduced costs for homeless shelters, foster care system and emergency health care

Strategies to Assist ALICE Families			
	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Friends and family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary housing • Food • Rides • Child care • Caregiving for ill/ elderly relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to access good employers
Nonprofits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary housing • Food pantries • Utility assistance • Home repair • Tax preparation • Caregiver respite • Subsidized child care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loans and affordable financial products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to access good employers
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid days off • Transportation assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular work schedule • Full-time opportunities • Higher wages • Benefits • Flex-time • Telecommuting • HR resources for caregivers • On-site health services, presentations, wellness incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career paths • Mentoring
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TANF • Child care and housing subsidies • Educational vouchers and charter school options • Social Security credit for caregivers • Tax credit for caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality, affordable housing, child care, education, health care, transportation, and financial products • Reduced student loan burden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract higher-skilled jobs • Strengthen infrastructure

WHAT IS UNITED WAY OF WHATCOM COUNTY DOING FOR ALICE?

- Working with and investing in a variety of proven programs to help ALICE stay above the poverty line. This is a complex issues that takes more than just one program, it takes a variety of programs all working together to address each piece of the puzzle.
- Conducting research and collecting ongoing community data to keep our finger on the pulse of current community issues

EDUCATION – The more education ALICE has the higher the income

- Free Kindergarten Readiness Calendars for all pre-school aged children in Whatcom County
- Providing support to ensure access to early learning/childcare programs for kids of all learning levels with a sliding scale fee (Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center, Whatcom Family YMCA, Opportunity Council, Whatcom Early Learning Alliance, Whatcom Center for Early Learning)
- Alternative and after school programs for kids from low-income families and at-risk youth (Alderwood and Cordata Schools, Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County, GRADS, Home Port Learning Center, Whatcom Family YMCA)

INCOME – Ensuring ALICE has job skills, knows how to manage finances and has a roof overhead

- Food and assistance to offset cost of monthly bills (Bellingham Food Bank, Opportunity Council, Salvation Army)
- Skill building to attain better jobs and better income(Whatcom Literacy Council, Work Opportunities, Sustainable Connections)
- Housing support and financial literacy (Lydia Place, Opportunity Council, Northwest Youth Services, Sun Community Services, YWCA)

HEALTH – Making sure ALICE can access medical needs and live a healthy life free from violence and abuse

- Providing access to reduced cost prescription drugs through our FamilyWize program
- Ensuring kids and adults of all income levels have access to outlets for healthy lifestyles (Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County, Whatcom Family YMCA, Max Higbee Center)
- Access to crucial health care and advocacy for vulnerable populations of all ages (Arc of Whatcom County, Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement, Whatcom Council on Aging, Compass Health)
- Providing crucial help and support for survivors of violence and abuse (Brigid Collins, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services)

Your gift to United Way makes all of this possible for ALICE and strengthens our entire community!

PROGRESS

- Increase in early literacy
- Decrease in homelessness
- Increase in medical access and insured individuals
- More kids accessing after school programs (100 more kids already in Cordata!)
- Prosperity report shows us that there has been an increase in ability to access medical care and food assistance