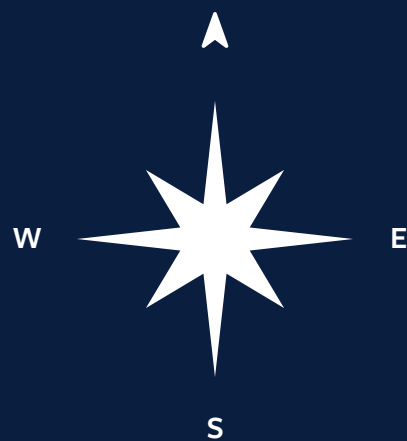




20
24
ANNUAL
REPORT



Strengthening Military Families
Through Shared Storytime ➤



From the Chair of the Board and Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends of United Through Reading,

Reflecting on the past year, we are filled with profound gratitude for the extraordinary community of supporters who fuel United Through Reading's mission. For **35** years, you have helped us bring the power of a story to those who serve, fostering connection, continuity, and comfort for military families around the globe.

Thanks to your unwavering generosity, in 2024, we reached over **405,000** military family members. We stood shoulder to shoulder with those who stand watch for us through more than **87,000** distributed books, **4,000** storytime video recordings, and nearly **20,000** literacy resources.

At United Through Reading, every story recorded and book read is a testament to the strength of our military families and the community that supports them. These shared moments become bedtime rituals, morale boosters, and emotional bridges across time zones and continents.



As one Marine Corps spouse shared about her oldest son, “One night, about a month into the deployment, Maddox had a tough time. I pulled out my phone, and he watched three stories, one after the other. When he was done, he looked up and said, **‘I’m not sad anymore; I feel better now.’ It’s his way of resetting, of feeling close to his dad, even when he’s oceans away.**”

We extend our most profound appreciation to the service members who sacrifice daily, the families who serve alongside them, and you, our donors, partners, and advocates. We are humbled by your trust and inspired by your commitment.

As we look to the future, we remain rooted in service and hope. Together, we are building a legacy where every military child knows the love of storytime, no matter the distance.

With heartfelt thanks and continued service,



Sally Ann Zoll
SALLY ANN ZOLL, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer (Interim)



Sean McHugh
SEAN MCHUGH
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Celebrating 35 Years of United Through Reading

In 2024, we celebrated United Through Reading's 35th birthday with our Storybook Ball (SBB 35), a heartfelt tribute to the power of shared stories and the military families we serve.

We honored **Rear Admiral Fran Holian** (in memoriam) with the *Military Family Leadership Award* and author **Kelly Starling Lyons** with the *Audrey Geisel Friend of Military Families Award*.



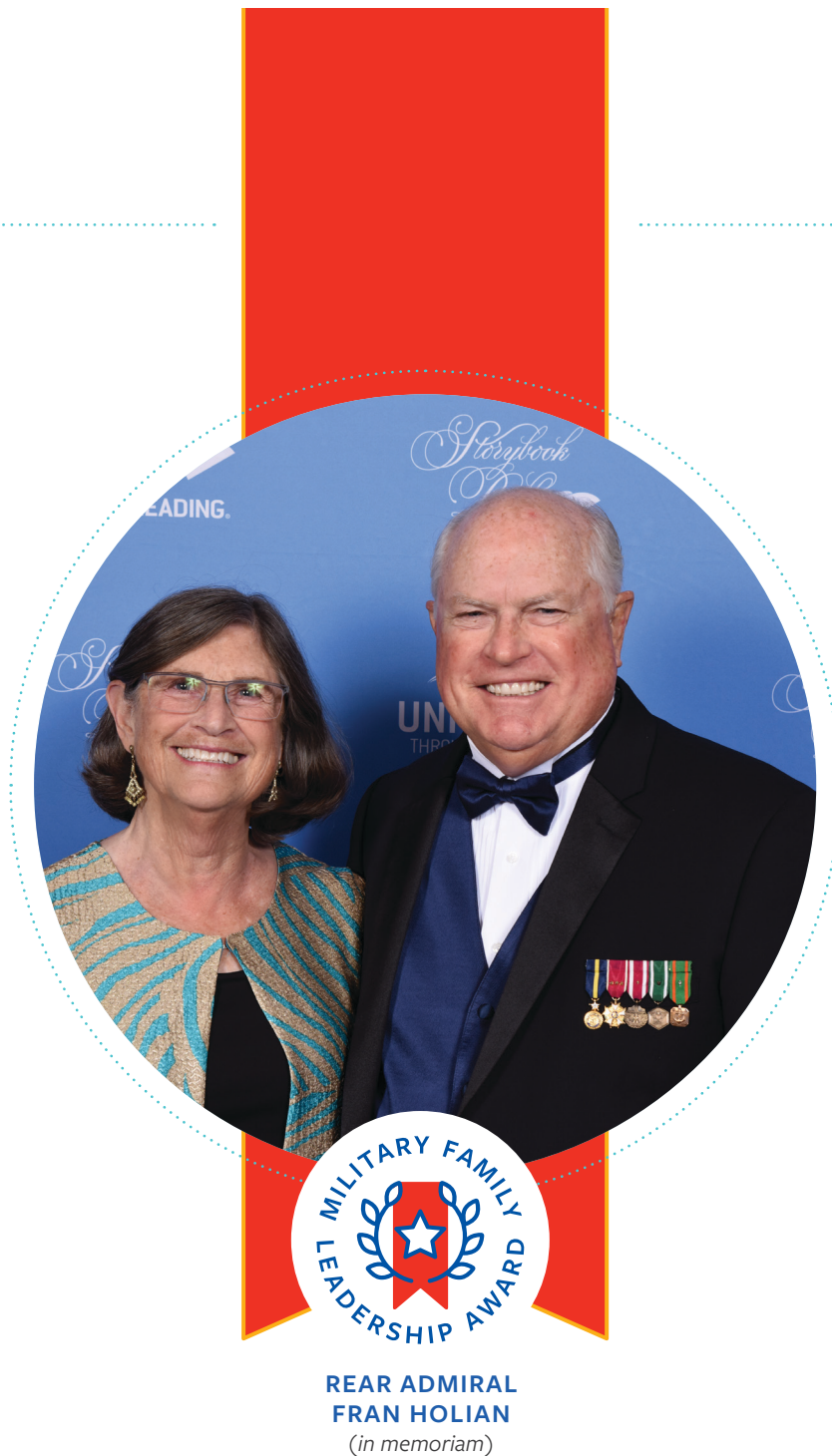
**VICE ADMIRAL
DAN CHEEVER**

Keynote speaker **Vice Admiral Dan Cheever** inspired attendees, and Marine Corps spouse Erin Crew reminded us of the real impact of a deployed parent's voice reading to their children.

Thank you to everyone who supported this unforgettable evening and helped us make tangible steps toward our next major milestone: connecting four million military family members.



**AUTHOR KELLY
STARLING
LYONS**



**REAR ADMIRAL
FRAN HOLIAN**
(in memoriam)



Honoring Legacies of Leadership and Service

This year, we proudly celebrated the legacies of Rear Admiral Fran Holian and Dr. Lynnette Beall.

Fran Holian's lifelong dedication to military families left a lasting impact on our mission. Through the Military Family Leadership Award presented at SBB 35, we honored his memory and enduring belief in the strength of family connection.



Dr. Lynnette Beall's passion for literacy and service continues to shape our organization. Her years of support have empowered generations of readers. We are indebted to her for her visionary leadership and unwavering belief in the transformative power of books.

DR. LYNNETTE BEALL
(in memoriam)



Staying Connected Across Oceans

In 2024, we facilitated over **4,085** storytime video recordings through our embedded Story Stations, Mobile Story Stations, and the **United Through Reading App**. From the quiet of the U.S. Air Force Academy Library to the volatile waters surrounding the

USS Carney and others at sea, service members recorded heartfelt messages and bedtime stories, strengthening bonds across distances, fostering resilience at home, and creating meaningful daily rituals of connection and comfort.

Our app saw increased engagement through seasonal campaigns like the Bingo Game sponsored by our Dollar General Literacy Foundation partner, the Go for Gold! Summer Olympic reading challenge and the Box Art contest in conjunction with our Book for the Military Child, **Ty's Travels: All Aboard**. Each submission and recording kept children engaged with creative ways to incorporate reading into their daily routines.



Books in Hands, Stories in Hearts

2024 Annual Report

Thanks to generous donors and partners, UTR distributed 87,401 new children's books in 2024. These books were placed directly into the

hands of military children at events like military command parties, literacy fairs, and baby showers.

HIGHLIGHTS:

13,000 books distributed during the back-to-school season

4,445 books shared at 24 Operation Homefront holiday events

1,200 books donated to Santa's Castle

Every book represents a promise: that no child goes without the joy of storytime.



Story Stations: Anchoring Connection

In 2024, UTR expanded its reach by opening 21 new Story Stations worldwide. These walk-in and embedded locations empower military members to record stories anytime.

NEW SITES INCLUDE:

- 📍 USS Spruance and USS Pinckney
- 📍 Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii
- 📍 Aviano Air Base, Italy
- 📍 Fort Liberty's Special Warfare Center, North Carolina

Each station is a lifeline for families separated by service and a space where love and literacy thrive.





Literacy Tools for a Lifetime

We distributed nearly **20,000** literacy guides and reading trackers tailored to all age groups, from coloring-friendly pages for early readers to journaling templates for **tweens**. These resources empowered families to build daily reading routines, strengthening academic and emotional development.

Our Ready for Reading podcast returned with new episodes focusing on literacy and military life. We also launched the Reading BINGO and Box Art contests to inspire creative engagement throughout the PCS season.





➤ *Book for the Military Child: “Ty’s Travels: All Aboard”*

In its second year, we chose *Ty’s Travels: All Aboard* as our 2024 Book for the Military Child.

The early reader story by award-winning author Kelly Starling Lyons brought joy, creativity, and representation to thousands of military kids.

With over 10,000 copies distributed, children across the globe followed Ty on his imaginative journey.

Families participated in art contests; we co-hosted a virtual storytime for the National Military Family Association’s Operation Purple Camp, we featured an ASL version of *Ty’s Travels: All Aboard* in the Spotlight Section of our app, and lucky students at the Fort Liberty ASYMCA and DoDEA Shugart Elementary school were fortunate enough to host Kelly for an in-person storytime! We’re grateful to Ms. Starling Lyons and illustrator Niña Mata for being so generous with their time.



Powering Impact Through Partnerships

From Operation Gratitude to ASYMCA and the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, our partners amplified our mission in 2024.

HIGHLIGHTS:

5,000 Reading Ready kits distributed

1,500 school readiness backpacks gifted to military children

STEM storytimes launched in collaboration with Fort Liberty's Family Programs

Through collaboration, we ensure military families are seen, supported, and supplied with the tools they need to thrive.



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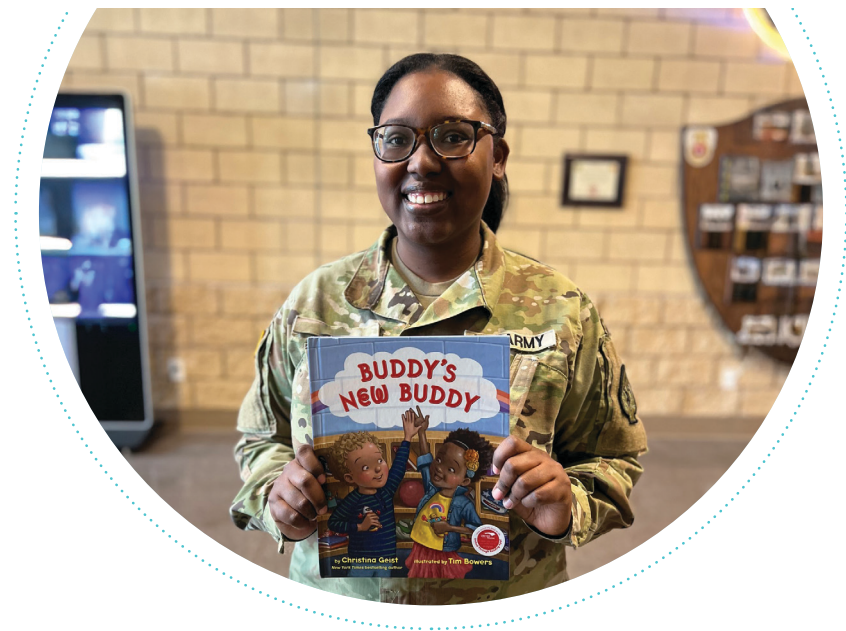
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Chief Executive Officer (Interim)
United Through Reading



990 Overview

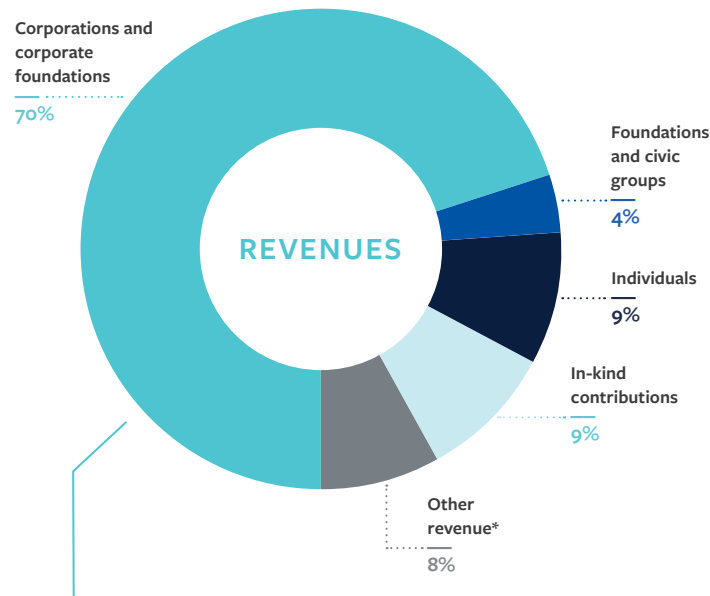
In 2024, United Through Reading upheld its commitment to transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship.

Our **Form 990** is available on our website, and we're proud to share the following highlights:

- ▶ **Earned top ratings**, including Charity Navigator's 4-Star rating and Guidestar's Platinum Seal of Transparency.
- ▶ **Directed the majority of expenses to programs**, demonstrating strong financial stewardship.
- ▶ **Maintained healthy revenue and assets**, in line with national nonprofit benchmarks and best practices in transparency.

2024 Financial Overview ➤

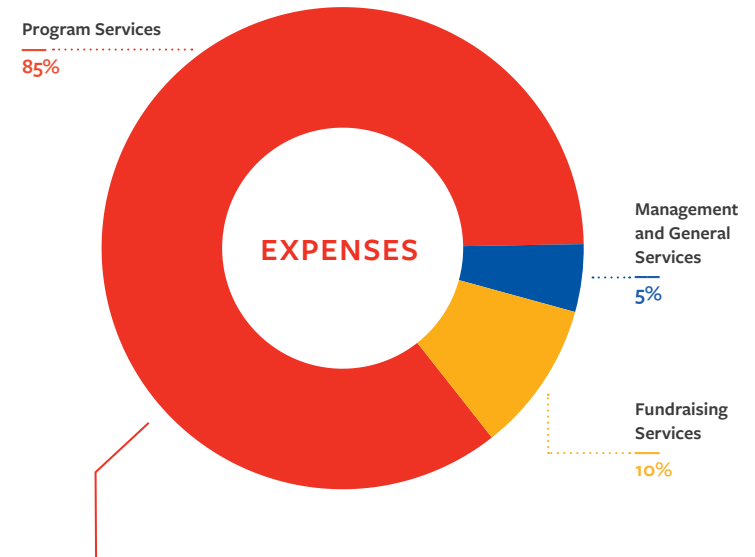
Our donors' investments continue to be directed primarily to our mission —connecting military families through reading. We take pride in every dollar making a difference.



REVENUES

Corporations and Corporate Foundations	\$1,835,497
Foundations and Civic Groups	\$113,866
In-kind contributions	\$234,303
Individuals	\$229,794
Other revenue*	\$185,050
Investment income	\$1,905
Total	\$2,600,415

*Other revenue includes special event revenue.



EXPENSES

Program Services 85%	\$1,913,310
Management and General Services 5 %	\$114,233
Fundraising Services	\$219,625
Total	\$2,247,168

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

\$678,240

Net Assets as of January 1, 2024	\$364,617
Net Assets as of December 31, 2024	\$1,042,857

2024 DONORS

Lead Institutional Partners

\$2,000,000+

Reader's Digest Foundation

\$250,000+

Dollar General Literacy Foundation

\$100,000-\$249,999

BAE Systems, Inc.

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\$50,000-\$99,999

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*Thank you for being
part of our story. ➤*

United Through Reading Envisions
A Nation of Thriving Military Families
Whose Strength is Amplified by a
Shared Love for Reading



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