



UNITED WAY
Lowcountry

WOMEN UNITED

Empowering Lowcountry Women & Students to Succeed

United Way of the Lowcountry's **Women United** is a dynamic group of women leaders committed to advancing the common good by focusing on education in the forgotten pockets of Beaufort and Jasper counties.

Since 2012, Women United has mobilized the caring power of women to engage, educate, and empower our community toward a brighter future. Women United supports a variety of Initiatives including:



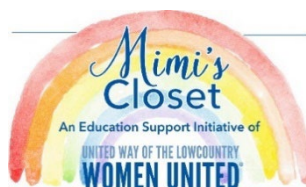
Operation Backpack

Operation Backpack helps students begin the school year ready to learn by providing:

- **Backpacks stocked with essential school supplies**, such as paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, binders, and glue
- **New school uniforms**, a new addition for 2025, to help ease a common financial strain on families

School social workers help identify eligible students, and supplies are delivered directly

to schools for distribution before the school year begins. This program is especially helpful for families who may not qualify for other assistance programs but are still struggling to make ends meet.



Mimi's Closets

Mimi's Closets are school-based resource hubs stocked with essential items to meet unexpected student needs throughout the year, including:

- Hygiene supplies like toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, hand sanitizer, and tissues
- Snacks and water bottles
- School supplies such as pencils, paper, and crayons
- Clothing essentials like socks, underwear, diapers, and uniforms

By easing the burden on teachers and nurses who often fill these gaps themselves, Mimi's Closets help create an environment where students and educators can thrive. Currently available at five schools, the program plans to expand based on community need and support.

Breaking Barriers to Education Fund

This fund provides immediate, practical support to parents and students facing non-academic obstacles—like transportation, uniforms, or hygiene needs—that could disrupt their education.

- Administered through United Way's **HELPLINE**, a free, confidential 24/7 referral service connecting families to resources
- Activated by school social workers or counselors through direct referrals
- Designed to quickly remove barriers unmet by other community programs

Women United Scholarship Fund

Since 2020, Women United has awarded more than \$25,000 in scholarships to 20+ women attending University of South Carolina Beaufort or Technical College of the Lowcountry.

Eligibility requires:

- Residency or employment in Beaufort or Jasper counties
- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- Demonstrated community involvement through volunteerism

Scholarship recipients are encouraged to re-apply, fostering ongoing educational advancement and leadership development.

The result: Through leadership, compassion, and targeted support, Women United is empowering students and women to overcome obstacles, pursue education, and build pathways to self-sufficiency—strengthening the entire Lowcountry community.