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Advancing I.D.E.A. *Together*

2023-2024 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Report



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The dedication of our employees, leaders, members, and communities **fuels our journey** to create a healthier, more equitable, and **vibrant future for all.**

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Thank you for your interest in our annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Report.

This is our fourth edition, which we proudly share with our communities as a demonstration of our intentional and ongoing work to model Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access – the I.D.E.A. mindset.

Univera Healthcare is a locally based and nonprofit health plan, [right here, for you](#). In this report you'll find examples of the many ways we partner with our members, our employees, and the communities we call home. We are proud of our progress and know there is always more to be done.

The I.D.E.A. mindset is among the seven core values we live by and that drive our mission.

I.D.E.A. is not only what we do, but also how we do what we do. To us, I.D.E.A. is everyone's responsibility, and it means all of us. It means digging deeper, asking tough questions, and taking thoughtful action. It means being curious and learning about others to create spaces that are fair, inclusive, and welcoming for ALL of us to thrive.

We know we don't have all the answers. But we do know who we are and the commitment we've made to be better and do better. We cannot do this work alone, and the dedication of our employees, leaders, members, and communities fuels our journey to create a healthier, more equitable, and vibrant future for all.

With gratitude,



Art Wingerter (he/him)
President



Sady Alvarado-Fischer (she/her)
VP, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer

Working toward greater representation

As part of our commitment to I.D.E.A., we work to attract and retain a workforce that is reflective of the members and communities we serve. We measure progress and opportunities for growth in the areas of career advancement, development, and recruitment.



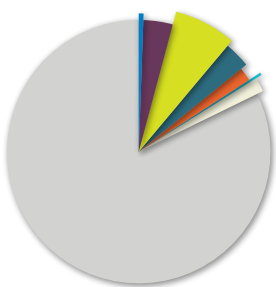
4,386
Employees



72.53%
Percentage of female workers



Employee racial/ethnic breakdown



0.59% American Indian/ Alaskan Native	3.63% Asian	7.00% Black/African American	3.10% Hispanic/Latino
1.78% Multiracial/More than one race	0.05% Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1.69% Not specified	82.17% White

Breakdown of employees by age



35.04% Under 40	64.96% 40 and over
18-29 9.53%	30-39 25.51%
30-39 25.51%	40-49 25.58%
40-49 25.58%	50-59 25.88%
50-59 25.88%	60+ 13.50%

We commit to an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace

Our annual Inclusion Survey is one way we measure employee experience and progress in our DEI journey.

While increasing representation is important to us, we also understand that strengthening inclusion and belonging are just as crucial. Understanding how our employees experience I.D.E.A. at our company helps us measure the distance between our goals and their daily experience. This feedback not only lets us know where we are succeeding, but also informs our programs and continues to hold us accountable for driving change.

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Agree that we are committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access	95%	97%	94%	92%
Agree that we respect individuals and value their differences	93%	94%	91%	88%
Agree that we do a good job at providing job training programs that promote multicultural understanding	91%	90%	88%	85%
Agree that we are making progress with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives	91%	92%	90%	88%
Agree that we provide an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs	87%	89%	87%	84%
Agree that I am comfortable talking about my background and cultural experiences with my colleagues if/when I choose to	87%	86%	84%	81%
Agree that DEI issues are openly discussed	85%	84%		
Agree that I have the same opportunities for advancement as other employees in my organization	81%	84%		

Each year, we add a few new questions related to a specific area of I.D.E.A. This year, our focus was on accessibility, with questions including:

New! in 2024

Agree that should I need an accommodation, I trust my manager would assist me with meeting my needs	95%
Agree that I have the materials and equipment I need to be effective at work	93%

Leadership - female representation



New hires (started in 2024 and still active)



Leaders of color



Intersectional representation - female leaders of color



Additional workforce representation

Employee Self-ID Demographics from Human Resources Information System*



Employee Self-ID Demographics from 2024 Inclusion Survey Participants



* At the end of 2023, we moved to a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) which allowed us to capture additional LGBTQ+, Disability, and Veteran identities. We are actively working to close the gaps between the self-identification reported in our new HRIS and the representation in our annual Inclusion Survey.

I.D.E.A. is a group effort

We’ve long recognized that fostering an inclusive workplace isn’t a one-time effort, but an ongoing responsibility requiring daily actions. Through a combination of educational programs, leadership development, and collaborative events, we are continually advancing our understanding and actions related to I.D.E.A.

DEI Book Club

Begun in 2020 by two employees, and with leadership support, the DEI Book Club provides employees with a space to explore different perspectives and lived experiences, allowing for deep engagement, broad discussions, and strengthened connections. The Book Club tackles a wide range of topics, from understanding intergenerational dynamics in the workplace to discussing the experiences of indigenous youth in residential schools. This is just one of the ways we address intersectionality and create safety so that all voices are heard and respected within our organization.

Book Club picks:

- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei (2024)
- *American Like Me: Reflections on Life between Cultures* by America Ferrera (2024)
- *Indian Horse: A Novel* by Richard Wagamese (2023)
- *A New Kind of Diversity: Making the Different Generations on Your Team a Competitive Advantage* by Tim Elmore (2023)
- *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People* by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald (2022)
- *We Can’t Talk About That at Work* by Mary-Frances Winters (2022)
- *Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit* by Mary-Frances Winters (2021)
- *Waking Up White (and Finding Myself in the Story of Race)* by Debby Irving (2021)

“Being a part of the book club has given me the opportunity to grow personally and professionally by allowing me to learn, understand, and think differently.”

Michelle Doherty
Executive Assistant to COO,
DEI Book Club co-founder



Essential Habits program

Leaders of our organization play a critical role in creating an inclusive and safe working environment, which is why we invest in strengthening and developing essential leadership habits through our Essential Habits program. In 2024, our Essential Habits training focused on inclusive leadership, a vital component of living our company values. Leaders had access to self-paced learning modules that equipped them with the skills to lead with empathy, understand the unique needs of each team member, and apply practical tools for leading tailored 1:1s and team meetings. Complementing these modules, our Learning and Development team also offered virtual, instructor-led training that provided leaders with opportunities for deeper reflection and practical application. These efforts support our goal of shifting inclusive leadership from a theoretical concept to a consistent practice within our organization.

Employee Resource Group (ERG) events

Our ERGs provide our employees with meaningful connections, resources, and support for business and personal goals, while supporting our culture and strengthening our intersectional approach. In 2024, our ERGs offered our employees more than 45 learning opportunities to partner within our organization, and with community-based organizations beyond our walls.

Examples of those include:

- **Suicide Awareness**
A collaboration between the 7 Generations, African American, Awareness of Visible and Invisible Disabilities (AVID), and Lifetime Pride ERGs, this virtual event highlighted the disproportionate impact of suicide on historically marginalized groups. The presentation featured insights from the Suicide Prevention & Crisis Service of Tompkins County, and provided valuable resources and education to help address this critical issue within our communities.
- **HerStory Speaker Series**
Hosted by the Women & Empowerment Network ERG, HerStory is an annual series of events that brings together women leaders from across the organization, from various backgrounds, to share their lived experiences. These discussions cover a range of topics, from career development and leadership strategies to personal growth and work-life balance. HerStory not only empowers women within our organization, but also fosters a culture of mentorship and support.

“The Essential Habits inclusive leadership training has reinforced the importance of embracing and understanding diversity, equity, and belonging, and fostering an environment where all my team members feel safe, valued, empowered, and heard. Inclusive leadership isn’t just about setting expectations for others - it’s also about holding yourself accountable to these same values and behaviors. My hope is that by continuously applying these learnings, I have created a more cohesive, engaged, and high-performing team that benefits from the strengths and insights of every individual.”

Anna D’Amico
Employee Experience Manager



Internal development resources

By keeping I.D.E.A. at the forefront of employees' minds, we're advancing a culture in which everyone feels valued, heard, and empowered to do their best, together. **We all have a responsibility to model I.D.E.A., and for employees who want to dive deeper, we offer a range of DEI resources and programs, such as:**



Digital accessibility resources and education to create more accessible digital content and experiences



Free access to LinkedIn Learning courses



New DEI Multicultural Learning Collection: Multiple self-paced learning modules throughout the year



Internal leadership programs



Mentor and mentee programs, including Advancing Diversity mentoring



Two DEI-specific electives: Inclusive Language Workshop and Working Across Multi Generations



Mandated all-employee training on cultural humility in alignment with National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) requirements



An internal, online learning platform that offers training on topics related to DEI, the I.D.E.A. mindset, working with diverse and underrepresented groups, leadership development, emotional intelligence, time management, and more



Annual I.D.E.A. Series, focused on cultural humility; welcomes subject matter experts on DEI-related topics

Building on our accomplishments

As we take meaningful steps to improve our company, we're proud of our progress. At the same time, we understand that we still have work to do and continue to set annual goals as part of our corporate commitment to I.D.E.A.

Here are just some of our accomplishments this past year:

Recognized

- Univera Healthcare again earned top honors in the **Business First Best Places to Work** competition, winning the First Place Award among employers in its size category (250-799 employees). Business First is Western New York's weekly business newspaper. This is the second consecutive first place finish for Univera Healthcare, and its fourth in the past five years. The annual Best Places to Work competition is based on a company's employees choosing to participate in a voluntary and confidential survey conducted by Business First in which they share their thoughts and views on the company and its culture.
- Univera Healthcare received a **2024 Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award**. We received this recognition for creating a workplace where employees across our organization are engaged, empowered, and proud of the work they do. To achieve this recognition, our organization met Gallup's rigorous standards of excellence and demonstrated how our business performance is fueled by an engaged workforce. The Annual Lifetime Way Employee Engagement Survey participation rate of 85% exceeds Gallup's criteria (80% or higher) and our overall engagement score of 4.40 places us in the 96th percentile of companies within Gallup's database.
- For the fourth year in a row, our organization has been named a **Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion** with a top score of 100% on the 2024 Disability Equality Index, a national benchmarking survey by Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities.
- Univera Healthcare received a score of 85% out of 100 on the **Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2023-2024 Corporate Equality Index (CEI)**, the nation's foremost benchmarking survey and report measuring corporate policies and practices related to LGBTQ+ workplace equality. Our company joins the ranks of 1,384 major US businesses that were also ranked in the 2023-2024 CEI.

Reaffirmed

- Until Justice Just Is: We join the YWCA annually in reaffirming our commitment to **Until Justice Just Is** through an online pledge and learning on structural racism, bias, and how to be an ally.



Listening to our employees to improve our I.D.E.A. efforts

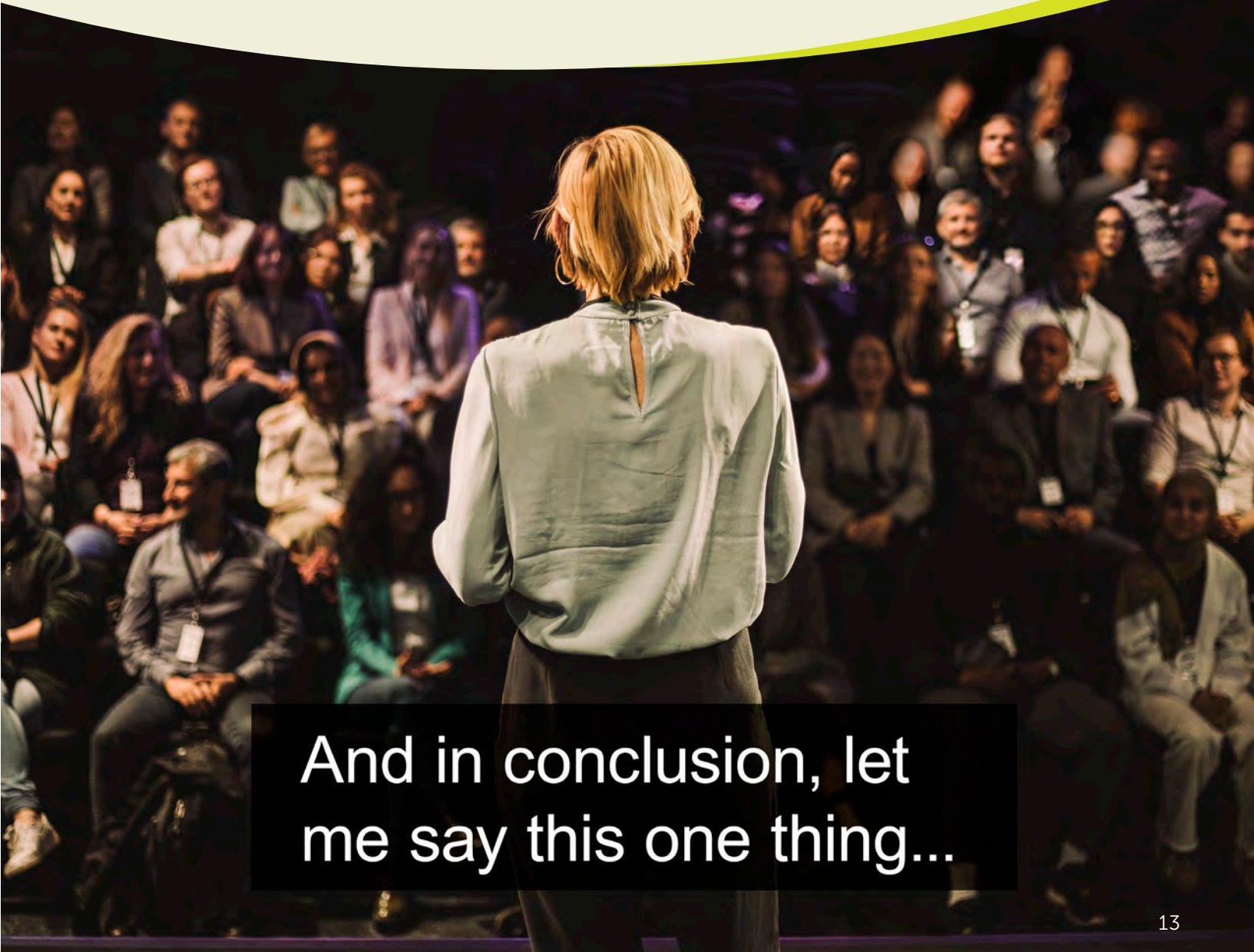
We are proud to have been named a Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion, with a top score of 100% on the 2024 Disability Equality Index, a national benchmarking survey by Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities. And we also recognize that 100% does not mean perfect. We continue to identify opportunities to close gaps and create more consistent experiences.

This year, we had an opportunity to incorporate live captioning at our Spring and Fall Leadership meetings. The original inquiry came from a member of our Awareness of Visible and Invisible Disabilities (AVID) Employee Resource Group and their executive sponsor

connected with our vice president, DEI officer and the project team. Though we have captioning available in our internal learning materials, this was a chance to incorporate it in-person and make this important event more accessible for the more than 700 people in attendance.

The project team, a multi-departmental collaboration with representatives from across the company, took on the task of identifying the appropriate software, testing, and implementation.

When we collaborate and increase access for some, we increase access for all.



And in conclusion, let me say this one thing...



Size inclusion: Looking beyond what's expected of DEI

While we continue to build upon our foundation of I.D.E.A., our employees help us to expand beyond the boxes in which many expect efforts of diversity, equity, and inclusion to belong.

When we think of inclusion, it means all of us. Body size is one aspect of diversity that is often overlooked, though it can carry societally based stigmas, biases, and stereotypes that impact all aspects of life.

In the last year, we are proud to have invested in both the creation and expansion of internal resources for our employees and learning opportunities for our provider networks.

We work with our employees to champion change

A major catalyst was when Sarah Smith, claims process analyst, was introduced to Sady Alvarado-Fischer, VP DEI officer, and they began a conversation about how body positivity could be integrated into the company's DEI work. They agreed that people of any size deserve a holistic, dignified, caring, and fair approach to their health care. The two then developed a plan to collaborate across various departments to incorporate size inclusion through multiple efforts, including:

- The formation of a new employee-led body inclusion group (BodyPosi) where employees can gather and learn about positivity, acceptance, visibility, and support for all different body shapes and sizes.
- The inclusion of body size diversity and inclusion in internal Wellbeing learning modules throughout the year, with feedback and content review from members of our body inclusion group.
- The launch of a new training, Weight Stigma and Size Inclusion, developed by our Provider Training team with input from members of our body inclusion group. The training addresses biases related to weight, the negative impacts to health outcomes for patients of size, and best practices to be size inclusive.

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Weight stigma and discrimination is something that affects all of us, whether it has happened to us directly, or to a family member, friend, and those we cherish in our communities. People are dying from conditions that could have been prevented or treated, all because they are frightened, embarrassed, uncomfortable, nervous, self-conscious, etc., due to the everyday stigma they experience from many around them.

Sarah Smith
Claims Process Analyst

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Fostering a better understanding of body positivity is important to the work we do – **from personal relationships and work culture**, to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Making our wellbeing benefits more inclusive

Often, when we hear “health and wellbeing,” we attribute it to our physical state. But wellbeing is more than just getting a step count in for the day: Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable, healthy, and happy. It’s a combination of physical, emotional, mental, and financial wellbeing.

As a health plan with about 4,500 employees, we know wellbeing can come in many different forms and isn’t the same for all. **Our team is comprised of individuals who vary in terms of their social determinants of health, including income, education, and accessibility to care and reliable transportation, as well as unique needs based on their gender identity, race, ethnicity, disabilities, and other factors.** Our employees have daily experiences that change the way their wellbeing is impacted, so we make it a priority to meet each individual where they are in their unique wellbeing journey.

2024: Expanding our inclusive wellbeing strategy to create fair opportunities for all employees to live a healthy life.

We continue to offer wellbeing programs that engage our diverse employee population, including virtual fitness classes and mindfulness classes. New in 2024, we added free access to VitalizeSM for our employees and their spouses who enroll in one of our medical plans. Vitalize, in partnership with Personify Health (formerly known as Virgin Pulse), is a digital home base that helps people engage in healthier choices and build healthy habits.

Within the platform, our employees have access to:

- A variety of wellbeing content
- Specific actions to address Social Determinants of Health
- Coaching that supports everyone
- Assistance and guides for navigating the complex health care system

Users can connect a fitness tracker to Vitalize to improve their physical wellbeing. But, we know that “getting more steps in” or going to the gym is not always attainable for everyone.

With this benefit, our team members can get **content and support for a variety of things known to improve overall wellbeing**, such as:

- Improving sleep habits for a better night’s rest
- Recognizing and overcoming burnout
- Setting a wellbeing goal
- Connecting with colleagues, friends, and family through wellbeing challenges
- Managing anxiety and general mood
- Improving gut health through diet
- Moving better while living with arthritis and joint pain

Plus, our employees with Vitalize also gain free access to two additional resources in the platform:

- **Headspace**[®]: Focused on mental and emotional health, Headspace provides access to hundreds of meditations and exercises for stress, focus, sleep, and movement. It also has great accessibility features such as closed captioning, audio descriptions, and language options.
- **Foodsmart**: A digital nutrition platform, Foodsmart has tools that make it easier to eat well based on food preferences and cost.

“Our goal is to encourage healthy habit-building and cultivate better resilience among our employees, no matter their circumstances. Building this into our benefits package helps make it more accessible to everyone on our team.”





Community Health Spotlight

Supporting a century of compassion in East Buffalo

For over 100 years, St. Gerard's Parish was the center of Buffalo's Bailey Delavan neighborhood, where families could come together as a community. Although the final mass was held in 2008, the site's century-long outreach to its surrounding East Buffalo community has continued.

Today, the former school, convent, and parish hall that stand in the shadow of the Roman Basilica-style church are known as Gerard Place, established in 2000 through the work of women in the Diocese of Buffalo. Their goal was to provide housing and support to help individuals and families facing homelessness rise out of poverty.

"We transition families back into the community with services wrapped around them," says David Zapfel, Gerard Place president and CEO. "We've helped over 90% of the mothers and children we serve to successfully move to independent housing."

"Without Gerard Place, I don't know where I would be. I've grown so much, and I've matured so much. I want to say thank you, because without this place, I'd be on the streets. If you're on the streets, you can't be on the streets with your kids, so I probably wouldn't have my daughter with me right now."

- a Gerard Place mom

Gerard Place has expanded over the last two decades to encompass a food pantry, a health clinic for mothers and their babies, education programs and job training, and services for seniors. This growth is thanks to strategic partnerships with other community organizations and strong support from individuals and corporations from across Western New York, including Univera Healthcare.

Gerard Place is the recipient of a Univera Healthcare grant to target severe maternal morbidity and related health equity issues. The funding supports the Healthy Mom and Baby Program at Gerard Place, which offers education, advocacy, mentoring, and clinical tracking of low-income moms by nurse educators. More than 200 new moms are currently enrolled.

"There are so many opportunities to raise up people's lives and their families," says Zapfel. "With the generosity of organizations such as Univera Healthcare, Gerard Place is able to continue the 100+ year mission emanating from this special site in East Buffalo, to improve the community around us and the lives of those within it."



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