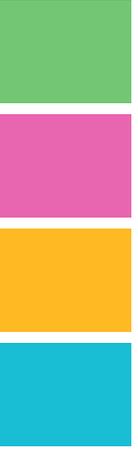


2022



United Tenants of Albany Annual Report



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Introduction

2022 was a unique time for United Tenants of Albany (UTA). The organization began the year facing some unanticipated challenges. The former Executive Director had left the organization and the Acting Executive Director then went on maternity leave, leaving gaps in management at a time where UTA's staff was down approximately 40%. Meanwhile, the eviction moratorium expired January 15, 2022, meaning these transitions were taking place while thousands of Albany residents faced the possibility of homelessness for the first time in nearly two years while Covid continued to pose a threat to personal safety and our economy. Tenant arrears for their rent payments were exorbitant, and rarely did UTA's maximum payment meet household needs. As a result, UTA expanded our organizational relationships and referral networks to connect tenants with as many housing-related resources as possible.

UTA's Homelessness Prevention Program staff stepped up to the challenge in extraordinary ways. Flexible provisions of direct service care ensured that 171 families had payments made on their behalf to recover the full arrears balance and stop all eviction proceedings. A new UTA Court Advocate position was created, which formally assisted over 100 families going through eviction proceedings in just five months, offering support to tenants in Albany civil court. This advocacy augments the legal representation provided to tenants, which due to community resource constraints is not sufficient to respond to the extent of the problem. Currently, only about 2-5% of tenants can find legal representation when faced with possible eviction or harm from their landlords. Additionally, the small staff were doing the Herculean task of responding to thousands of emergency housing hotline calls.

In March of 2022, UTA hired a new Executive Director, Canyon Ryan, who had experience as a housing counselor at UTA as well as significant community organizing experience. This new leadership helped set the direction for UTA to engage in some important and badly needed organizing activities throughout the year. From helping facilitate the development of the Bleecker Terrace Tenant Association to hosting numerous workshops with community partners, UTA was out in the community making tenant needs known. We actively worked with the Albany Justice Coalition to help get EPIC (Eviction Prevention and Intervention Collaborative program) and Albanylandlord.com off the group and worked with the Albany Democratic Socialists of America Housing Committee to help raise political awareness around tenant needs.

We also re-engaged with several statewide coalitions, such as Housing Justice For All and the Housing Courts Must Change Coalition, so we could work alongside tenant associations and organizations fighting for statewide Good Cause, Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, Right to Counsel, and more. We also joined Right To The City, which is a national coalition dedicated to community control of urban land.

By the end of the year, staff positions were restored and UTA's Board of Directors more than doubled, with the introduction of more tenant, community, and labor leaders. Along with our dedicated staff, the new Board's energy, breadth of experiences and insights offer UTA a dynamic degree of leadership that will support the organization in achieving its goals and in improving the quality of life for tenants in our community.



Our Work

In 2022

Homelessness Prevention Program

- Distributed \$392,642.86 in rental assistance to secure housing for 171 households ranging from 1-to-12 people per payment
- Responded to 6,300 housing hotline calls
- UTA's court advocate assisted more than 100 tenants in court proceedings to prevent eviction (hired July 26, 2022)
- Reversed more than 20 evictions and assisted each household maintain their residence after lockouts occurred
- Recorded more than 45 instances of Fair Housing violations
- Assisted more than 24 households living in properties in foreclosure secure stable housing
- Referenced in 20 news articles about tenant rights

Achievements with Partners

- Secured \$260,000 to support the Eviction Prevention and Intervention Collaborative
- Launched Albanylandlord.com
- Distributed hundreds of toys for the holidays
- Helped facilitate the development of a majority Black, low-income, women-led tenant association representing hundreds of households
- Submitted an Amicus Brief with the support of the Justice Center at Albany Law School's Community Economic Development Clinic regarding local Good Cause Eviction
- Raised awareness to get Tenant Dignity and Safe Housing Act over the finish line

Acknowledging Our Team

Staff

Lovett Branch,
Housing Counselor

Allie Dentinger,
Court Advocate Assistant

Marco Flagg,
Tenant Organizing Coordinator

Jennifer Krstovich,
Executive Assistant

Diana Morano,
Court Advocate

Shatiqua Pannell-Hyndman,
Deputy Director

Fantashia Robinson,
Tenant Advocate

Dorothea Ross,
Homelessness Prevention
Program Coordinator

Canyon Ryan,
Executive Director

Carly, Crista & Anders
SUNY Albany BSW Interns

Board of Directors

Debbie Collura,
President

Anthony Judd,
Vice President

Daniel Lennon,
Secretary

Tandra LaGrone,
Treasurer

Eileen Cregg

Ibrahim Pedriñán

Christian Garramone

Gabriel Silva

Matthew Drescher

Laurie Buitrago



Consultants

Lisa Frisch & Laura Felts

UTA Assisted Tenant Data

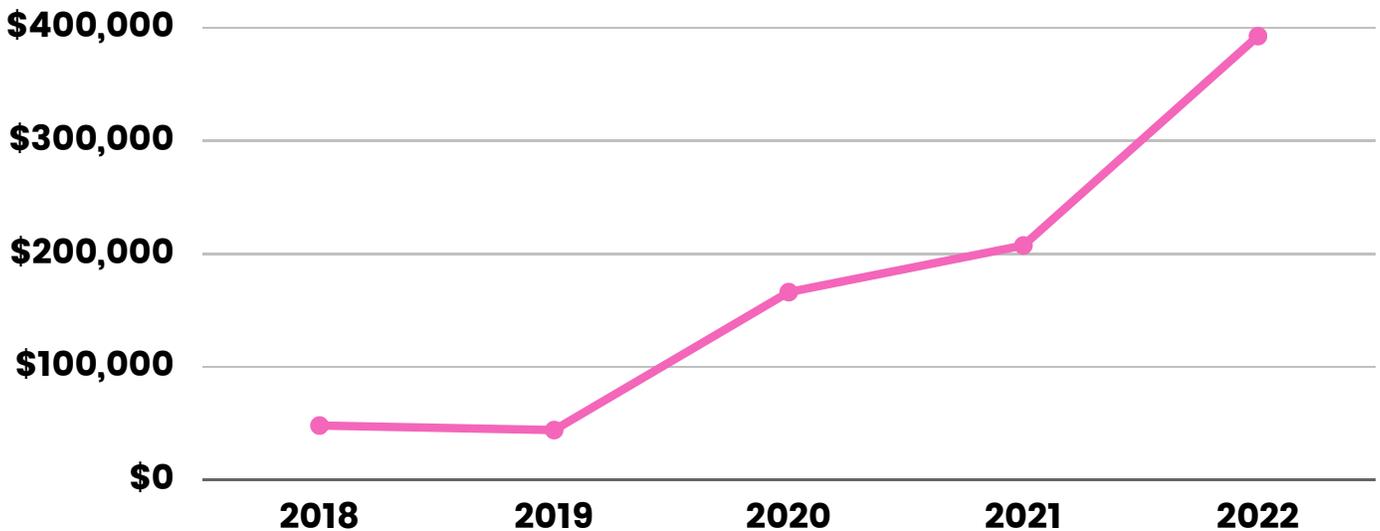
- Average household size: 2 people / Same as 2021
- Average number of children per household: 1 / Same as 2021
- Average tenant rent: \$878.57 / \$86.57 more than 2021 (includes federally subsidized rents)
- Average tenant income: \$1,683.14 / \$80.01 more than 2021
- Average tenant age: 40 years / 4 years younger than 2021
- 70.5% of tenants reported being impacted by COVID-19
- 73% of tenants identified as women
- 69% of tenants identified as Black, 21% as white, 10% as Other; 10% of tenants identified as Hispanic or Latino/a
- Over 80% tenant households called from the City of Albany
- 1-in-10 tenants assisted were federally subsidized renters
- 42% of tenant rented on a month-to-month basis



Emergency Rental Assistance 2018–2022

UTA has provided emergency rental assistance since the 1990's. The graph below shows the increase in UTA's Homelessness Prevention Program rental payments for the last 5 years. Each payment recorded brought the tenant's balance to \$0 owed, and historically the program has demonstrated an above 80%-retention rate for long-term housing stability. The significant increase in 2020 can be directly related to the impact of COVID-19 on low-income families and the influx of pandemic-relief grants.

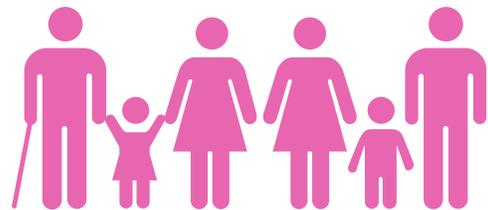
In 2020, UTA increased its maximum standard payment from \$450 to \$2,100.



Actual Payments Per Year:

- 2018 - \$48,128.50
- 2019 - \$44,111.31
- 2020 - \$166,150.00
- 2021 - \$207,419.45
- 2022 - \$392,642.86

**UTA has directly assisted
over 650 families
in the last five years
avoid homelessness.**



More than 4-in-5 families

that receive a United Tenants of Albany
emergency rental assistance payment
reach long-term housing stability.

Takeaways From 2022 Data

- Rent is increasing 7% faster than household incomes
- The average UTA assisted tenant is severely rent burdened (paying more than 50% monthly income on rent)
- UTA received and responded to 1,200 more housing hotline calls in 2022 than 2021
- UTA nearly doubled emergency rental assistance expenses in 2022
- On average, more younger tenants are struggling than before the eviction moratorium
- The city of Albany is UTA's primary source of need and support
- More than 4-in-10 tenants are not protected by annual leases
- Without your support, none of this is possible!



Get Involved!

Below are a few ways you can help support the work United Tenants is engaged in:

Volunteer Help make housing a recognized human right!

- Housing Hotline
- Tenant Organizing
- Outreach

Join a Committee

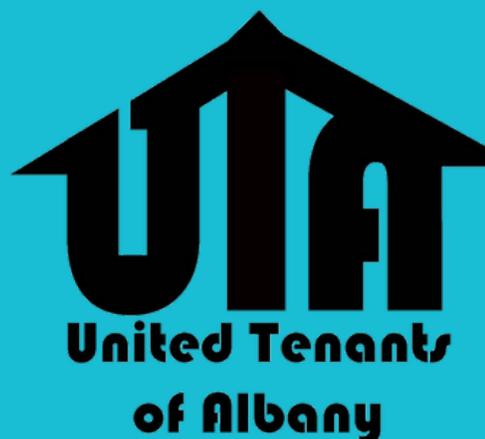
Highlight your skills!

- Communications & Art
- Policy work & advocacy
- Fundraising & community engagement

Donate

Help support our mission!

- Mail a check
- Donate on PayPal
- Donate on our website



The mission of United Tenants of Albany is to protect tenants' rights for safe, decent and affordable housing, with special emphases on those who have the greatest need or who experience the most severe problems and to promote the development and preservation of more affordable housing.

UTA Turns 50!

Did you know that on March 30, 2023 UTA will be turning 50 years old?

Maria & Roger Markovics met at a rent strike in Michigan before moving to Albany and founding UTA. Each year of existence has brought innovative forms of resistance and advocacy around all things related to tenancy.

We will be holding the "United Tenants of Albany 50th Anniversary Celebration" on September 21, 2023 at 6 pm at the Albany Labor Temple, located at 890 3rd Street, Albany, NY 12206.

Our Celebration will feature recognitions and awards, refreshments and an appetizer buffet, a raffle and silent auction, all for more than 200 community members. We welcome your attendance and support in this endeavor!

Our website at www.utalbany.org will provide you with a place to choose your level of support and make a protected credit card or PayPal payment. Our website will also give you more information on the extremely important work we are doing in the community.

**We thank you for your continued support
in our efforts to amplify and defend
tenants rights across New York State.**

Contact

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