

PRESS RELEASE

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United Way Welcomes New Staff to Leadership Team

Robert Bush, Roshni Darnal, and Rob Hancock to play vital roles in delivering on organization's LIVE UNITED 2025 plan to build racial equity in Rhode Island

Providence, R.I. (June 1, 2021) With sights set on achieving the goals outlined in its [LIVE UNITED 2025](#) plan and a commitment to invest \$100 million over the next 5 years to build racial equity in our state, United Way of Rhode Island has welcomed new staff to its leadership team.

Robert Bush has joined as Chief Operating Officer; Roshni Darnal has been named Director of Community Investment; and Rob Hancock is Sr. Director of Marketing and Communications.

"We are thrilled to have such talented individuals join the United Way family and our work to improve the lives of our neighbors and strengthen Rhode Island as a whole," said Cortney Nicolato, United Way's president and CEO. "There is both tremendous work and potential in front of us if we're to create justice and opportunities for all, and Robert, Roshni and Rob are each deeply committed to making our state the best it can be."

Robert Bush comes to United Way with more than 20-years of executive leadership experience across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Most recently, he served as the COO of Grads of Life, a Year Up subsidiary, where he led efforts to innovate, test and bring to life strategies to close the opportunity gap by reimagining the education and workforce systems. His work focuses on helping organizations adopt strategies that prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Robert has also worked as a senior leader for AmeriCorps VISTA in Washington, D.C., where he oversaw more than 1,200 community-based projects, and led two Feeding America food banks.

As Director of Community Investment, **Roshni Darnal** leads United Way's investment work in Rhode Island community's and managing its strategic direction to address the needs of Rhode Islanders through its grant-making processes. Roshni joined United Way in 2019 as Program Officer for Workforce Development and Economic Mobility. In this role, she helped to launch and lead special initiatives that include the Small Business Outreach and Sustainability mini-grants programs; United Way's role in the Back to Work RI program; and co-managed the Olneyville Community Fund and its hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants disbursements. Prior to United Way, she was the Director of Senior Services for Federal Hill House. A resident of Providence, Roshni holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Johnson and Wales University.

Rob Hancock has joined United Way as Sr. Director of Marketing and Communications. He brings two decades of experience supporting mission-driven organizations through strategic marketing, communications, and community engagement initiatives grounded in equity and empowerment. He comes from Roger Williams University, where he led a transformation of the University's content strategy with a focus on authentic digital storytelling and expanding content production in video, photography, and social media. Rob was also a key contributor to RWU's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. He was an active member of the Equity Action Plan task force and a lead Equity Ambassador, advising search committees on running equitable hiring processes.

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Prior to RWU, Rob was VP of Community Engagement at the Buzzards Bay Coalition. Rob holds a Masters in Environmental Science and Management from the University of Rhode Island and a Bachelor's degree in Geology from Brown University. He and his family live in Bristol.

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United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, business, nonprofit, community leaders and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and to drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).