



THE UNITED COUNCIL ON WELFARE FRAUD

2024 - 2025

ANNUAL REPORT



UNITED COUNCIL ON WELFARE FRAUD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**
- 04. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
- 05. 2024 - 2025 UCOWF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- 06. OVERVIEW OF 2024 - 2025: BY THE NUMBERS**
- 07. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE UPDATES**
- 08. NOTABLE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES**
- 10. UCOWF NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCE**
- 12. MEMBERSHIP TIER SYSTEM**
- 13. AFFILIATE & CORPORATE PARTNERS**
- 14. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**
- 15. SUMMATION**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



First, thank you to those that nominated me to become the 47th President of UCOWF. I am honored for the opportunity and hope to continue the growth that UCOWF has seen over the last few years. We have made great strides toward increasing our membership, creating a more user-friendly website and member portal, testifying in front of Congress, and continuing our motto of “Let’s Get Talking.”

To all UCOWF members that attended our most recent Las Vegas National Training, thank you! It was a wonderful turn-out

and the feedback for our guests and speakers was remarkable. We had a variety of trainings, coming from Counties, States, and our Federal Government partners, involving everything from case studies to emerging trends to new technology, such as AI and comprehensive case management systems. We have our next two Conference locations planned and hope to see everyone in Tulsa next year, and Pittsburgh the following!

As President, there are a few goals I hope to accomplish. The highest priority goal is to strengthen our voice by increasing our numbers. Our updated Affiliate program will align us with other State organizations that have the same goals and vision as us; to educate those in power and make changes toward the betterment of these programs we work with every day. Our Membership Committee will be communicating with those organizations so that we can be one front, united against fraud, waste, and abuse in our safety net programs.

In addition, I will continue supporting our Intergovernmental Committee in the great work that they do. On top of submitting outstanding comments and correspondence that provide UCOWF’s opinion on changes that need to be made toward program integrity, they continue to educate Congress as subject matter experts in the area of welfare fraud. They have worked extremely hard to promote UCOWF and our goals and initiatives, and I could not thank them more for the work they do and will continue to do.

With the new by-laws change to extend presidential terms to two-years, I am excited to see what myself, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee can get done for UCOWF during that time. We are all united towards one goal and I welcome ideas, input, and support towards our efforts to defend the integrity of public assistance programs and ensure the responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

Thank you again, and I look forward to working hard with the Board of Directors to continue promoting UCOWF’s message.

Sincerely,

Ashley Wilkes



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2024-2025 was a monumental year for UCOWF and our continued growth toward better Education, Collaboration, and Advocacy for our members and partners.

Our Intergovernmental Committee has solidified UCOWF as the premier source for information on program integrity and continues to be the face of advocacy for reforms in our government benefits' programs. Just this year, past President and Intergovernmental co-chair, Dawn Royal, testified in front of the U.S. House of Representative's first DOGE hearing, with the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Dawn educated the committee on different types of fraud that agencies are dealing with, specifically in the SNAP program, and common-sense reforms that can take us a step closer to decreasing the fraud, waste, and abuse in that program. This is the second time Dawn has been asked to testify as a representative of UCOWF in front of Congress. UCOWF also had the privilege to join affiliate, California Welfare Fraud Investigator's Association (CWFI) on a visit to D.C. Andrew McClenahan joined the executive committee of CWFI for multiple meetings at the Capitol, as well as a visit to the National Law Enforcement Memorial during Police Week.

Additionally, our Intergovernmental chairs, Dawn and Andy McClenahan, have ran with UCOWF's core values of Education, Collaboration, and Advocacy, and have appeared on C-Span and multiple Podcasts this last year. The committee has also sent out numerous responses relating to Federal Register Notices, which have been sent to leaders of the House Agriculture committee, as well as other Congressional leaders and groups overseeing CMS, the Farm Bill, and reviews on program integrity. The Board of Directors for UCOWF have also taken the time to evaluate our member benefits and how we can positively reach our members the best. Changes to the member tiers were made, as well as additional involvement opportunities. On top of the quarterly newsletter, UCOWF has also started a UCOWF Fraud Call, giving members a space to meet, discuss issues and emerging trends, and provide solutions to ongoing problems. The best way to stop fraud is to "Get Talking", UCOWF's motto and the best way to stop fraud that doesn't recognize state borders.

UCOWF APPRECIATES THE SUPPORT FROM ITS MEMBERS, AFFILIATES, AND CORPORATE PARTNERS.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

WE ARE UNITED FOR INTEGRITY.

2024 - 2025 UCOWF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ASHLEY WILKES - FL
PRESIDENT

KEITH MISKIE - NE
VICE PRESIDENT

ANDREW PETITT - WV
TREASURER

MEGAN KIEFER - KS
SECRETARY

LAURA LINDSEY - KS
BUSINESS MANAGER

TOMMY FOWLER - AR
PARLIAMENTARIAN

PAST PRESIDENTS IN ADVISORY ROLE TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

JACK HEACOCK - FL

SHELIA DORSETT - NC

JANA MCDONOUGH - NE

DAWN ROYAL - WY

CARROL CHRISTIAN - KS

CWFI CHAIR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Region 1: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio

TERRI LINEHAN - RI

ROBYN BATTLE - NY

PAM SHANK - MD

Region 2: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands

RICHARD CARR - TN

GREG MATTHEWS - NC

FLO BROWN - KY

JULIE BALDWIN - NC

MONA CASTILE - GA

ANDY MCCLENAHAN - FL

Region 3: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

MEGAN KIEFER - KS

MICHAEL BRENNECKE - KS

CICELY MCGLORY - KS

BRIAN ANSCHUTZ - KS

KEITH MISKIE - NE

TOMMY FOWLER - AR

Region 4: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico

DAVID KRASNOW - CO

ROBBYN WHITE - WY

LUKE CURTIS - CO

MARY VASQUEZ - CO

GLENN ALLEN - CA

MICHELE SNYDER - WY

Region 5: Alaska, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and the Provinces, Canada

BRADLEY GERMANN - ID

SEAN VAIVAO-OLIVER - HI

One Year at Large Directors

EDGAR BUSTER - WV

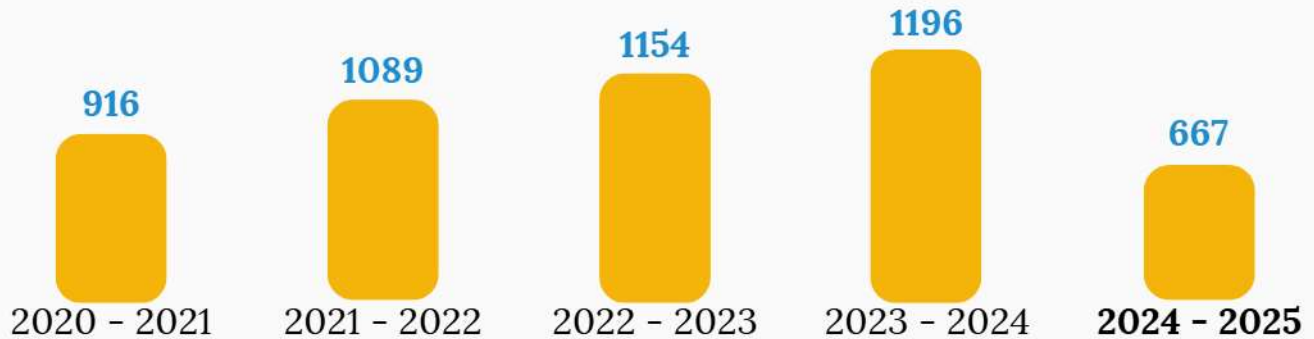
MELISSA WILLIAMS - KY

OVERVIEW OF 2024 - 2025: BY THE NUMBERS

With the change and growth UCOWF has seen operationally, those changes have also affected our Membership and Financials. By upgrading our previous membership structure, our Affiliate program has gone through some tweaks to make the membership more beneficial to our state and regional organizations. In addition, our member portal upgrade helped us identify discrepancies in our active and past members.

Historically, Affiliate groups would provide their members with a large membership discount of just \$5 to be a UCOWF member. However, because of this low membership cost, it was identified that many of those members were not actively involved in UCOWF and the discounted membership rate was not providing value to UCOWF or its active members. Our current Affiliate membership is for the organizations themselves, and a benefit for Affiliate groups is a 10% discount for any individuals wanting a Traditional Membership. This has proven to benefit both the Affiliate and UCOWF. But, as reflected in membership numbers, there appears to be a large dip in membership. This is almost entirely due to the change to our Affiliate membership.

MEMBERSHIP



FINANCIALS

UCOWF's financial situation is strong, although a year-over-year drop in strategic reserves would give a different impression. In 2023 - 2024, UCOWF paid the remainder of the contract with OnlyCo, LLC for web, marketing, and business development work. Additionally, UCOWF spent money to secure trademark protection for our new logo and some branding materials. And signed contracts two years out for upcoming Conferences. UCOWF's goal is to plan for the future.

| Operating Year | 2023 - 2024 | 2024 - 2025 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <u>Checking Balance</u> | \$105,651.26 | \$95,247.71 |
| <u>Savings Balance</u> | \$97,159.92 | \$97,192.48 |
| <u>Total Revenue</u> | \$202,811.18 | \$192,440.19 |

Those expenses are done and UCOWF continues to be in a strong position to earn sufficient revenue annually to meet normal expenses and put a small amount into its strategic reserve funds. The year-to-year breakdown of funds is shown here.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE 2024 - 2025

WOW is all we can say. Our Intergovernmental committee, specifically the chairs Dawn Royal and Andrew McClenahan have made incredible strides for UCOWF in the last year.

In February 2025, Dawn Royal testified in front of the first DOGE committee hearing, “The War on Waste: Stamping out the Scourge of Improper Payments and Fraud”, United States House Committee on Oversight and Accountability. Testimony was shared by Forbes Breaking News and has received over 392,000 views and over 1,300 comments.

In addition, our Intergovernmental Committee has been regularly sending letters to Congressional members and decision makers. Some of those letters include responses/opinions to CMS, response to California SB 560, letter to Speaker Johnson on Extension of Stolen EBT Replacement, letter to House Ways and Means on TANF Fraud and Reform, and dozens more listed under our Legislative tab on our website, under Fact Sheets.

Both committee chairs also participated in an interview with C-SPAN discussing Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in the Welfare System (Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in the Welfare System | C-SPAN Classroom).

As our UCOWF Intergovernmental chairs continued getting tapped to provide their subject matter expert take on the current state of the welfare program, more opportunities to do so began popping up. Co-Chair Andrew McClenahan was asked to appear on The Drill Down, a podcast for the Government Accountability Institute. Andy spoke with co-host Eric Eggers about the waste, fraud, and abuse in government programs (DOGE Going After SNAP Fraud | The Drill Down | Ep. 210 - YouTube).

The committee is regularly receiving updates from the Federal Register as it relates to SNAP and other government programs and providing comments on those we feel affect our members. This committee’s actions, led by co-chairs Dawn and Andy, have made unbelievable strides for UCOWF as an organization and will continue to do so as we move into the future with the new administration.



NOTABLE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

UCOWF's goal is to operate in the most effective and efficient ways. To do that, every year, current operations are reviewed.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHANGES

UCOWF has experienced a lot of change this year, including our Executive Committee. Although UCOWF said good-bye to two strongly involved Board Members, former Vice-President Christopher O'Neil and former Secretary Ellis Bryson, we added two more outstanding members to the team. UCOWF was lucky to have so many incredible Board members express interest in the positions, but after much deliberation, Keith Miskie was voted in as UCOWF's new Vice-President and Megan Kiefer as the new Secretary. With the strong leadership of UCOWF's Executive Committee, we are excited to see how far UCOWF will continue to go next year.

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY BOARD

This year at UCOWF's annual National Training Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Board of Directors voted to remove our Long-Range Planning committee, which historically had not been effective in navigating UCOWF to our future goals. In place of that committee, the Board of Directors approved the creation of a new operating board, the President's Advisory Board. With similar goals to the former Long-Range Planning committee, this board would consist of the current President, Vice-President, and past presidents who are active on the Board of Directors. This Board would be a direct support to the current President, and once a year following the Conference, meet to discuss specific strategies to reach these goals. This past year, the newly formed President's Advisory Board met and had an extremely fruitful discussion. Solidified gameplans were created to meet UCOWF's goals and the change was an effective upgrade from the previous Long-Range Planning committee.

TRAINING COMMITTEE

Another example of a quick and effective review of a committee was our newly created Training committee. At our Las Vegas Conference, a Training committee was motioned and approved to improve the training for our members. However, after a thorough review of our committees and how to best use our directors, it was determined the committee was redundant to our Conference committee. With that, at our Spring Board meeting, it was voted to dissolve the Training committee.



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NOTABLE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

BYLAWS UPDATES

- 1** Article IV, Section 2A – revised to correct numbers of voting members needed to establish a quorum at meetings (this corrected an error in a previous revision).

- 2** Article V, Section 2 – added Subsection H to define Appointed Directors and added Subsection I establishing the position of Parliamentarian.

- 3** Article VI, Section 1 – added Parliamentarian as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

- 4** Article VI, Section 11 – deleted (Long Range Planning Committee).

- 5** Article VI – added Section 15 establishing the President’s Advisory Board and redesignated current Section 15 as Section 16, Special Committees.

UCOWF QUARTERLY FRAUD CALL

As mentioned, UCOWF recently began a quarterly Fraud Call. The goal of this call is to get people talking, matching UCOWF’s slogan of “Let’s Get Talking”. The advanced fraud that investigators are experiencing does not stop at the border of each state. Collaboration among members, as well as education on the new trends popping up, is the goal of this call. This July will be UCOWF’s second call. We encourage members to submit topics they want discussion on and we look forward to the input our members will have on that and future calls.

LET’S GET TALKING

UCOWF NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCE - LAS VEGAS

UCOWF's 52nd National Training Conference was held in Las Vegas, Nevada at Planet Hollywood from August 20 – 22, 2024.

An incredible job was done by Conference co-chairs Greg Matthews and David Krasnow and their committee. Many don't see all the effort it takes to put on a Conference of this size. The Conference brought in a total of 333 attendees, making it one of our biggest Conferences to date.

The keynote address was given by Angela Rachidi, Senior Fellow with the American Enterprise Institute, and Rowe Scholar, whose research has included references to UCOWF's initiatives for program integrity. The Conference committee also brought in experts in the field, like Jennifer Tiller, who is now the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary and Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services. UCOWF members had the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion with Intergovernmental co-chairs and had "The Lie Guy" Stan Walters teach about how to catch a lie during the interview. UCOWF's agenda included over a dozen additional workshops and presentations which attendees provided excellent feedback on.



UCOWF NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCE - LAS VEGAS

Not only did members come and learn at this training, but we also celebrated those that do great things in their field and those that do great things for UCOWF as an organization.

UCOWF was happy to present the 2024 Dorothy Forney award to Marcie Reyes, Investigation Specialist with Florida Department of Children and Families. Marcie was pivotal in revamping the agency's Administrative Disqualification Hearings and was the mastermind behind a specialized unit to help standardize and increase efficiency of hearings.



Pictured: Marcie Reyes, 2024 Dorothy Forney Award recipient



Pictured: Jack Heacock (left), Dawn Royal (right), and Andy McClenahan (center), the 2024 Jack Heacock Distinguished Services recipient

UCOWF also celebrated a long-time and crucial member to UCOWF's success – Director Andrew McClenahan. Andy was presented the 2024 Jack Heacock Distinguished Service award by none other than Jack Heacock. Much of UCOWF's successes over the years have been due to Andy. He has represented UCOWF on the national level, advocating for program integrity and being a key subject matter expert to officials looking for guidance on how to make government programs better. UCOWF is stronger because of Andy's passion for program integrity and his ability to educate others on it.

MEMBERSHIP TIER UPDATES

UCOWF's Board of Directors has worked hard to revamp and reevaluate our member tier system. After some changes to the structure in the last few years, the Board found a way to best reach our target audiences of membership.



Pictured: UCOWF Membership Brochure

| 3 CORPORATE PARTNER | \$1000/YR | 2 AFFILIATE | \$350/YR | 1 TRADITIONAL | \$45/YR |
|---|-----------|--|----------|--|---------|
| <p>This membership is for our vendors and organizations that stand with UCOWF's message on program integrity and support us at our National Training Conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free exhibitor/vendor Conference fee with table Website and Annual Report acknowledgement Website advertisement page with hot link 15% Discount for Corporate Partner employees who purchase an individual membership, and will receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the benefits of Traditional members. | | <p>This membership is for our state and regional organizations that share a similar mission - to stop fraud, waste, and abuse in our public assistance programs through education, collaboration, and advocacy. Together, we can make our message louder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational profile in UCOWF's Annual Report Organizational logo and profile listing on UCOWF's home page Organization event advertisements on UCOWF's website Nominate members from the affiliate organization to be the "Affiliate Spotlight" in our quarterly newsletter 10% discount on individual affiliate memberships, which receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the benefits of Traditional Members | | <p>Learning and Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education, training, and staff development Ability to apply for and take the Certified Welfare Fraud Investigator exam, and have access to the study guide Opportunity to attend the National Training Conferences Reduced member registration fee for National Training Conference Sponsorship program available for National Training Conference Access to job listings and postings <p>Connecting and Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to member contact information and connections via UCOWF's searchable Membership Directory UCOWF Quarterly Fraud Call <p>Industry Trends and Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact reporting from regulation and industry trends Updates on rules, public policy, and legislation Newsletter subscription | |
| <p>* MEMBER BENCHMARK \$98/YR</p> <p><i>How much UCOWF spends per member per year, to accomplish what our board has asked us to do for you.</i></p> | | | | | |

TRADITIONAL

Our Traditional Member tier has not changed – it is still for our regular members that want a members-only registration fee, ability to apply and take the Certified Welfare Fraud Investigators (CWFI) exam, and added benefits, like access to the member portal, where the Active Member Directory and Newsletter exist. One add-on to our Traditional Member benefits give access for attendance on the quarterly UCOWF Fraud Call.

AFFILIATE

This is for our state or regional organizations who share a similar mission to UCOWF. To spread awareness and education of the fraud, waste, and abuse occurring in our public assistance programs. Our Affiliates have the opportunity to promote their organization or members in our quarterly Newsletter, as well as any of the organization's upcoming events. The organization will also have their logo on UCOWF's website and acknowledgement in the Annual Report. For individual members of that organization, they will also receive a 10% discount on Traditional Member rates.

CORPORATE PARTNER

This membership is for vendors or organizations that share UCOWF's mission and support UCOWF at our National Training Conferences. Corporate Partner's will receive a free vendor/exhibitor table at our Conference that year, will have their organization's logo on UCOWF's website, and will be acknowledged in UCOWF's Annual Report. For individual members of that vendor or organization, they will also receive a 15% discount on Traditional Member rates.

AFFILIATES & CORPORATE PARTNERS

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR AFFILIATE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS AND CORPORATE PARTNERS, WHO SHARE AND SUPPORT UCOWF'S MISSION OF EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY FOR INTEGRITY IN OUR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

AFFILIATES

Wisconsin Department of Health



CORPORATE PARTNERS



TRACKLIGHT



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

UCOWF continues to grow and so does our footprint. For members, keep an eye out for a UCOWF shop to be announced soon. Members will be able to purchase items like polos, padfolios, pins, and other gear with UCOWF's logo. We are also launching a UCOWF Challenge Coin that can be purchased by members.

This year, a sweet surprise rose out of UCOWF's time in the spotlight. Following testimony given by Dawn Royal at the first DOGE hearing, a past, and one of the first, Presidents of UCOWF reached out. Ms. Karen Ludwick was able to provide us invaluable history into UCOWF, formerly ERCOWF, but also when NWFA joined as well. Karen also had the pleasure of knowing and working with Dorothy Forney, who co-founded National Welfare Fraud Association and was their first President. Dorothy also served on the Reagan Transition team in 1981. UCOWF now celebrates Dorothy Forney by naming the most honored award UCOWF gives after her. We are honored to have Karen attend our 52nd Conference in Tulsa, and to be there to present the 2025 Dorothy Forney award.

We are on track for a great Conference this August in Tulsa, Oklahoma. We look forward to seeing everyone in the Sooner state and want to thank our awesome Conference chairs for putting together another excellent event. If you are still needing to register, you can do so at our website www.ucowf.net/national-conference/.

CERTIFIED WELFARE FRAUD INVESTIGATORS

As UCOWF continues to grow and look towards the future, we want to acknowledge our members who have studied and tested to be recognized as a subject matter expert.

UCOWF's Certified Welfare Fraud Investigator program is the only exam available that certifies an individual in this field. Receiving this certification shows the competency and experience of the Welfare Fraud Investigator and allows them to testify as a subject matter expert on the topic. Becoming a CWFI enhances one's expertise and professional standing in the field of welfare fraud investigations and can greatly assist in legal settings such as testifying, report writing, and character examination. In order to take the exam, a UCOWF member must have at least two years of experience in the field of public assistance fraud investigations and pass the comprehensive examination. This certification must be renewed annually.

Currently, there are 246 Certified Welfare Fraud Investigators across the nation. Every year, UCOWF Board of Director members proctor exams for members. This year, a total of 70 exams were proctored across 11 states, with an 83% passing rate of the exam.

Locations: Colorado (2), California (5), Rhode Island (1), UCOWF Conference, Nevada (28), New York (9), Florida (9), Kentucky (1), Tennessee (7), Mississippi (3), Montana (4), and North Carolina (1).

SUMMATION

UCOWF will continue to build on its core imperatives of Education, Collaboration, and Advocacy, strengthening its value to its members and to policy and lawmakers nationally.

UCOWF will continue providing one of a kind, skill-specific training opportunities and certification testing for members.

As an advocate for improving the safeguards of taxpayer dollars in the nation's welfare programs, UCOWF will continue to make annual visits to lawmakers to provide facts, first-hand experience, and advice about fraud in the public assistance programs. It will continue to comment on proposed federal program rule changes and pending legislation that either helps or hinders the work performed by our members.

UCOWF will remain a vibrant and active organization, supporting its members, their work, and offering expertise to state and federal administrators charged with the responsibility of protecting resources intended to help our nation's most vulnerable citizens.



UNITED FOR INTEGRITY

UCOWF.NET