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United Way of Allegheny County expands focus on volunteerism
Lois Mufuka Martin named Chief Volunteer Engagement Officer

Pittsburgh, Pa. (June 25, 2015) – United Way of Allegheny County recently appointed Lois Mufuka Martin, former CEO of Bethlehem Haven, to the newly created position of Chief Volunteer Engagement Officer. Martin will lead the formation and launch of United Way’s Good Neighbor Center, which will build upon United Way’s successful volunteer initiatives by developing unique, purposeful and impactful opportunities to increase United Way’s volunteer base and help more people in need.

Martin will work with a committee, led by United Way board members Gretchen Haggerty, community volunteer, and Henry Maier, president and CEO of FedEx Ground, to build upon strategic partnerships with corporations, universities, nonprofits, schools, and faith-based organizations to recruit and match volunteers with opportunities to help.

“Our goal is to identify the most important needs, build purposeful opportunities to address those needs, and recruit caring people to do the work,” said Maier. “The Good Neighbor Center will be a great resource for organizations looking to connect their employees to the best opportunities to give back to the communities in which they live and work.”

Each year, United Way relies on over 6,000 volunteers who give approximately 60,000 hours to help people across the region via United Way’s key impact areas – financially struggling families, children and youth, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities, in addition to serving on United Way’s advisory boards and committees. Volunteers work on ongoing, relational projects, like making regular visits to keep seniors safe in their homes, mentoring middle students each week, assisting with tax preparation for low-income working families, and spending time reading to elementary school children. Additionally, United Way has developed unique one-time volunteer events, such as collecting books at happy hour events, sewing quilts for homeless female veterans, rebuilding school libraries, helping to renovate local athletic fields, and packing ‘snack packs’ filled with healthy food to feed hungry children.

“Pittsburghers are some of the kindest people,” said Martin. “I look forward to returning to my United Way roots, where I first learned about the power of collective impact, and where I will be able to help grow the caring, generous culture in our region and connect the good-hearted people who want to help to our most vulnerable citizens.”

For the last seven years, Martin led Bethlehem Haven, working to provide a continuum of care to move women from homelessness to housing and self-sufficiency. Prior to that, she served as Community Fund Director at the United Way in Asheville, N.C.

More information about United Way’s volunteer opportunities can be found at <http://unitedwaypittsburgh.org/volunteer>.

About United Way of Allegheny County – United Way of Allegheny County is a change agent and efficient community fundraiser that improves lives by addressing critical community needs. By convening diverse partners and investing in programs and people to advance solutions, United Way creates long-lasting change and helps children and youth succeed, strengthens and supports families by promoting financial stability, ensures the safety and well-being of vulnerable seniors and people with disabilities, and provides county-wide access to information and referral sources meeting basic needs.

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