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**United Way of Allegheny County announces new funding allocations  
to help local families thrive**

*Funding remains in place for programs to help seniors, children and youth, and people with disabilities*

Pittsburgh, Pa. (July 7, 2015) –United Way of Allegheny County, now a part of United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania serving Allegheny, Westmoreland, Fayette, and southern Armstrong counties, recently announced funding allocations to support its Helping Families Thrive and United for Women initiatives. Following a comprehensive needs assessment, RFP, and volunteer committee review over the past year, thirteen programs to aid low-income workers, veterans, and those struggling for the first time received a total of \$2.4 million dollars over three years from United Way’s Impact Fund. Additionally, eight programs received more than \$815,000 in funding over three years to support United for Women, a United Way initiative that supports women facing an unexpected financial crisis.

The funding allocations are determined through a comprehensive process, which includes research to identify the most critical issues facing the populations United Way serves, issuing a request-for-proposal to local human service agencies to develop programs that will best address those needs, and convening 60 community volunteers to serve on committees to provide a stringent review of RFP responses, including site visits, interviews, and analysis of financial stability, accountability and measurability. A total of 40 partner agencies received funding this year.

“United Way invests in smart, innovative solutions to address the most pressing community issues through strong, collaborative partnerships,” said Deborah Rice-Johnson, president, Highmark Health Plan, Highmark, Inc. and co-chair, United Way of Allegheny County Impact Cabinet. “The combined experience, resources and commitment of our partner agencies deliver powerful results. United Way is boldly addressing the epic challenges that face people in our community each day due to the solid partnerships and the generosity of our community.”

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Helping Families Thrive is a commitment of resources, dollars, people and programs designed to help those in need overcome short-term crisis and set them on a path to long-term financial recovery and stability. The needs assessment revealed the changing face of poverty, namely among suburban residents, women and veterans. Funded programs will not only help individuals and families avoid homelessness and other tragic circumstances resulting from poverty, but give them the tools, strategies and support to attain financial stability and self sufficiency. Funded programs include:

| <b>Program</b>   | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Lead Agency</b>                      | <b>Funding Received</b> |
|--|--|---|-------------------------|
| Foreclosure Prevention   | Reaches homeowners before they are in imminent foreclosure crisis  | Action-Housing, Inc.                    | \$149,172               |
| Team Hope  | A holistic family strengthening program of educational, financial and supportive services  | Catholic Charities                      | \$165,000               |
| Community Kitchen Pittsburgh   | A food service training program to help those in need to secure jobs in the food service sector  | Community Kitchen Pittsburgh            | \$100,000               |
| Home Matters   | Keeps families in their homes through eviction prevention, utility assistance, transportation, financial education   | Community Human Services                | \$335,000               |
| Ways to Work   | Gives low-wage earners with poor credit transportation access and expanded financial education to get jobs and maintain financial stability  | Family Services of Western PA           | \$140,000               |
| Workforce Development  | Designed to increase the number of qualified, successful African-American applicants for civil service and public safety positions   | Hill House Association                  | \$100,000               |
| WorkAble   | County-wide collaboration that help un-underserved employed individuals find gainful jobs  | Jewish Family & Children's Services     | \$445,520               |
| Safety Net Streamlining and Improvement                                    | Helps individuals and families in crisis access basic necessities, advocates for policy/systems change, improves coordination across benefits programs                                   | Just Harvest Education Fund             | \$120,000               |
| Workforce Business & Development Program                                   | Provides career counseling and employment-related services   | Mon Valley Initiative                   | \$120,000               |
| Collaborative Employment Transportation Program                            | Serves low-income workers who lack the financial resources to pay for transportation to get to work or find a job  | Travelers Aid Society                   | \$100,000               |
| Bank On Greater Pittsburgh   | Helps un/underbanked individuals avoid income-draining, fee-based financial services   | Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh      | \$124,500               |
| Building New Lives: Meeting the Needs of Intimate Partner Violence Victims | Helps domestic violence victims find safe, affordable housing  | Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pgh | \$125,000               |
| Hope for All   | Unique collaboration to bring access to benefits, free income tax prep, healthcare enrollment navigation, and direct or referral services low-income and financially struggling families | YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh              | \$280,000               |

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This is the first time United Way's United for Women initiative awarded multi-year funding. Over the past two years, United for Women has helped more than 1,600 vulnerable women avoid a financial crisis, find a job or escape homelessness. Still, 75 percent of PA 2-1-1 Southwest callers are women, and 13% of women working full-time lived in poverty in 2012. Funded programs will help women and their families overcome short-term crises and give them the tools, training and support they need to rebuild their lives. Funded programs include:

| Program                                   | Description  | Lead Agency                                    | Funding Received |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| Safe at Home                              | Prevents long-term homelessness by providing short-term financial assistance   | Bethlehem Haven                                | \$72,500         |
| Ways to Work: Extra Mile                  | Provided micro-grants to women whose one-time financial crisis led to transportation issues preventing them from getting to work                     | Family Services of Western PA                  | \$72,500         |
| Repairing Homes, Healing Hearts           | Covers the cost of major household repairs for women who cannot afford them due to a one-time financial event  | Hosanna Industries, Inc.                       | \$50,000         |
| Smart Investments                         | Provides modest emergency grants to help women recover financial stability after an unexpected life event, and offers preventive financial education | South Hills Interfaith Ministries              | \$98,750         |
| Women's Transportation Assistance Program | Provides bus passes or gas cards to women receiving services in United for Women-funded programs   | Travelers Aid Society                          | \$150,000        |
| Project Journey                           | Helps 200 homeless female veterans, many with children, to secure stable housing and develop a financial plan  | Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA      | \$190,000        |
| Building New Lives                        | Ensures the safety of abused women who are clients of WC&S Civil Law Project, by addressing their immediate and long-term non-legal needs            | Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh | \$75,000         |
| Women's Empowerment Initiative            | Provides employment, legal and emergency assistance services to women who unexpectedly experience a financial crisis due to a life-changing event    | YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh                     | \$105,000        |

Each year, United Way funds four impact areas: children and youth, financially struggling families, (which includes initiatives specific to women and veterans); seniors; and people with disabilities. Each impact area designates funding allocations based on a three-year funding cycle. Last June, \$1.46 million in impact investments were announced for programs to help seniors and people with disabilities. In 2013, \$2.5 million in impact investments were allocated to programs that help children and youth.

A total of \$13.51 million will be allocated through United Way's Impact Fund to meet the needs of children and youth, financially struggling adults and families, people with disabilities, vulnerable seniors and disaster relief.

**About United Way of Allegheny County** – United Way of Allegheny County, now a part of United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania serving Allegheny, Westmoreland, Fayette & Southern Armstrong Counties, brings people together to tackle our community's most challenging issues, because no one person or organization can do it alone. United Way leads and mobilizes the caring power of individuals and organizations to help people in need measurably improve their lives. We are 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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