



United Way of Hampshire County
Media Release

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AWARDS SEASON AT UNITED WAY OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

Northampton, Mass, May 25, 2018 – United Way of Hampshire County presented awards of two varieties this Spring. Funding awards were announced in May to 10 programs focusing on Health and Safety. Awards of a different kind were also presented in May to community partners at UWHC’s Annual Celebration and Luncheon.

Health & Safety Funding Cycle Announced

United Way of Hampshire County announced three-year funding of awards totaling \$191,000 to 10 area programs and organizations with demonstrated ability to improve the lives of Hampshire County residents. Individual awards range from \$19,000 to \$90,000 over the three year grant period.

“For many in our community, health and safety issues can impact all aspects of someone’s life and disrupt their livelihood,” said UWHC Executive Director, John Bidwell. “We believe that Hampshire County residents should have the support they need to tackle any problem such as help navigating medical appointments, having access to mental health services, or having refuge from domestic abuse.

Family Outreach of Amherst, a program of Center for Human Development is one of the programs that is receiving UWHC funding for the next three years. Program Manager of Community Services, Francine Rodriguez, was able to help Family Outreach of Amherst client Sofia (name changed for confidentiality) face a life changing diagnosis. Because Sofia has very limited resources and doesn’t speak English, negotiating the medical world can feel like an insurmountable hurdle.

Sofia had ovarian cancer. With United Way funding, Francine was able to help Sofia through the entire ordeal—from diagnosis to treatment.

Because Sofia was an immigrant she had very limited medical care. Francine helped her find a hospital that offered free specialized care, and over the course of the next six months Francine brought Sofia to treatment appointments, helped her find care for her children when she was too ill to care for them, and helped her access resources during the time she couldn't work so she wouldn't lose her housing. Francine translated complicated medical information and helped Sofia make decisions about treatment. At each step of Sofia's treatment Francine didn't simply translate and do things for Sofia, she taught Sofia how to advocate for herself and ask questions. The coaching helped empower Sofia to make informed choices about treatment and helped her feel more in control of her medical care.

When Sofia finished treatment, she thought she was done. The concept of follow-up appointments and monitoring was difficult for her to understand; she wanted it to be over. Francine explained the need for on-going screenings and convinced Sofia to continue her doctor visits. Today, Sofia is cancer free.

Programs that are receiving Health & Safety grants for a three year funding cycle are:

Women, Infants and Children - Community Action

Nutrition Program - Highland Valley Elder Services

Advocacy Program - Behavioral Health Network

*Northampton Recovery Center

Enhanced Access Project - Safe Passage

*Wound Care as a Gateway to Health Care for Injection Drug Users -Tapestry

*Hampshire County Veterans Medical Legal Partnership - Community Legal Aid

*Empowered Eaters - Collaborative for Educational Services

*Family Outreach - Center for Human Development

*New programs to receive UWHC funding.

UNITED WAY HONORED COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Over 200 people gathered at United Way of Hampshire County's Annual Celebration and Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at the Mullins Center to celebrate and recognize organizations and individuals committed to help our community through their work and campaign efforts.

"This is such a great opportunity for us to recognize these organizations and individuals for their outstanding and significant contributions to our United Way," said executive director, John Bidwell. "With over three thousand donors, volunteers and community partners, it's never easy to single out specific groups and individuals to recognize. But this year there were three that stood out from the crowd."

The 2018 Community Partner Award was presented to The Jubilee Cupboard Diaper Ministry at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Ware. The Community Partner Award is presented to an area non-profit that contributes to the mission of our United Way and creates positive, lasting change in Hampshire County. The Jubilee Cupboard has been a steadfast diaper drive partner to United Way of Hampshire County's 'Change for the Better' annual diaper drive for the last three

years. They have helped raise awareness about diaper need and distributed thousands of diapers to residents of Ware who struggle with diaper need.

The 2018 Workplace Champion Award was presented to Easthampton Savings Bank. It is presented to an organization and their Campaign Coordinator in recognition of their overall achievement in running a successful campaign and answering the call to make our community a better place. The award was accepted by Thomas Brown, Executive Vice President, Retail Banking and Executive Assistant, Anne Howland. BankESB runs a very successful workplace campaign year after year, they volunteer for several United Way funded partners, and their branches serve as collection sites for the annual diaper drive.

Photographer, Paul Shoul received the Kay Sheehan Spirit of the Community Award, which is presented to an individual or group that has shown outstanding service and leadership to the community. Paul Shoul, a community fixture in Hampshire County, helped tell United Way stories over the last several years through his incredible photography and through his generosity.

About United Way of Hampshire County

United Way of Hampshire County engages and inspires the people, employers and organizations of Hampshire County to give, advocate, and volunteer on behalf of our community. Our vision is that all individuals and families have the tools and resources to reach their full potential through education, economic security and wellness. Lifting together, we build strong, vibrant, and inclusive communities. To learn more or to make a donation, please visit: www.uwhampshire.org

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Photos Attached:

Diaper Ministry Photo: l – r: Edie Kirk, Volunteer Coordinator, Reverend Mary Rosendale, Ron Newton, Volunteer

BankESB: l – r: Thomas Brown, Executive Vice President, Retail Banking, Lynn Starr, Executive Vice President, Chief Information Officer, Michael Roy, Vice President & CRA Officer, Anne Howland, Executive Assistant, Matthew Sosik, President, Jessica West, Branch Officer

Paul Shoul: Paul Shoul, photographer