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United Way and Howland Foundation Award \$58,952 in Program Grants

(Vestal, NY)—The United Way of Broome County and the Helen T. Howland Foundation have agreed to provide Venture and Special Assistance Grants, totaling \$58,925, to 11 programs. Recipient programs are either innovative, new human service programs in Broome County or special one-time purchases and projects that demonstrate a high level of need and also fit within focus areas defined within the United Way's Community Investment Strategy Report.

At the heart of the United Way's Community Investment Strategy is commitment to mobilizing the caring power of Broome County to advance the common good. The United Way believes the betterment of the community can be achieved by focusing on three basic building blocks: Education, Income, & Health. Grants awarded as part of the 2010 Venture and Special Assistance Program address these three building blocks through programs in Quality Early Child Care, Youth Mental Health, Chemical Dependency Prevention, Physical Fitness & Wellness, Health Access, Service Access for Seniors, and Other Community Needs.

The following 11 projects will be funded by the grants:

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Quality Early Child Care

- Special assistance grant to **Opportunities for Broome** to conduct a one day workshop on the seven basic skills for discipline. Conscious Discipline for Broome County is a workshop program that will be offered to teachers, health and human service professionals and parents focusing on “The Seven Basic Skills for Discipline”. The Goal of the one day workshop is to help parents and teachers of young children learn positive guidance skills. **(\$2,000)**

Youth Mental Health

- Program grant to **Catholic Charities of Broome County** to implement the Gateway Center for Youth After School Program. This afterschool program will be targeting youth with mental health diagnosis and at-risk behaviors. Priority will be given to youth with mental health diagnosis and at-risk behaviors, but will be open to all Broome County youth. Gateway Center for Youth will serve 20 youth in 2010. **(\$7,984)**

Chemical Dependency Prevention

- Program grant to **Lourdes Hospital** to implement FASTWORKS in the Newark Valley Central School District. This is an evidence based program designed to improve family functioning, prevent school failure, prevent substance abuse, and reduce stress experienced by parents and children. **(\$5,000)**

Physical Fitness and Wellness

- Program grant to **Handicapped Children’s Association** to implement a program to engage children and their families in healthy lifestyle choices such as exercise and proper nutrition. “Fit for Fun” will address sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy eating habits, and total wellness. This program will also encourage parent participation through group meetings, parents as fitness partners and developing a healthy cookbook. “Fit for Fun” will be taking a holistic approach to addressing the childhood obesity issue facing Broome County. **(\$3,500)**

Health Access

- Program grant to **Planned Parenthood** to conduct a pregnancy prevention program focused on educating adolescent males. “It’s a Guy Thing Too” is a program that focuses on pregnancy prevention to high school students, specifically males. This program will follow the high school sporting calendar and will offer three meetings, each consisting of four educational sessions (Fall, Winter, Spring). Sports teams from the Broome County School systems would participate. Each of the four days would cover a different educational focus area as it pertains to pregnancy prevention. **(\$5,000)**

Service Access for Seniors

- Special assistance grant to **Broome County Council of Churches** to install 15 wheelchair ramps during the summer of 2010. The goal of the project is to build wheelchair ramps for elderly, disabled and chronically ill households in Broome County. Construction of these ramps will be performed by trained volunteers. **(\$5,000)**

- Program grant to **Family & Children Society** to implement a program model designed to identify seniors with mental health needs and get them connected with services in the community. The Gatekeeper’s program is specifically designed to identify at-risk elders 65 years and older, particularly those who are isolated, living alone and in need of some type of assistance to maintain their independence. The objectives of the Gatekeepers program are to improve emotional or behavioral problems, prevent abuse/neglect, link elders to support systems and correct poor physical health. The goals of the Gatekeeper program include keeping at-risk elderly adults in their own homes and preventing premature out-of-home placement. **(\$6,075)**

- Special assistance grant to **Rebuilding Broome Together** to provide home repairs to at least two clients in 2010. This program will provide free home repairs to low income, elderly, disabled, and families with children. It will make homes safe, secure, and weatherproof, which allows families to remain in their homes without impacting their often precarious financial situation. **(\$2,124)**

- Special assistance grant to **YMCA of Broome County** to complete renovations to the lobby of

the West Family Branch to create a more inviting environment for seniors to socialize before and after participating in programs at the facility. The YMCA Socialization Project will create an atmosphere where seniors feel comfortable to spend additional time together, in a friendly, safe environment, as opposed to leaving directly after their program of choice concludes. **(\$5,000)**

Other Community Needs

- Program grant to **Greater Binghamton Education Outreach Program** to implement a program designed to help high school students develop the knowledge and skill necessary to be successful in today work environment. The Junior Achievement Company Program will be introduced to local high schools in Broome County which will create the opportunity for students to gain knowledge of the world of business, improve interpersonal skills, connect with peers, and develop relationships with adult mentors from local industries. By participating in this program students will can be expected to learn: relevance of schoolwork, necessary workplace skills, teamwork, connection between learning and earning, and introduction to careers. **(\$5,269)**

- Program grant to **Southern Tier Alternative Therapies** to provide a unique mentoring and community service project designed to keep at-risk youth in school. ProMISE is a program that will work with 15 teens at risk of dropping out of school. The program will provide the kids with counseling, participate in leadership/mentoring skills training, be exposed to multiple career opportunities, gain volunteer experience, and receive assistance with goal planning for their future with guidance from the MSW team. **(\$12,000)**

“The Venture and Special Assistance Program provides a unique opportunity to support new and innovative programs in our community. Each of the projects receiving a grant today represent opportunities to improve people’s lives and create lasting changes in our community that would not exist without the funding made possible through the United Way and the Howland Foundation,” said Doris Getty, chair of the Venture and Special Assistance Program Selection Committee.

The Venture Grant Program of United Way of Broome County was permanently established in 1990 when its Board of Directors earmarked up to one percent of the allocable funds from each year's annual fund-raising campaign to be set aside for such grants. The program was later expanded to cover special assistance grants as well.

In 1993, the Helen T. Howland Foundation arranged for United Way of Broome County to provide recommendations to the foundation for a portion of its funding decisions. United Way agreed to use its Venture Grant process to develop these recommendations. The foundation is named after Helen Thomas Howland who was born in Binghamton and resided in Ithaca for much of her life. A trust was established under her will in order to benefit the community. M&T Bank manages the Helen T. Howland Foundation.

At the beginning of March, United Way of Broome County mailed Venture and Special Assistance Grant Request for Proposals to a comprehensive list of human service providers in Broome County. Completed applications were due in mid-April. The Venture and Special Assistance Grant Selection Committee met in April and May to evaluate the proposals and develop a list of funding recommendations. The committee's recommendations were submitted for review to the United Way's Community Services Division in June and then forwarded for final approval by the United Way Board of Directors and Howland Foundation Board of Trustees.

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