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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Granite United Way Announce Community Investments ~ Delivers More than \$1.1 Million in Support to the Central Region**

*Central Region volunteers announce funding for local programs*

(Laconia, Plymouth and Ossipee, New Hampshire) – Granite United Way’s annual campaign mobilizes more than 20,000 donors and corporate supporters to raise more than \$8.7 million across the state of New Hampshire. The campaign benefits more than 750 nonprofit agencies and programs providing services to more than 350,000 individuals. Volunteers are mobilized from each local region in its footprint to review and vet proposals and make funding decisions based upon strict criteria that ensures investments are held to the highest standards and are producing the greatest, most cost-efficient impact. In addition to the volunteer-led grant investment process and donor designation program, initiatives like Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), the 2-1-1NH information & referral line and FamilyWize, a prescription drug discount program deliver a combined total of nearly \$14 million in support to residents across New Hampshire.

Local volunteers on Granite United Way’s Community Impact Committee dedicated the last few months to evaluating program proposals and determining their investment decisions for the Central Region. **Together, with the volunteer Board of Directors and the Central Region Community Impact Committee, announced that the 2016 Campaign would deliver more than \$1.1 Million in support during 2017 to the Central Region.**

This year marks the first time the Central Region has accepted annual non profit proposals since ending the previous three-year funding cycle.

“Our Central Region Community Impact Committee is filled with dedicated volunteers who are excited to lead the United Way investments in this region,” said Patrick Tufts, President and CEO of Granite United Way. “The Central Region has a long history of collaboration and we continue to work with partners to address the needs of this region in New Hampshire. Together we have been able to provide support in areas like education, financial stability and prevention programs that are key to creating a healthy community.”

In the Central Region, the **Whole Village Family Resource Center serves as major resource in the region** for programs focused on quality child care, developing strong parenting skills and achieving financial stability. In 2016, Whole Village celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> year with a luncheon and a community-wide ice cream social in August.

Granite United Way’s work with Carroll County Coalition for Public Health continues to lead the way in public health initiatives across the Central Region. **This year they hosted a record number of informational sessions for the public on the use of Narcan to save lives.** To date, more than 118 kits have been distributed throughout the region.

Through the “Get on the Bus Challenge” this year, **six new companies in the Central Region either hosted a workplace campaign or gave a \$1,000 corporate gift.**

This year **Granite United Way sold their 95 Water Street, Laconia office to the Greater Lakes Child Advocacy Center** when they were seeking additional space to expand their program. After the sale was completed, Genesis Behavioral Health Care generously offered office space to Granite United Way for their Laconia team.

Partners like Marti Ilg, Executive Director, for Lakes Region Child Care Services, Inc. and Penny Pitou, Loyal Contributor and Leadership donor to United Way, support the vision of Granite United Way's work in the Central Region and their focus on Education, Income and Financial Stability.

"In many ways these are unprecedented times with the pre-K movement, return on investment study, the presidential campaign with all of the attention the candidates gave to early childhood, and the current research that demonstrates the benefits to society when quality early care and education is provided. Licensed child care allows parents to take and keep a job while ensuring children get a strong educational start. Quality child care helps parents grow their income and children grow smarter." Marti Ilg, Executive Director for Lakes Region Child Care Services Inc.

"As a long-time Leadership donor to United Way, I whole heartedly support their vision and volunteer investment strategies in our community," said Penny Pitou, owner of Penny Pitou Travel, Inc. "I appreciate the time local volunteers dedicate to the process of identifying current community issues and granting funds to the nonprofit proposals that will address those needs. As a donor I continue to be confident in this process and know that my gift is being leveraged in the most efficient and effective way possible."

Funded programs will receive notification this week.

For more information about Granite United Way, visit [www.graniteuw.org](http://www.graniteuw.org).

#### **Granite United Way**

*Granite United Way is an experienced and trusted organization dedicated to leveraging the resources of investors and volunteers to create lasting change by addressing the underlying causes of our community's most pressing needs.*

*United Way's purpose is to convene public, private, and governmental leaders and resources to tackle the largest, most pressing issues facing our community. These issues include, but are not limited to: Providing children with the tools they need to read at grade level, putting them on the path to becoming successful, contributing members of our community. Offering free assistance from trained tax professionals to ensure that low income individuals and families file their taxes properly and timely, and utilize qualified tax credits to begin to build their own capital, Administering a statewide, comprehensive 24 hour a day/ 365 days a year help hot-line called 2-1-1 that quickly delivers help to any resident in New Hampshire*

*Granite United Way works with over 1,000 companies, 25,000 investors and thousands of volunteers every year to make our communities a better place. Granite United Way is rated a Platinum Participant by GuideStar and a Three Star Charity Navigator, two of the nation's largest nonprofit rating sources.*

*Granite United Way serves the Central Region, Merrimack County, North Country, Northern Region, Southern Region (Manchester / Derry / Salem) and Upper Valley Regions of New Hampshire as well as Windsor County, Vermont. For more information, visit [www.graniteuw.org](http://www.graniteuw.org).*

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