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Granite United Way Announces Investments ~ Delivers More than \$1.88 in Support to Merrimack County

Merrimack County volunteers announce funding decisions for 2016

(Concord, New Hampshire) – Granite United Way’s annual campaign mobilizes more than 20,000 donors and corporate supporters to raise more than \$8.22 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. By mobilizing volunteers 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 from Merrimack County on Granite United Way’s Community Review Team dedicated the last few months to evaluating program proposals and determining their investment recommendations that were made to the local Community Impact Committee for Merrimack County. **Together, with the volunteer Board of Directors and Community Impact Committees, they announced that more than \$1.88 Million in support will be delivered to this community during 2016.**

This year the volunteer teams focused their Request for Proposal on four of the focus areas within in Community Health Improvement Plan for the region; the misuse of drugs and alcohol, access to comprehensive behavioral health services, educational achievement and economic well being.

In Merrimack County support is also distributed to the Capital Area Public Health Network, whose role has grown tremendously with the onset of the substance misuse crisis in New Hampshire. This initiative has been working collaboratively with community leaders and nonprofit partners to increase awareness about substance misuse and increasing access to treatment.

“Our volunteers are working alongside us to forging new partnerships and developing new solutions to old problems. We are mobilizing our agency partners and leveraging our donor dollars in ways that even five years ago may not have seemed possible,” said Patrick Tufts, President and CEO of Granite United Way. “We were extremely impressed with the quality of applicants this year and how organizations are embracing a collaborative approach to their work.”

This year marks the third year of implementing the Strategic Plan the Board of Directors adopted in 2013. Funding decisions in each of Granite United Way’s six regions and encourage collaborative efforts between agencies to create deeper, more lasting impact.

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"We know that it is impossible for any one organization to address all of the issues in our community. It's critical that we work together with local nonprofits, community leaders and corporate partners to address difficult problems in new, effective ways," said Tufts.

Partners like Lynne M. Parker, Esq., Executive Director of New Hampshire Legal Assistance and Zach Powers, Executive Director, Pittsfield Youth Workshop, couldn't agree more with the need for collaboration.

"Our funding from Granite United Way helps us advocate for the needs of the most vulnerable New Hampshire residents in court, at the State House and in front of the many government agencies that make decisions affecting their lives," said Parker. "We're grateful the Granite United Way supports our mission to protect low-income residents' rights, their homes, their families and their livelihoods."

"The Pittsfield Youth Workshop is proud to partner with Granite United Way to help improve the lives of youth and families in our community. Support from Granite United Way has allowed PYW to provide programs and activities that allow youth to explore their passions, connect with the community, focus on their future, and achieve academic success," said Powers. "We are grateful to be able to continue to offer low, to no-cost, afterschool programming because of this collaborative relationship."

Funded programs will receive notification this week.

For more information about Granite United Way, visit www.graniteuw.org.

Granite United Way

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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 is committed to improving the lives of individuals and families by supporting programs in the areas of education, income and health. 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 highly rated by both GuideStar and 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.

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