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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Granite United Way Announce Community Investments ~ Delivers More than \$77,000 in Support in the Northern Region**

*Northern Region volunteers announce funding decisions for 2016*

(Berlin, 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 the Northern Region on Granite United Way’s Community Impact Committee dedicated the last few months to evaluating program proposals and determining their investment decisions for the Northern Region. **Together, with the volunteer Board of Directors, they announced that more than \$77,000 in support will be delivered to this community during 2016.**

This year the volunteer teams focused their Request for Proposal in United Way’s three primary areas of impact: Education, Income and Health.

In the Northern Region over the past year Granite United Way was also able to provide additional literacy programming in both the Berlin Middle School and High School. This specialized program called Reading Plus has helped students improve their silent reading skills significantly. This additional support was provided in part by their collaboration with Eversource Energy.

“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.

“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 together in more effective ways,” said Tufts.

Partners like Vickie Plourde, Executive Director of the Feeding Hope Food Pantry and Charlie Cotton, Area Director for Northern Human Services, couldn't agree more with the need for collaboration. Their funded programs focus on providing access to nutritional food and a variety of much needed human services in the Northern Region, respectively.

"In 2015 the Feeding Hope Food Pantry dispersed food to over 5,000 individuals and from the Community Cafe fed a weekly free meal to over 2,000 people. Without the funding and support of Granite United Way neither the Pantry or Cafe would have been able to accomplish their goals of caring for those in our communities that are food insecure. It is a partnership for success!" Vickie Plourde, Executive Director of the Feeding Hope Food Pantry.

"It's critical that organizations work together to improve conditions in our community. In the Northern region especially this effort is essential to providing access to important services to our neighbors and we are proud to work alongside Granite United Way in this effort," said Charlie Cotton, Area Director, Northern Human Services. "We all know that no one organization can solve all of the issues our community faces. There have been many instances where we've partnered with a number of nonprofits to address a specific concern. It's important that we work together and support each other in this work. That is where United Way has been helpful in helping to convene groups together and make positive change in our community."

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 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](http://www.graniteuw.org).*

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