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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Granite United Way Announce Community Investments ~ Delivers More than \$864,000 in Support in the Upper Valley**

*Upper Valley volunteers target Education, Income, Health, and Legal and Safety investments*

(West Lebanon, 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 and Windsor County, Vermont.

Local volunteers from the Upper Valley on Granite United Way’s Community Review Teams dedicated the last few months to evaluating program proposals and determining their investment recommendations for the Upper Valley. **Together, with the volunteer Board of Directors and Upper Valley Community Impact Committee, they announced that the 2016 Campaign would deliver more than \$864,000 in support this year to the Upper Valley.**

This year the volunteer teams focused their Request for Proposal in four main areas: Education, Income, Health, and Legal and Safety with an emphasis on addressing the needs of the low income wage earner.

In the **Upper Valley one of the most well received Granite United Way initiatives continues to be Working Bridges**, which partnered with four additional companies this year. The program has grown and now features additional capacity to assist employees at companies like: **Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital, Hypertherm, Kendal at Hanover, King Arthur Flour, Simon Pearce, Coop Food Stores, Dartmouth College, Mascoma Savings Bank and Timken.**

“Our Upper Valley volunteers are focused on improving lives across New Hampshire and Windsor County, Vermont. Each year they review some of the most impressive nonprofit proposals with the intention to invest United Way dollars in the best possible way,” said Patrick Tufts, President and CEO of Granite United Way. “We have been impressed with the applications this year and look forward to working with them in new and innovative ways.”

“We recognize that no one organization is able to address all of the issues in our community. By working together we’re able to see lasting change occur throughout the region.” Said Tufts.

Granite United Way’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, **delivered more than \$200,000 in federal tax refunds, including the Earned Income Tax (EITC), to low to moderate income families in the Upper Valley.**

Gordon Ehret, Engineering Project Manager at Hypertherm is supportive of the United Way work in Upper Valley.

“As a volunteer both in the Community Impact process and as a Board Member, I am impressed each year with the dedication that our local volunteers show when investing Granite United Way donor funds,” said Gordon Ehret, Engineering Project Manager at Hypertherm, and Granite United Way Board Member. “United Way is an important part of our community, not only as a fundraising organization, but as a convener who steps up when there are complex community issues to address. I am proud to support this effort in the Upper Valley.”

Partners like Jeannette Birge, Director of the Upper Valley Office of Child & Family Services of New Hampshire agrees with that concept. Child & Family Services works to advance the well-being of children and families through an array of social services.

“As nonprofits across our region evolve to face the current and frequently shifting challenges in our community, working in collaboration with Granite United Way we know we have a strong partner in the process,” said Jeannette Birge, Program Director at Child and Family Services. “No one organization can solve the many complex issues in our community. It takes all of us to work together, in tandem, to address these community needs. I am proud to work alongside the team at Granite United Way in this effort. Their support is invaluable.”

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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