

Immediate Release

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UWRI awards \$135,000 in merger/consolidation grants *5 groupings, a total of 17 nonprofits, all over the state to benefit*

Providence, RI (June 2, 2009) – United Way of Rhode Island awarded a total of \$135,000 in grants to five different groupings of nonprofits to use for either merging or consolidating operations or services.

Those receiving money from United Way of R.I.'s 3-year-old Merger and Consolidation Fund are located throughout the state -- from Newport to Pawtucket -- and they focus on a broad array of areas such as domestic violence, affordable housing, and human services for the homeless, individuals, families and children. The UWRI Fund had a \$35,000 increase from last year because of funding support from members of the Grantmakers Council of Rhode Island.

“These organizations have joined together to share services that are complementary or being duplicated, and to save money and free up staffs to expand and increase their work in our community,” said Anthony Maione, president and CEO of United Way of Rhode Island. “We are pleased to give out these grants, which exceeded our \$100,000 budget, to such important organizations, which will be stronger and enhanced because of our commitment.”

Of the 17 organizations in five groupings to receive grants, seven are domestic violence nonprofits, and they are R.I. Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center, Domestic Violence Resource Center of South County, Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center, Sojourner House, Women's Center of R.I. and Women's Resource Center of Newport and Bristol Counties. This summer, those agencies will hold a series of meetings to discuss and create a strategic plan for the optimal way to deliver shared services and then decide how to best execute the plan.

Four affordable housing and homeless advocacy organizations -- Housing Network of R.I., Housing Action Coalition, R.I. Coalition for the Homeless and Corporation for Supportive Housing, received a grant to assist with moving their already working partnership to a new level by co-locating in office space. The plan is to consolidate back-room administrative functions for more efficiency, and collaborate on promoting affordable housing and permanent supportive housing. The partnership already integrates communications, government relations, advocacy, and community outreach and engagement work.

The Newport Family & Child Opportunity Zone (formerly Sullivan School Family Center), which offers social services to families and individuals, will become a program of East Bay Community Action Program, EBCAP. The grant money supplied by UWRI will be used to support communications, board development, strategic planning and evaluation.

Two other organizations awarded a grant are Tri-Town Community Action Agency, Johnston, and South County Community Action Agency, Wakefield. Both are expected to merge into one entity in the next several months. The two agencies have shared the same management team for about eight years, and both have a commitment to comprehensive social and advocacy services to individuals and families in need while promoting their self-sufficiency.

In addition, Pawtucket Citizens Development Corp., a nonprofit working to make target neighborhoods of Pawtucket safe and livable, will merge with Woodlawn Community Development Corp., a Pawtucket-based nonprofit dedicated to youth development, adult education and community health. As a merged entity, the new organization will address supporting success in school, job skills development and affordable housing/reducing homelessness, which align with UWRI's focus areas.

UWRI's Merger and Consolidation Fund is backed by an annual commitment from United Way of Rhode Island, and from additional funders through a collaborative sponsored by Grantmakers Council of Rhode Island, which included Amica, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, CVS/Caremark Charitable Trust, GTECH, Hasbro Inc. and O'Halloran Family Foundation.

In 2007, UWRI created its Merger and Consolidation Fund to supply financial support to nonprofits looking to merge and/or consolidate back-office operations to better serve clients. The Fund was established after many agency executives and board members expressed interest in fostering such efficiencies in the nonprofit sector.



Any two or more 501 c-3 human service organizations in the State considering a full organizational merger or a consolidation of administrative functions may apply for funds. Special consideration will be given to those organizations whose mission aligns with United Way's three focus issues: supporting children's success in school, job skills development, affordable housing and reducing homelessness.

For more information on the annual merger/consolidation grants, visit LIVEUNITEDri.org. Usually, applications are due in the spring, and recipients are notified in mid-May.

About United Way of Rhode Island

United Way of Rhode Island has been working to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island communities for over 80 years. UWRI's mission is to mobilize the caring power of the community to improve the lives of people in need and address the issues Rhode Islanders care most about. United Way's goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. We believe that all Rhode Islanders deserve the opportunity to have a better life, as when any one of us succeeds, we all succeed. At United Way, we refer to this as advancing the common good. For more information, visit www.LIVEUNITEDri.org.