

United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
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Nevada and the Sierra**

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United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra Announces 2011-12 Funded Partners, First Under New Strategic Allocation Process

Reno, Nev. — For the first time after undertaking a more strategic process of funding organizations and partnerships, United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra (UWNNS) has announced its funded partners for fiscal year 2012-13. The new funding process was put in place to ensure that the funding UWNNS provides can truly make a measurable impact on identified problems in the communities it serves. UWNNS also redesigned the process in order to fund initiatives in larger dollar amounts to make a greater impact.

In 2010, UWNNS and its board of directors announced that the organization was embracing a more strategic and community needs-based approach to funding organizations and partnerships. As part of that process, UWNNS completed extensive research with the members of our communities to develop priority funding needs within its three areas of focus: Education, Financial Stability and Health. UWNNS then worked with its regional experts, who volunteered in each of the three focus areas, to review the research and determine even more focused priorities to guide funding decisions going forward. These same groups reviewed each of the partner agencies to ensure they still qualified within UWNNS' Standards of Excellence criteria. UWNNS then issued Requests for Proposals to those agencies.

"This is a new and exciting way of doing business for us," said Karen Barsell, CEO and President of UWNNS. "We're engaging with our community in different and more substantive ways. United Way is in the business of creating a positive impact in the community by ensuring that people have the basic building blocks for a good life. Fundamental change in communities cannot happen unless there is sustained involvement of individuals and institutions working together."

UWNNS received requests for \$3.3 million dollars from its partner agencies and the coalitions they formed, and was able to fund \$650,000 of the requests with the allocations ranging from \$15,000 to \$100,000. This year, nearly half of the allocations were presented to applicants that were collaborations. Allocations were also presented agencies for specific programs and initiatives that can obtain measurable goals and outcomes that will positively affect the community.

Awardees included:

- **Education**
 - Wells Family Resource Center - \$20,000 to bring the preschool to national accreditation standards for preschools in Wells, Nev., in order to meet the growing demand for comprehensive and effective early learning opportunities.
- **Financial Stability**
 - Community Services Agency - \$75,000 to operate its Youth Matter Now program in Washoe County designed to provide low-income youth and young adults with career information, career exploration and job experience in health and health-related jobs.
 - Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada - \$15,000 to lead efforts to make food more available to all people who need it - through creative integration of food buying and client support.
- **Health**
 - Step 2 (in collaboration with ACCEPT, Safe Embrace, Advocates to End Domestic Violence, Committee To Aid Abused Women, Washoe Legal Services) - \$75,000 to reduce the impact of family violence on individual family members and the family as a whole, while working to eliminate the intergenerational component of family violence.

- Nevada Rural Counties Retired Senior Volunteer Program (in collaboration with Alzheimer's Association of California and Northwestern Nevada) - \$75,000 to provide affordable, non-medical home respite care and home companion services to help relieve family caregiver stress and provide basic services to the home bound.
- Quest Counseling - \$50,000 to provide youth with the skills and tools to maintain sobriety through an intensive residential program and curriculum.
- Tahoe Family Solutions - \$25,000 to provide critical mental health service to families and children throughout the Lake Tahoe region.
- **Overarching – benefiting multiple focus areas**
 - Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of Truckee Meadows (in collaboration with BGC of Western Nevada, BGC of Mason Valley, BGC of Lake Tahoe, BGC of North Lake Tahoe, BGC of Elko)- \$100,000 to provide essential workforce skills to youth, ages 10-18 throughout the entire UWNNS region.
 - ReStart (in collaboration with Volunteers of America - Greater Sacramento and Northern Nevada) - \$50,000 to provide substance abuse and mental health counseling for those experiencing homelessness.
 - Community Counseling Center (in collaboration with Ron Wood Family Resource Center, Carson City Families First Drug Court, United Latino Community, Partnership Carson City) - \$50,000 to diminish the impact of substance abuse on children in Carson City by providing substance abuse treatment to children under the age of 18, and parents who are required to complete treatment as part of a successful reintegration / recovery plan
 - Ridge House (in collaboration with Step 1)- \$50,000 to assist participants in locating and maintaining employment, managing their finances and tax return filings and preparing credit reports for eventual home mortgage applications.
 - Nevada Youth Empowerment Project (in collaboration with Safe Embrace, Vernon 'the Tiger' White and Dr. Bob Quilitch)- \$40,000 to provides a structured training program that gives young homeless women a chance to be self-sufficient and successful in life.
 - South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center (in collaboration with the Lake Tahoe Unified School District) - \$25,000 to strengthen literacy and health outcomes for targeted families and children in South Lake Tahoe by enhancing the efforts of all of the collaborating partner agencies.

Under the prior more traditional funding process, UWNNS had only been able to fund small components of partner agency programs. These smaller funds did not allow UWNNS to measure results because they made smaller impacts. The size of the smaller grants also deterred some nonprofits from applying for funds in the past. The traditional model also encouraged competition rather than collaboration among partner agencies. The new model takes partnerships between organizations into account and encourages nonprofits to collaborate to make an even greater impact in the community.

This year, UWNNS volunteers also looked closely at the applications and coalitions that did cross county borders because of the recently expanded UWNNS service area. In 2011, UWNNS assumed responsibility for the territory of the former United Way of the Great Basin that services Elko, Eureka, White Pine, Lander and Humboldt counties. With the absorption of the additional counties, UWNNS now serves 13 Nevada counties and portions of California. The UWNNS service area now represents more than 800,000 people.

Applicants that did not receive funding may still have the opportunity to obtain funds during 2012. As additional funds are released by the UWNNS board of directors, its volunteers will review the current priorities of our communities' need and allocate those funds appropriately. UWNNS will also be developing opportunities to work with organizations to assist with capacity building to make collaborative projects more fundable, for the next fiscal year.

"We were pleased to have received a large number of applications from partner agencies and the collaborations they formed," said Barsell. "We were also delighted that many of the collaborations and applications crossed over county borders to benefit multiple regions of northern Nevada and the Sierra. This process was proof that our region's nonprofits were looking for strategic ways to work together for the betterment of our collective communities."

About United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra

The foundation that nurtures and supports healthy lives is made up of three, interconnected 'building blocks' – education, financial stability and health. United Way is ideally suited to create positive, lasting change by addressing all three areas as one – through proper expertise, capacity and relationships. Join us! Bring your passion, knowledge and resources to get things done all across our community. We all win when a child succeeds in school, when a neighborhood turns around and when workers have solid jobs. For more information, call 775-322-8668 or visit www.uwnns.org.

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