



United Way  
of Broome County

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### **United Way and Howland Foundation Award \$59,416 in Program Grants**

(Vestal, NY)—The United Way of Broome County and the Helen T. Howland Foundation have agreed to provide Venture and Special Assistance Grants, totaling \$59,416, to nine programs in Broome County. Recipient programs are either innovative, new human service programs in the community or special one-time purchases and projects that demonstrate a high level of need and also fit within focus areas defined within the United Way's Community Investment Strategy Report.

At the heart of the United Way's Community Investment Strategy is commitment to mobilizing the caring power of Broome County to advance the common good. The United Way believes the betterment of the community can be achieved by focusing on three basic building blocks: education, income, and health. Grants awarded as part of the 2011 Venture and Special Assistance Program address these three building blocks through programs in Quality Early Child Care, Youth Mental Health, Chemical Dependency Prevention, Physical Fitness and Wellness, Health Access, Service Access for Seniors, and Other Community Needs.

The following nine programs will be funded by the grants:

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### **Youth Mental Health**

- Program grant to **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County** to implement a program designed to address issues of adolescent stress management, depression, and suicide, and to build systems of support for young people. The agency will collaborate with Catholic Charities' Gateway Center for Youth to introduce the Tackling Tough Stuff curriculum at the Endicott Family Resource Center and Jennie F. Snapp Middle School. The program will take place during spring and fall 2011, with 12 eighth grade students enrolling in each session to participate in the eight weekly meetings. The goal of these education and group work sessions is for the youth to experience increased self-esteem, and develop skills and understanding of the risks associated with poor choices and destructive behaviors in response to stress and depression. Parents of enrolled youth will meet separately to discuss the same topics and to practice skills to better support their children's mental health. **(\$10,564)**

### **Chemical Dependency Prevention**

- Program grant to **Fairview Recovery Services, Inc.**, to provide Adventure Therapy Ropes Course programming to residents of the agency's Community Residence. The program plans to use the ropes course facility already established at St. John's the Evangelist Elementary School in Binghamton. The goal is to have residents participate in both physical and non-physical challenges to encourage group cooperation, skill application, creative problem solving, and reliance upon one another. The agency plans to provide a therapeutic intervention at least once per quarter in conjunction with Catholic Charities, and if proven successful after the first year, the agency will continue the program using agency resources. **(\$2,000)**

- Program grant to **Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital, Inc.**, to establish a family empowerment program through collaboration with the Chenango Forks School District. The Lourdes Chenango Forks FASTWORKS Program will consist of 10 sessions of evidence-based programming, which will be held at the rate of one each month during the school year. FASTWORKS plans to serve 6 to 10 families each month, and the agency expects to serve 24 to 40 individuals each month, targeting a group of middle school youth and their families. The program is designed to improve functioning within each participant's family, prevent school failure and substance abuse, and reduce stress experienced by both parents and children. These goals are accomplished through multi-family and youth group activities, strengthening the self-esteem of both youth and parental caregivers. **(\$10,097)**

#### **Physical Fitness and Wellness**

- Program grant to **Boys & Girls Club of Binghamton** to continue to provide a unique opportunity for local teenage girls to participate in a step team. Youth involved in the Unexpected Step Team program will participate in twice-weekly practice sessions, during which the youth will also engage in healthy lifestyle workshops. The participants will gain a greater understanding of the importance of physical activity and proper nutrition as part of a healthier lifestyle. In addition to engaging in this demanding physical and mental activity, the youth will learn the importance of responsibility, commitment, and teamwork as a result of their participation on the team. The agency notes that this will help the participants develop their self-esteem, healthy habits, communication skills, imaginations, and appreciation for the arts. **(\$6,155)**

### **Health Access**

- Program grant to **The Danielle House** to provide guest rooms for parents with newborn children receiving treatment in the Neo Natal Intensive Care Unit at Wilson Hospital. The grant funds will provide 125 nights of housing at Danielle House for these parents, who are often unable to afford lodging and food in addition to the medical bills associated with their children's hospital stays. **(\$2,500)**
- Special assistance grant to **Planned Parenthood of South Central New York**, to allow for the purchase of new portable medical equipment for use in the clinic. These new portable vital signs units and medical scale will be used in the initial assessment of all patients and will assist the agency's clinicians in providing high quality medical care to all patients. **(\$3,600)**
- Program grant to **The Friendship Tree** to implement a training program to provide participants with education, skills, and resources for safe sleep environments for infants. In implementing Cribs for Kids, the agency aims to reduce the risk of SIDS and the possibility of infant injury or death due to unsafe cribs. The organization will be collaborating with Mothers & Babies Prenatal Network as a direct referral source, and these families will participate in two training and education sessions. Furthermore, The Friendship Tree will provide cribs to families in Broome County that could not otherwise afford safe sleeping environments for their babies. **(\$9,000)**

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### **Service Access for Seniors**

- Program grant to **American Red Cross, Southern Tier Chapter** to begin implementation of a training program to address the increasing demand for certified nursing assistants in our area. The New York State Department of Education Nurses Assistant Training Program will provide high quality health and safety training to students, in addition to incorporating a significant job-training aspect. Those enrolled in the program will learn skills critical to finding and retaining a job, working well as a member of a team of health care providers, and recognize the importance of a nurse assistant's role in improving the quality of life for people entrusted in their care. The training program will help address the challenges faced by an aging population in Broome County, and will ensure that seniors in nursing homes will have the support and access to health care that they need. **(\$10,500)**

### **Other Community Needs**

- Program grant to **Rebuilding Together Broome County**, to provide free home repairs to at least two clients in 2011. This program will provide free home repairs to the low income, elderly, disabled, and families with children. It will make homes safe, secure, and weatherproof, allowing families to remain in their homes without jeopardizing their often precarious financial situations. **(\$5,000)**

“The Venture and Special Assistance Program provides support to new and innovative programs in our community, so that they can address the need currently in Broome County. Each of the projects receiving a grant today represents an opportunity to improve the lives of community members and to create lasting changes. These opportunities would not exist without the funding made possible through the United Way and the Howland Foundation,” said Doris Getty, chair of the Venture and Special Assistance Program Selection Committee.

The Venture Grant Program of United Way of Broome County was permanently established in 1990 when its Board of Directors earmarked up to one percent of the allocable funds from each year’s annual fund-raising campaign to be set aside for such grants. United Way of Broome County later expanded the program to cover special assistance grants as well.

In 1993, the Helen T. Howland Foundation arranged for United Way of Broome County to provide recommendations to the foundation for a portion of its funding decisions. United Way agreed to use its Venture Grant process to develop these recommendations. The foundation is named after Helen Thomas Howland, who was born in Binghamton and resided in Ithaca for much of her life. A trust was established under her will in order to benefit the community. M&T Bank manages the Helen T. Howland Foundation.

At the beginning of March, United Way of Broome County mailed Venture and Special Assistance Grant Request for Proposals to a comprehensive list of human service providers in Broome County. Completed applications were due in mid-April. The Venture and Special Assistance Grant Selection Committee met in April and May to evaluate the proposals and develop a list of funding recommendations. The committee’s recommendations were submitted for review to the United Way’s Community Services Division in May and then forwarded for final approval by the United Way Board of Directors and Howland Foundation Board of Trustees.

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