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United Way of Washington County, MD Releases FY16 Community Impact & Investment Goals and Strategies

HAGERSTOWN, MD (December 11, 2014) — United Way of Washington County, MD released its FY16 Community Impact & Investment goals and strategies. The revised goals and strategies are concise and strategic. Agencies and donors have a clearer understanding of United Way’s work with Community Impact and how collectively we can work together for a better quality of life for all.

“There were several reasons for the revision, but mainly it was driven by the scarcity of available funds and current community concerns.” said Stephanie Stone, chairman of the Community Impact & Investment Committee. She led a team of volunteers to review the original goals created from the community needs assessment process, the Strategic Community Impact Plan, which is still the overarching assessment used to guide United Way’s work. Volunteers were then guided by research and data that was gathered and provided by many Washington County community leaders representing the areas of education, health, and individual and family stability, as well as traditional basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing.

In addition to the revisions to the goals, United Way will begin multi-year funding for programs addressing goals in Education and Income. Eventually all focus areas will become multi-year awards. The multi-year commitment means that agencies will have the ability for better, more sustainable program planning and it could open up more possibilities to leverage funding from other sources. All grant recipients are required to provide quarterly, results-based reports that show how the grant is being used and how it is improving individuals’ circumstances and changing lives of Washington County residents.

United Way’s investment of Community Impact funds, which are raised throughout the year, is guided by its funding statement, focus areas, mission and vision. Current funding statement: United Way of Washington County, MD will strategically approach the education of our community through funding collaborative and evidence-based programs focusing on school readiness, healthy life styles, financial literacy, and basic needs as aligned with the Strategic Community Impact Plan (SCIP). United Way continues to invest in programs addressing issues in the following areas:

Education: Helping children and youth achieve their potential through educational readiness. (3 year grant)	Health: Improving individual and family health, safety and security. (1 year grant)
Income: Promoting financial stability and independence through financial literacy. (2 year grant)	Basic Needs: Providing access to the basic needs of life. (1 year grant)

As of today, local human service agencies submitted 41 Letters of Interest for grant funding totaling \$1,523,484. The letters will be reviewed by committee volunteers to ensure alignment with the goals and strategies. Agencies are then invited to submit a formal application. The FY16 funding cycle for those agencies receiving a grant begins July 1, 2015.

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To enhance its goal of Community Impact in Washington County, United Way has several key initiatives: Born Learning, Day of Caring, Day of Action, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (in partnership with Community Foundation of Washington County and other funders), the Strategic Community Impact Plan, Summer Learning Loss (part of the Education focus area), FamilyWize (a discount prescription drug program), and 2-1-1 (a free, confidential health and human service referral line available 24 – hours/day).

The mission of United Way is: "Through strategic leadership and investments, United Way of Washington County will impact community improvement and inspire collaborations to address critical needs in education, income and health."

United Way of Washington County is located at 33 West Franklin Street, Suite 203 in Hagerstown, MD. For more information or to make a donation please call 301-739-8200 or visit our website at www.unitedwaywashcounty.org.

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