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PRESS RELEASE

July 5, 2016

Trident United Way Announces \$25,000 in Community Engagement Grant Offers

[North Charleston, SC] Today, Trident United Way (TUW) announced grant offers to 7 organizations totaling just over \$25,000 focusing on Community Engagement events scheduled to take place in the coming 12 months across Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties. Today's announcement marks the first of two rounds of Community Engagement investments totaling \$50,000 available in 2016.

The slate of Community Engagement grant offer recipients include activities and events provided by local nonprofits aimed to strengthen their volunteer engagement efforts and to connect individuals to resources and service in the three areas of critical need across the region: education, financial stability, and health.

"The interactive fairs, conferences and festivals provided by the grant recipients are aimed not just at offering momentary relief, but creating opportunities for learning, removing barriers to access and improving the lives of people and families across the region," said Chris Kerrigan, TUW president and chief executive officer.

Nineteen trained community volunteers dedicated nearly 200 combined service hours reviewing and evaluating grant applications. "I am so thankful for the community volunteers who participated in the review process for community engagement applications. They were trained and reviewed more than 22 quality applications for this round of funding," praised Bob Fei, chair of the TUW community impact committee, and member of the TUW board of directors.

During the last decade, the role of Trident United Way has transformed. It is no longer an organization simply focused on providing funding. Rather, it is a catalyst and a partner for achieving BOLD COMMUNITY CHANGE in critical areas of need.

Today's grant offers are only one part of TUW's overall investment strategy. The \$150,000 over three years in Community Engagement grant offers represent 1% of the total dollars the organization will invest to benefit the community during its 2016-2019 investment cycle.

In addition to these investments, TUW has added two new education innovation funding pools to support third grade literacy and kindergarten readiness. The organization will also continue to fund mental health, basic needs and feeding programs in low-income schools through its Links 2.0 Initiative.

Recipients of today's grant offers include:

Berkeley County First Steps - *Early Childhood Diaper Derby, Youth Dash and Family Wellness Festival*

Children in Crisis of Dorchester County - *Child Abuse and Neglect Conference*

Help Me Grow – *Read Rattle & Roll*

Lowcountry Foodbank, Inc. – *Fuel for School- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Distribution*

PASOs – *Community Baby Shower*

Reading Partners – *Commit to the Next Chapter Event*

Trident Literacy Association – *Live, Learn, Graduate Adult Literacy Fair*

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“We are excited to assist our partners as they embrace effective practices for community engagement activities in the areas of education, financial stability and health,” said Amanda Lawrence, TUW vice president of community impact. “Together, we can enhance community connections for our neighbors and ensure access to the building blocks of a quality life.”

The next application period for the second round of Community Engagement grants will be available on TUW’s website in the mid- July. Visit www.tuw.org/community-investments-0 for more information.

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Trident United Way works to make long-lasting, measurable community transformation around the issues that matter most in people’s lives: education, financial stability and health. To learn more visit www.tuw.org.