

United Way awards \$132k for education

ADDISON COUNTY — United Way of Addison County has announced that its Board of Directors approved \$132,000 in Community Impact Funding (CIF) for the 2023 priority area of Education. This increase over last year of over \$36,000 was made possible by the community's strong support of UWAC's fundraising efforts.

UWAC focuses its efforts in three areas: Health, Education, and Financial Stability. Any organization receiving a CIF grant from UWAC must clearly align with one of these areas of need. Every year, UWAC enters funding relationships under one of these focus areas and makes three-year grants. A diverse team of dedicated Addison County citizens carefully review and evaluate applicants and make program funding recommendations to UWAC's Board of Directors.

This year, UWAC took a trust-based philanthropy approach to its CIF application and review process. Rather than requiring nonprofits to submit a lengthy application scored by reviewers, nonprofits submitted a Letter of Interest. "The trust-based philanthropy approach to grant-making puts the burden of collecting information about applicants on the funder," said Helena Van Voorst, UWAC's Executive Director. "We don't want the grant application at

UWAC to be a barrier for local nonprofits doing frontline, life-saving work, and who need our financial support and resources."

Instead of scoring written applications, UWAC's volunteer review team spent time looking at local data, researching applicant organizations, and preparing for site visits that ultimately allowed reviewers to gain a deeper understanding of each organization's work and how/if UWAC could best support them with its limited local philanthropic dollars.

UWAC believes the new application approach was key in welcoming 20 new nonprofits to submit their Letters of Interest in funding. "We took a careful look at our funding structures and systems and determined that the barrier to applying may leave out smaller organizations doing big work," Van Voorst said. "We expected to have some new-to-UWAC organizations apply — but didn't expect to have 20! There is both great need and great work being done in Addison County."

The process was also well received by 13 returning UWAC funded partners. Taylor Welch, executive director of the HUB in Bristol, said, "It is incredible to see UWAC shift more towards trust-based philanthropy, especially since it tracks so closely with the relationships UWAC works so hard to build with the agencies in the area. We are so excited

that the HUB has the privilege of partnering with you folks."

UWAC's 2023 CIF recipients and amounts awarded (amounts shown are per grant year) include:

- Addison County Parent Child Center: \$12,000/year
- Addison County Readers: \$2,500/year
- Bixby Memorial Library: \$2,500/year
- Boys & Girls Club of Vergennes: \$7,500/year
- Bristol Family Center: \$12,000/year
- DREAM Program: \$1,500
- The Hub Teen Center & Skatepark: \$7,500
- Mary Johnson Children's Center: \$12,000
- MAUSD Mentoring: \$2,000
- Middlebury Area Land Trust: \$5,000
- Otter Creek Child Center: \$12,000
- Red Clover Children's Center: \$5,000
- Starksboro Cooperative Preschool: \$12,000
- The Teen Center: \$7,500
- Teen Makery After School: \$10,000
- Vermont Adult Learning: \$11,000
- Willowell Foundation: \$10,000

UWAC's commitment to its funded partners is made possible thanks to the generous donors who give to the organization. For a full list of UWAC's funded partners, please visit their website.