Introduction

United Way of Allegheny County is working to ensure that the dollars invested by our donors strategically address critical community needs. As an organization, we have made changes to accomplish this. The identification of the current priority needs and community outcomes for People with Disabilities was guided by a team of community stakeholders and informed by research conducted by University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. This work resulted in a Needs Assessment Report and Action Plan (the full report is available on the website at http://unitedwaypittsburgh.org/for-agencies/reports-and-resources/).

United Way’s Impact Fund has implemented an open application and request for proposal (RFP) process focused on addressing critical community needs. This RFP process is open to all providers who meet the eligibility criteria outlined below. Providers interested in funding from United Way must demonstrate that they are willing to collaborate and partner with others (such as non-profits, government, school districts, corporations, etc.) and that their proposed projects achieve measurable community impact in addressing critical needs. They also must show evidence that their agencies are financially sound, well-managed and governed by a voluntary board that utilizes best management practices.

Through the 2014-17 RFP process, United Way is looking for nonprofit partners that can remove systemic barriers to support to people with disabilities and family caregivers. Proposals must include:

- creating collaborations and partnerships; and
- implementing results-oriented models that can be widely replicated or otherwise lead to community-wide impact.

Statement of Need

The 2013 United Way Community Needs Assessment has documented the critical needs faced by people with disabilities and their caregivers. Significant issues were raised around employment opportunities, caregiver support and efforts to increase independence and social connection in the community.

The following information provides key indicators of need for people with disabilities.

Unemployment & Poverty: People with disabilities have an unemployment rate nearly double that of the general population - 13% compared to 7% (Dept of Labor Statistics, January, 2013). Median income for employed people with disabilities is approximately $19,000, compared to a median income of over $31,000 for people without disabilities (2011 American Community Survey). People with disabilities are twice as likely to earn incomes below the poverty line than individuals without disabilities. For adults with psychiatric disabilities, employment has led to lower rates of hospitalization, and an increased sense of personal control (Kirsh, 2013). People with disabilities who receive vocational training and job support have been shown to be twice as likely to be competitively employed (Steingass et al., 2011).

For individuals with disabilities, there are limited community options for volunteering and few resources for engaging and inclusive day activities. Minimally restrictive work and living
environments have been shown to positively impact individual self-determination (Wehmeyer and Palmer, 2003).

Health and Well-Being: Overall, people with disabilities have higher rates of many health conditions (such as diabetes), are more likely to be living with multiple medical conditions, make less use of preventive health care, and face significant challenges accessing traditional health care facilities. As they age, people with disabilities contend with added challenges of age-related conditions at the same or greater rate than other older people (Evenhuis et al., 2000).

In adults with intellectual disabilities, such as Down syndrome, aging brings greater risk of a wide range of physical and mental health challenges (Perkins & Moran, 2010). For many adults with intellectual disabilities, complex health care needs requiring any number of health care professionals is difficult, at best, without case management. Increasing support for people with disabilities in managing complex medical needs, would contribute significantly to their independence. Caregivers of people with disabilities, especially aging caregivers, also need help managing their own chronic conditions, as well as those of the person in their care.

Allegheny County is home to roughly one-tenth of the state’s veteran population which is approximately 100,000 veterans (Veterans Administration). 24,568 veterans in Allegheny County have a disability and 2,194 of those had income levels at or below the poverty level within the last 12 months (2012 American Community Survey).

Caregivers: In 2011, it was projected that by 2020 approximately 20,000 seniors in the county will be caring for a dependent adult child. In a sample survey of older caregivers of adults with disabilities conducted on behalf of United Way of Allegheny County in 2012, fewer than half of respondents report having wills and/or plans for the dependent's care when they can no longer provide that care. Many aging caregivers have not been able to prepare their adult children with disabilities for inclusion in the community and/or independence, which presents unique transitional challenges for adult children. Systems of support and services are complex and have changed significantly since many aging parents may have navigated them when their children were young. Without adequate planning, individuals with disabilities can be left without support and end up in nursing homes, unnecessarily.

Housing: There are limited resources and few housing models that support adults with disabilities living in the community independently. For individuals with the most complex needs and intellectual disabilities, residential settings are especially challenging to identify (Allegheny County DHS). More broadly, nearly 30,000 people in Allegheny County age 17-64 years report difficulty living independently due to a disability (2011 American Community Survey).

United Way Response

Through the RFP process, United Way's goal of addressing such serious community needs is to invest funds strategically, focusing on efforts that can mobilize the community to achieve these long-term outcomes:

- Increase the number of people with disabilities who are employed or making significant progress toward employment.
• Increase support to caregivers of people with disabilities which allows them to continue providing care.
• Support people with disabilities to have increased levels of independence and social connection in the community.

Proposal Process

2014-2017 Request for Proposal RFP – People with Disabilities
By investing in programs and projects that assist people with disabilities, United Way is seeking to meet a vital community need by supporting programs that will lead to:

• People with disabilities having more substantive employment opportunities and preparation for employment.
• People with disabilities having greater independence and social connection.
• Caregivers of people with disabilities having the support they need to continue providing care.

United Way is seeking nonprofit health and human service organizations that have the capacity to collaborate and partner with other organizations in providing high-quality programs that address the above outcomes and achieve community impact.

Proposed projects should align with the United Way's goals of engaging corporate and community volunteers, demonstrating the community impact of funded programs, and advocating for systems change. Agency reports of measurable results and successful outcomes are critical to United Way telling the story to donors so sufficient dollars can be raised. Spreading the word about the excellent work and achievements of funded programs is a valuable tool to engage donors. Funded agencies will assist by recognizing how the agency's work is enhanced by United Way's contribution in the effort.

While agencies are not limited in the amount of support they may request from United Way for the projects, the total expected to be available to invest in this RFP will be approximately $350,000. United Way will use the average agency allocation of $75,000 as its benchmark when making awards.

Funding awards will be announced in June 2014, to be effective for the three-year period from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017 contingent upon bi-annual performance and sufficient availability of funds from the annual campaigns.

Agency Eligibility

A single agency may submit a proposal, but partnerships and collaborations of multiple agencies and other key stakeholders are encouraged and will be given first priority in the selection process. Applications must be submitted by the lead agency of the collaborative effort. The agency/lead agency that will serve as the fiscal and reporting agent must meet the following criteria:

• 501(c)(3) organization located and providing a health or human service in Allegheny County (NOTE: arts, cultural, religious, recreational, political programs, government agencies and institutions providing formal education are not eligible)
• In full compliance with all federal, state, county and local requirements and laws pertaining to non-profits, including the USA Patriot Act and other counterterrorism laws
• Meets the requirements of the Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act passed by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in December, 1990
• Provides all documentation requested as noted in Step 1 and Step 2

Proposal Timeline

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<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>RFP Materials Posted on United Way Website</td>
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<td>December 18</td>
<td>Logic Model and e-CImpact Training for Agency Applicants</td>
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<td>Jan 6 – 10</td>
<td>Proposal Feedback Sessions – open to all, but by appointment</td>
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<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Step 1 Applicants Submit Proposal Forms on-line by 5 P.M.</td>
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<td>Feb 27</td>
<td>Providers Invited to Submit Step 2 Proposals</td>
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<td>March 7-12</td>
<td>Step 2 Proposal Feedback for Applicant Agencies – by appointment</td>
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<td>March 17</td>
<td>Step 2 Applicants Submit Full Proposals on-line by 5 P.M.</td>
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<td>April 21</td>
<td>UW Staff Notify Providers for Site Visits – Schedule Site Visits</td>
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<td>April 28 – May 6</td>
<td>Step 3 Site Visits to Invited Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>United Way Board Meeting – Agencies notified of funding decisions</td>
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Application Process for Qualifying Agencies

United Way uses an RFP process that has three distinct steps or stages and is designed to collect the additional information at each stage which is vital to the selection process. While all applicants submit in Step 1, only selected agencies will be invited to submit proposals in Step 2 and participate in Site Visits during Step 3.

In order to apply, visit our website for instructions regarding the on-line application and supporting information required (www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org)

Step 1: Due via eC Impact January 24, 2014, by 5 p.m.

Applicants will complete and provide preliminary agency and project information, including:

- Agency Cover Sheet (hyperlink on website with items included on the sheet)
- Agency Budget Summary
- Step 1 Proposal Summary Form (hyperlink on website with items included on the form)

Step 2: Due March 17, by 5 pm - By Invitation Only

Applicants selected through Step 1 will be invited to complete a Full Proposal, including:

- Detailed program description
- Program Logic Model with outcome projections (if applicable)
- Agency Budget Form
d. Supporting documentation including:
   - audit(s) covering two years for agencies with contributions/revenues greater than $300,000; for those at or below $300,000, year-to-date Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) and Statement of Activities (Income Statement) are required for FY 2011-12 or FY 2012.
   - most recent IRS Form 990;
   - Board list with term dates

Step 3: Site Visit target Dates – April 28 - May 6, 2013 - By Invitation Only

Finalists in the selection process will participate in a site visit. The site visit, conducted by a multidisciplinary review team including corporate and community volunteers and United Way staff, will focus both on the proposed service for which funding is requested, and a more in-depth exploration of the lead agency’s capacity to implement the service/lead the effort.

Scoring Criteria

The following criteria are applied by United Way staff and teams of trained review volunteers (the majority of which are United Way donors) to rank proposals. The proposal questions are used in this process to elicit if the following criteria are met.

- The project serves the target population
- The project utilizes a sound approach
- The project achieves measurable results
- The project leverages necessary partnerships
- The project is likely to lead to community impact and is the best investment of United Way dollars
- The project meaningfully engages corporate or community volunteers
- The project raises awareness of the target population

Project Outcomes

Proposals chosen for funding will focus on achieving and providing a comprehensive plan for measuring at least one of the following long-term community level outcomes for people with disabilities:

1) People with disabilities have more substantive employment opportunities and preparation for employment.

Potential strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying and filling gaps in service that support individuals with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment
- Utilizing corporate partnerships to enhance employment opportunities
- Replicating models that successfully engage people with disabilities in employment and volunteer activities, including individuals with complex disabilities
- Assist veterans with disabilities to obtain and sustain employment
2) Caregivers of people with disabilities have the support they need to continue providing care.
Potential strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying caregivers, assessing their needs and providing support in meeting them
- Promoting programs and policies to increase access to community support, including access to quality information and respite services
- Providing caregivers with assistance in planning for their son’s/daughter’s futures
- Encouraging innovative models to support working caregivers

3) People with disabilities have increased independence and social connection in the community.
Potential strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing initiatives that create a culture of community participation, independent living and employment for individuals with disabilities including veterans with disabilities
- Assisting people with disabilities and their families to prepare for long term living (by mobilizing legal, financial and/or social work communities)
- Supporting opportunities for persons with disabilities to learn daily living activities that will help them live more independently, including those with complex disabilities
- Advocating for increased housing options and promote efforts to connect individuals with appropriate supportive housing, home modifications and assistive technology

Target Populations

Proposed projects must serve one or more of the following target populations:

- People with disabilities who are seeking employment or job readiness skills
- People with disabilities who are seeking greater independence and social connection, including those with complex disabilities
- Veterans with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities who are transitioning out of the education system
- Caregivers of people with disabilities

Community Outcomes Strategies

Proposals should be designed to achieve community level impact through bold, transformative collaborations that push to be as impactful as possible—they should employ **at least one** of the following community outcome strategies (or an equally effective, vetted strategy):

1. **Engage Volunteers:**
   - Connect volunteers (on a large scale) with people with disabilities and/or their caregivers in consistent, meaningful activities that increase independence.

2. **Raise Awareness / Advocate for Change:**
3. Contribute to Systems Change:

- Engage non-profit, business, government and labor community as leaders and partners in efforts that improve outcomes for people with disabilities.

Proposal Questions (to be answered online: Program Section)
Please note: These questions will be answered online and are provided here only for your review. The online answer box for each question is limited by a certain number of characters as noted below. We encourage you to work first in a WORD document, use tools-word count to track the total characters used per each question, and save your work. You may then copy and paste into the online answer boxes when completing the online application.

1. Proposal Funding
   - Dollar amount of the funding request
   - Describe how resources will be leveraged in the implementation of this project (1000 character limit)

2. Select the category of service for this proposal:
   - New project
   - Expansion of an existing project
   - Enhancement of an existing project

3. Purpose Statement
   - Provide a brief description of the project, the strategies you will employ to achieve goals, and the problem it is seeking to address. (3000 character limit)

4. Choose which United Way outcome this project is designed to address. (Multiple selections possible)
   - Increase the number of people with disabilities who are employed or making significant progress toward employment.
   - Increase support to caregivers of people with disabilities which allows them to continue providing care.
   - Support people with disabilities to have increased levels of independence and social connection in the community.

5. Select which of the following community outcomes strategy(ies) this effort will employ:
   1. Contribute to Systems Change
   2. Engage Volunteers
   3. Advocate for Change
6. Describe how the selected strategy(ies) will lead to the accomplishment of the goals of the project, include the agency’s past experiences specific to this issue (2000 character limit)

7. Describe the community level changes that will occur as a result of this effort, detailing the positive impact these changes will have on the community. (1500 character limit)

8. Collaborating agencies

   List the collaborating/partnering agencies that will be involved in the project. Please indicate which (if, any) agencies will be sharing funding.
   • Describe the role of the lead agency in implementing this project. Describe why this agency is uniquely positioned to lead this project. (1500 character limit)
   • Provide a brief description of the role the partner agency(ies) will have in implementing the proposed project (500 character limit)

STEP 2: To assist in proposal preparation, below is a draft of the questions that will be posed in STEP 2 of the RFP process. Please note: STEP 2 is by invitation only. The questions are presented as reference, as understanding the requirements of STEP 2 may be instructive. Also, understand that the questions are in draft form and are subject to change.

1. Describe how this effort will be sustained over time. Discuss how necessary resources will be secured (financial, personnel, partnerships, etc.) and how the project will be affected by budgetary cuts to programs if they should occur. (1000 character limit)

2. Describe this effort’s benefit to the target population. Explain why this approach will be more effective than what has been done in the past. (1000 character limit)

3. Discuss how this effort will prevent future problems and be the best investment of community-generated United Way Dollars. Include why it is likely to resonate with United Way Donors. (1000 character limit)

4. Describe measurable results that have been achieved to date by the participating agencies. (1000 character limit)

5. Discuss the ways you will partner with and recognize United Way in this effort. (1500 character limit)

In STEP 2, invited agencies will also complete a logic model to explain how the proposed activities will reach United Way’s long term outcomes. This logic model will require agencies to:

   • Choose which of the designated long-term outcomes the program/project will achieve;
   • Select and set goals for indicators that will lead to these outcomes
   • Describe how the agency(ies) will track and measure changes; and,
   • Describe the program activities that will lead to the desired outcomes.