



**United Way  
of the Greater Capital Region**

## **Investment Strategy 2010-2011**

United Way of the Greater Capital Region  
One United Way  
P.O. Box 13865  
Albany, NY 12212  
518.456.2200  
[www.unitedwaygcr.org](http://www.unitedwaygcr.org)

**Investment Strategy – 2010-2011**  
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## **I. Introduction**

### **Mission**

To improve people's lives through the investment of community resources.

### **Vision**

To be the leader in bringing people and resources together to achieve measurable and sustainable improvements in the quality of life in our communities.

Thank you for your interest in partnering with United Way of the Greater Capital Region. We value working with a variety of human service organizations in our mutual desire to advance the common good, improving conditions and helping people throughout our five county region achieve their idea of a good life.

Due to the work that agencies like yours do within our community, people's lives and neighborhoods are changed. We are pleased that United Way-funded programs and collaborations reported touching the lives of 86,800 individuals -approximately 5% more than the prior year. Many of these individuals have demonstrated improvements across a variety of areas including increased family stability, improved literacy, and increased income through employment and skill building as well as understanding how to manage money. The reported progress in key areas is a positive signal of lasting change. Collectively the improvements represent significant contributions to creating more economically vibrant communities as well. Our work will be of greater value for people and our communities as we become more proficient at measuring progress toward outcomes in the most critical areas.

United Way is dedicated to refining strategies and investments that lead to lasting change. We are fortunate to have the benefit of national and local resources that support our community-building and investments. Working with many partners, United Way will increasingly focus on the most effective and systematic approach to help people gain access and life-long skills related to education, income and health-related opportunities. I anticipate completing a plan of action in 2010 that will bring greater definition and allow us to frame United Way outcome goals and investment priorities around education, income and health. We look forward to and encourage your participation in formulating strategies to drive community impact and lasting change.

## Eligibility Criteria

In order to be able to apply for a UWGCR investment, your organization must meet the standards listed below and present the following documentation at the time of application:

1. 501(c)(3). The lead organization for all programs or community partnerships must present a valid 501(c)(3) IRS non-profit determination letter prior to investment. If required, the organization must also be registered as a charitable organization with the New York State Office of the Attorney General.
2. Length of Operation. Programs that apply for investments must have been in operation for at least one year prior to submission of application. All collaborations that apply must have been operating as a collaborative partnership for at least one year.
3. Governance. All lead organizations must comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding governance of nonprofit organizations, including the following:

To be submitted with every application:

- All lead organizations must have a volunteer Board of Directors with fiscal and programmatic oversight responsibilities. A current Board of Directors list is due with the application.
- All organizations must have a current IRS form 990 and/or audits filed in accordance with federal and state regulations.
- All lead applicants must submit to UWGCR their latest 990 and/or audit at time of application.

To be submitted if never before submitted to UWGCR or if there are changes:

- All lead organizations and their primary partner(s) must have sexual harassment policies in compliance with federal civil rights law and non-discrimination policies in compliance with New York State Human Rights Law. (NYS Human Rights Law states, "It is unlawful to discriminate against any person because of race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, age, disability or marital status.")
- Sexual harassment and non-discrimination policies for lead agencies are due at the time of the application.
- Lead agency programs that serve infants, children and youth are required to submit a copy of the agency's child abuse policy at time of application.

4. 2-1-1 Profile. Agencies must complete a 2-1-1 profile by the time their application is submitted to UWGCR. If the agency already has a 2-1-1 profile they must review it and make updates. The 2-1-1 directory may be reviewed at <http://www.refersoftware.com/uwgcr/> and updates may be made by calling the call center at 2-1-1.

5. Memorandums of Understanding. MOU's must be submitted for the primary partner(s) in collaborative applications at time of application. An example of an MOU can be found at <http://www.unitedwaygcr.org/Files/SampleMOU.doc>
6. Donor Designations. As a service to our donors, UWGCR allows designations to any 501(c)(3) organization. Organizations whose programs or community partnerships receive UWGCR investment may not encourage those designations on their own behalf, in the United Way campaign. Solicitation of designations on behalf of one's own organization may result in the loss of investment. In the State Employees Federated Appeal and the Combine Federal Campaign, organizations are encouraged to solicit contributions on their own behalf.

### Types of Investments

All applicants must meet the eligibility guidelines and application criteria of this **Investment Strategy**. The investment period for all UWGCR investments is July 1 through June 30. UWGCR investments for 2010-2011 will be for one year of funding.

#### **A. Single Program Investments**

In single program investments, the agency operating the program is doing so independently without another party to bring consumer change. All applicants must demonstrate consumer change in behavior, skill level or a change in consumer condition. **Two performance indicators reflecting this change are required in these applications. The indicators must both be in the same investment area (such as Family Support) although they may reflect one or two UWGCR outcome statements.**

#### **B. Program Collaboration Investments**

Program collaborations must have one collaborating partner who will enter into a strategic partnership to improve the services for or conditions of consumers in clearly defined target populations and/or geographic areas.

Program collaboration applications must address two UWGCR outcome statements in **one** investment area (such as Financial Stability). All collaborative programs are strongly encouraged to identify both a consumer change and a community-level change. **All involved partners must be active participants in achieving consumer change as identified in the program's indicators. Program collaborations are encouraged to have more than one additional partner.**

Any program that has received a UWGCR investment as a program collaboration must apply again as a program collaboration.

*Example of a Program Collaboration:* A youth literacy program that has multiple partners working together to improve identified indicators. Partners could include, for example, a school, an after-school program, and a neighborhood library. All collaborative partners would need to demonstrate specific programmatic plans for the improvement of reading levels (one example) of the identified population.

Partners can be non-profit organizations, municipalities, school districts, hospitals, and other community institutions and for-profit businesses. The lead organization must have 501(c)(3) status. A collaborative partner may not have the same 501(c)(3) as the lead agency. *An organization that merely acts as fiscal agent, provides only space, or makes or receives referrals is not considered a “collaborative partner.”*

### **C. Community Collaboration Investments**

Community collaboration investments are programs and community partnerships that have at least two collaborating partners who enter into a strategic partnership in order to make community-wide change. This can be done by strengthening locally established task forces, alliances, or coalitions.

Community collaboration applications must address two UWGCR outcome statements in one investment area. All community collaborations are encouraged to indentify both a consumer change and a community-level change. All involved partners must be active participants in achieving performance targets.

All community collaborations previously funded through UWGCR must continue to apply for funding within this category.

*Example of a community partnership:* regional or county-wide alliances, task forces, or coalitions that focus on systems change or infrastructure development.

Partners can be non-profit organizations, municipalities, school districts, hospitals, and other community institutions and for-profit businesses. The Lead Organization must have 501(c)(3) status. The collaborative partners may not have the same 501(c)(3) as the lead agency. *An organization that merely acts as fiscal agent, provides only space, makes or receives referrals is not considered a “collaborative partner.”*

**D. Other Investments:** UWGCR has a Strategic Investments pool that is by invitation only. For the 2010-2011 investment cycle, this process is closed for new investments.

## Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

UWGCR will ask applicants to provide two budgets. The first will be for the whole program and the second will show how the proposed United Way investment will be used. UWGCR will only invest in programs which show a budget and budget narrative including only eligible program-related expenses as listed below. Any application that includes one or more of the ineligible expenses listed below anywhere in the application will not be reviewed for funding.

### **Eligible program-related expenses**

- a. Staff Salary
- b. Occupancy
  
- c. Supplies & Equipment
- d. Travel Expenses
- e. Training of Staff
- f. Administrative Expenses
- g. Stipends

### **Ineligible expenses**

- a. Construction and capital expenses (such as buildings or vehicles)
- b. Communication materials, when they are not an integral component of a larger program or community partnership investment
- c. Membership fees
- d. Salary increases as the single reason for increased request
- e. Scholarships
- f. Subsidies

## UWGCR Outcomes

Community outcomes are vision statements that focus an application toward specific community priorities. Single program investments require one outcome statement while program and community collaboration investments require selection of two outcome statements under one investment area. These outcome statements will be provided in a drop down menu in the on-line application. Note that there is a listing of types of programs that fit with each investment area. Ultimately, select the outcome(s) that best matches your program's indicators.

### **Family Support**

- A community with coordinated plans and goals to meet identified needs, fill existing gaps and integrate services to create strong, healthy families.
- A community where people enjoy physical and mental well-being.
- A community where caregivers have the skills and resources to raise successful families.
- A community where seniors live in a safe and secure environment.

Programs that fit well into the Family Support outcomes include ones that provide these types of services:

*Counseling, Case Management, Parenting Education, Domestic Violence, Personal Development, Teen Pregnancy, Mentoring, Senior Independence, Mediation, Substance Abuse.*

## **Financial Stability**

- A community where individuals and families can build assets to achieve educational and financial goals.
- Individuals and families have access to supportive services to move towards economic stability.
- A community with coordinated plans and goals to meet identified needs, fill existing gaps and integrate services to create financial stability for community members.

Programs that fit well into the Financial Stability outcomes include ones that provide these types of services:

*Employment skills, Financial Education, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Home Buyer Programs.*

## **Literacy**

- A community where every youth demonstrates developmentally appropriate literacy skills.
- A community where all adults are able to speak, read and write at a level which will enable them to achieve their personal, family, educational and employment goals.
- A community with coordinated plans and goals to meet identified needs, fill existing gaps, and integrate services to create a literate community.

Programs that fit well into the Literacy outcomes include ones that provide these types of services:

*Educational, Literacy, After School Tutoring.*

## **Basic Needs**

- A community in which every member has access to supports and services to meet basic needs for food, shelter, and care for dependent family members.
- A community with coordinated plans and goals to meet identified needs, fill existing gaps and integrate services to create a community with a sound safety net.

Programs that fit well into the Basic Needs outcomes include ones that provide these types of services:

*Homelessness, Housing, Food Security, Information and Referral, Transportation.*

## **VII. Indicators**

### **Measurable Results**

Applications need to demonstrate that the program can and will produce measurable results. A measurable result must identify a specific behavior, skill level, or condition of a consumer that will change. Indicators provide the means by which UWGCR measures the results of an investment.



**Method of Verification/Tracking Tools:** Each indicator must have specific means of tracking it. For example, a homework help program can show that it is helping children pass their grade by keeping copies of the children's report cards. Other tracking tools could be pre and post tests, clinical files, or the Devereux Childhood Assessment among others which best fit the performance target. By listing your program's tracking tool(s), you are demonstrating that the program has a means to show that it is performing.

### **Program Design**

UWGCR encourages agencies to design programs which address a community need with these elements in mind:

**a.) Evidence-Based Practice (EBP):** The use of the best available scientific knowledge derived from outcome studies as a basis for guiding professional interventions and effective therapies, combined with professional ethical standards, clinical judgment, and practice wisdom.

**b.) Strength-Based Approach:** Emphasizes a consumer and/ or community's resources, capabilities, support systems, and motivations to meet challenges and overcome adversity.

**c.) General Program Design:**

After reading your program's application, UWGCR volunteers should be able to answer these questions.

- *Does the program appropriately address the consumer and his/her barriers to change?*
- *Are the key people implementing the program qualified to work with the identified consumer?*
- *Are the program's leaders aware of and effectively using relevant community resources?*
- *Has the agency conducted strategic planning for fiscal and programmatic sustainability?*

### **Fiscal Competency**

All funded programs and collaborations receiving a UWGCR investment must have a lead agency with a history of fiscal competency. This will be evaluated by review of the following: annual IRS 990, year-end audit and fiscal summary. UWGCR's Board of Directors may recommend no investment or termination of the investment at any time if the fiscal stability of the organization compromises its ability to deliver the program(s) funded under the grant agreement.

UWGCR requires the submission of the following financial documentation:

- IRS Form 990's are required from every funded partner.
  - Annual certified audits are required from:
    - Agencies with operating budgets of \$250,000 or more
    - Agencies with operating budgets of \$100,000 to \$250,000 with a UWGCR investment of \$25,000 or greater
- Note: To determine what the operating budget is for an agency, see Line 12 on IRS Form 990.*
- Annual financial reviews are required from:
    - Agency operating budgets between \$100,000 and \$250,000 and an investment less than \$25,000
    - Annual reviews must be conducted by an independent certified public accountant
  - Agencies with operating budgets under \$100,000 are not required to have a certified audit or review by a CPA firm. UWGCR will, though, review the IRS Form 990.

### **Cost Effectiveness**

UWGCR volunteers ask specific questions of applicants to ensure that investments are cost effective. Programs that best answer the following questions are most likely to receive investments:

- *Will the investment support the indicator?*
- *What is the likelihood that the program can achieve its intended results?*
- *Is the cost reasonable, given the results?*
- *Does this program represent a duplication of services?*

### **On-going Evaluation**

**a.) Mid-Year, End of Year, and Site Visit Reports:** UWGCR uses progress and site visit reports to track progress towards performance targets. Be advised that all investment volunteers reviewing applications from previously funded applicants will examine these reports.

**b.) Site Visits:** Site visits provide an opportunity for UWGCR staff, board members and/or volunteers to meet with the program staff, discuss the project's objectives, visit the site, and review tracking tools and the overall operation. Site visits are generally done once a year for the collaborative programs. As noted above, investment volunteers will review site visit reports for previously funded applicants.

### **For Program Collaboration and Community Collaboration Investments**

#### **Collaboration and Integration**

Collaborators are expected to share in-kind or actual financial resources to fill a service gap or creatively address a community problem. Partners can be non-profit organizations, municipalities, school districts, hospitals, and other community institutions. All collaborative partners must be active participants in achieving indicators. The Lead Organization must have 501(c)(3) status. *An organization that merely acts as fiscal agent, provides only space, or makes referrals to a program or community partnership is not considered a "collaborative partner."*

Priority for investment will be given to previously funded collaboratives that have demonstrated successful results.

Please Note:

- With the application, collaborative applicants must submit a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the key one to two collaborative partners.
- Programs are encouraged to participate in community taskforces and coalitions that seek new or enhanced solutions for community impact. Priority investment recommendations will be given to programs that have committed staff and/or other community resources to one or more of the following community partnerships:
  - United Way Family Support Network
  - CA\$H of the Greater Capital Region and/or its multiple county coalitions
  - Saratoga Housing Alliance
  - Schenectady County Long Term Care Consortium
  - County 10 Year Plans to End Homelessness
  - Literacy Task Force of Schenectady and Saratoga Counties
  - Emergency Food and Shelter Program – Local Board
  - 2-1-1
  - Other community coalitions

### **Application Process**

UWGCR has an open and competitive investment process. Agencies interested in applying for a United Way investment need to first contact a UWGCR staff person to have a screening of their program to see if it meets the UWGCR criteria for funding. Invitations to complete an on-line Letter of Intent in October 2009 will be sent to all of our currently funded programs and any new programs that meet the investment criteria who have been screened.

Letters of Intent will be available to complete on-line from October 14, 2009 through November 11, 2009 for each program seeking funding. The primary purpose of the Letter of Intent is to ensure that each program will be working on outcomes and indicators that impact the UWGCR outcome statements. This Letter of Intent will be used as a **screening tool** prior to an organization being invited to submit a full application. The criteria for submitting the Letter of Intent are:

- The Letter of Intent is complete
- Lead organization applying is a 501(c)(3)
- Lead organization has policies for sexual harassment, non-discrimination and child abuse
- Program or collaboration has been in operation 12 months or longer
- Program is requesting an investment of \$5,000 or more
- UWGCR's investment will be used for eligible expenses

- Both of the indicators include the **five** elements written in the format provided on page 9.
- The activities, milestone steps, and indicators provided in the letter of intent have a logical progression towards the outcome statement selected.
- The indicators written relate to UWGCR outcome statements and investment areas
- If seeking to apply as a collaborative, the Letter of Intent provides enough information to show that the collaborative partner(s) are engaged and supporting consumer and/or community level change related to the investment request.
  - Collaborative partners cannot be part of the lead agency's 501(c)(3)

Agencies will be notified in writing if they will be able to apply for funding by mid-December 2009.

Applications will be made available on-line on December 14, 2009. Single program applications will be due on January 13, 2010 while collaborative applications will be due on February 10, 2010. All required documentation listed above must be submitted with the application.

Notification will go out to agencies about their UWGCR investment in May/June 2010. Investments for the 2010-2011 cycle begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Applications must be complete and submitted on time with a balanced budget.** This includes all required documentation and forms. *Incomplete applications or applications without a balanced budget will not be considered.*

Investment review is an open and competitive process. Donor volunteers commit time and expertise to review investment applications and will make recommendations for funding to the Board of Directors. All decisions made by the Board are final. **There is no process for appeal.**

### **Policies and Procedures for Investment Awards**

- 1) Impact Investment Award Agreement. Organizations receiving investment awards are required to sign agreements with UWGCR. The agreement must be signed and returned to UWGCR by the specified due date. The agreement will outline the responsibilities of the lead organization and the expectations of UWGCR. The document will also contain important information, including contingencies and due dates for reports and other documentation.
  - a) If the agreement is not received on the due date, the service provider will be given 15 days to return the agreement while the first month's investment check is withheld. If the agreement is not signed and received by UWGCR after 15 days, the investment will be sent to the Board of Directors for action, which could include further hold on monthly payments or termination of the award.
  - b) If the agreement has special conditions or contingencies which require action on behalf of the lead agency, the contingencies must be met by the due date listed. If not received by the due date, the lead agency will be given 15 days to address the conditions or contingencies, while the first month's investment check is withheld. If the special conditions or contingencies are not met within 15 days, the investment will be sent to the Board of Directors for action, which could include further hold on monthly payments or termination of the award.

- 2) Investment Distribution. UWGCR will pay awards in 13 installments. Installments are generally paid out monthly unless other specific arrangements have been made. The final installment will not be made until all reports and other documents have been received by UWGCR.
- 3) Program Reporting. UWGCR articulates clear due dates for progress reports on the Impact Program Award Agreement. If progress reports are not received by the due date, the service provider will be given an additional 15 days to complete the reports, while the next month's payment is withheld for one month. If not received within the 15 day extension, the investment will be sent to UWGCR's Board of Directors for action, which could include further hold on monthly payments or termination of the award.
- 4) Financial Reporting. In accordance with federal and state regulations, UWGCR must receive an IRS form 990, audit or fiscal summary within 4½ months of the organization's fiscal year end. If UWGCR does not receive the required documents or documentation of audit extensions, the organization will be notified and monthly payments will be withheld for 60 days. If financial documentation is not received within compliance deadlines, the investment will be sent to the Board of Directors for action, which could include further hold on monthly payments or termination of award.
- 5) Minimum Investment. Requests for UWGCR investments cannot be for less than \$5,000. UWGCR will also not make any investments for less than \$5,000 in the 2010-2011 Investment Cycle.
- 6) School Based Programs. Programs housed in a school and in which a school is a collaborative partner will be able to apply for and receive UWGCR funding for three consecutive years. After three years have passed, the program will no longer be eligible for UWGCR funding with the intent being that the school district will include the program into their budget.

### Glossary

**Collaboration**: A mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results that they are more likely to attain together than alone.

**Collaborative**: The structure or group working together to achieve a shared vision. An organization that merely acts as fiscal agent, provides space, or makes referrals to a program or community partnership is not considered a "collaborative partner."

**Community Impact**: Improving lives by mobilizing communities to create sustained changes in underlying conditions.

**Community Outcomes**: Vision statements that focus an application toward specific community priorities.

**Infrastructure development**: Collaborative programs that redesign existing processes, structures or programs to build the capacity of the community to serve consumers (e.g., the Homeless Management Information System tracks the homeless population in the region, which assists in case management.) UWGCR does not provide capital funding.

**Measurable Results**: A quantifiable, positive change that a program has set as its goal.

**Indicators**: A written statement of the results a program or community collaboration has committed to achieve. UWGCR indicators must be written in the format on page 9.

**Investment Area**: The four areas in which UWGCR will provide funding. These are Family Support, Financial Stability, Basic Needs, and Literacy

**Scholarship**: A financial award provided to a consumer that would allow the consumer to improve his/her formal education or attend a workshop/conference. UWGCR does **not** provide financial assistance to support a scholarship fund.

**Service delivery change**: Collaborative programs that offer new or enhanced services or outreach sites, or utilize untapped partners for delivering services to consumers.

**Stipend**: A cash/product incentive generally given to a consumer at the end of a program to encourage participation in the program. UWGCR will fund stipends.

**Subsidy**: Financial assistance intended to lower the cost of care for families. UWGCR will **not** fund subsidies.

**Systems change**: Collaborative programs that change how a current system of service operates in order to improve consumer service delivery or to create greater access to programs. An example would be creating a uniform intake process for all service providers who provide emergency food.

## **X. UWGCR Staff Contacts**

UWGCR's Community Impact staff can provide support and assistance to your agency before, during and after the application process. We can work with your organization to make stronger indicators, provide technical assistance in using our online system, and answer your questions about United Way investments.

### **Laurie Bacheldor**

Vice President of Community Impact  
456-2200 x130  
[lbacheldor@unitedwaygcr.org](mailto:lbacheldor@unitedwaygcr.org)

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*For information and assistance on UWGCR policies and procedures.*

### **Allison Lattin**

Director of Community Investments  
456-2200 x135  
[alattin@unitedwaygcr.org](mailto:alattin@unitedwaygcr.org)

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*For information and support on creating strong indicators, using the on line system, and general questions.*

### **Loreen Kaiser**

Community Impact Manager  
456-2200 x139  
[lkaiser@unitedwaygcr.org](mailto:lkaiser@unitedwaygcr.org)

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*For information and support on creating strong indicators, using the on line system, general questions and inquires about Community Care Fund payments, and required documentation.*

### **Laurie Allen**

Administrative Assistant – Community Impact  
456-2200 x147  
[lallen@unitedwaygcr.org](mailto:lallen@unitedwaygcr.org)

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*For support in using the on-line system and required documentation.*