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NEWS RELEASE

UNITED WAY ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL PROGRAM FUNDING

Success of 2010 Campaign enables \$150,000 in funding for 3 programs

(BUFFALO, NY, May 23, 2011) – United Way of Buffalo & Erie County (UWBEC) today announced that it is providing \$150,000 in funding to three programs at local agencies. This funding is in addition to the \$4 million in program investments announced earlier this year.

The success of the 2010 United Way Campaign, which raised over \$13.3 million – the first increase in the organization’s Campaign revenues since the 2001 Campaign – made this incremental funding possible, according to United Way board chair Bob Zak. “The members of our community truly stepped up this year and demonstrated their belief in the importance of United Way’s work through their generosity,” he said. “There is no better testament to the spirit of Erie County than this additional funding, which will support vital services for vulnerable and underserved populations.”

The announcement was held at the Belle Center, which provides educational, recreational and social services to children and youth up to age 24. The Center will receive \$54,000 under United Way’s Education platform to support programming designed to ensure that youth are prepared for higher education, trade education, or work upon graduation from high school. Nestor Hernandez, executive director of the Belle Center, said, “Our system of service provides what children need to be successful in life; to go from our Day Care to graduating college or assuming a prosperous career. We are delighted that United Way is joining us by investing in our children.”

The International Institute of Buffalo’s Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Victim Services Program was awarded \$46,000 under United Way’s Health and Wellness platform. The program provides immigrant victims of trafficking and intimate partner violence with comprehensive and appropriate services that take into account these individuals’ cultural and linguistic challenges. “We are deeply grateful to the United Way for recognizing our work as important, and to the many donors who made this funding possible,” said Eva Hassett, International Institute executive director.

The final organization, which will receive \$50,000 under the Education platform, was Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, a nationally recognized youth development program at South Park High School proven to dramatically improve the graduation rates for youth at risk of dropping out. The program connects South Park students to a full-time school-based Youth Advocate, employment training, college preparation support, and tutoring services, while helping youth earn their high school diplomas. “We are incredibly grateful for the financial support from United Way and its generous donors,” said Roderick Green, executive director of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection. “We are well on our way toward

helping South Park students stay engaged in school and develop the skills and confidence they need to graduate ready for college and the workplace."

Michael Weiner, United Way president, noted that these programs were highly ranked in the organization's most recent application process, but did not receive funding simply because funds were not available at the time. "Although we were proud to be able to maintain our total funding levels when we announced our investments in January, we continued to work toward a successful Campaign in the hope that we would be able to increase our support for high-quality programs like these," he said. "Today is a proud moment for our organization, and should be a very proud moment for each of the 53,000 individuals and 1,200 companies, foundations, and other organizations who supported our Campaign this year. Without the community's generosity, this additional funding would not be possible."

The mission of the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County is to bring people, organizations, and resources together to improve community well being. For more information, and for a complete list of funded programs, visit www.uwbec.org.