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Nine Promising Initiatives Tapped to Receive \$1.7 Million in Social Innovation Fund Grants to Improve Achievement, Cradle to Career

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky (January 31, 2010) - The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Social Innovation Fund has announced grants to support the expansion or replication of nine promising initiatives to help more than 1,900 families and individuals in Cincinnati, Covington and Newport prepare their children for kindergarten, improve reading skills, graduate from high school, enroll in and complete college, and maintain stable employment.

The grants are part of a \$2 million federal Social Innovation Fund award to expand innovative and effective approaches to help children and young adults succeed in school and life. The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Social Innovation Fund is a partnership of 14 local funders who are implementing the project with leadership from United Way of Greater Cincinnati and The Strive Partnership. The Corporation for National and Community Service, which administers the new Social Innovation Fund, awarded our local community \$2 million over two years to help children and families.

Through a unique funders collaborative, 14 local funders are matching the federal money, dollar for dollar. They recently conducted a competitive grants competition to identify effective, innovative community solutions working in one or more of the targeted areas. The new grants - which range from \$100,000 to \$325,000 per year - will be used to increase the number of individuals served by programs that are working in the local community.

"With this portfolio of grantees we feel we have a great opportunity to accelerate some of the positive changes we have experienced in our community," commented Robert C. Reifsnnyder, president and CEO of United Way of Greater Cincinnati. "The Social Innovation Fund provides our community with a great opportunity not only to change the trajectory for children but also to learn which programs are having the most impact."

The Social Innovation Fund, authorized under the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, is an innovative new federal program that addresses major challenges confronting communities by growing high-impact organizations delivering proven solutions. It targets millions in public-private funds to expand effective community solutions across three issue areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development and school support.

"The work being done by United Way, The Strive Partnership and other partners in Greater Cincinnati is proving to be a model for other communities looking to build the civic infrastructure necessary to move all children towards education and families towards financial stability," commented Patrick Corvington, director of the Corporation for National and Community Service while in Cincinnati for the awards announcement. "We are proud to support this partnership and look forward to seeing the results of their partnerships with their new grantees."

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Local initiatives receiving grants today, following a competitive process, are:

Kindergarten Readiness:

- The Consortium for Resilient Young Children (The Children's Home of Cincinnati) - to support the Consortium for Resilient Young Children which connects child care centers and mental health providers to care for children's social and emotional development through their earliest years.
- The ECSITE Program (Cincinnati Museum Center) - to expand a program helping children be ready for kindergarten by focusing on building science activities into preschool classrooms.
- Books in Action and Summer Bridge (Cincinnati Public Schools Early Childhood Education) - to expand its evidence-based pre-literacy curriculum to community based child care centers which will drive children's readiness for school.
- Every Child Succeeds - to ensure that all families served by the program are able to transition their children to quality child care settings at the age of three.

High School Graduation/College Enrollment:

- Holmes 180 (Covington Independent Public Schools) - to support a transformation on the Holmes High School campus to better connect students to learning opportunities that ensure that they have opportunities to graduate from high school with college credit and with skills that can help them attain employment.
- Leadership Scholars - to provide peer delivered leadership development training towards at risk children to help them graduate from high school and transition to college.

High School Graduation/Employment:

- Bridging the Gap (Cincinnati Arts and Technology Center) - to support an initiative which connects youth graduating from high school with entry level employment within the health care industry helping to get a footing in a career path that will lead to additional education and training.

Postsecondary Enrollment and Completion:

- Gen-1 (University of Cincinnati) - to expand services that support first generation college students and children coming from the foster care system.

Sustained Employment:

- Advanced Manufacturing Enterprise Expansion (Easter Seals Work Resource Center) - to replicate a successful program that provides on-the-job training and experience to become employed in the advanced manufacturing industry.

"This portfolio of promising initiatives is not just a group of effective and innovative programs but also represents the potential to connect systems that support our community's children and young adults as they successfully transition from one stage of life to another, cradle to career," commented Greg Landsman, executive director, The Strive Partnership.

The 14 local funding partners leading the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Social Innovation Fund are:

Duke Energy Foundation

The Thomas J. Emery Memorial

The Greater Cincinnati Foundation

The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation

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KnowledgeWorks
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
The Daniel and Susan Pfau Foundation
The P&G Fund
SC Ministry Foundation
Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trust, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee
The Strive Partnership
Toyota
United Way of Greater Cincinnati
The Craig Young Family Foundation

"This is a major milestone for our community," Landsman added. "The Social Innovation Fund is a unique collaboration between the federal government and local philanthropic funders. The fact that our community was one of the very first selected to receive a grant through the Social Innovation Fund, speaks both to the importance of our work and the potential we offer for identifying and bringing innovative solutions to scale."