



United Way
of Greater Stark County

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Dear Stark County 501(c)3 Organization:

As you may be aware, there are a variety of grants flowing from the federal government's stimulus money. We have identified one that we hope will assist small non-profit organizations in Stark County with annual budgets less than \$500,000 by supporting development of boards, systems, communication, and recruiting skills, among others. Called the Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF) Nonprofit Capacity Building Program, it is intended to improve services to a "distressed community" and those most impacted by the current financial crisis.

As your local United Way, we are interested in the development of additional systems, processes, and trainings that will be of help and support to the non-profit community in Stark County. We have been encouraged to act as the "Lead Agency" for this project.

Enclosed (attached) you will find two documents. The first is a short summary of this Strengthening Communities Grant Program, and the second is a brief questionnaire about your organization which will assist us as we include you in the project.

As you can see, time is short-the grant must be received in Washington, D.C. by July 7. We are encouraging you to consider if this opportunity is one which will benefit your organization. If you do, please join us at a meeting at Walsh University next Tuesday, June 9 at 10:00 a.m. in the Barrette Business Center, Conference Room B. We anticipate this meeting taking no longer than 2 hours. Please bring the completed questionnaire with you so that we can begin to develop the grant narrative as soon as we finish our initial meeting. We will also have the formal Memorandum of Understanding available for the signature of program directors at the Walsh meeting.

We hope that you find that your organization is appropriate for inclusion in this important community support and development effort. Please feel free to share this information with another agency who also may find this of interest. To RVSP, simply send an email to: grantsvp@uwgsc.org. We look forward to seeing you on June 9.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maria B. Heege".

Maria B. Heege
President & CEO

MBH:jac

Enclosures: Grant overview, Grant questionnaire

Strengthening Communities Fund

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program

Expected Number of Awards: 34

Ceiling on Amount of Individual Awards: \$1,000,000 per project period

Floor on Amount of Individual Awards: None

Average Projected Award Amount: \$1,000,000 per project period

Length of Project Periods: 24 Months

There is one project and budget period of 24 months to allow funded organizations to maximize the award in order to provide assistance to nonprofit organizations that is both timely and efficient. No continuation awards will be offered.

ACF project will be implemented in a distressed community and will engage nonprofit organizations with annual budgets less than \$500,000 that serve low-income populations that are working to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to State and Federal benefits and tax credits.

ACF Grant defines: the distressed, well-defined service area; the needs of the service area; the training, technical assistance, and competitive financial assistance project; an estimate of the numbers and types of organizations expected to receive training and technical assistance and/or competitive financial assistance. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates the applicant's ability to provide training and technical assistance in all of the five critical areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness either on its own or through partnerships. An application will be evaluated on the extent to which outreach and eligibility for technical assistance will reach and be open to both secular and faith-based organizations.

Examples of Allowable Activities in the Five Critical Capacity Building Areas:

1. Organizational Development

- Strengthening Board Governance
- Developing Systems: Management, Human Resources, Financial, Information Technology, Planning
- Training Job/Benefits Counselors for ARRA Benefits and Other Federal Assistance
- Developing Comprehensive Communications Strategy

2. Program Development

- Creating Information Systems (e.g., ARRA Benefits/Programs, Financial Benefits/Tax Credits, Social Service Benefits)

- Translating Program Information into Spanish or Other Languages
 - Developing Curriculum (e.g., job retraining, new job skills)
 - Making Program Improvements
3. Collaboration and Community Engagement
- Disseminating Information Regarding State/Local ARRA Benefits
 - Developing Referral Systems Related to ARRA Benefits
 - Forging Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Community Colleges or Vocational Schools
 - Conducting Research on Local Sector Workforce Needs
 - Developing Collaborations/Strategic Partnerships with Industry-Specific Training Programs
 - Utilizing AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteers to Address Needs of Those Seeking Employment
 - Assessing Green Needs of Community and Skills Needed for Green Workers
4. Leadership Development
- Specifying Board Composition and Function
 - Contributing to Staff Professional and Career Development
 - Training and Development of Volunteers
 - Developing Succession Planning
5. Evaluation of Effectiveness
- Launching a Formal Program Evaluation
 - Developing and Incorporating New Program Measures
 - Incorporating Best Practices
 - Assessing Program Outcomes
 - Replicating Effective Program Models

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES GRANT QUESTIONNAIRE

The ACF grant program is designed to assist nonprofit organizations with budgets less than \$500,000 annually who are working in distressed communities with capacity building activities that support economic recovery. Specifically, the United Way of Greater Stark County, as a lead organization, will assist grassroots organizations working in distressed communities with capacity building activities in five critical areas: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability and effectiveness, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those in need.

Please note, "The Capacity Building program funds pay for the collaborative efforts of lead organizations with their project partners to build capacity that results in improved social service programs and activities, rather than for direct social services."

Please respond to this questionnaire so that we may appropriately describe your organization in the ACF Grant application. Please bring the completed form with you to the initial meeting at Walsh University, Barrette Business Center - Conference Room B on Tuesday, June 9 at 10:00 a.m.

Organization Name _____

Organization Director _____

Organization Address _____

Phone Number _____ FAX number _____

Website _____ Email _____

Mission and Vision

Statements _____

Number of clients served in 2008 _____ 2007 _____

Budget 2009 \$ _____ 2008 \$ _____ 2007 \$ _____

Board President _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

What are your primary interests in this grant? Please provide more information if needed.

INTEREST AREA	HIGH NEED	NEED	LOW NEED
Board Formation			
Board Training			
Leadership Training			
Collaboration Development			
Strategic Partnership Development			
Program Development			

INTEREST AREA	HIGH NEED	NEED	LOW NEED
Client Base Development			
Client work skills curriculum development			
Information, data collection system development			
Assistance with translation to client language			
Client finance management curriculum development			
Other:			
Other:			