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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amgen Foundation Provides \$100,000 Challenge Grant to United Way of Ventura County's Homelessness Efforts

Ventura, Calif. (November 12, 2019) – The Amgen Foundation has presented a \$100,000 challenge grant to United Way of Ventura County to launch a landlord engagement pilot program. The goal of the program is to increase housing stock and utilize existing housing vouchers and housing subsidies provided by local jurisdictions and community partners to prevent and end homelessness.

The grant will provide the foundation for a new funding mechanism designed to generate permanent supportive housing for chronic homeless individuals through a streamlined, one-stop funding collaborative comprised of public and private funders dedicated to ending homelessness.

“Landlord outreach, engagement and support is critical for homeless individuals in our county to be able to utilize the housing vouchers they have in hand,” said Eduardo Cetlin, president, Amgen Foundation. “Lack of available units is a serious barrier to housing our homeless, and the Amgen Foundation is proud to support the United Way’s efforts to address this important component of the problem. We are hopeful that this challenge grant will mobilize additional support.”

The private funds will further leverage public support provided by a recently awarded Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) grant in the amount of \$200,000 by the Ventura County Continuum of Care for United Way’s Landlord Engagement Pilot program.

In June of 2018, the United Way of Ventura County completed a Strategy Roadmap to prepare for its 75th Diamond Anniversary in 2020. Through this experience, the Board of Directors and staff were encouraged to see if there was a way the organization could be helpful in the housing and homeless arenas, as rental assistance was shown to be the #1 area of need for disaster victim hardship assistance.

“Everyone needs a safe place to call home, yet that basic need is increasingly out of reach for many people in Ventura County. Limited affordable housing supply, extremely low vacancy rates, and prohibitive and rising rents, make home access for those with housing barriers

exceedingly challenging,” said Eric Harrison, President and CEO of United Way of Ventura County. “We are grateful to the Amgen Foundation for leading the way with this generous challenge grant and we look forward to additional funders joining the cause to bring an end to homelessness in Ventura County.”

To accept the Amgen Foundation challenge and become a member of the funding collaborative, please email Eric.Harrison@vcunitedway.org. Landlords interested in becoming a member of the program, please email Amy.Duganne@vcunitedway.org.

About the Amgen Foundation

The Amgen Foundation seeks to advance excellence in science education to inspire the next generation of innovators, and invest in strengthening communities where Amgen staff members live and work. To date, the Foundation has donated more than \$300 million to local, regional, and international non-profit organizations that impact society in inspiring and innovative ways. The Amgen Foundation brings the excitement of discovery to the scientists of tomorrow through several signature programs, including Amgen Scholars, Amgen Biotech Experience, and LabXchange. For more information, visit www.amgeninspires.com and follow us on Twitter @AmgenFoundation.

About United Way of Ventura County

Since 1945, United Way of Ventura County has advanced the common good by creating opportunities for a better life for all. United Way identifies the root causes of poverty and works strategically to solve them by building alliances across all sectors, funding targeted programs and advocating for change. When we work together in common purpose, we LIVE UNITED. For more information about United Way of Ventura County, visit www.vcunitedway.org.

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