



For Immediate Release

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Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation Provides \$40,000 Challenge Grant to United Way's Homelessness Efforts

Ventura, CA, October 15, 2020 – The Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation (VCMRF) has presented a \$40,000 challenge grant to United Way of Ventura County's Landlord Engagement 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 activation for a 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.

"The Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation (VCMRF) is proud to stand with United Way to serve the most vulnerable in our community with this challenge grant," said Victoria Chandler, President & CEO. "Please join us with your gifts, large or small, to help end homelessness. VCMRF believes in partnerships and the generosity of others to support and deliver a program that houses those who need us most."

The funds will further leverage support provided by a Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) grant in the amount of \$200,000 by the Ventura County Continuum of Care and a funders collaborative that has raised more than \$200,000. The seven founding funders of the collaborative include Amgen, City of Oxnard, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, Pacific Western Bank, Sherwood Cares Foundation, and Union Bank.

Since United Way launched the Landlord Engagement Program in December 2019, 33 unsheltered homeless households including seniors, veterans, individuals, and families have been permanently housed. As a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March, United Way has helped 66 unsheltered veterans and family members by securing temporary housing in a motel and providing

daily food service. Through a partnership with Salvation Army's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), the program continues as United Way seeks permanent housing solutions for those veterans and their families. Additionally, United Way provided 2,000 Rapid Response Homeless Care Kits which were distributed by the Ventura County Healthcare for the Homeless Backpack Medicine team.

"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 Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation for 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 Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation's 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.

To make a donation, visit <http://igfn.us/form/hEGFmg>

About the Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation

Since 1956, the Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation (VCMRF) has been dedicated to improving, in partnership with others, access to needed health care for the most vulnerable and underserved residents of Ventura County. VCMRF's programs include the Children's Resource Program (CRP), a dental and vision program providing free oral health and vision care for low-income youth, under the age of 18; the Senior Resource Program (SRP), which provides free dental and vision care services to low-income older adults and seniors, 62 and older, and the Homeless Outreach Program, that is dedicated to improving the health of vulnerable Ventura County households through case management, outreach, and advocacy to eliminate the basic causes of homelessness. For more information, visit www.vcmrf.org.

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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