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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nearly \$1.5 million in Program Grants Distributed on Behalf of the UW Credit Union Fund for Racial Equity
Grants target financial stability and the education achievement gap for BIPOC community members

Madison, WI – June 3, 2021 – UW Credit Union, in partnership with United Way, will award 27 organizations located throughout the greater Milwaukee and Madison areas with racial equity program grants totaling \$1.5 million. The UW Credit Union Fund for Racial Equity is a collaborative effort with United Way of Dane County and United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County to remove barriers to economic mobility.

The recent program grants are specifically designed to increase financial stability and close the education achievement gap for people of color. A community advisory board prioritized transformational programming, recognizing organizations with specific, actionable plans that foster racial equity on a local level.

Eight Milwaukee-area organizations will receive \$25,000 per year over the course of two years for a total program investment of \$400,000. In Dane County, where most UW Credit Union members reside, 19 organizations will receive one-time grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000 for a total program investment of more than \$1 million. The combined \$1.5 million is on top of the \$500,000 in emergency funds granted earlier this month, equating to nearly \$2 million spread across both markets.

Several of the program grants address better educational outcomes for BIPOC community members in Dane County, including Maydm's 'Changing the Face of STEM' program and Operation Fresh Start's CareerScape Counseling Program for disconnected youth. But the largest program grant, \$200,000, was awarded to the Latino Academy to support their efforts to create equity in the transportation industry.

"Our number one goal is making family-sustaining wages more accessible to underserved communities," said Baltazar De Anda Santana, Executive Director for the Latino Academy of Workforce Development. "For too long, BIPOC community members have been the observers of economic growth, not the participants. Our Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program addresses this underrepresentation by helping Latino Academy students to obtain a Class A or Class B license. This grant not only doubles our capacity, it creates a sense of dignity and purpose."

In Milwaukee, five of the eight program grant recipients focus on educational development and advancement, including College Possible. The nonprofit addresses the college degree divide and will use the program funds to improve college access for students from diverse backgrounds. Similarly, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Foundation will invest the grant into their M3 Smart Start: Pathways to College Success program.



“Only one of our eight program awardees is a current United Way-funded organization,” said Nicole Angresano, Vice President of Community Impact, United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County. “UW Credit Union’s ask to develop a more equitable means for selecting organizations cast a much wider net than previous grants, uncovering a refreshing variety of impactful programming and opening a lot of doors.”

UW Credit Union is in touch with all grant recipients, both emergency and program-funded, to continue the conversation around social justice. Its employees, many of whom are personally connected to equity-based community groups, remain a direct resource for ongoing volunteerism opportunities.

“The UW Credit Union Fund for Racial Equity isn’t about imagining a more equitable future; it’s about building it *with* the community,” said Sheila Milton, UW Credit Union Vice President of Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. “We’re grateful that so many employees and community members spoke up to advocate for organizations at every stage. This is just the beginning of transforming community plans into community realities.”

Demarius Jury, a retail support senior teller for UW Credit Union’s Bayshore location and the current treasurer for the credit union’s Black Excellence employee resource group, referred Milwaukee-based Urban Underground for emergency funding earlier this year. Jury participated in their after-school program in high school and credits those life skills for where he is today, saying, “Urban Underground was the first time I saw successful, college graduates who looked like me. The organization motivated me to be the curator of my own success. It’s amazing to pay that back so many years later and to see the difference those funds will make.”

To see a full list of emergency and program grant recipients, please visit www.uwcu.org/racialequity.

About UW Credit Union

UW Credit Union is a growing, federally insured financial institution and a leading provider of a full range of financial services to University of Wisconsin communities. UW Credit Union's more than 800 employees serve the financial needs of nearly 300,000 members through world-class technology systems, and through a convenient network of 29 branch locations and over 100 ATMs. With assets exceeding \$4.6 billion, UW Credit Union is ranked nationally among the leading credit unions. Founded 90 years ago by members of the University of Wisconsin faculty and staff, UW Credit Union continues to operate as a not-for-profit, member-owned financial cooperative with locations in the Madison, Milwaukee, Stevens Point, Green Bay, Oshkosh, Whitewater and La Crosse areas.

About United Way of Dane County

United Way of Dane County has been tackling Dane County’s toughest challenges for 99 years. With a mission to unite the community to achieve measurable results and change lives, we are committed to build a Dane County where everyone can succeed in school, work and life. Through strategic partnerships and collaborative work, United Way brings the many voices of Dane County together to find common ground and develop a strategic architecture for change, while engaging businesses and individuals to give, advocate and volunteer in Dane County. Together, we are The Power of Many. Working for All.

About United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County:



United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in our local community.

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