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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Monadnock United Way announces COVID 19 recovery fund allocations

**Keene, NH** – Monadnock United Way announced this month, $85,500 in grant funding to qualifying programs and initiatives that are working to help individuals and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Monadnock Region.

The investments, designed to help provide gap funding for needs not covered by federal, state, and local aid, will fund childcare scholarships, housing related advocacy, early learning staff development, and a digital literacy needs assessment for seniors. These priority areas emerged during MUW’s Community Voices series, a forum for nonprofits, businesses large and small, government, and philanthropists to learn about the impact of COVID-19 and engage in an opportunity to reimagine and rebuild a stronger more equitable region for everyone.

Nine organizations received funds ranging from $2,500 - $15,000 including Keene Housing Kids’ Collaborative, The Mayhew Program, the Monadnock Alliance for Families, the Monadnock Social Service Collective, Rise for baby and family, The Winchester Learning Center, Monadnock Community Early Learning Center, New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance.

“We are delighted to receive funding to produce a video that will highlight how manufactured housing can be part of the solution to the affordable housing crisis in the Monadnock Region,” said Michele Talwani, director of Community Relations for the NH Community Loan Fund. “Working families, and employers struggling to hire because of the lack of housing, need to know about the affordability and quality of manufactured homes and the availability of nearly 50 vacant lots in nearby resident-owned communities.”

During the year-long Community Voices series, the issue of the vulnerability of children and families and need for support as both children and their caregivers attempt re-entry after the pandemic rose again and again. Several programs received funding for childcare and other support initiatives for families.

The Monadnock Alliance for Families received funding to support home visiting programs which build resiliency and strengthen families in the face of challenges like COVID-19. “Families have suffered greatly from the upset that the pandemic brought to this region. If we could wave a magic wand to create ample quality childcare spaces, adequate safe and affordable housing, access to the internet and enough mental health support, we would. Thank you, Monadnock United Way, for offering the magic wand,” said Penny Vaine, program manager for Healthy Starts at HCS a member of the Monadnock Alliance for Families.

The Monadnock Community Early Learning Center (MCELC) is using the funding to help defray the cost of childcare for families going back to work during this period of recovery. MCELC Executive Director, Judy Watkins, said, “Thanks to MUW we are able to help parents get back to work without worrying about childcare for the first two weeks!"

“We are so grateful to the community for their contributions to the COVID-19 Fund. During the pandemic, MUW was able to respond in real time to the needs of the community and now, in the recovery period, we are delighted to be able to offer support to these vital initiatives,” said Liz LaRose, president of Monadnock United Way.

For more information about the COVID-19 Recovery Funding allocations, please go to our website: www.muw.org/covid-19-recovery.

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About Monadnock United Way

Monadnock United Way is dedicated to improving lives by mobilizing diverse partners and investing in programs and people to create long-lasting, measurable change. MUW was founded in 1952, and currently has more than 2,500 donors, advocates, and volunteers. At Monadnock United Way, we fight for children, education and financial stability and basic needs in every community throughout our region.