

Remainder of Katrina Evacuee Grants Announced



United Way
of Greater Milwaukee

October 21, 2005

Today, nearly 700 Katrina evacuees are struggling with a new set of challenges that range from housing to counseling to legal aid. The transition from evacuee to Milwaukee resident clearly presents a new set of problems. That is why United Way of Greater Milwaukee initiated a mini-grant fund distribution process for agencies that could provide long-term assistance to Katrina evacuees.

On October 17th, United Way of Greater Milwaukee announced an initial investment of an additional \$50,000 from its reserve funds for five agencies that emphasized long-term solutions for evacuees. On Friday, October 21, United Way of Greater Milwaukee granted an additional \$50,000 dollars to the following agencies (\$10,000 each) in support of long-term services for evacuees:

- **Aurora Family Service – Counseling and Mental Health Services**

Aurora Family Service and Family Therapy Training Institute have developed The Family-Centered Traumatic Incident Response Program (FCTIR) to assist displaced families in minimizing the debilitating effects of acute traumatic stress. A combination of assessment, family psycho-education and support, and brief-intensive psychotherapy is available. The program will reduce the effects of acute trauma related stress and prevent the onset of post-acute traumatic stress disorder in both adults and children. Because of United Way's support, Aurora will be able to impact between 80 and 110 people, and as many as 30 families!

- **Housing Resources Incorporated – Housing Education**

With over 14 years experience, Housing Resources, Incorporated (HRI), is one of the leading home ownership counseling agencies in Milwaukee. With the support of United Way, "Financial Literacy for Life" education classes will be available to Evacuees of Hurricane Katrina that have relocated to the City of Milwaukee and plan to stay 28 months or longer. Participants will learn about banking services, checking and credit, their rights as a consumer, and how to save for the future. Participating evacuees will also develop their own individual budget and financial plan with the assistance of a financial counselor. The result is for evacuees to increase their financial knowledge and stability.

- **Lutheran Social Services – Behavioral Health Clinics**

With support of United Way, Lutheran Social Services through the assets of its Behavioral Health Clinics, will host four, day-long sessions of support, education, healing and resource collaboration for Katrina evacuees. Coping strategies and skill development during and following a disaster will be offered by licensed therapists. Additional activities include introductions to community resources for short-term and long-term mental health needs. Lastly, individual therapists will be available to conduct one-on-one support and guidance in dealing with more personal issues affecting an evacuee. Day-care will also be provided to ensure that families can fully participate without obstacles of child care arrangements. Children ages 7-15 will be offered appropriate

activities and groups aimed at processing some of their experiences and allow for fun and engaging educational activities.

- **Madre Angela Dental Clinic – Dental Services**

Through the support of United Way of Greater Milwaukee, MADC is able to provide urgent and restorative dental care to Hurricane up to 150 Katrina evacuees living in the Milwaukee area. In addition, MADC will coordinate restorative care with other providers as their services become available.

Within a few weeks of the evacuees' arrival in Milwaukee, MADC had triaged 55 hurricane victims for urgent care and provided an additional 21 dental services for a total of 76 dental services. In addition to a need for urgent care, the overall oral condition of these clients reflects the abject neglect MADC staff has observed in the impoverished population in the Milwaukee area. The *Dental Care for Katrina Victims* project will address this long-term need as well as the immediate urgent care need.

- **YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee – Social & Health Opportunities**

The goal of the YMCA for evacuees is to offer comfort in a time of uncertainty. Programs such as Girls Night Out and Youth Sports provide a sense of belonging and a group of peers to interact with, especially for kids who are far from their familiar schools and friends. Water Safety and Swimming Lessons may be able assuage fear of the water brought on by seeing the destruction it caused in their communities. With an estimated 60 children from areas affected by Hurricane Katrina now enrolled in the Milwaukee Public Schools, evacuees will have access to YMCA programs designed for school age children and teens. To date, 11 free individual and 13 family memberships were given.

United Way of Greater Milwaukee's main goal is to improve lives through sustained change. Each year, United Way invests over \$30 million dollars in the community, with nearly \$2 million in programs that work to *break the cycle of poverty*.

United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Katrina - Background

Since Hurricane Katrina, United Way has arranged for 2-1-1 IMPACT (the crisis information hotline) to have an on-site presence at the Tommy Thompson Center whereby a trained information referral specialist from 2-1-1 at IMPACT can direct evacuees to needed services. Professional IMPACT staff will have access to an online database, which has helped connect people to a variety of programs. Last year, United Way allocated over \$375,000 to 211 @ IMPACT

“United Way of Greater Milwaukee substantially invests each year in disaster relief programs,” said Sue Dragisic, president of United Way, “But we must also provide direction to where the evacuees begin to rebuild their lives through support of our existing network of services. We must commit to both short-term and long-term solutions.”

United Way of Greater Milwaukee invests in what matters most, improving lives. United Way multiplies the impact individuals have to make a difference by bringing together the financial and human resources of the whole community. For more information on United Way, visit us at www.unitedwaymilwaukee.org or call 414.263.8100.