

NEWS RELEASE

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**United Way
of Greater Stark County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way of Greater Stark County's Get Connected program receives \$100,000 Grant

(Canton, OH) July 5, 2017 –United Way of Greater Stark County's Get Connected program recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Education. The Community Connectors Grant supports initiatives that provide high school students access to personal connections that lead to opportunities and success at school and in the workplace. This is the third consecutive year that UWGSC has received this grant award, and they are the only 2017 recipient in Stark County.

Get Connected career-based mentoring helps local Career Tech students prepare for life after graduation. Juniors and seniors visit workplaces to learn about careers that align with their interests and skills. The students build a rapport with professionals working in those fields and can continue the relationship post-graduation through an optional mentoring program. Get Connected exists in school districts with a high percentage of students from low-income families. Canton City and Plain Local School Districts are currently participating in the project, and the grant funding will allow Alliance City Schools to come on board.

"Get Connected is one of the many ways United Way is fighting for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community," says Maria Heege, UWGSC President & CEO. "Most high school kids don't really understand the value of mentoring so they shy away from these types of programs. Get Connected makes it cool to have a mentor and explore career opportunities. We're thrilled to receive grant funding that will allow us to expand the program to Alliance."

Get Connected partners have included: Aultman College and Aultman Hospital, Canton City Police Dept., Diebold-Nixdorf, Innis Maggiore Advertising, The Karcher Group, Ohio Gratings, Williams Companies, Inc., Seifert Companies, Stark State University, TechniBus and TimkenSteel. Get Connected students also have opportunities to volunteer in community service projects throughout the year.

"There is a significant segment of our population that feels very disconnected from the positive things happening in our community, even though this progress is literally occurring in their back yards," explains program director Laurie Moline. "Through collaboration, Get Connected helps young adults with good intentions develop the social skills, confidence, character, and employer and community relationships that will empower them to create the life they want for themselves. These students realize there are career opportunities here in Stark County. This also creates a talent pipeline for local employers."

Get Connected is actively recruiting business partners who would like to help mold the workforce of the future. More information is available at <http://www.uwstark.org/Get-Connected> or email laurie.moline@uwstark.org.

About United Way of Greater Stark County

United Way of Greater Stark County fights for the Health, Education and Financial Stability of every person in every community. The agency collaborates, convenes, and partners to support programs and initiatives that break the cycle of poverty, promote a healthy community where children are successful from kindergarten through graduation to a career, and where families have the tools, skills, and support they need to become financially independent. We win by living United. For more information about United Way of Greater Stark County visit www.uwstark.org. Headquarters are at 401 Market Avenue North, Suite 300, Canton, Ohio 44702. (330) 491-0445.

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