

NEWS RELEASE

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**United Way
of Greater Stark County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stephen Dages Wins United Way's Young Leaders Society Stark SOUP Event

(Canton, OH) April 25, 2017 – United Way of Greater Stark County's Young Leaders Society (YLS) hosted a Stark SOUP event on **Sunday, April 23 at The YWCA Canton**. The \$1,440 proceeds from the event PLUS a \$1,000 matching grant were awarded to Stephen Dages for his "Mount Mentors" program. This collaboration with Pathway Caring for Children brings a group of foster youth to the University of Mount Union campus where they are partnered with student mentors every other week during the school year. The foster youth and their student mentors share a meal together and connect with an activity during each visit.

The Stark SOUP series is a micro-grant program that supports Stark County community projects focused on HEALTH, EDUCATION and FINACIAL STABILITY - the impact areas of United Way of Greater Stark County's BOLD GOALS. Bold Goals are United Way's essential building blocks for a better quality of life. Stark SOUP offers a supportive space for creative people and a relational hub where people can connect. Other presenters on April 23rd were Christina Weyrick & Joe Rozsa (*Stark County FLAVOR*), Lisa Benton (*Massillon Community Garden Coalition*) and Tenicia James (*Wednesday Walks*).

Stark SOUP coincides with the school year calendar, and will start up again in October. This community dinner showcases innovative ideas from remarkable individuals and organizations in our community and helps them materialize. Guests enjoy soup, salad, bread and a chance to vote for one of the four presented project proposals. Each speaker has four minutes to talk about their project idea, how it will advance United Way of Greater Stark County's BOLD GOALS and answer four questions from the audience members. Attendees eat, talk, and network - then vote on the project that they believe benefits Stark County the most. At the end of the night, the spoon ballots are counted and the winner receives all the money raised PLUS a \$1,000 matching grant from United Way's Young Leaders Society. More information is available at www.uwstark.org/StarkSOUP.

"We we can build a stronger community through this platform of connection, idea sharing, and collaboration." said Kelly Klein, Director of Communication, Lighthouse Ministries and Chairwoman of SOUP. "We have so many dreamers, makers, and doers in Stark County and are happy to showcase a few through SOUP."

United Way of Greater Stark County extends special thanks to Stark SOUP program sponsors and in-kind donations. Without them, STARK SOUP would not be possible. All supporters are recognized online at www.uwstark.org/StarkSoup. For additional information regarding Stark SOUP and United Way's Young Leaders Society, please contact Carrie Clemens at 330-491-9974 or email carrie.clemens@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. We win by living United. By forging unlikely partnerships. By finding new solutions to old problems. By mobilizing the best resources. And by inspiring individuals to join the fight against their community's most daunting social crisis. Our mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities in Greater Stark County. In order to live better, we must live 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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