

NEWS RELEASE

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**United Way
of Greater Stark County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way of Greater Stark County's Young Leaders Society hosts second STARK SOUP event to benefit local entrepreneurs

(Canton, OH) March 4, 2017 – United Way's Young Leaders Society (YLS) will host the second of three events in the 2017 STARK SOUP series on **Sunday, April 23 at 6:00 pm at The YWCA Canton**. The proceeds from the event PLUS a \$1,000 matching grant will go home with the winner.

The STARK SOUP series is a three-part micro-grant program that supports Stark County community projects focused on health, education and financial 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. Last year, SOUP events funded \$4,130 into community projects and YLS matched \$3,000.

STARK SOUP offers a supportive space for creative people and a relational hub where people can connect. The rest is up to the attendees, but wonderful things can happen when people come together and SOUP stories are evidence of that. STARK SOUP is a community dinner that exists to take the innovative ideas from remarkable individuals and organizations in our community and put life to them.

APRIL 23 STARK SOUP PRESENTERS

Christina Weyrick & Joe Rozsa are planning an event called Stark County FLAVOR to raise awareness and funds for the work being done to settle refugees and immigrants into the Stark & Summit County communities through International Institute of Akron. They're hoping to build a network of volunteers & advocates to share true information about refugees and immigrants; as well as provide an event template for other communities to adopt and implement. Beyond education and volunteer opportunities, FLAVOR will help to share the most important story of all - to remind everyone that we are ALL descendants of immigrants and to build greater solidarity within our community.

Lisa Benton will speak about the Massillon Community Garden Coalition, which serves as a collaborative network of Massillon and Western Stark organizations, whose mission is to coordinate community gardens. If they obtain the micro-grant on April 23, funds will be used to add raised beds, underground watering systems and special needs tools to two garden sites, Ability Garden & The Franklin Park Neighborhood Visions Garden. Their goal is to make garden sites more accessible for those who are developmentally disabled and/or mobility challenged.

Tenicia James, Mission Outreach Coordinator for Mercy Medical Center, is developing a new program called Wednesday Walks to be held in NE Canton by St. Paul Square. Wednesday Walks will offer a safe environment for individuals to get out and walk in their community and encourage healthy habits.

Stephen Dages is a junior at University of Mount Union and will pitch his program, *Mount Mentors*. This collaboration with Pathway Caring for Children brings a group of foster children to the campus where they are partnered with student mentors every other week during the school year. The children and their student mentors share a meal together and connect with an activity during each visit. Stephen's vision is that *Mount Mentors* will be adopted and implemented as an official ongoing student program.

General admission tickets to the upcoming dinner are \$10 and include 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. At the event, attendees eat, talk, and network then vote on the project that they believe benefits Greater Stark County the most. At the end of the night, the spoon ballots are counted and the winner goes home with all the money raised PLUS a \$1,000 matching grant from United Way's Young Leaders Society. All are invited to support these innovators and dreamers from our community in pursuit of their passions! For a chance to mingle and have a say, purchase tickets at www.uwstark.org/StarkSOUP.

UWGSC 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 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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