



Valley Youth House
829 Linden Street
Allentown, PA 18101

For Immediate Release

UNITED WAY SUPPORTS VALLEY YOUTH HOUSE, HIGHLIGHTS SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

July 15, 2008, Valley Youth House, after an intensive competition involving almost 550 agencies, has been awarded \$26,520 by United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania. This is the first time that Valley Youth House has received funding from UWSEPA.

The grant, expected to be renewed for two additional years pending the results of future United Way campaigns, is to help with the general operating expenses of the organization rather than directed to a specific program. The agency said that while United Way placed no restrictions on the use of the funds, it provided the funds because of the agency's success in helping stabilize the lives of homeless youth, and help young people to develop the education, work experience, and life skills necessary to live independently.

Each year hundreds of Philadelphia youth age out of child welfare placement or foster care. About half have a high school diploma or GED, less than 30% have jobs, and more than 40% become immediately homeless. Valley Youth House Supportive Housing Program has established a track record of improving the lives of these teens. Participants in the program receive rent subsidized apartments, providing stability while agency counselors work to assure that the teen is employed, furthers his or her education, and develops necessary life skills.

"Last year 83% of the youth exiting our program were employed, more than 80% had stable housing, and 28% had started college," noted Allison Moore, Associate Director of the Supportive Housing Program.

"We are grateful to the United Way for recognizing the work we do with older adolescents and for providing funding that will enhance our ability to serve Philadelphia youth coping with homelessness," said Moore.

United Way's *Investing in Results* process was its first competitive funding process in many years. Previously, United Way supported a selected group of high-quality agencies that had been chosen over the course of its 87 year history. But several years ago, United Way announced that it was revitalizing its funding model and beginning with its most recent fundraising campaign, it would look for and fund organizations that have a strong track record aligned with United Way's three areas of focus – supporting children to enter school ready to learn and stay on track to graduation, supporting families in achieving financial self-reliance, and helping seniors remain healthy and safe in their own homes.

United Way considered over 2,100 proposals from 546 agencies in the *Investing in Results* process, ultimately selecting 137 agencies, an increase of sixty agencies over its former list of 77. Ninety-three of the agencies selected had not previously received United Way funding.

Valley Youth House is a Lehigh Valley-based social services agency devoted to assuring that every child in our society will have a chance to develop into a healthy, productive, and responsible adult. The agency offers a range of residential, counseling, mental health, and life-skills education services in Lehigh, Northampton, Bucks, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties.

Valley Youth House has offices in Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, Warminster, Norristown, and Philadelphia, and a full and part-time staff of 300. The agency serves 9,000 youth and their families each year.

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