

Foundation collaboration drives resident-led neighborhood change

Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the Zilber Family Foundation and Northwestern Mutual team up for Community Connections small grants program

MILWAUKEE, June 4, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- With the right tools, residents improve their neighborhoods through beautification, community-hosted programming and safety initiatives. To ensure residents have this opportunity, Northwestern Mutual, through its foundation, along with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and the Zilber Family Foundation are together launching Community Connections, a small grants program to help fund resident-led efforts to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods the three foundations support.

The program awards up to \$500 to groups of three or more community members to support projects, events and activities. The grants are some of the first of their kind for the area as the funding goes directly to residents rather than relying on a nonprofit to accept or manage funds.

"We're able to have a greater impact on the community when we collaborate with others that have similar goals," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "This program enables small groups of thoughtful, committed Milwaukee residents to make contributions to drive positive change, which we hope will lead to a bigger movement of getting others in their neighborhoods to join them."

Residents in 21 neighborhoods can use the funds for a variety of projects including after-school and youth-led programs, beautification, community safety, health and wellness, literacy or adult education, public art, neighborhood festivals or events and urban gardens. To learn more about the effort and apply for grants, residents are invited to visit www.ccsmallgrants.org.

"Funding shouldn't hold a community back when it comes to bettering the neighborhood," said Kathryn Dunn, vice president, community investment, Greater Milwaukee Foundation. "We're excited to kick off this grant program and look forward to the great ideas, projects and programs that will be a result of this partnership."

Applications will be available June 2 and due July 1 with two grant cycles per year. Up to \$30,000 in grants will be awarded to support resident-led projects.

"This program is aimed at building a network of actively engaged resident leaders," said Susan Lloyd, executive director, Zilber Family Foundation. "Along with making improvements to neighborhoods, we hope the program strengthens the sense of community and increases feelings of neighborhood ownership among residents."

Residents in the following neighborhoods are eligible to apply: Amani, Baran Park, Capitol Heights, Clarke Square, Concordia, Harambee, Havenwoods, Johnsons Park, Layton Boulevard West, Lincoln Village, Lindsay Heights, Martin Drive, Metcalfe Park, Muskego Way, Riverwest, Sherman Park, Silver Spring, Thurston Woods, Tower Hill Waukesha, Old North Milwaukee and Washington Park.

About Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation is to improve the lives of children and families in need. The Foundation has given more than \$260 million since its inception in 1992 and is designed to create lasting impact in the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. We accomplish this by combining financial support, volunteerism, thought leadership and convening community partners to deliver the best outcomes. Our efforts are focused nationally on curing childhood cancer, and locally on education, neighborhoods and making our hometown of Milwaukee a great destination.

About Northwestern Mutual

Northwestern Mutual has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for nearly 160 years. Our financial representatives build relationships with clients through a distinctive planning approach that integrates risk management with wealth accumulation, preservation and distribution. With more than \$217 billion in assets, \$26 billion in revenues and more than \$1.5 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.2 million people who rely on us for insurance and investment solutions, including life, disability and long-term care insurance; annuities; trust services; mutual funds; and investment advisory products and services.

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Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company; and Russell Investments.

About the Greater Milwaukee Foundation

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation is a family of nearly 1,200 individual charitable funds, each created by donors to serve the local charitable causes of their choice. Grants from these funds serve people throughout Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington counties. Started in 1915, the Foundation is one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the world.

About the Zilber Family Foundation

Formed in 1961, the Joseph and Vera Zilber Family Foundation, Inc. is a private independent grant making institution dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods, with a primary emphasis on the City of Milwaukee. In recent years, the Zilber Family Foundation has pledged \$30 million to Marquette University to fund scholarships and other programs; \$10 million to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to establish a School of Public Health; and \$50 million over 10 years to improve the Milwaukee neighborhoods of Lindsay Heights, Clarke Square, and the Layton Boulevard West neighborhoods of Silver City, Burnham Park and Layton Park.

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