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Contact:
Cheryl Rau, Director of Marketing & Communications
603-436-5554 x 21
crau@uwgs.org



Highland Hardwoods Saves United Way Community Response Grant Program

Portsmouth, NH – Where can an area non-profit agency turn for additional funding when an unanticipated increase in demand for services occurs? Or when an opportunity to expand a successful program into a new community arises? Or what about when a natural disaster strikes or the roof springs several more leaks?

Thanks to Highland Hardwoods of Brentwood, NH, the Community Response Grant Program at United Way of the Greater Seacoast (UWGS) will be around to meet such emerging and emergency needs for the next three years.

When the 2005 annual community campaign fell short of the \$5 million goal, it appeared that the Community Response Grant program would have little (if any) money to allocate in the 2006 fiscal year.



But when Rick and Wendy Lang, owners of Highland Hardwoods, heard about this potential loss of a unique resource for area non-profit agencies from their accountant (and UWGS Board Member) Anne Holliday, they stepped in with a \$75,000 donation for this fiscal year to fund the

program...and committed to the same amount for the next two years, as well.

“Outreach has become an integral part of our company’s identity,” offers Rick Lang. “We feel strongly that it is our responsibility to give something back to the community in which we live and operate our business.”

“As a business owner, I know how important it is for the UWGS to be able to respond to new opportunities or handle unexpected problems when the need arises. We are just glad to be able to help,” Lang explains. “By supporting this grant program, we are assisting non-profit agencies with timely financial support...when they really need it. Strengthening the agency in turn benefits the many individuals and families they serve. Each grant made has a larger ripple effect.”

The Community Response Grant Program was developed in 2005 to assist area non-profit agencies with funds to respond to an emerging opportunity that was either not identified during the 3-year cycle for Client Services Grants or cannot wait until the next grant cycle. The program also considers applications from agencies in desperate need of funds due to man-made or natural disasters. Average grant award amounts last year were between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Highland Hardwood’s contribution last month is the first of a three-year commitment to support this grant program.



“We are very grateful to Highland Hardwoods for this generous investment in our community,” United Way Executive Director Sue Suter commented. “This is such an inspiring example of how one business can make a real difference with far-reaching impact.”

Last month, the first Community Response Grant supported by the Highland Hardwoods' donation was awarded to SeaCare Health Services for work being done by the Alliance for Community Health and the Community Resource Network to install a web-based software system at 8 area agencies to allow sharing of client data. The \$16,012 grant will pay for the technical expertise needed to install and adjust the software system to the needs of each of the participating agencies, which will then be able to share client data to create meaningful reports across agencies, track utilization and identify emerging needs.

Founded in August 1986, Highland Hardwoods originally began as a Hardwood Wholesale operation, working out of small office in the Lang's home. Today, the company employs 30 people, operates 6 delivery trucks, and services over 400 customers throughout the New England Area. Highland's "fast growing" retail division supplies hardwood lumber, plywood, and flooring to the many builders, contractors, custom woodworkers and homeowners in the area.

United Way of the Greater Seacoast (UWGS) is a locally governed nonprofit organization committed to promoting self-sufficient individuals and families, improving health and wellness, and supporting strong and safe communities. By engaging volunteers, strategic grant making, getting people to work together, and public policy efforts, United Way is seeks to improve the lives of people throughout the Seacoast region. For more information, visit the website at www.uwgs.org or call 603.436.5554.

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