

For Immediate Release
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United Way of Southwestern Indiana Announces Empowering Employment Grant Recipients

Evansville, IN - United Way of Southwestern Indiana is pleased to announce the recipients for its first Empowering Employment Pathway Grant award, totaling \$250,000. This grant opportunity focuses on helping individuals gain or advance employment, and is the first of a cadence of semi-annual grant cycles. Three of the twelve local nonprofit applicants will receive funding.

Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Board, Inc. is awarded \$140,000 to provide mobile employment services for underserved sections of our three-county area. The grant will also fund the expansion of services to reach more job seekers who need free employment assistance. Participants will receive testing, job coaching, skills evaluation, and assistance with placement.

Ivy Tech Foundation is awarded \$84,000 to provide scholarships and job placement for participants in the new IvyBridges HVAC and CDL certification programs. The scholarship will cover tuition, books, and fees. The program will recruit unemployed or under-employed community members to become certified in these two highly-paid, high-demand industries. While participating in the 12 week program, certification students will have access to Ivy Tech's wrap-around services, including transportation, a food pantry, mental health care, and childcare. Program eligibility will be based on financial need and other barriers to employment.

Missing Pieces is awarded \$26,000 to help provide a new no-fee transportation route for unemployed job seekers and underemployed workers to employers in the eastern Vanderburgh/western Warrick County area. *Epworth Express* will provide more rapid transport to areas in which bus connection times are work-prohibitive. The service will also include accessible vehicles for riders with mobility challenges.

The new Pathway grants are part of United Way of Southwestern Indiana's shift in strategy to empower under-resourced individuals and families to become more upwardly mobile. The new focus was a result of United Way's strategic planning process, which included direct feedback from community members and local business leaders. The process revealed that providing support to **help individuals and families improve their economic situation** was the most critical need in our community. For more information and to donate to support this work, visit unitedwayswi.org/give.

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About United Way of Southwestern Indiana

United Way envisions communities where all individuals and families have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The nonprofit organization serves at the center of a network of partners and programs that address critical issues facing thousands of people in Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Spencer Counties. To learn more about United Way's work, visit unitedwayswi.org.