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YWCA receives \$50,000 grant from Women Inspiring Philanthropy

Major gift supports career training scholarships at the University of Texas at Arlington for homeless and low-income women served by the YWCA

Arlington – YWCA Fort Worth & Tarrant County will receive a \$50,000 grant from Women Inspiring Philanthropy to provide career training scholarships for homeless and low-income clients in Arlington who qualify. This three-year program is the first of its kind for the YWCA and in Arlington. The YWCA expects that the majority of scholarship recipients will find entry-level careers in fast-growing industries such as health care, human resources and administration.

Women Inspiring Philanthropy is a non-profit group of women seeking to transform lives in the Arlington area through philanthropy.

“We are thrilled to provide funding to advance their programming,” said Linda Dipert, president of Women Inspiring Philanthropy. “I am proud and excited to know this money was donated by local women wanting to make a difference in Arlington.”

Women Inspiring Philanthropy Scholarship recipients will come from the YWCA Arlington Rapid Re-Housing program, which places homeless women and their children in permanent housing as soon as possible and helps them stabilize through a combination of financial assistance and supportive case management. While they are in the program, YWCA case managers help them to find employment that can cover their living expenses and put them on the path to self-sufficiency. Currently, 5 of the original 7 families housed in Arlington have found employment. This year, the YWCA is expanding the program to serve 14 families.

While the Rapid Re-Housing program has been successful in Arlington, 61% of YWCA Housing Services clients have no more than a high school diploma or G.E.D. – and with that education level, many only qualify for low-wage jobs, most at minimum wage.

“What we have been missing is the ability to directly help these women increase their education, which is a key component to moving out of poverty,” said Carol Klocek, YWCA CEO. “Women Inspiring Philanthropy Scholarships for Career Training can provide this crucial piece and help

women obtain the job skills and certifications to significantly increase their income in the shortest period of time – 6 months or less. When you have young children and you are under the constant stress of poverty, time is of the essence. With Women Inspiring Philanthropy Scholarships, we can begin to move women and their families out of poverty now.”

YWCA staff partnered with the University of Texas at Arlington’s Division for Enterprise Development to identify 17 career training courses that provide certifications in less than 6 months, make graduates eligible for jobs with starting wages between \$12 and \$27 per hour and have high rates of employment. Each of the training options selected will be matched to meet the needs of the women served and will lead to jobs in high-growth, competitive fields with advancement potential, benefits and increasing wages. Women Inspiring Philanthropy Scholarship recipients can work toward becoming Certified Nursing Assistants, Medical Administrative Assistants, Pharmacy Technicians, and Human Resource Generalists to name a few of the career options.

In addition to the support from Women Inspiring Philanthropy, UTA’s Division for Enterprise Development has agreed to provide an in-kind match of books and other supplies that these students otherwise may not be able to afford.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for the women we serve,” Klocek said. “When they come to us, their opportunities are limited. The Women Inspiring Philanthropy Scholarships for Career Training will open up doors and create pathways to success. We could not be more grateful for this gift.”

Research suggests that for every family the YWCA moves out of homelessness, Tarrant County saves \$20,000 – and the adults and children within the family have a greater chance at becoming productive citizens and employees within our society.

About Women Inspiring Philanthropy

Women Inspiring Philanthropy is a donor-advised fund through the Community Foundation of North Texas made up of women seeking to transform lives in the Arlington area through high-impact and lifelong giving. The only membership requirements are to be female and donate \$1,000 each year. Women Inspiring Philanthropy combines the annual donations from members and gives large grants each year to local worthy causes selected by members to collectively change the face of philanthropy in Arlington.

About YWCA Fort Worth & Tarrant County

The YWCA transforms the lives of women and children by moving them from poverty to independence through housing stability, affordable high-quality child care and financial empowerment services. The YWCA served 2,884 individuals and families last year. Yet, the need continues to grow: one in 10 women and one in four children live in poverty in Tarrant County.

The YWCA's three child development centers offer a literacy-rich curriculum in a safe, caring environment, providing early childhood education for more than 500 children ages 6 weeks through 5 years. Studies show children from very low-income families can fall 18 months behind developmentally by age 4. YWCA educators help prepare them for success in school. Last year, 95% of YWCA graduating pre-Kindergarteners were assessed as "ready for school" using the widely respected Kindergarten Early Skills inventory. In addition, the YWCA provided shelter to 443 homeless women and families, while also providing them with counseling, job readiness skills, educational opportunities and resources for life improvement. Through Financial Empowerment Services, the YWCA helps women and families find paths out of poverty to self-sufficiency through financial coaching. Clients learn to budget and manage their money, establish and maintain savings accounts, and ultimately reach goals such as buying a house or paying for college. Last year, 777 individuals received services and are working toward financial independence. In a recent client survey, 50% have opened a bank account, 50% have started saving and 9% have saved more than \$1,000.

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