

PRESS RELEASE

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11 Local Leaders Selected for United Way’s Executive Director Learning Circle

Designed for leaders of nonprofits with annual budgets less than \$1 million, series offers education credits through Roger Williams University’s School of Studies Community Development program

Providence, R.I. (May 8, 2019) The latest United Way of Rhode Island (UWRI) *Executive Director Learning Circle* is underway with the organization having selected eleven local leaders for the innovative educational program. Launched in 2017, the effort has been lauded by its graduates for its approach and commitment to strengthening the state’s nonprofit sector.

“We know that Rhode Island nonprofits are working harder than ever – while challenged to do more with less – to meet the needs they see in our communities,” said Cortney Nicolato, President and CEO of UWRI. “This program leans on United Way’s motto that we can accomplish more by working together to improve the services that, ultimately, touch the lives of our neighbors and strengthen our state.”

The *Executive Director Learning Circle* was developed for leaders of Rhode Island-based nonprofits with annual budgets less than \$1 million. The series’ curriculum is designed to help organizations increase capacity through practical scenario sharing, group activities, and coaching in a range of competency topics. Focus areas include strategic planning and implementation, fund development, risk management, board engagement, marketing/communications, and emergency preparedness. Additionally, graduates of the program are able to apply their experience toward credits for a BA or MA at Roger Williams University’s School of Studies Community Development program. Current participants are:

Executive Director	Organization
Marcela Betancur	Latino Policy Institute
Shari Bitsis	Greening the Sphere
Laura Brion	Childhood Lead Action Project
Jacqueline Britto	Lighthouse Community Development Corp.
Alice Buckley	Washington County Community Development
Mary Jane Daly	Mount Hope Learning Center
Caitlin Frumerie	Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless
Zachary Mezera	Providence Student Union
Elliot Rivera	Youth in Action
Phyllis Gingerella Wade	Rhode Island Urban Debate League
C. Patrick Westfall	Open Doors

The series is led by facilitator Michael Fournier, a retired nonprofit executive who consults organizations across Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The program is made possible by BankNewport, which has committed \$40,000 per year for three years to deliver the initiative.

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United Way of Rhode Island is changing lives and strengthening our communities by investing in proven programs that work over the short-term, and are scalable over the long-term. For more information, visit www.LIVEUNITEDri.org.