

PRESS RELEASE



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United Way, Social Enterprise Greenhouse Select 10 Fellows for Nonprofit Innovation Lab *Unique, six-month program to spark development of new solutions to pressing social issues culminates with "Shark Tank-like" presentation to secure funding to bring ideas to life*

Providence, RI (January 13, 2018) Leaders from ten Rhode Island-based nonprofits have been selected as fellows for a unique social innovation program created by [United Way of Rhode Island](#) (UWRI) and [Social Enterprise Greenhouse](#). The cohort for the inaugural **Nonprofit Innovation Lab** was selected from a pool of two dozen applicants eager to address pressing social issues and who took part in a Shark Pitch selection event this past December.

Through the Nonprofit Innovation Lab, UWRI and SEI seek to spark the development of self-sustaining solutions that enable organizations to expand and accelerate their ability to create positive social impact. The effort trains an entrepreneurial thinking to identify new solutions to existing problems, offering a social impact curriculum and providing fellows the critical resources – coaching, access to networks and capital – that they need to bring their ideas to life. The program culminates with a "Shark Tank-like" presentation in June, where fellows will compete for \$50,000 in seed funding.

The fellows of the inaugural Nonprofit Innovation Lab and their respective organizations are:

Marla Suarez, Progress Latino	Dana Givens, College Graduate of Rhode Island
Mike Deas, Thomas International Institute of RI	Laura Jewett, House of Hope (C)
Kate Corbett, United Way CDC	Jonathan Rakib, Oliver Howard Perry Rhode Island
Jessie Halcovian, Impact Rhode Island	Rhonda Price, Mon Uly, Inc.
Paul Figueroa, Nurse Laborer	Andrea Hall, Senior Center

"Together with Social Enterprise Greenhouse, we were very impressed with the innovation and quality of every proposal – there is some incredible forward thinking coming out of our state's nonprofit community," said Courtney Neumann, President and CEO of SEI. "We are eager to help our fellows hone their ideas to strengthen Rhode Island, and for every participant to bring back to their organization the knowledge and skills to take their work to the next level."

Added Kelly Ramirez, CEO of SEI, "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with United Way to deliver the Nonprofit Innovation Lab. This 'entrepreneurial' accelerator aims to provide some of the state's top social impact leaders time and space, networks, and resources to enable them to better innovate within their organizations. The ultimate goal is to ensure the best opportunities and services to Rhode Islanders."

The Nonprofit Innovation Lab begins on January 13 and runs through June. It consists of three components:

- **Boot Camp:** 4 weeks of intensive expert instruction via two, 4-hour weekly sessions and online curriculum to refine innovation plans and set reflective goals