



Greater Milwaukee  
& Waukesha County

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:  
Dan Herda, Director of Communications  
dherda@unitedwaygmwc.org  
Office: 414.263.8149, Cell: 414.731.0369

### **United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County Announces Reducing Barriers to Employment & Advancement Grant Application**

**March 6, 2020 – Milwaukee**—United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County's Diversity Leadership Society is leading an initiative to reduce barriers to employment and advancement for local, diverse individuals.

Despite the strongest economy in a generation, Milwaukee's African-American unemployment rate of 9% is nearly twice the national average (5.5%). It's also triple Milwaukee's Caucasian rate of 2.7%, reflecting the nation's largest unemployment racial disparity.

At the same time, employers in our community's largest sectors, manufacturing and health care, continuously struggle to find workers with the specialized skills and credentials their fields demand.

#### **GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS**

United Way announced today that the grant application process is now open for organizations who work and support one or more of the following four key priorities of this initiative:

- **Education, training, and credentials:** offer financial support to programs that help adults learn to read, earn their GED or other employment credentials, and teach English as a Second Language (ESL).
- **Transportation:** support programs that help adults recover their driver's license and assist youth in obtaining their initial driver's license.
- **Involvement in the justice system:** advocate for laws that promote expungement of records from public databases for non-violent offenders. Studies have shown that most employers are reluctant to hire applicants with criminal records, even for non-violent convictions.
- **Diverse Talent Retention:** enlist the help of outside consultants to develop a survey tool to understand why diverse talent is leaving the region at such a high rate.

Special consideration will be made for organizations applying for funding with an additional organization to maximize impact.

For more information or to apply for a grant, visit [UnitedWayGMWC.org/reducing-barriers-grant](http://UnitedWayGMWC.org/reducing-barriers-grant)

**About United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County:** *United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in our local community.*  
Learn more at: <http://www.unitedwayGMWC.org>

###