



United Ministries

Providing life changing opportunities

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Ministries Receives \$25,000 Grant from Walmart State Giving

Greenville, S.C. (June 2, 2016) – The Walmart Foundation and the South Carolina State Giving Advisory Council awarded United Ministries a \$25,000 grant to support food assistance. This local grant award is part of the Walmart Foundation's mission to fight hunger and improve nutrition, create economic opportunities, and strengthen communities.

In Greenville County, 15% of the population lives below the poverty line (2012 US Census). If a family is living paycheck to paycheck, a temporary financial problem can quickly escalate into a crisis. United Ministries' Emergency Assistance Program stabilizes a family with something that most people take for granted: food, life-sustaining medicine, and utility/rent assistance. Last year, United Ministries provided food to 2,988 families, helping to feed 6,250 people.

"United Ministries' goal is not only to provide immediate assistance, but also to create a vision of long-term financial stability for the families we serve," says Ethan Friddle, Interim Executive Director. People who come to United Ministries for help with food are also introduced to United Ministries' programs and services aimed at increasing financial stability, such as Adult Education, Employment Readiness, Financial Stabilization, and Matched Saving and Emergency Loans.

Participants in the Adult Education Program work with volunteers and staff towards earning their GEDs. Participants in the Employment Readiness Program work with employment counselors to find a job or upgrade employment to a job with a livable wage. The Financial Stabilization Program provides up to \$1,500 of targeted financial assistance to working families experiencing a temporary crisis. The Matched Savings Program offers working families a 1-to-1 match on the first \$500 they save in an emergency savings fund established by CommunityWorks Carolina, and the Emergency

Loan Program offers a low interest rate and flexible repayment schedule as an alternative to payday loans.

(MORE)

United Ministries' holistic approach to addressing poverty is what appealed to the Walmart Foundation. "Supporting United Ministries helps us to maximize our impact. Families seeking food assistance from United Ministries also receive the benefit of being connected to resources such as SNAP, health coverage, home energy assistance, education, employment services, and more," says Phillip Keene, Walmart Foundation. United Ministries' food pantry is also distinguished by utilizing a client-choice model, whereby food recipients are able to choose the food items that best suit their families' needs—saving money and cutting down on waste.

"United Ministries is blessed with community support—many congregations, schools, and businesses conduct food drives for our pantry. Even so, we budget to spend approximately \$40,000 each year purchasing food in order to meet the need in the community," says Friddle. "This grant from the Walmart Foundation is a huge blessing to our community."

The Walmart Foundation is proud to support initiatives that give people access to a better life, one community at a time. They consider it their responsibility to make a positive impact in the communities they serve, whether it's through grants or community service. In 2014, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave \$1.4 billion in cash and in-kind contributions around the world.

About United Ministries

Located in downtown Greenville's West End, United Ministries has been working for 45 years to give every member of our community the opportunity to participate in the prosperity of our community. Originally established by local congregations to meet the crisis needs of people living in poverty, our agency has evolved to focus on developing the potential each family possesses to become self-sufficient – and even to thrive. Our integrated service model discourages dependency on charity and promotes the dignity of work. For more information on United Ministries please visit www.united-ministries.org or call 864-335-2614.

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