

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 23, 2009

The Wyoming Kids First Initiative and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services have awarded the United Way of Southwest Wyoming with one of three \$50,000 Wyoming Kids First Initiative Planning Grants. These funds are allocated to United Way to continue building a Regional Partnership, made up of dedicated United Way Volunteers, community stakeholders, and various community partners. The Regional Partnership will build an early childhood network by identifying needs or gaps in services for children 0 to 8 years of age. The goal of the Planning Grant is to ensure the delivery of quality early childhood education and early child care, comprehensive family support systems and inclusive quality health and mental health services. Katie Monroe, the Director of Regional Partnerships at United Way will coordinate the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Planning Grant. "Community volunteers have specified children as one of our targeted areas of need in Sweetwater County. This grant along with United Way's matching funds will provide valuable resources as we move forward in investing in our children and youth from 0 to 17 years of age. It is our goal for the youth of Sweetwater County to become healthy and productive citizens," said Suzanne Zutter, United Way of Southwest Wyoming Executive Director. "Having Katie Monroe, Director of Regional Partnerships on staff will allow United Way to effectively address these needs and work more closely with partnering entities."

The Wyoming Kids First Initiative has presented United Way with a unique opportunity by providing a VISTA Member to assist the United Way and the Regional Partnership in their work. VISTA Members work to create sustainable programs that will endure and expand beyond the VISTA Member's service. VISTA Members commit to serve full-time for one year to a government or non-profit organization. In return, the VISTA Member will receive a living allowance, health care benefits, childcare assistance, student loan deferment, one year non-competitive status for a federal government job, and access to a network of 170,000 VISTA Members and VISTA Alumni. At the end of the service year the VISTA Member will receive a monetary stipend for college or school loans. In addition, the VISTA Member opportunity allows recent college graduates or current college students to gain real-world experience. This opportunity would be great for a recent graduate looking for invaluable experience.

If you are interested in the VISTA Member opportunity or would like to be involved with United Way's Regional Partnership please contact, Katie Monroe, Director of Regional Partnerships at regional@swunitedway.org or call 307-362-5003.

Caption for Picture: Kendra West, Chairperson for the Wyoming Kids First Initiative (far right) presents Suzanne Zutter, Executive Director (middle), and Katie Monroe (far left), Director of Regional Partnerships from United Way of Southwest Wyoming with a check for \$50,000 for the Wyoming Kids First Initiative Planning Grant.