

August 2, 2011



UNITED WAY WELCOMES STEPPING STONES AS PARTNER AGENCY

Bloomington, IN – United Way of Monroe County is proud to announce that Stepping Stones, Inc. is now certified as a partner agency. Stepping Stones will join the network of 24 local human service nonprofit agencies that work closely with United Way to achieve strategic community goals. Additionally, all existing partner agencies applying for re-certification this year have been approved for continued membership.

Stepping Stones offers transitional housing and supportive services to youth between the ages of 16-20 experiencing homelessness and provides a positive community where young people develop skills to live independently.

According to Barry Lessow, United Way Executive Director, "The United Way board greatly appreciates the work that Stepping Stones has done to provide opportunities for the youth in our community. We were particularly impressed by their alignment with our goal that everyone should "graduate school ready to earn". Stepping Stones outcomes show they have been successful in ensuring that young people in difficult circumstances have found the support to finish their education and build critical life and job skills."

Sheri Benham, Stepping Stones Executive Director, said, "We are honored to be accepted into the United Way family. This partnership brings new opportunities for all the youth that we serve. We look forward to working with the United Way staff and other partner agencies."

More information about Stepping Stones can be found at www.steppingstones-inc.org.

A team of community volunteers and agency professionals developed the United Way membership standards to assure donors that agencies meet certain "best practices" related to their governance, representations, effectiveness, operations, finance, and efficiency. Certified partner agencies work with United Way to help meet immediate needs and make long-term improvements in people's lives.

United Way of Monroe County is a nonprofit organization that improves people's lives by addressing critical needs today and working to reduce those needs tomorrow. Through its Community Action Fund and grant opportunities, United Way works with 25 member agencies and community partners to focus resources on the building blocks for a better life: education, earnings, and the essentials. You can find more information at www.monroeunitedway.org.