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Town of Palm Beach United Way thanks volunteers, celebrates end of grant review process during appreciation event

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Allocation Committee volunteers celebrated the end of the Town of Palm Beach United Way's grant review process at a cocktail party Wednesday, April 23, at the Island Drive home of **Jayne Keith**.

This year's committee consisted of a record 140 community volunteers divided into 14 teams (roster attached). They were responsible for reviewing 78 program applications from 41 nonprofit agencies in Palm Beach County seeking grant funding from the Town of Palm Beach United Way. **Suzanne Brenner, Carla Cove** and **Diane McNeal** served as General Chairs of the Allocation Committee. Team Chairs were **Missy Agnello, Diana Barrett, Sandy Fleming, MM Lang, Fran Levy, Pamela McIver, Amber McMichael, David Scaff, Louise Snyder, Lauren Sterlacci, Jessica Surovek, John Tatoes, Cornie Thornburgh** and **Betsy Turner**.

"The Town of Palm Beach United Way allocations process is my favorite way to volunteer," said Jayne Keith, who has served on the committee for the past 4 years. "I've been on a variety of teams, some that focused on education, and others that focused on housing and older adults. The process is a fantastic way to see and understand the different needs of our community while also making sure United Way donations are invested in quality programs that are making a difference in the lives of children and adults in need."

Allocation Committee volunteers read program funding requests from area charities, analyze financial data, review policies and procedures, meet with agency staff and board members, deliberate as a team, and ultimately make funding recommendations to the United Way Board of Trustees. Their recommendations will be voted on by the Board of Trustees at the Town of Palm Beach United Way's Annual Meeting on May 7 at The Breakers. Once approved, funding will be awarded monthly from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

"We had a record number of volunteers this year, which demonstrates United Way donors are eager to get involved and to see how their contributions impact people's lives," said Carla Cove. "I can't think of another charity that provides the sort of hands-on experience and volunteer-led decision making that our local United Way does. It's both eye-opening and rewarding."

This year the Allocation Committee is recommending the Town of Palm Beach United Way invest \$4,312,900 into 71 programs at 38 agencies. This represents about an 11% increase in funding compared to grants distributed last year.

Programs reviewed support early childhood education, after-school enrichment, mentoring, tutoring, literacy, college preparation, career readiness, access to healthcare, counseling, behavioral therapy, day programs for seniors, substance abuse treatment, independent living for individuals with developmental disabilities, financial education, job training and placement, affordable housing, emergency shelter, food assistance, homelessness prevention, aid for survivors of domestic abuse, and much more.

"It's amazing to see our campaign year come full circle," said Richard Rothschild, Board Chair. "We've had a hugely successful fundraising year, and now we get to see how those dollars are being allocated. It's such a team effort all around, and one that every United Way donor can feel secure and proud about."

Since the Allocation Committee review process began in 1945, more than \$96 million has been invested in programs that build strong educational foundations for children, create healthy communities, lift families out of poverty, and improve the quality of life for residents in Palm Beach County.

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