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Connecticut Social Equity Council Approves Grant Managers to Administer New Community Reinvestment Funding

Hartford, Conn., December 18, 2025 – The Connecticut Social Equity Council (the Council) has approved the slate of Grant Managers (GMs) who will administer the Council's three-year Community Reinvestment Program, representing a key milestone in deploying approximately \$12 million annually to strengthen economic opportunity, support re-entry pathways, and expand youth-focused programming in Connecticut's Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs).

The Council approved the following GMs:

- **Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (Bridgeport, Meriden)**
- **United Way Inc. (Hartford/East Hartford)**
- **Community Foundation for Greater New Britain (New Britain)**
- **United Way of Greater New Haven (New Haven, East Haven, West Haven)**
- **United Way of Southeastern CT (New London, Norwich, Windham)**
- **United Way of Coastal and Western CT (Danbury, Norwalk, Stamford)**
- **United Way of Greater Waterbury (Waterbury)**

These GMs, in collaboration with the Council, will be responsible for selecting approximately 18 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), per region, that will receive three-year awards ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. The selection of the CBOs will be guided by a Notice of Funding Opportunity and rubric designed by the Council to ensure consistency throughout the regions and ensure that all funded projects align with the Council's strategic priorities. Funding will support programs rooted in Economic Development, Re-entry Initiatives, and Youth Initiatives, with all awards directed to organizations serving or located within DIAs. The Council emphasized that the selection of GMs is intended to ensure high-quality administration, strong compliance controls, and consistent data reporting to measure statewide impact.

"The approval of our Grant Managers represents a major step forward in building an equitable and accountable reinvestment model for communities most affected by the War on Drugs," said Brandon McGee, CEO of the Social Equity Council. "Their expertise in oversight, compliance,

and community partnership will help ensure these investments are directed where they can make the most meaningful impact.”

“This investment framework ensures that reinvestment dollars reach the neighborhoods that need them most,” said Black and Puerto Rican Caucus Chair and State Representative House District 130 (Bridgeport), Antonio Felipe. “By supporting trusted community organizations with strong accountability systems, the Council is helping build long-term pathways to stability, opportunity, and economic mobility for Black and Brown residents across Connecticut.”

GMs will administer the Notice of Funding Opportunity, screen and score eligible applications, issue awards approved by the Council, and maintain oversight to ensure funds are used appropriately.

“The structure we approved today embeds transparency and consistency into every part of the grantmaking process,” said Andréa Comer, chair of the Council. “By partnering with experienced Grant Managers, the Council is empowering local organizations while maintaining strong fiscal and programmatic accountability.”

“This process is ultimately about strengthening the systems that strengthen our communities,” said Ojala Naeem, House Majority Leader appointee to the Council. “By establishing a thoughtful structure and selecting partners who are committed to integrity and impact, we are ensuring that reinvestment dollars create long-term, community-driven change.”

About the Connecticut Social Equity Council:

The Social Equity Council was established to ensure that Connecticut’s cannabis industry and economic development efforts provide real access and lasting investment for communities disproportionately harmed by cannabis criminalization. Through strategic funding, partnerships, and accountability, the Council is creating pathways to prosperity for individuals and neighborhoods long excluded from opportunity. For more information, including highlights of the strategic plan, visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/social-equity-council>



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