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YWCA Northern New Jersey to Launch 'Operation Sisterhood' to Support Women Veterans in Bergen County

Women United In Philanthropy awards program with $40,000 Impact Grant

(Bergen County, New Jersey) June 19, 2024: YWCA Northern New Jersey (YWCA NNJ) announced plans today to launch 'Operation Sisterhood', a program that supports women veterans in Bergen County as they transition into civilian life. The funding for this program was made possible through a $40,000 impact grant from Women United in Philanthropy.

YWCA's Operation Sisterhood will provide a platform of support and wraparound services to address the social, physical, and mental wellness needs of women returning from military service. These services will include case management, workforce development and entrepreneurship training, counseling services for sexual violence survivors, as well as assistance in connecting to outside resources.

"The members of Women United in Philanthropy who made this grant possible believe strongly in the idea of giving circles, and that women together can change their corner of the world," **shared Maxine Frampton as President of The Women's Foundation of NJ.** "We are pleased that this year's WUIP impact grant was awarded to "Operation Sisterhood" and look forward to hearing more from our friends at the YWCA about the progress of this important program for female veterans.``

"Women veterans often encounter greater obstacles in their transitions to civilian life than their male counterparts. They face higher levels of unemployment and financial distress, as well as mental health challenges including PTSD, suicidal ideation, and often sexual trauma stemming from harassment and assault," **stated Helen Archontou, CEO of YWCA Northern New Jersey.** "These women have made immeasurable personal sacrifices in order to serve our country, and we are immensely grateful to Women United in Philanthropy for providing this funding so that we can help ensure our women veterans have the support they need during this life-altering transition."

New Jersey SOS Veterans Stakeholder Women's Committee, which works to promote the public interest of women veterans in the state, honored YWCA NNJ for their community partnership and ongoing work to support New Jersey's veterans during its annual Women Veterans Appreciation Day Celebration.

"We fully support the YWCA in creating a mental health program specifically for women veterans in Bergen County. Women veterans face unique challenges and experiences during their service and transition back to civilian life, and it is crucial that they have access to

specialized mental health services that address their specific needs. This program can also help raise awareness about the mental health issues that women veterans may face and reduce the stigma surrounding seeking help for mental health concerns," **said David Pearson, Director of Veteran Services Catholic Charities - Archdiocese of Paterson, Chair - NJ SOS Veteran Stakeholders.**

Operation Sisterhood is expected to launch in the Fall of 2024.

About YWCA Northern New Jersey
For over a century, YWCA Northern New Jersey has improved the lives of thousands of women, girls, and families and is at the forefront of the fight against gender and racial discrimination. We work to build more just and inclusive communities through programs for women and girls, anti-racism training, and policy advocacy. We operate healingSPACE, Bergen County's only Sexual Violence Resource Center (hotline number: 201-487-2227) and provide year-round childcare, and senior wellness programs. YWCA Northern New Jersey serves Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, and Passaic counties. To learn more, visit ywcannj.org and follow @ywcannj on social media.

About Women United in Philanthropy
Women United in Philanthropy (WUIP) is a premier women's giving circle that's goal is to empower women by investing in innovative solutions to the burden poverty and financial instability places on them and their families. Based in Bergen County, New Jersey, the founding members of QUIP created the circle as a new philanthropic vehicle for women–one that enables them to collectively invest in big ideas to change the trajectory of poverty for women in Bergen County. Since 2004, the women-focused giving circle has awarded $1.2 million in grants that continue to help hundreds of women and families through its funded programs today. To learn more about their work visit them at Women's Economic Empowerment: Women United in Philanthropy (womensfoundationnj.org)

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