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NONPROFITS SHARE COSTS TO SHARE SUCCESS

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — As a key player in the “Volunteer State” of Tennessee, Chattanooga is not short in the area of philanthropy. Just ask United Way’s Center for Nonprofits, which serves nearly 2,000 nonprofit organizations in Chattanooga’s Hamilton County alone. The Center recently launched a program to help three nonprofits collaborate to manage a growing volunteer base.

When two environmental organizations came to the Center with high volunteer needs and limited budgets, the Center’s Executive Director, Angie Sledge, had an idea for a shared staffing program. After recruiting another environmental organization and securing funding, the program was born. The first of its kind in Chattanooga, this allows three organizations to share the time and energy of one volunteer coordinator, Sarah Quattrochi. Not only are the organizations saving money, they are each gaining new volunteers, work days and volunteer appreciation opportunities.

“This is innovation at its best: good management and a sharing of resources,” Sledge said.

The program wouldn’t be possible without the innovative support from the Benwood Foundation, Community Foundation, Lyndhurst Foundation and Tucker Foundation. These foundations have generously supported the program’s launch and plan to give in decreasing amounts until the third year, during which the organizations will cover the costs. The directors of the organizations report the benefits far outweigh the costs. During the first quarter of the program alone, a total of 216 volunteers giving 760 hours of service, with a monetary value of nearly \$14,000 (based on the Independent Sector’s hourly rate for volunteerism of \$18.04).

A program of the United Way of Greater Chattanooga, the **Center for Nonprofits** is a management service organization whose purpose is to help nonprofit organizations operate more efficiently and effectively in achieving their missions. The Center offers training workshops, tailored training, consulting services, facilitation of planning processes, board development and a library dedicated to excellence in nonprofit management.

United Way of Greater Chattanooga funds 79 vital, local programs that strengthen families and assure readiness for school and work. Thanks to an endowment fund that covers all overhead and administrative expenses, **one hundred percent of contributions** goes directly to these services to help individuals and families in greater Chattanooga, northwest Georgia and northeast Alabama.

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