

## **Mile High United Way *Impact Investments* Process**

For more than 123 years, Mile High United Way has been proud to inspire the collective generosity of the metro Denver community to advance the common good and take strategic action to create measurable, lasting change. As a trusted steward of community resources, we are committed to building on our legacy and investing in issues and programs that have the greatest possible impact. In 2010, Mile High United Way intends to invest more than \$29 million back into our community. As part of that investment, we intend to invest \$6 million directly into nonprofit agencies through our 2010 Impact Investments Allocation Process.

In early 2009, the Mile High United Way Board of Trustees, a volunteer-led Community Impact Task Force and the staff re-committed to our focus areas of School Readiness, Youth Success and Adult Self-Sufficiency. In March of 2009, Mile High United Way's currently funded partners received a letter stating that a new funding process would be established.

As the summer of 2009 began, MHUW partnered with the National Civic League to convene more than 600 individuals representing service providers, funders, business leaders and other interested groups in a series of Community Conversations, further validating the three focus areas and deepening our understanding of the community's needs. Information and feedback gathered during these conversations were then integrated into MHUW's Impact Plan and used to shape the Impact Investments RFP process.

In September of 2009, MHUW hosted more than 500 people representing 300 organizations at Pre-Proposal Conferences designed to guide applicants through the RFP process. When the RFP deadline came to pass, we had received 280 proposals totaling \$33 million in requests from 262 organizations.

For the next five months, review panels comprised of volunteer community experts and MHUW Board and staff members undertook a thorough and rigorous review process of each application. Criteria included:

- Alignment with one of Impact Investments' three focus areas-
  - School Readiness, Youth Success or Adult Self-Sufficiency
- Demonstration of long-lasting and measurable results.

Through the process, Mile High United Way sought a balance of quantitative and qualitative results and worked to achieve a combination of funding that will ensure community results and outcomes are achieved. After careful thought and deliberation, the Impact Investments Volunteer Allocations Committee reached consensus on funding recommendations totaling \$6 million. In late March 2010, the MHUW Board of Trustees reviewed and approved their recommendations. Impact Investments announcements began on March 30, 2010.

As the first United Way in the country, Mile High United Way is proud to move forward with Impact Investments as we support organizations working to achieve long-lasting and measurable change in our community in the areas of School Readiness, Youth Success and Adult Self-Sufficiency.