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UNITED WAY HONORS LOCAL VOLUNTEERS AT SPECIAL EVENT

HARRISBURG – (April 27, 2017) – United Way of the Capital Region recently recognized the hard work and dedication of local volunteers at its Volunteer of the Year Event, sponsored by Highmark Blue Shield and High Companies.

Carol Koppenhaver of Enola received the Adult Volunteer of the Year Award for her work with Caitlin’s Smiles. She volunteers each week and logged more than 900 hours in 2016. Some of the projects include making craft bags and delivering them to several hospitals, coordinating and making gift baskets for a silent auction, helping to organize and run an annual fundraiser, and staff an agency booth at public exhibits and volunteer fairs.

The Youth Volunteer of the Year Award went to Brandon Yorth of Millerstown. A full-time student at Carson Long Military Academy, he logged 98 hours of volunteer service during the 2015-2016 school year. Some projects included performing with the academy’s glee club and drill team, serving as a military policeman for campus events, and shoveling snow for elderly campus residents. He also volunteers with his church and the Perry County Chamber of Commerce Food Truck Festival.

The Rutherford House Technology Team received the Volunteer Group of the Year Award for their work with the Rutherford House Senior Center. They provide weekly computer assistance to seniors, update computers and assist with special events. On average, they log 57 hours of service each month.

Cindy and Bob Heath of Red Lion were awarded the Volunteer Center Founder’s Award, which is presented annually to an individual who displays outstanding volunteer leadership. Cindy and Bob were drawn to serve Gaudenzia after the traumatic death of their son in 2007. They have organized and implemented quarterly events for the agency’s Chambers Hill Adolescent Program and recruited an active group of fellow volunteers to help. Over the past 10 years, Cindy and Bob have worked to instill encouragement, hope, motivation, character development, leadership and a zeal for life for each of the program’s participants.

Cheryl Hornung of Dauphin received the Essence of Humanity Award during the event for her demonstration of incredible strength, courage, determination, inspiration and persistence in the face of adversity. After losing her seven-year-old daughter, Caitlin, to cancer in 2004, Cheryl created the nonprofit organization, Caitlin's Smiles. The organization creates and distributes arts and craft bags for hospitalized children throughout nine different states. Last year more than 11,000 craft bags and 125,000 art kits were delivered, giving these children a therapeutic outlet for creativity and healing.

"Changing our community through volunteerism is a core value of our United Way," said Heidi Neuhaus, director of the Volunteer Center for United Way of the Capital Region. "These honorees are outstanding examples of the positive impact volunteers make in the Capital Region."

For more information about United Way of the Capital Region, visit uwcr.org or call 717.732.0700.

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Editor's note: Photos available upon request.