consulting opportunity

United Community, a leading nonprofit community service provider based in Fairfax County, Virginia, seeks a consulting resource to guide and support a Collective Impact initiative with a long-term goal of reducing poverty and advancing equity in two census tracts in the county. The ideal consultant or firm will:

• have a demonstrated track record of success in the Washington, DC region;
• have experience in designing, directing and supporting the early phases of Collective Impact initiatives;
• be knowledgeable about how to develop capacities and networks needed to sustain a Collective Impact initiative over a period of years in order to address “upstream” policy and systems change, beyond “downstream” needs of community residents; and
• either, have the expertise to design and execute a streamlined evaluation component; or, be able to refer evaluation expertise to the initiative.

about united community

United Community has a 50-year history pursuing a mission of empowering adults, children, and families to transform their lives. As the anchor agency providing comprehensive human services to low-income and disadvantaged residents in southeastern Fairfax County, United Community responds to the challenges of residents as the lead community partner for Opportunity Neighborhood: Mount Vernon, a school-government-community partnership engaging residents and stakeholders in geographically-defined areas to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth.

about southeastern fairfax county

Fairfax County is the second wealthiest county in the nation with a median household income of $112,436 per year (2017), and yet 83% of the families United Community serves have annual incomes below the poverty level of $25,750 for a family of four. Nearly 40% of our clients are children. In our neighborhoods, historic and pervasive racism has perpetuated a system of structures, practices, policies, and laws that disadvantage residents of color and low-income people. Inequity is baked into the system. The area that United Community serves has been identified as an Island of Disadvantage in the Northern Virginia Health Foundation-commissioned report, Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia. Until these systems change, inequities will persist—and so will multigenerational poverty. (Please refer to Attachment A: Glimpse at Demographics)

setting the stage for collective impact: building communities of opportunity

Our Communities of Opportunity process, supported by Northern Virginia Health Foundation is a start to a collective impact model that will eventually change the landscape of the Route One Corridor in Alexandria, Virginia, with residents at the helm.
Phase 1, Pre-planning and Identification of Needs, January-April 2019
In early 2019, and with funding from Northern Virginia Health Foundation, United Community engaged the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) in a streamlined process to hear and document the concerns of residents in four disadvantaged communities located along the Route 1 Corridor, as well as a research of the literature about the history of the community and other available data, e.g., housing, health, education, and others. (Please refer to Summary Report: Communities of Opportunity Grant, Planning Phase by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, April 2019—enclosed separately)

CSSP conducted interviews and completed targeted research to assemble data and insights on “downstream” and “upstream” factors and living conditions for residents living in these communities. In addition to residents, participants included organizations such as FACETS, Good Shepherd Housing, Neighborhood Health, INOVA – Mt Vernon and INOVA Health System, and Fairfax County Departments of Health, Housing & Community Development, and Neighborhood and Community Services. (Please refer to Attachment B for Phase 1 Sponsorship Team Participants).

Phase 1 confirmed that residents aspire to live a life with dignity; yet currently feel they have little or no power to address their most pressing concerns, which include:
- Feeling unsafe and under threat for reasons including theft, violence, and drug use and distribution.
- Concern for the well-being and future of children, from lack of available preschool to gang recruitment activities
- Dearth of decent jobs, livable wages, and transportation to and from work.
- Lack of family and social supports.
- Lack of access to information about County, nonprofit providers, and other human service resources available to them.

Transition to Phase 2, Organizing to Launch Collective Impact, June-September, 2019
Based upon findings and enthusiasm generated in Phase 1, United Community sought funding to activate a process consistent with a Collective Impact approach. During a transition period, United Community has:
- Received a grant for Phase 2 (6 months) involving the launch of Collective Impact work
- Promised results for the six-month period, guided by questions such as, Did the process...
  - actualize Collective Impact principles?
  - produce a ten-year vision statement?
  - solve at least one quick-win issue identified in Phase 1?
  - define gaps between residents’ concerns and current agency/provider solutions?
  - surface examples of how current policies, practices, and norms incorporate bias?
  - result in resident input influencing agency and provider behavior?
- Drafted a preliminary Process Design Document and collected key stakeholder feedback. (Please refer to Phase 2 Design Document, August 2019 – enclosed separately)
• Formed the nucleus of a Steering Team for the Collective Impact Process, and convened the team on August 26, 2019, with a second meeting to be held on September 17, 2019.

• Begun to identify stakeholders to participate in a broad, cross-sector Collective Impact Stakeholder Group, including residents, with the intent to convene in October 2019.

• Recognized the need for specialized expertise in Collective Impact and organized a search process to select a consulting resource to support aspects of Phase 2, and pending mutual interest and funding, provide continued consulting support in Phase 3.

Requirements – Deadline: September 27, 2019
On or before September 27, 2019, please submit a brief proposal and attachments including:
• Statement of interest and fit
• Evidence of experience in consulting for Collective Impact initiatives
• Proposed scope of services and estimated level of effort
• Statement of qualifications (firm and team members)
• Preliminary fee estimate
  o Optional: suggest basic, value-add, and premium level estimates and services
• References (3)
• Availability for interviews during the week of October 7, 2019

United Community invites proposal submissions digitally or in print.

Please send digital submissions to:
Alison DeCourcey, Executive Director
alison.decourcey@unitedcommunity.org

Please mail/courier print submissions to:
Alison DeCourcey
Executive Director
United Community
7511 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306

Timetable
The selection process is designed as follows, although specific timing is subject to change:
• Week of September 9          Invitations & RFPs distributed
• Week of September 23         Proposal deadline (September 27, 2019)
• Weeks of October 7           Interviews
• Week of October 14           Evaluation, references and selection
• Week of October 21           Contract review and approval
  Also: Collective Impact Stakeholder Group Meeting #1

Enclosures
• Phase 1 Report: *Summary Report: Communities of Opportunity Grant, Planning Phase*
  by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, April 2019
• Phase 2 Design Document, August 2019
Attachment A: Glimpse at Southeastern Fairfax County Demographics

A glimpse at the demographics of our neighborhoods—census tracts 4215 and 4216—reveals the startling reality of 6,418 people (2,083 households) who call it home.

- The highest rate—three times the average—of hospitalization for asthmatic complications in all of Northern Virginia.

- A TANF rate that is two times higher than the rest of Fairfax County.

- Median income of $54,490, less than half the median income for Fairfax County of $111,963.

- Over two-thirds of households identify as rent-burdened.

- Eighty-three percent (83%) of the 3-4 year olds in one census tract are not in preschool.

- Thirty-seven percent (37%) of adults are without a high school diploma.

- A residential makeup of fifty-five (55%) African American and thirty-seven (37%) Hispanic.

- Thirty-one percent (31%) are without health insurance.

- A life expectancy that is 10 years less than other residents of Fairfax County.
Attachment B: Phase 1 Sponsorship Team Participants

The following is a list of interviews that Center for the Study of Social Policy conducted throughout February and March 2019

Tom Fleetwood, Director, Fairfax County Housing and Community Redevelopment
Samantha Gallo, Fairfax County Housing and Community Redevelopment
*Alison DeCourcey, Executive Director, United Community
*Yolanda Thompson, Community Center Coordinator, United Community, Creekside Village Community Center
Basim Khan, Executive Director, Neighborhood Health
Jane Knops, Community Partnerships and Communications, Neighborhood Health
Leslie Hatch, Vice President, Good Shephard Housing & Family Services, Inc.
David Levine, President and CEO, Good Shepherd Housing & Family Services, Inc.
Ann Harbour, Governmental Relations, iNOVA Health System
Joe Fay, Executive Director, FACETS
Phaedra Sampson, Program Manager, FACETS
*Chris Revere, Deputy Director, Innovation and Planning Fairfax County Health Department
Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayens, Director, Fairfax County Health Department
*Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer, Fairfax County Office of the County Executive
Chris Leonard, Director, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services
Sarah Allen, Division Director Access, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services
Pallas Washington, Region 1 Manager, Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services
Lloyd Tucker, Division Director, Regional Services, Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services
Dean Klein, Director, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness
Sharon Singer, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

* Have agreed to serve on Steering Team for Phase 2