



News Release

United Way of Anchorage to Help Hundreds of Students Finish High School with \$750,000 from AT&T

One of 18 Recipients of \$10 Million in Contributions to Programs Across U.S.

Anchorage, AK. Aug. 30, 2016 —United Way of Anchorage has been selected as one of 18 recipients nationwide that will share in \$10 million from AT&T through the company's [Aspire Connect to Success Competition](#). The philanthropic organization was chosen because of its deep commitment to supporting and motivating underserved students and its successful track record of helping them stay in school and prepare for their next step in life. Hundreds of organizations applied to the competition, which is part of [AT&T Aspire](#), a signature philanthropic initiative to help students succeed in school and beyond.

Nationally, Aspire Connect to Success funding recipients deliver support for students in need with a focus on college or career preparation. Funding also provides mentoring and peer-to-peer support through college.

United Way of Anchorage will receive \$750,000 to support the “Back on Track” initiative run by Covenant House Alaska and the Anchorage School District. The effort will help nearly 500 high school students in Anchorage graduate on time. But it doesn't end there. AT&T's contribution will also better prepare these students succeed in college and increase their chances of getting a job. The program will serve homeless and at-risk students, 35% of whom are Alaska Native.

“Thanks to AT&T we're able to provide hope and opportunity to hundreds of students who need help with a big step in life; graduating high school,” said Michele Brown, president and CEO of United Way of Anchorage. “The “Back on Track” partnership is making sure Anchorage's children don't drop out or fall behind. Every day, we're focused on the things that improve children's lives so that more kids can start school ready to learn, stay on track and graduate on time. AT&T's contribution strengthens our work and will change countless lives.”

“Young people need a high school diploma to stay on track for college and career success,” said Bob Bass, president of AT&T Alaska. “AT&T's future, as well as the country's, is dependent on our young people. Through Aspire, we support programs that invest in students, especially those who need it the most, so they can walk across the graduation stage ready to fulfill their dreams. This particular contribution is meaningful because it impacts our local community.”



The “Back on Track” program is part of a larger Anchorage community initiative called “90% by 2020.” This initiative is the result of Anchorage businesses, nonprofit organizations, service providers, the school district, community members and families coming together to get better results for all Anchorage children. The goal of the initiative is to achieve and sustain a 90% graduation rate or higher by the year 2020.

“Our youth are the future,” said Governor Bill Walker. “Programs like Anchorage’s 90% by 2020 demonstrate how result-focused partnerships can use resources effectively, while helping our students succeed. I applaud the 90% by 2020 partnership, and am pleased it gained the notice of AT&T. AT&T’s investment in our youth and, by extension our state, is admirable.”

“90% by 2020 focuses on investing in our children,” said Mayor Ethan Berkowitz. “I thank AT&T and United Way for being good neighbors committed to our future.”

Through a competitive process the 18 non-profits, including United Way of Anchorage, were selected based on their effectiveness helping young people graduate from high school ready for career or college. Funded programs use evidence- based approaches that are showing results.

“We’re thrilled to be a partner with United Way, AT&T and the Anchorage School District to help so many young people in Anchorage achieve a bright future,” said Alison Kear, Executive Director of Covenant House Alaska. “Sixty-seven percent of the young people who come to our shelter don’t have a high school diploma. We’re working to lower that number every day. The money provided by AT&T will help hundreds of young people gain independence and prevent them from becoming homeless.”

“We are honored AT&T and United Way are choosing to make such a significant investment in our students,” said Dr. Deena Paramo, Anchorage School District Superintendent. “Thanks to our community partners we can offer programs like “Back on Track” and make certain that every Anchorage student can graduate high school and have a chance to go to college and find a job they love. That’s powerful.”

The effort to help students achieve great things doesn’t stop with the “Back on Track” or “90% by 2020” effort. Anyone can help a student succeed.

About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address



community needs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T's signature philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring. Through Aspire, we've passed the \$250 million mark on our plan to invest \$350 million in education from 2008-2017.

For more information, contact:

Name: Jenny Evans

Phone: 907.727.2585

Email: jennykevans@gmail.com