



United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley, P.O. Box 460, Winchester, VA 22604

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## NEWS RELEASE/MEDIA ALERT

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### **United Way NSV and Wells Fargo Partner to Increase Economic Mobility** *United Way NSV's Valley Assistance Network receives \$10,000 grant*

Across the country, Wells Fargo and United Way are transforming lives by empowering and strengthening families to achieve financial stability. This week, Wells Fargo is making a financial commitment to support United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley's efforts to help local families create a path to financial success.

During its United Way Campaign Kick-off event at **8:00am on September 7, 2018, Wells Fargo will present United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley (UWNSV) with a \$10,000 check to benefit the organization's newly created Valley Assistance Network (VAN) at their downtown Winchester location.** The program launched in October 2017 as a direct result of UWNSV's Community Needs Assessment and the ALICE Report, which shines a light on the number of families who are struggling financially.

Since its launch in October 2018, VAN has served nearly 500 individual clients and made over 1,150 referrals to community partners. VAN's mission is to engage community resources to move individuals and families from crisis to financial security. Eighty-five percent of referrals are related to financial stability resources, including connections to housing resources, basic needs and financial assistance. Wells Fargo's investment will allow VAN to launch the Mobility Mentoring® program. The program pairs participants with trained mentors, so that over time clients may acquire the resources, skills, and sustained behavioral changes to achieve economic independence. Mobility Mentoring is a program of Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) with proven outcomes for success. The program utilizes The Bridge to Self-Sufficiency: a tool to chart a path to economic self-sufficiency. The Bridge helps families plan and reach their goals in five essential areas: family stability, well-being, education and training, financial management, and employment.

"This is an inspiring example of how corporate partners are working with United Way to change lives," said Nadine Pottinga, President and CEO of United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley. The chief purpose of the program is to serve working families who have low to moderate incomes and are struggling to survive in our community. In the City of Winchester, 14% of families live in poverty, while

an additional 36% are considered ALICE ® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) - they work, but can barely cover the basics, including housing, child care, food, health care, and transportation. They are often one emergency away from falling into poverty. The addition of case management tools like Mobility Mentoring will advance VAN's mission and provide a measureable pathway to increase economic mobility.

“VAN is the first program in our region to address the complex barriers facing ALICE® families,” Pottinga said. “It has quickly become a vital resource to our community, but we can't do it alone. We need the support of partners like Wells Fargo, and many others, to make a sustainable impact.” United Way Worldwide named Wells Fargo's workplace giving campaign number one in the U.S. for nine consecutive years.

“Wells Fargo has long been committed to United Way's mission of improving lives and building stronger communities. Together, our focus is on helping individuals and families get on more solid financial ground,” said Lynne Sayles, Senior Financial Advisor for Wells Fargo in Winchester.

Wells Fargo is a member of the United Way's Global Corporate Leadership program, which aims to improve lives and create lasting changes in communities across the country through corporate resources, consumer research and employee engagement. The company has previously been honored with the United Way's highest award for volunteer engagement.

United Way NSV is actively recruiting volunteers to serve as mentors for the program. Anyone who is interested in learning more can contact Jennifer Hall, Director of Community Engagement at (540) 773-3178 or [jhall@unitedwaynsv.org](mailto:jhall@unitedwaynsv.org).

**About United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley:** Since 1946 the United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley has worked to impact the community human care needs that matter most to the people of Clarke, Frederick, Shenandoah Counties and the City of Winchester. United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley convenes the people and organizations necessary to create solutions to our region's most pressing challenges and collaborates with effective partners. United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley seeks to serve as the catalyst for community change by supporting over 42 partner agencies in the area on Income, Health and Education. For more information visit our website [www.unitedwaynsv.org](http://www.unitedwaynsv.org).

**About Wells Fargo:**

Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a diversified, community-based financial services company with \$1.9 trillion in assets. Wells Fargo's vision is to satisfy our customers' financial needs and help them succeed financially. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, investment and mortgage products, as well as consumer and commercial finance through more than 8,300 locations, 13,000 ATMs, the internet ([wellsfargo.com](http://wellsfargo.com)) and mobile banking, and has offices in 38 countries and territories to support customers who conduct business in the global economy. With approximately 265,000 team members, Wells Fargo serves one in three households in the United States. Wells Fargo & Company was ranked No. 26 on Fortune's 2017 rankings of America's largest corporations. In 2017, Wells Fargo donated \$286.5 million to 14,500 nonprofits and Wells Fargo team members volunteered a record 2 million hours. Wells Fargo's corporate social responsibility efforts are focused on three strategic priorities: diversity and social inclusion, economic empowerment, and environmental sustainability. News, insights and perspectives from Wells Fargo are also available at Wells Fargo Stories.