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United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania Announces Transition to Pennsylvania Disability Advocacy Fund

United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania (UCP of PA) Board of Directors today announces and celebrates the completion of our transition from a non-profit organization to a grant-making entity.

UCP of PA is a 501(c)3 organization committed to advocating for the independence, productivity, and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and other disabilities. The organization was founded in 1952 by parents and committed volunteers who wanted to improve the lives of people with disabilities in Pennsylvania. For over 68 years it has advocated for the civil and human rights of individuals with disabilities and for funding and access to needed services and supports. The organization has been a strong advocate for family support and lifespan respite services, inclusion in education, and community services. The member agencies of UCP of PA provide a variety of community-based services to thousands of individuals through various public and private funding streams and their own community-raised funds. Member agencies have provided services to children, adults, and seniors with intellectual or developmental disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, and individuals with dual diagnoses across the Commonwealth.

The Board analyzed the most effective and efficient option to ensure continued advocacy and impact on Pennsylvanians and their families consistent with the UCP of PA Mission and Purpose.

After much deliberation, the Board of Directors of UCP of PA has taken action to dissolve their non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Simultaneously, their affiliation with the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) national organization ends. These actions will have no effect on any UCP of PA member organizations or on any other UCP national affiliates in Pennsylvania. The Board would like to thank United Cerebral Palsy for their advocacy work at the national level on behalf of local affiliates and individuals with disabilities across the country. It has been a mutually beneficial and supportive partnership. Anita Porco, UCP Vice President Affiliate Network said "United Cerebral Palsy values the long standing relationship with UCP of Pennsylvania and recognizes the important work that they have performed for so many years to affect legislation and provide advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities. We wish them much success with their transition to a grant making organization in order to continue their advocacy initiatives impacting Pennsylvania".

UCP of PA member organizations will continue to carry out advocacy and services to individuals through their individual efforts, participation in coalitions, and through membership in human service trade associations associated with their service areas across the Commonwealth.

The Board is pleased to announce today that the organization has transitioned to a grant-making body where the passion and commitment to carry on the UCP of PA legacy will guide the future use of its resources through creation of the Pennsylvania Disability Advocacy Fund to be managed by The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC). The fund's Advisory Committee, comprised of the former Board of Directors and Joan W. Martin, will select grantees that respond to address specific advocacy goals beginning in 2021. Information about the new fund is available at <https://www.tfec.org/funds/pennsylvania-disability-advocacy-fund/>

The Board would like to thank Spencer Nauman, Jr. of Nauman, Smith, Shissler and Hall for legal advice, Lynn Hocker of Whispering Creek for facilitating our planning retreat, and Janice R. Black, President/CEO of TFEC, and other TFEC staff Jennifer Doyle and Kirk Demyan and for their assistance and support to make the transition a reality. Janice R. Black said "the Foundation for Enhancing Communities has had the privilege of working with UCP of PA for the past 10 years managing their investments and overall accounting work. TFEC is now excited to be able to assist UCP of PA with their the new fund within TFEC, the Pennsylvania Disability Advocacy Fund The purpose of the fund is advocating for the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with Cerebral Palsy and other disabilities. We would like the public to know the new fund is able to receive contributions at any time in any amount by sending the checks to TFEC with the name of the fund in the memo line or going to TFEC.org and using a credit card".

The Board thanked the many coalition partners and supporting organizations and individuals that helped UCP of PA be an effective advocate for people with disabilities over the years. Of note, the Board recognized the extraordinary commitment and generosity of the late Glenn P. Hoffman who made bequests in his will that provided resources that support the ability to offer grants into the future.

The Board also takes this opportunity to recognize a long-time dedicated member of the Board for his service to UCP of PA as well as his service to other groups and to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Board President Sarah A. Drob presents the congratulations from Tom Wolf, Governor, to William R. "Bill" Schultz. Ms Drob quoted the Governor's proclamation "During the course of your career you made a difference in the lives of countless Pennsylvanians through your commitment to providing support and services to people with disabilities. Your leadership and advocacy are true representations of the tradition and values of our commonwealth. I applaud you for approaching each day with dedication, loyalty, and responsibility. Your caliber of character, leadership, and inner strength, as well as your desire to help others develop their qualities within themselves, is truly admirable. The professionalism and expertise that you brought to both the Board of Directors of United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania and the commonwealth will be missed".

Ms Drob concluded the event by thanking all present and past officers and directors of UCP of PA for their service, and their long-time advisor, Joan W. Martin of Wojdak Government Relations, for assisting them on their journey.

For more information, please contact Joan W. Martin at 717-951-2622 or joanm407@gmail.com.

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