



**For Immediate Release**

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## **GLCF, CTI and Middlesex District Attorney's Office Partner in Drug Court Transportation Project**

### ***Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI) receives \$10,000 Greater Lowell Community Foundation (GLCF) Grant***

**Lowell, March 13, 2019** – Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI), Greater Lowell Community Foundation and the Middlesex District Attorney's Office are announcing a first-of-its kind partnership to provide transportation to individuals to and from Drug Court. Last year CTI received a \$10,000 grant from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation to help start the pilot program, which kicked off in October, and is currently providing services three women who are being picked up from a Lynn Sober House and transported to their court appearances. The goal is to accommodate up to 13 individuals each week.

"This partnership with the office of District Attorney Marian T. Ryan, Community Teamwork and the Drug Court is the capstone of a multi-year commitment to fund programs for opioid prevention and treatment in our area and help ensure success for participants. In response to the opioid epidemic, the Community Foundation has awarded more than \$160,000 in discretionary funds to support local nonprofits," said Greater Lowell Community Foundation President and CEO Jay Linnehan.

"By providing this transportation option we are filling a service gap that was prohibiting some individuals from easily accessing the courts, which is essential to successful completion of drug court," said District Attorney Ryan. "We continue to work with the courts and our community partners to ensure the criminal justice system is not just punitive. To do this we need to think outside the box to come up with innovative solutions that will hopefully lead to a successful outcome and ultimately interrupt the often cyclical effects of substance use disorders."

The Drug Court is a special session within Massachusetts district courts where judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, police and social-service workers team up to work with defendants on probation whose crimes were motivated by substance abuse. Many defendants are placed where treatment beds are available, which can be

located in Sober Houses far from their community and the Drug Court. These defendants risk violating probation because they are unable to secure transportation to attend their trial. In addition, various modes of transportation, such as public transportation and taxis can be cost prohibitive and often defendants can find themselves back in the neighborhoods and streets where drugs are being sold.

Community Teamwork recognized that its Transportation Department, which brings children to and from school, had flexibility to use drivers and vehicles during the school day to respond to other community needs. With funding from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, CTI is deploying drivers and vehicles to fill this need. GLCF provided a \$10,000 grant to support the cost of a driver and van for Community Teamwork to facilitate this innovative approach to assist the Drug Court and its clients. Together, CTI, GLCF and the Drug Court probation officers developed a framework for what the program might look like as well as a strict Code of Conduct which the participants would have to follow in order to receive the benefit of this program.

“Most often, these defendants are in need of other basic services which CTI can provide, such as housing, financial literacy, child care, etc. Through this pilot program, which can send employees from CTI to work with the probation officials and social workers, we are able to identify the various resources available to the defendants. We could not have taken this novel approach without the help of this grant from GLCF,” stated Meghan Siembor, Director of Child and Family Services.

### **About Community Teamwork**

Community Teamwork is a catalyst for social change. Our driving mission is to help people help themselves with child care, family supports, nutrition, fuel assistance, housing, skills training, employment, financial education, and individual asset and small business development. As a Community Action Agency, a Regional Housing Agency, and a Community Development Corporation, Community Teamwork helps nearly 50,000 individuals from 63 cities and towns in northeastern Massachusetts gain greater economic independence.

### **About the Greater Lowell Community Foundation**

The Greater Lowell Community Foundation is a philanthropic organization comprised of over 350 funds, currently totaling over \$35MM, which is dedicated to improving the quality of life in 20 neighboring cities and towns. The Community Foundation annually awards grants and scholarships to hundreds of worthy nonprofits and students, and is powered by the winning combination of donor-directed giving, personal attention from its staff, and an in-depth understanding of local needs. The generosity of our donors has enabled the

Community Foundation to award more than \$13 million to the Greater Lowell Community since 1999.

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