**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CONTACT:**

February 10, 2021 Kim Duncan

[kim@ontrackwc.org](mailto:kim@ontrackwc.org) 301-514-8082

**ONTRACK WASHINGTON COUNTY RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM STRIVETOGETHER FOR AN EQUITABLE RECOVERY**

*Systemic racial inequities exposed by COVID-19 heighten the need for systems transformation*

**Hagerstown, MD** — StriveTogether, a national network working to bring communities together around data to make decisions and improve results for kids, today announced OnTrack Washington County as an awardee for the Challenge Fund. OnTrack joins fifty other communities across 26 states to deliver more equitable outcomes for children and families. These communities are part of the Cradle to Career Network, a national movement led by StriveTogether to ensure every child has every opportunity to succeed.

OnTrack Washington County will be utilizing the Challenge Funds to support the operations of the organization and ensure the long-term success of this collective impact cradle to career initiative. Additionally, these funds will provide training, planning and implementation support for the Collaborative Action Networks – each focused on a specific result across Early Childhood, School Age Youth, and Workforce and Career Readiness. “OnTrack is incredibly grateful for the support of StriveTogether and is honored to be awarded Challenge Funds to move our work forward in Washington County.”

“When the pandemic hit in early 2020, we made the strategic decision to shift cost savings from cancelled events and travel to expand grants we award to our network members,” said Jennifer Blatz, president and CEO, StriveTogether. “With the support of our board of directors, we pivoted and accelerated payment of previously awarded multi-year grants and extended new grants focused on COVID-19 recovery and resilience. The work underway in these communities is vital to the future of our children. We’re supporting the efforts of communities to transform systems so that they produce more equitable outcomes.”

Altogether, StriveTogether has provided $20 million in grants since the onset of the pandemic in 2020 and will award another $12 million by the end of 2021. Multi-year commitments from several long-time investors in StriveTogether helped make this possible.

“Our network members are helping their communities change the systems that fail so many families of color and families experiencing poverty. There is tremendous need and opportunity to redefine what’s possible,” Blatz added. “We’re creating a new normal where race, ethnicity and poverty do not determine opportunity or outcome.”

“OnTrack has been working with our community partners to help our community’s most at-risk individuals navigate these trying times.  This funding will be a great help, particularly as we work to ensure that our residents have the necessary credentials to be employable,” says Jeanne Singer, Board Chair.

These investments reflect StriveTogether’s ongoing commitment to support its network of cross-sector partnerships as they work to put children and families on a path toward economic mobility. Communities across the country are changing systems like education, housing, health care and more with a goal of eliminating disparities for millions of young people and their families.

Priority was given to network members serving significant populations of children and families of color who are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The following have received funding:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Achieve Brown County, Green Bay, WI * Achieve Escambia, Pensacola, FL * Alamance Achieves, Burlington, NC * Aligned Impact Muscatine County, Muscatine, IA * All Hands Raised, Portland, OR * Baltimore's Promise, Baltimore, MD * Better Together Central Oregon, Redmond, OR * Boston Opportunity Agenda, Boston, MA * Bridgeport Prospers, Bridgeport, CT * Building Our Future, Kenosha, WI * The Commit Partnership, Dallas, TX * Cradle to Career, Rochester, MN * Cradle to Career Alliance, Columbia, MO * Cradle to Career Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH * Cradle to Career Fresno County, Fresno, CA * Cradle to Career Partnership, Tucson, AZ * E3 Alliance, Austin, TX * Eastside Pathways, Bellevue, WA * The Forsyth Promise, Winston-Salem, NC * Generation Next, Minneapolis, MN * Graduate Strong, Bremerton, WA * Graduate Tacoma/Foundation for Tacoma Students, Tacoma, WA * Harlem Renaissance Education Pipeline, New York, NY * Higher Expectations for Racine County, Racine, WI * imPACT East Idaho, Pocatello, ID * ImpactTulsa, Tulsa, OK * Learn4Life, Atlanta, GA * Learn to Earn Dayton, Dayton, OH | * Marin Promise Partnership, San Rafael, CA * Milwaukee Succeeds, Milwaukee, WI * Mission Promise Neighborhood, San Francisco, CA * Northfield Promise, Northfield, MN * Norwalk ACTS, Norwalk, CT * OnTrack, Hagerstown, MD * Partners for Education, Berea, KY * Promise Partnership of Salt Lake, Salt Lake City, UT * Raise DC, Washington, DC * RISE: Treasure Valley’s Education Partnership, Boise, ID * The Road Map Project, Seattle, WA * ROC the Future, Rochester, NY * Rocky Mountain Partnership, Thornton, CO * Seeding Success, Memphis, TN * South Bronx Rising Together, New York, NY * Spartanburg Academic Movement (SAM), Spartanburg, SC * Stamford Cradle to Career, Stamford, CT * Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Modesto, CA * Summit Education Initiative, Akron, OH * Thrive Chicago, Chicago, IL * Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative, Charleston, SC * UP Partnership, San Antonio, TX * Waterbury Bridge to Success Community Partnership, Waterbury, CT |

###

**About OnTrack**OnTrack Washington County serves as the backbone organization for a countywide education initiative, consisting of 54 and growing Active Partners, aimed at improving educational and workforce outcomes from cradle to career. OnTrack is part of StriveTogether, a national movement with a clear purpose: helping every child succeed in school and in life from cradle to career, regardless of race, ethnicity, zip code, or circumstance. OnTrack's primary role is growing and convening the partners across three distinct Collaborative Action Networks on the cradle to career continuum: Early Childhood, School Age Youth, and Workforce and Career Readiness, in a concerted effort to close disparity gaps and improve outcomes for children of color and children living in poverty.

**About StriveTogether**

StriveTogether partners with nearly 70 communities across the country to advance equity so local success stories can become the reality for every child, everywhere. They work to transform failing systems using collaborative improvement and a proven framework for change. The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network is closing disparity gaps in education, housing and so much more. Together, they impacted the lives of more than 12 million youth — more than half are children of color — across 30 states and Washington, D.C. Learn more at StriveTogether.org.