



**United Way
of Bradley County**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Allen Mincey, Communications
(423) 472-9876 (office)
(423) 339-1110 (fax)
Email: allen.mincey@unitedway.org

FOR RELEASE:

Sunday, April 6, 2008

United Way announces process for hospital fund grant applications

The process for applying for grants from the proceeds of the sale of Bradley Memorial Hospital has been set, with specific eligibility requirements established for non-profit entities in Bradley County.

The first grants to be distributed by United Way of Bradley County from the interest accrued from proceeds of the sale of the hospital will be announced later this year. Applying for those grants will begin in May, as interested parties will be required to fill out a Request for Application (RFA) and attend one of up to three training workshops which will help them fill out that application.

“We want to make sure that anyone applying for these funds fits the criteria set by the agreement made by the Bradley Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees and United Way,” said Dr. Matt Ryerson, Coordinator of the Bradley Memorial Hospital Endowment Fund.

That agreement specifies that the interest from investment of the funds United Way received from the sale shall go to helping provide local grants to parties that have 501(c)(3) non-profit status through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS Code of 1986), and that have programs that will address community needs in three specific areas: healthcare, wellness and quality of life.

The agreement between the hospital trustees and United Way was very precise on the definition of these areas. They are as follows:

- Healthcare – Programs or projects that serve unmet healthcare needs in Bradley County regardless of ability to pay.

- Wellness – Programs or projects that educate the Bradley County community about the physical and mental aspects of maintaining and improving personal health.
- Quality of Life – Programs or services that enhance or improve the physical or mental health of the citizens of Bradley County.

“The agreement was very specific in requiring that organizations have their 501(c)(3) designation, and that they address these areas, so we want to make sure that those wishing to apply for funding know these requirements. They will need to explain how their program meets these criteria,” Ryerson said.

To that end, Ryerson and members of the United Way of Bradley County’s Program Selection Team have set up workshops for interested parties to go over the application process. These workshops, which will provide identical information, will be held in May, with Ryerson saying they will be at different times of the day to meet the schedules of anyone who might wish to attend. Applicants will need to attend only one of these sessions.

“At the workshop they will receive the Request for Application. There will be valuable information at these workshops that will aid applicants in their completion of the grant forms, so no applications will be given out to any organization unless they have at least one person attend one of these sessions,” he stressed.

The exact dates and times are being confirmed and will be announced later this month.

“One thing that we are also emphasizing is sustainability, so we would expect to see those grant applicants give us a plan for reducing grant funding for each year,” he said.

“This money is to be used as ‘seed money’ or one-time grants instead of ongoing funding. We hope to see new programs for our community that meet an existing need,” Ryerson added.

Ryerson said that there is no minimum amount set for a grant and if an organization feels it meets an unmet community need, that organization should apply for the funding.

"On-going program evaluation and technical assistance will also be available for these organizations selected for funding. We want these organizations to be successful and sustainable, so we will offer all the help we can," he added.

He said this will include additional workshops on how to apply for other funding sources. "We will have a support system in place for these organizations and are going to walk with them through those steps," he explained.

United Way of Bradley County had two needs assessments conducted for the community, one by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and one by the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. The UTC assessment pinpointed five areas of needs: healthcare, affordable housing, adult education and literacy, afterschool programs and services for disabled residents. The UTK assessment pinpointed the needs of the "working poor."

Ryerson said that while these are community needs, he recognizes that other needs exist that may not have been identified by the assessment. "Using the assessments as a guide will benefit those applying for grants, but should not deter any organization from applying for funding," Ryerson said.

Organizations need to have a 501(c)(3) status and have a program or service that will address the specific areas of healthcare, wellness and quality of life.

The deadline for receiving the applications will be Tuesday, July 1, with grant awards being announced on Friday, Aug. 1.