

UNITED WAY ORGANIZATIONS MERGE TO HAVE GREATER COMMUNITY IMPACT,

(June 8, 2017)—The boards of United Way of Greater Williamsburg and United Way of the Virginia Peninsula voted today to pursue a merger of the organizations as they continue to improve lives and strengthen communities. The newly reimagined organization is uniquely positioned to work with community leaders, businesses, policymakers, nonprofits and individuals to affect change on a scale that neither organization can achieve on its own.

“What drives United Way is the notion that as a community we are greater than the sum of our parts,” said Steven S. Kast, President & CEO of United Way of the Virginia Peninsula. “There’s something about the power of people coming together collectively for a cause. It’s energizing. It’s rewarding. It magnifies the amount of impact we can achieve, especially for people in need.”

This merger will unite already interconnected communities on the Peninsula and the Middle Peninsula to ensure a proactive approach to their most pressing needs. The single United Way can better understand the region’s needs, build stronger relationships with residents and service providers, and more easily engage with all stakeholders. All of this leads to a greater community impact.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for us to harness the innovation of two truly great communities, so that we can meet bigger and bolder goals,” said Larry Foster, Interim Director of United Way of Greater Williamsburg. “The challenges facing our communities do not recognize city or county lines. This larger United Way will be able to serve a greater number of people, influence social change, and solve more problems.”

“Throughout this merger process, great care has been taken to ensure that the services and agency funding currently provided by both United Ways will be protected,” said Sam Poole, Board Chair of the United Way of Greater Williamsburg. “While the entities are merging, the services that our donors and partners have come to expect of each United Way will continue.”

“When the two separate United Ways were formed decades ago, they served two very distinct communities,” said Bill Bell, Board Chair of the United Way of the Virginia Peninsula. “As our region has grown, the communities have come together in many ways. As more of the agencies we fund and people we help have roots in both service territories, it makes sense for the two United Ways to partner and become a single regional entity.”

While details of the combined entity will be finalized in the coming months, United Way of Greater Williamsburg and United Way of the Virginia Peninsula remain committed to improving our community, giving individuals pathways out of poverty.

The newly merged United Way will serve the counties of Gloucester, New Kent, James City, Mathews, and York and the Cities of Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, and Williamsburg.

To follow updates and learn more about the community’s agenda, *Pathways Out of Poverty*, visit uwvp.org. ### Media Contact: Steven S. Kast skast@uwvp.org, 757-873-9328