



United Way
for Southeastern Michigan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEAPS AND BOUNDS & UNITED WAY EARN PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION

DETROIT — October 28, 2019 — United Way for Southeastern Michigan and Leaps and Bounds Family Services, a United Way Early Learning Center (ELC), have been awarded the prestigious CDA (Child Development Associate) Gold StandardSM Award from the Council for Professional Recognition. The Council granted the award in recognition of the two entities' expertise in providing exceptional CDA training toward preparing students for successful careers in early childhood education.

Criteria that must be met in earning the CDA Gold Standard includes successful demonstration of three of the Council's industry-leading principles of:

1. Alignment with the CDA formal education coursework in eight subject areas.
2. Sound business policies and practices.
3. Quality student services that meet their educational and professional needs.

"The CDA is the next step in professional development for all childcare providers, and we are pleased to have received this special endorsement of our work," says Denise Dorsz, executive director, Leaps and Bounds. This recognition from the Council underscores our efforts in ensuring the best professionals are available to families seeking the best childcare resources for their children."

In addition to providing high-quality training, Gold Standard applicants must provide evidence of serving students with professional development that prepares them to successfully complete CDA training.

"By investing in agency partners like Leaps and Bounds to offer CDA training, we're addressing a critical need for families by expanding access to qualified providers," says Jeff Miles, senior director, Center for Early Childhood Excellence, United Way for Southeastern Michigan. "Our goal is to support families and caregivers so the children in their care are best positioned to succeed at the onset of their academic ark and beyond."

Next year, Leaps and Bounds will offer a CDA certification program to six cohorts of 25 childcare providers and two cohorts of 25, for those wishing to renew their certification as required every three years.

"We believe the Council's CDA Gold Standard award adds value and integrity to the early childhood profession by verifying connections between the Council's proven teacher competencies and the quality

of training resources available to CDA students,” says Valora Washington, chief executive officer, Council for Professional Recognition.

In addition to United Way funding, the CDA program at Leaps & Bound is also made possible with support from the Detroit Regional Workforce Fund, Michigan’s Great Start to Quality program, and United Way affinity group, Women United.

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About the Council for Professional Recognition

For more than 30 years, the Council for Professional Recognition has been the leader in promoting improved performance and recognition of professionals in the early childhood education of children ages zero to 5 years old. The Council recognizes and credentials professionals who work in all types of early care and education settings – Head Start, pre-k, infant-toddler, family childcare, and home visitor programs. As a non-profit agency, the Council sets policies and procedures for assessment and credentialing, including the CDA® and the new CDA Gold StandardSM; publishes the industry leading training books and workbooks, including its CDA Competency Standards and Essentials textbook and workbook (2nd edition).

About Leaps and Bounds

Since our founding, Leaps & Bounds Family Services has been a non-profit agency dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults. We provide education programs and services that support families and help children reach their potential and become productive citizens. It is the vision of Leaps and Bounds Family Services that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential, and that they enter Kindergarten ready to learn.

About United Way for Southeastern Michigan

United Way for Southeastern Michigan mobilizes the caring power of Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties to improve lives in measurable and lasting ways throughout the region. The organization is led by a diverse group of volunteers from business, labor, government, human services, education and the community. United Way provides opportunities to invest in the metropolitan Detroit community through volunteerism, advocacy and its annual campaign. United Way is a leader in convening partners to achieve positive outcomes around Health, Education, and Economic Prosperity. For more information, visit www.UnitedWaySEM.org.