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Jackson County Data Network

The United Way of Jackson County has awarded the Jackson District Library a \$20,000 grant to create and host a data repository to assist nonprofits, human service organizations and community planners. The Jackson County Data Network will be a centralized source of timely, relevant information on Jackson County, through the use of data provided by Jackson organizations. Planners and researchers seeking solutions to the community's pressing needs will find data and potential collaborations. Scott Schmidt, Full Circle Development Coordinator says, "The Jackson County Data Network represents collaboration at its finest. For several years, a centralized clearing house of Jackson-centric information has been the vision of a core group of organizations, initiatives, grant writers and community leaders. The Jackson County Data Network is the culmination of this collective vision and determination."

Inspiration and development of this project came from the United Way of Jackson County, the Full Circle Initiative and the Grant Writers' Forum. An advisory committee, comprised of representatives from the United Way of Jackson County; Allegiance Health; Jackson Nonprofit Support Center; Jackson Area Manufacturers Association; Aware, Inc.; South Central Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross and many others as well as the library, meets periodically to review the project. Many other organizations have contributed along the way. The United Way Community Report Card will form the framework around which the data will be organized.

The network coordinator, Tessa J. Eger, will staff a help desk, to be located in the Reference Department of the downtown Carnegie Library. Public and private organizations as well as individuals may get help with grants, information needs and available resources, whether in person, on the phone or by email. Eger, a former library webmaster and media liaison, is also a reference librarian at the Carnegie Library. The network website will be created by the library's IT staff and maintained by Eger. "This project has the potential to bring a wealth of new projects and funding into the Jackson area, transforming the critical problems of our community into glowing examples of collaboration and teamwork," commented Eger. "We are all excited about the possibilities."

“Information and data regarding the unique qualities, challenges and resources inherent to Jackson County will enable us to mobilize and take targeted action in addressing issues that impact our community,” adds Schmidt.

Please contact Tessa Eger at 517-788-4087, ext 234, or email her at egertj@myidl.com if your organization is interested in collaborating on this project.

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