

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release:**

Date: July 10, 2008  
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### **United Way Supports The Philadelphia OIC, Inc. for its Adult Literacy and GED Test Preparation Programs.**

OIC, after an intensive competition involving almost 550 agencies, has been awarded \$61,455 by United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania. This is the first United Way allocation to OIC which has been serving the citizens of the Delaware Valley for the past 44 years.

The grant, expected to be renewed for two additional years pending the results of future United Way campaigns, is to help with the general operating expenses of the organization rather than directed to a specific program. Bob Nelson, OIC's President & CEO said that while United Way placed no restrictions on the use of the funds, it provided the funds because of the agency's success in providing Adult Basic Education and GED Test preparation services.

OIC's Learning Opportunities Center (LOC) is funded by the State Departments of Education and Welfare and serves 365 individuals per year. Its Comprehensive Competencies Program model is a computer-assisted program that elevates reading and math competencies by 1 grade level for every 50 hours of instruction. Moreover, the model provides GED Test preparation instruction as well as functional skills remediation. The program is ranked 27<sup>th</sup> among 127 state-supported agencies.

Nelson added, "Illiteracy among adults is a critical problem in our community clearly prohibiting the pursuit of gainful employment at the level of not being able to complete a job application; not being able to read a newspaper; not being able to help children with their homework; and overall, the psychological impact and the life long effort to conceal and/or compensate for these deficiencies. That is why the allocation from the United Way is so important to OIC and the other agencies so awarded."

United Way's *Investing in Results* process was its first competitive funding process in many years. Previously, United Way supported a selected a group of high quality agencies that had been chosen over the course of its 87 year history. But several years ago, United Way announced that it was revitalizing its funding model and beginning with its most recent fundraising campaign, it would look for and fund organizations that have a strong track record aligned with the United Way's three areas of focus – supporting children to enter school ready to learn and stay on track to graduation, supporting families in achieving financial self-reliance, and helping seniors remain healthy and safe in their own homes.

United Way considered over 2,100 proposals from 546 agencies in the *Investing in Results* process, ultimately selecting 137 agencies, an increase of sixty agencies over its former list of 77. Ninety-three of the agencies selected had not previously received United Way funding.