

Stamford-based Inspirica Wins \$200,000 Grant

STAMFORD -- Inspirica, the homeless shelter and social services agency based in Stamford, has been chosen to receive a \$200,000 grant, along with leadership training, as part of a program run by The Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

Known as Neighborhood Builders, the Bank of America award is considered highly prestigious in the nonprofit sector. The program, which is in its 10th year, identifies organizations that are deemed as having a significant impact on communities related to human series, workforce development and education. To date, The Bank of America Charitable Foundation has invested \$160 million in 800 nonprofit organizations and provided training to 1,600 nonprofit leaders.



"This is a big honor for Inspirica and Stamford," said Jason Shaplen, the CEO of Inspirica. "It brings validation and recognition of what we do."

Shaplen said the leadership training piece of the award is as important as the money. Bank of America sends the top leaders from nonprofits that win the award for intensive training retreats.

The announcement of the award was made by Bank of America on Thursday evening at The Palace Theatre in Stamford. Among the elected officials who attended was Mayor David Martin. U.S. Rep. Jim Himes was expected, but was unable to leave Washington, D.C., in time to be there.

Unlike some grants, the \$200,000 from Neighborhood Builders can be spent at the nonprofit's discretion.

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"We've heard from past Neighborhood Builders that the combination of unrestricted funding and leadership training has fundamentally changed their organizations," said Bill Tommins, Southern Connecticut market president, Bank of America, in a news release. "We expect the same to be true for Inspirica, which has already done so much to alleviate homelessness in Connecticut."

Inspirica serves approximately 700 people each year and is the largest provider of homeless housing in lower Fairfield County. All told, its emergency shelter and homes house 270 people a night. The nonprofit also provides a broad array of other social services, including assisting people living with HIV/AIDS, mental illness and/or substance abuse, and offers education and employment programs. The organization's history dates to the late 1800s, but it was not until 1987 that it became an independent nonsectarian charity. In 2012, it changed its name from St. Luke's LifeWorks to Inspirica.

A number of other Stamford area nonprofits were also recognized for their work, including the Boys & Girls Club of Stamford, the Stamford Mayor's Youth Employment Program, the Stamford Downtown Special Services District, Domus and the Connecticut Food Bank.

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