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ZILBER FAMILY FOUNDATION AND THE BRIDGE PROJECT INTRODUCE CITY'S FIRST UNCONDITIONAL CASH PROGRAM FOR MOMS AND BABIES

Innovative program to empower 100 eligible low-income pregnant individuals in Milwaukee through financial assistance

MILWAUKEE – [The Zilber Family Foundation](#) and [The Bridge Project](#) have joined forces in an innovative collaboration to introduce Milwaukee's first unconditional cash program. Aimed at empowering low-income, pregnant individuals, this groundbreaking program will provide 100 eligible participants with unconditional cash assistance designed to support their needs during the crucial early stages of their baby's life.

"The Bridge Project in Milwaukee represents a significant step towards increasing economic mobility, addressing childhood poverty, and supporting family stability in our community," said Gina Stilp, Executive Director of the Zilber Family Foundation. "By providing direct financial support, we're not only assisting families in need but seeking to interrupt cycles of generational poverty and reduce racial inequity."

Made possible through philanthropic funding from the Zilber Family Foundation and support from the Monarch Foundation, The Bridge Project's expansion to Milwaukee marks its first program outside of New York. Early data from The Bridge Project in other cities has demonstrated that direct financial support enhances family stability and community health by enabling mothers to afford child care more easily and build emergency savings.

In Wisconsin, 1 in 7 children, or 14 percent, live in poverty. Milwaukee contends with the second-highest poverty rate among the top 50 most populated cities in the United States. In the Zilber Neighborhood Initiative (ZNI) neighborhoods of Lindsay Heights, Clarke Square, and Layton Boulevard West, 44% of children are living in poverty.

The Zilber Family Foundation is proud to support the establishment of The Bridge Project and unconditional cash in Milwaukee to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods. The program will help meet basic needs, increase access to social and economic opportunities, and improve the quality of life in these neighborhoods.

Through this program, eligible Milwaukee participants will receive:

- \$1,125 one-time, upfront prenatal stipend
- \$750 per month for the first 15 months of program participation
- \$375 per month for the remaining 9 months of program participation

Launched in New York in 2021 by the Monarch Foundation, The Bridge Project invests directly and flexibly in early childhood with an aim to break the cycle of stress and poverty passed down generationally and to enhance socioeconomic mobility of families.

“We are excited to partner with the Zilber Family Foundation to launch Milwaukee's first unconditional cash program,” said The Bridge Project Co-Founder and President, Holly Fogle. “Building on the success of our New York initiatives, this effort will invest directly in mothers and their babies – ensuring their basic needs are met starting in pregnancy. In providing mothers with unrestricted cash for the first two years of their child’s life, we are able to provide a stable start to life and create positive lifelong effects across generations.”

Eligible participants must be 18 years or older; 23 weeks pregnant or less at time of application; live in 53204, 53205, 53206 or 53215 with priority in Lindsay Heights, Clarke Square or Layton Boulevard West neighborhoods; and have an annual household income of less than \$39,000 USD.

Applications for the program will open on April 10, 2024, and participants will be selected by lottery. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis for eligibility and will remain open until all slots are filled.

For more information, visit: www.zilberfamilyfoundation.org/thebridgeproject.html

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About the Zilber Family Foundation:

Formed in 1961 by Joseph J. Zilber, a philanthropist and businessman, the Zilber Family Foundation is a private independent grantmaking institution dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods by supporting nonprofits to address basic needs and personal safety, increase access to social and economic opportunity, and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods. For more information, please visit: www.zilberfamilyfoundation.org.

About The Bridge Project:

Launched in New York in 2021 by The Monarch Foundation, The Bridge Project invests directly and flexibly in early childhood with an aim to break the cycle of stress and poverty passed down generationally and to enhance socioeconomic mobility of families. Through trust, cash and community, The Bridge Project now supports over 1,200 mothers across New York in tackling child poverty.