



First Niagara “Steps In” to Support Volunteers of America

Bank will provide financial support for organization

Buffalo, N.Y., October 2, 2013 – The First Niagara Foundation and Volunteers of America of Western New York, Inc. will be working together to implement a financial component to the Step by Step program. Step by Step, an outreach program of Volunteers of America, provides highly structured workshops for women currently serving in the Monroe County and Albion State Correctional Facilities, as well as women in residential treatment programs. Step by Step features workshops designed to provide the skills necessary for women to rebuild their lives, attain self-sufficiency and achieve greater financial independence.

The First Niagara Foundation is providing \$10,000 in funding to support and implement the enhanced workshops in the Step by Step program. Sessions will address the women’s need to gain skills to stay out of prison, to create a structured family environment and to cultivate self-confidence.

“First Niagara believes everyone deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential,” said Suzanne Nasipak Chapman, First Niagara Rochester Market Executive. “This partnership will empower women in need in our community by providing the support and instruction they need to achieve independence and success.”

Administrators of the Step by Step Program say that last year alone, they served more than 500 women in the Greater Rochester Area. A 2008 New York State Department of Correctional Services Study (covering State prisoners over a 3-year period) indicates that 82% of Step by Step graduates returned to society with no incident (not re-arrested or re-incarcerated) compared to the New York State average of 70% of women returning to society with no incident. In addition, in 2012 upon completing a Step by Step workshop, 74% of graduates reported an increase in self-esteem, and 89% accomplished an identified goal.

About First Niagara

First Niagara, through its wholly owned subsidiary, First Niagara Bank, N.A., is a multi-state community-oriented bank with approximately 420 branches, approximately \$37 billion in assets, \$27 billion in deposits, and approximately 6,000 employees providing financial services to individuals, families and businesses across Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com.

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