

Rajesh Rajaraman and Deepika Rajesh Honored for Their Commitment to Dane County

Madison, WI (September 27, 2021) – Each year, United Way celebrates major donors (giving \$10,000+ annually) with the Tocqueville Society dinner, highlighting ten-year members, those who've endowed their support and an individual or family's overall philanthropy. This year, Rajesh and Deepika received the United Way of Dane County Tocqueville Society Award during the celebration on Thursday, September 23.

Growing up in India, the pair met through their families in 1985 and became engaged in 1993. In 1991, Rajesh moved to Madison for the opportunity to study electrical engineering, and upon his graduation he accepted a job at Christensen Associates. Shortly after, Rajesh and Deepika got married and in 1995 they officially moved to the Dane County community.

While philanthropy runs deep for them both, it wasn't until Rajesh's boss, Lau Christensen, Christensen Associates, encouraged him to get involved with United Way that his true passion was sparked. The couple attended their first Tocqueville dinner in 2000 and quickly became inspired by the community behind United Way and the impact they make possible.

Through connections made at United Way and knowledge he gained from the staff and other volunteers, Rajesh (co-founder of ARB Energy and ModBESS) found a passion for helping families and individuals access affordable housing. In 2013, he joined our Basic Needs Community Solutions Team, bringing a fierce commitment and crucial knowledge of finance to the table. Rajesh is also credited with bringing another innovative idea to United Way – a social investment fund. The Dane Workforce Housing Fund has an aim to contribute 500 new affordable workforce housing units to our community's inventory over the next three years, and fund 1 raised over \$10 million alone.

In addition to Deepika's 25+ year distinguished career as a scientist of immunology, cancer biology and stem cell research, her other passions lay within education and the arts. Since her children (now grown) were little, she made it a point to volunteer in many different capacities at their schools. As they grew into their high school years, Deepika began assisting with the Capital Science and Engineering Fair – which has been run as an open opportunity for children across the state to participate in, no matter their circumstance. She has a passion for ensuring that underprivileged and minority kids have the opportunity to learn and participate. She is also on the boards of the Madison Opera, Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra and Melharmony Foundation. With these organizations, she has built upon her personal interests by becoming an active volunteer leader, expanding opportunities for others.

"The passion, commitment and philanthropic spirit that Rajesh and Deepika bring to our community is nothing short of inspiring," says Renee Moe, President & CEO of United Way of Dane County. "They both are incredible role models when it comes to the art of giving time and treasure, and they do so much to help us build a Dane County where everyone can succeed in school, work

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and life. Their leadership sparks innovation, positive impact and real change – we couldn't be more grateful and are so proud to be honoring them.”

On behalf of United Way of Dane County and the United Way Tocqueville Society, we are grateful for Rajesh Rajaraman and Deepika Rajesh for their unyielding support. To read their full bio and learn about their incredible accomplishments, visit www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/tocqueville.

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About United Way of Dane County:

United Way of Dane County has been tackling Dane County's toughest challenges for nearly 100 years. With a mission to unite the community to achieve measurable results and change lives, we are committed to build a Dane County where everyone can succeed in school, work and life. Through strategic partnerships and collaborative work, United Way brings the many voices of Dane County together to find common ground and develop a strategic architecture for change, while engaging businesses and individuals to give, advocate and volunteer in Dane County. Together, we are The Power of Many. Working for All.

About Tocqueville Society:

Tocqueville Society was created by United Way nationally in 1984 to celebrate the legacy of Alexis de Tocqueville, whose 1835 *Democracy in America* celebrated the impact of North American volunteerism and giving for the sake of the common good. In Dane County, Tocqueville Society was launched in 1990 by Jerry M. Hiegel and Oscar G. Mayer and today has grown to nearly 250 households among its ranks who have invested over \$68 million in our community to improve lives.