



## **UCP/Detroit, UCP/Michigan, merge to provide expanded services and greater reach into disability community**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Detroit, Dec. 01, 2020** - Two leading disability advocacy organizations, United Cerebral Palsy of Detroit (UCP/Detroit) and United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan (UCP/Michigan) have merged to expand the scope of service and reach provided to the disabled community. The new entity is MI-UCP (pronounced My-UCP), and will continue to operate from offices in Detroit and Lansing. The merger became official on July 1, 2020, but the announcement was delayed due to the COVID Pandemic. MI-UCP President and CEO Leslynn Angel made the announcement.

“This is positive news in times where we are seeing people with disabilities become increasingly disenfranchised,” said Angel. “With approximately 1.4 million people with disabilities in Michigan, there’s a definite need for the services we provide. Our goal is to **close the disability divide** that has marginalized so many of our clients. They deserve every advantage that we all have.”

The two merging organizations were founded in 1949, the same year that the national organization, United Cerebral Palsy, was founded. They have joined together to work for one mission “**To enable all Michiganders with disabilities to live to the best of their abilities and ambitions.**” The new MI-UCP will be here to serve every person in Michigan with a disability. This includes those affected by cerebral palsy, autism, spinal cord injuries, intellectual disabilities, visual impairments and many other disabling conditions. And, because COVID is disproportionately affecting people with disabilities, they are here to help reduce that disparity.

As an advocacy organization, MI-UCP closes the disability divide by providing services connecting its clients to organizations that can best address a particular need.

--Continued--

Examples of services include: a Representative Payee program to assist with financial matters; Benefits Counseling that helps individuals navigate complicated systems like Social Security and Medicaid; and Assistive Technology can be provided via grants to address needs in the areas of mobility, communication, learning, transportation, independent living and more. MI-UCP also provides Quick Ramps for Kids who are in need of an inexpensive, portable option for wheelchair accessibility.

Angel said that the staff would remain the same, and that there were several changes to the board. New to the board as Treasurer is David Brown, and moving from the Treasurer position to board member is Charlie Hawes.

### **About MI-UCP**

MI-UCP was founded in 1949 as United Cerebral Palsy Association of Metropolitan Detroit (UCP/Detroit). This included Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties. That same year, United Cerebral Palsy Association of Michigan (UCP/Michigan) was formed to serve the needs of constituents throughout the remainder of the state of Michigan.

In 2020, these two organizations merged into MI-UCP (Michigan United Cerebral Palsy). The goal is to expand our scope of service reach. In reality, more than 65 percent of the people we serve have a disability other than cerebral palsy. These include autism, spinal cord injuries, intellectual disabilities, visual impairments and many other disabling conditions.

By unifying as MI-UCP, we are able to operate more efficiently and effectively as one of the state's leading sources of information, referral and strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations. And by having offices in Detroit and Lansing, we can continue to be a leading advocate for all 1.4MM of Michiganders with disabilities. For more information or to contact MI-UCP, please visit the web site at [mi-ucp.org](http://mi-ucp.org)

###

### **Media Contact:**

Marc W. Harlow  
Harlow Public Relations, LLC  
Phone: 810-599-2558 (mobile)  
Email: [harlowprllc@gmail.com](mailto:harlowprllc@gmail.com)