PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

For more information contact:
Kristin Weiss, Kristin@greenumbrella.org, 513.541.1538
Executive Director, Green Umbrella

Green Umbrella Awards $125,000 for a Sustainable Food System

CINCINNATI, OH – Green Umbrella just awarded $125,000 in funding that will benefit food insecure residents in Cincinnati’s low-income neighborhoods, small farms, local food entrepreneurs and processors, a neighborhood grocery coop, schools, and regional food pantries.

These grants will advance regional environmental sustainability goals related to local food distribution, food waste reduction, fresh food access, and energy-efficiency. Through these grants - the largest amount ever distributed by the regional sustainability alliance, Green Umbrella seeks to serve as a steward of environmental funding and accelerate progress on Greater Cincinnati’s 2020 sustainability goals as well as recommendations in the draft Green Cincinnati Plan. Funding requests received totaled nearly $300,000.

Several funders have entrusted Green Umbrella in this effort, including the Duke Class Benefit Fund and Partners for Places – a project of the Funders Network for Smart and Livable Communities, with local matching grants provided by Interact for Health, The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Locally, 25% of residents are food insecure, yet so much good food is wasted that it’s the #1 material in landfills today. Nationally, the EPA and USDA have set joint goals for 50% food waste reduction by 2030. According to the ReFed Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste, strategies that focus on food waste prevention and food recovery are the most impactful and cost-effective. “Part of the funding will support innovative, scalable food recovery efforts that rescue good food and distribute it to hungry people, rather than sending it to landfills where it produces a harmful greenhouse gas. These projects are good for our community and our environment,” says Kristin Weiss, executive director of Green Umbrella.

“Additional funding will help grow our local food economy, supporting the production and consumption of food grown within our region, while conserving energy and reducing waste along the supply chain,” she says. Green Umbrella’s Local Food Action Team encourages residents to shift 10% of their food budget to locally grown food. If just 10% of the regional population did that, it would mean an infusion of $56 million into our local economy. Greater Cincinnati has increasingly received recognition for its commitment to local food, as the region boasts many vibrant farmers’ markets and restaurants that source locally, as well as food hubs that help drive sales of locally/regionally produced food.

Award recipients include Incubator Kitchen Collective, Apple Street Market Cooperative, Gabriel’s Place, KHI Foods, Ohio Valley Food Connection, Our Harvest Cooperative, Soup Cycle Cincy, La Soupe, Enright Ridge Urban Eco-Village, Lincoln Heights Outreach, Reach Out Lakota, and Wyoming City Schools.

[See next page for an overview of funded projects.]

###

Celebrating 20 years as Greater Cincinnati’s hub for environmental sustainability. Act locally with Green Umbrella and make a difference. Learn more or become a member at www.greenumbrella.org.

###
Duke Class Benefit Fund: Funds from the settlement of a class action lawsuit (Williams, et al vs. Duke Energy International, et al) will be used to benefit residential (home owners, renters) and non-residential (commercial, industrial, business, government, nonprofit) class members, defined as "all ratepayers who received retail electric generation service from Duke Energy Corp. and/or Cinergy Corp. or their subsidiaries or affiliates at any time between January 1, 2005, and December 31, 2008, in the CG&E/Duke Energy Ohio electric service territory and who did not receive rebates under the side agreements."

### 2018 Funded Projects

**Incubator Kitchen Collective** – This hub for local food entrepreneurs and home to our region's two food hubs provides critical infrastructure to the region's local food economy. This grant will fund an energy-efficient cooling system to benefit all tenants, their networks of growers/suppliers and buyers, while reducing product loss by 30%.

**Apple Street Market Cooperative** – This worker-owned grocery coop is dedicated to providing healthy food at affordable prices and family sustaining employment, with plans to purchase $498,000 in food from local producers in its first year. This grant will fund energy-efficient refrigeration for their first grocery store planned to open in 2019 in Cincinnati's Northside neighborhood, currently a food desert.

**Gabriel's Place** – This grant will allow Gabriel's Place to provide meaningful and affordable access to the local food system through its urban farm, produce marketplace, community meals and nutrition education in Cincinnati's Avondale neighborhood, currently a food desert.

**KHI Foods** – This local food processor prioritizes the regional farming economy, sources primarily from small scale and family owned farms in Kentucky, and turns “ugly” tomatoes or “wrong color” peppers from local farmers into delicious marinara or low sodium hot sauce for schools and retail grocery. This grant will help them expand by 20% their processing capacity, currently at 120,000 lbs. per year.

**Ohio Valley Food Connection** – This grant will support the development of a regional, rescued food "after-market" based on FoodMaven's reseller model piloted in Colorado. The project will provide a two-stream revenue model to food hubs and local farmers, a simple ordering process for institutions, and redistribution of all unsold but edible product to local pantries.

**Our Harvest Cooperative** – This grant will support a farm gleaning pilot based on the Gleaning Network's model and endorsed by the USDA. The project will utilize local volunteer networks and deliver thousands of lbs. of fruits and vegetables from local farms to low-income families and individuals in Cincinnati's Walnut Hills, South Cumminsville, Millvale, and North Fairmont neighborhoods.

**Soup Cycle Cincy** – This organization rescues food from farm stands and grocery stores to provide healthy soups and raw vegetables to rec centers in food deserts (Price Hill, Avondale, Evanston, OTR). This grant will help them expand by hiring youth chefs to work with volunteer professional chefs and college mentors.

**La Soupe** – This organization bridges the gap between food waste and hunger and rescued 275,000 lbs. of food in 2017, turning it into over 250,000 servings of healthy meals with 2,000 food insecure people served weekly through 75 community partners. This grant will support their efforts to increase impact by 15% in the next year with a new location.

**Enright Ridge Urban Eco-Village** – This grant will support the expansion of their urban farm, CSA (community-supported agriculture) program and farm market stand with energy-efficient refrigeration to store and display produce in Cincinnati's East Price Hill neighborhood, currently a food desert.

**Lincoln Heights Outreach** – This grant would help expand fresh food access for over 2,000 people in need in Lincoln Heights through a food pantry, snacks and meals for students and seniors, community meals, block parties and holiday dinners.

**Reach Out Lakota** – This grant would help expand fresh food access including mobile outreach for 2,800 clients in need in West Chester, Liberty Township and Lakota School District, to more than 18,000 lbs. of food monthly.

**Wyoming City Schools** – Schools can be large food waste generators, with EPA estimates of 1.3 lbs. per student per day. This grant will support the parent and student Green Team's efforts to reduce food waste.