

NEWS RELEASE

For more information:
Sarah Hayden
330-491-9954
shayden@uwgsc.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way announces county-wide 2009-11 allocations, additional direct emergency assistance for 2009

(Canton, OH) Mar. 18, 2009 –The United Way of Greater Stark County Board of Directors voted today to approve 2009-11 investments into 107 health and human service programs through 41 service providers county-wide. A special allocation for additional direct emergency assistance has also been approved by the board. Service providers are being notified of their allocation for the 2009-11 two-year funding cycle.

A total of \$4,820,482 was allocated to greater Stark County programs. Funding was based on a rigorous grant allocation process involving a number of criteria including how closely the program aligned with United Way's outcome standards and the service providers' ability to deliver services to fund the best programs creating long-lasting change with measurable results.

"Funding was incredibly competitive this year," said Scott Zurakowski, United Way of Greater Stark County board chairman. "United Way's volunteer Impact Councils performed an amazing job of gleaning the best programs that work to solve root causes of challenges here in greater Stark County. Funding levels in community priority areas of Early Education and Care, Graduation and Training Beyond High School and Family Stability stayed the same, despite less dollars to work with. Additionally, the Council also was able to address increasing emergency service needs with added dollars."

Beginning in January, three United Way of Greater Stark County Impact Councils, comprised of nearly 80 community volunteers and issue experts, examined requests for program alignment and measurable outcomes, reviewed agencies, heard program request presentations, researched community data and made allocation recommendations to United Way of Greater Stark County's Board of Directors to fund the best programs. More than 2500 hours were spent by volunteers to ensure programs delivering the best results to the community and United Way donors were funded. For a comprehensive listing of county-wide funding allocations, please visit www.uwstark.org.

In response to Board of Directors and Impact Council concerns in these tough economic times, a special allocation of \$105,163 was approved by the board for emergency services. Beginning Apr. 1 these additional funds will be used for direct emergency assistance for food, shelter and clothing and are to be shared evenly among central, eastern and western Stark County. United Way will be administering and coordinating distribution of the funds through Community Services of Stark County for central and eastern Stark County and Salvation Army in Massillon for western Stark County. Total emergency services program allocations represent 19.5%, or \$941,110, of total county-wide allocations for 2009-11.

"We are very pleased that we've been able to do what we have this year with allocations despite the tough economy we all are experiencing," said United Way of Greater Stark County President and CEO Maria Heege. "Donors are counting on us to make prudent and wise investments with their hard-earned dollars. United Way will ensure accountability from each and every dollar invested. And to further our resources, United Way will continue to work as a community convener, inviting other funders and key stakeholders to the table to collaborate on the best way to get help to the neediest people in our community."

United Way of Greater Stark County is a not-for-profit organization that seeks to improve lives in measurable and lasting ways by mobilizing thousands of people around a common goal: advancing the common good. United Way funds programs that focus on Early Education & Care, Graduation & Training and Family Stability. United Way believes these are the building blocks for a good life and that a quality education leads to a stable job, enough income to support a family through retirement, a safe place to live and good health.

For more information about United Way visit www.uwstark.org. Headquarters are at 4825 Higbee Avenue NW, Suite 101, Canton, Ohio 44718. Dial (330) 491-0445 to reach the offices.

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