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For Immediate Release

More than 3,000 Volunteers Join Forces to Make Greater Kansas City a Better Place to Live During the 15th Annual Day of Caring

(Greater Kansas City)-----The volunteers came in all shapes and sizes. Folks from the Northland and south of the river, people Kansas and Missouri, from all over the metro area. Together, the 3,000 United Way/CFC Day of Caring volunteers became an unstoppable “force for good” that literally changed the face of Greater Kansas City.

It seemed like everywhere you turned on Saturday there were men, women and children dressed in Day of Caring t-shirts, cleaning, painting, building, and doing landscaping or hosting events to help local nonprofit agencies. This year’s Day of Caring co-sponsored by United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign included 183 different projects at 75 locations across the metro area. More than 100 Kansas City area companies and federal agencies put together volunteer teams to lend a hand.

Volunteers sorted food at Harvesters; planted flowers and painted at Gillis; built an outdoor classroom at Operation Breakthrough; did cleaning and landscaping and hosted a carnival at Rainbow Center; and even hosted a beauty make-over for young women living in United Cerebral Palsy group homes. Although the volunteers worked hard, they clearly had a good time. It was hard to tell who enjoyed it more, the volunteers or the people who will benefit from the work they did.

One such project took place in Kansas City, Kansas, where volunteers from QuikTrip and the Coalition for Independence joined forces to help a disabled woman struggling to stay in her home. Jeanette Day’s roof has been leaking and she sought help from a Unified Government program offering grants to low-income residents needing critical home repairs. In order to qualify, she was told she needed to paint her house and make repairs to her sagging front porch. It was work she couldn’t afford, nor physically do, herself.

Day of Caring volunteers not only painted her house, they completely replaced the front and back porches of her home. Before the volunteers were done, they also replaced her water heater and put in a new bathroom vanity and sink. All of the materials were donated by vendors who work with QuikTrip everyday. As volunteers left Mrs. Day was almost in tears, thanking them over and over again for coming to her rescue.

Many other Day of Caring projects were not as dramatic, but the volunteers still walked away with a sense of satisfaction and joy knowing they helped brighten someone’s day. It was fun to see the look of excitement on the face of Jonathan, a young man with cerebral palsy, as he caught a fish in Longview Lake. Those big smiles were duplicated at Marillac, Spofford, and Rainbow Center where volunteers hosted carnivals for children with emotional problems and physical disabilities, demonstrating to those kids that people do care. In the end, it was a terrific day and volunteers walked away saying “What a Feeling”-----which just happened to be the theme of this year’s community-wide volunteer event.

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