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For Immediate Release



## United Way of Greater Kansas City Approves New Community Impact Agenda as a Way to Better Address Community Problems

(Greater Kansas City)---With an eye towards the future, and a desire to focus United Way resources where they can do the most good, the United Way of Greater Kansas City (UWGKC) Board of Trustees has adopted a new Community Impact Agenda that will serve as a guide for years to come. It is designed to help United Way set priorities for investing donor dollars and create new community partnerships to tackle the root causes of issues facing our community.

United Way's Impact Agenda focuses on three key areas identified as being most important when it comes to helping people and improving the health and well-being of the community. The three priority areas are:

- **Successful Children, Youth and Families**---Ensuring children and youth are prepared for school, achieve academic success and are ready for a productive future.
- **Financial Stability**---Providing the education, life skills, employment and community resources to help people increase their income and save for financial security.
- **Healthy People and Healthy Communities**---Promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring that access to equitable, affordable quality health care is available to all.

Also, as part of its Impact Agenda, United Way will continue to support many of the direct service programs that make up the basic safety net in our community. Those programs help people cope with chronic, ongoing conditions and deal with short-term crisis or disasters that impact their lives.

United Way's Impact Agenda was created over the past six months, based on analysis of current data and input from thousands of people in the community, including community experts, United Way donors, United Way agencies and clients who are served. The conclusion was that United Way needs to continue funding direct service programs that improve people's lives, but that United Way must also do more to address the underlying causes that are creating the problems in the first place.

The Community Impact Agenda approved today is just the first step in creating a new long-range strategic plan. This first phase established general goals and desired outcomes. Over the next year, United Way will set specific targets to measure progress and specific strategies to achieve those goals. The strategies and incremental goals will be developed with additional input from the community and based on research into successful programs in other communities. When the Impact Agenda is finalized in June 2009, it will serve as a comprehensive, high-level action plan including specific, long-term goals and measurable, targeted steps along the way.

UWGKC Board Chair Peggy Dunn said, "We want to mobilize not only dollars, but also people's time, talents and expertise to help change conditions in our community and achieve lasting results. That means we'll be awarding multi-year program funding, so we can measure progress as we seek to reach specific goals."

United Way's transformation will take place gradually. Beginning this year, all applications for UWGKC funding will be measured by how well the programs help United Way achieve the goals outlined in its Community Impact Agenda. During 2009, programs that have been funded by United Way for more than four years will qualify to receive a minimum of 75% of their prior year's UWGKC funding, assuming they meet United Way standards. In 2010 those programs will qualify to receive at least 50% of their prior year's UWGKC funding. And beginning in 2011, there will be no minimum funding threshold in place. Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis, based on the quality of the programs, how well those programs address priority community issues and how they help United Way achieve the goals of its Community Impact Agenda.

Many United Ways throughout the country are adopting a community impact approach as they seek to better mobilize financial, human and planning resources. The approach has proven to be successful in other communities in helping United Way create lasting change that improves people's lives. Working with like-minded partners is crucial in building community support to address the underlying causes of critical problems and achieving measurable results. Community experts agree that it is the most effective way to address the major issues we face.

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