

NEWS RELEASE

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United Way Fox Cities

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United Way to kickoff annual fundraising campaign with a goal of \$8.1 million

(Appleton) United Way Fox Cities' supporters will gather on the grounds of SECURA Insurance Companies on Tuesday, August 26 to officially mark the beginning of the 2014 United Way community campaign. A goal of \$8.1 million dollars has been established for the campaign. Campaign Co Chairs, Tim Bergstrom, president and COO, Bergstrom Automotive; and Tom Riodan president and CEO, Neenah Enterprises will lead the campaign.

Keynote speaker for the event, Beth Schnorr, executive director of Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs will be speaking on the importance of the community working together to tackle the most pressing issues. Many partners in the areas of housing, shelter, financial management, mental health, and youth mentoring programs work with the clients at Harbor House to provide services that address their needs and allow them to improve their lives. Initiatives like Voices of Men have made a real difference in providing education, role modeling and mentoring to boys and men on ending violence against women. (United Way has an active role in Voices of Men, serving as the fiscal agent and one of the founding sponsors.)

United Way's Work: The issues addressed by United Way Fox Cities are unique to the community, as they are based upon the needs that have been identified through community-wide studies and research. Over 80 United Way community impact volunteers participate in the program investment process, a thorough review of all the

programs funded by United Way. To address those needs, United Way Fox Cities has identified four priority issues:

- **Early Childhood Development:** Ensuring children are developmentally on track to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, 42% of children under age 3 in Wisconsin live in low-income families. Many children who live in poverty do not develop the skills that they need to be successful in school. It is United Way's goal to help children develop their full potential and become productive members of society.

- **Self-Sufficiency:** Improving employment and workforce readiness skills to increase individual and family self-sufficiency.

Statistics from the 2011 LIFE Study show that families in the Fox Cities are increasingly struggling to meet their basic needs. Schools report a growing number of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunches, and 16% of youth reported going hungry.

- **Mental Health:** Supporting education, access, and delivery of mental health services.

United Way is working to ensure that both mental and physical care is available to all residents by supporting mental health services. United Way's PATH (Providing Access to Healing) for students is providing school-based mental health therapy in 10 Fox Cities' school districts.

- **Parenting:** United Way is providing parent education, prevention, intervention and support services to strengthen families and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

Increasing rates of child abuse and neglect in Outagamie and Winnebago Counties now exceed the state average. United Way is focused on improving parenting skills through education.

Funds raised in the campaign will be invested in over 100 programs, in the areas of Children and Youth, Strengthening Families, Basic Needs and Self-Sufficiency, and Health and Healing that are provided by United Way partner agencies. Funds also support United Way initiatives, including:

- United Way's PATH for Students, a school-based mental health therapy program.
- The Connector, a transportation service provided in partnership with Valley Transit to provide rides for second and third shift workers.
- Fox Cities Diaper Bank, providing over 300,000 diapers annually to low-income families.

End

United Way works every day to improve lives and create lasting change in our community. Through community-wide studies we've identified key issues and areas of focus. We gather partners from across the community to create solutions that address those issues. Our work is thoughtful, collaborative and measurable. We invite you to join us and LIVE United.