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NEWS RELEASE

United Way Fox Cities

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United Way Fox Cities Celebrates Community Support

Supporters of United Way Fox Cities gathered on January 27, to celebrate a successful community campaign that met the 8.3 million dollar goal. The 2015 United Way campaign was spearheaded by co-chairs Tom Riordan, president and CEO of Neenah Enterprises and Mike Weller, of Mike Weller and Associates.

Generous support from the community makes it possible for United Way to continue the work of building a stronger, more caring community for everyone. United Way supported programs will impact 1 in 3 people in the Fox Cities in the coming year. Funds are invested in initiatives, community service programs, such as United Way 2-1-1, grants, and over 100 programs provided by United Way partner agencies.

In the past year United Way Fox Cities awarded grants for innovative programs that include:

- **Menasha Even Start Family Literacy Program**

United Way Fox Cities recognizes the importance of early childhood education so children are developmentally on track to enter kindergarten and the importance of adult education to help families become more self-sufficient. The Menasha Even Start Family Literacy Program is designed to help at-risk families increase educational attainment and potential for economic stability.

Even Start offers programming to adults who need to learn English and/or complete a high school credential in order to increase their employment potential. The program simultaneously provides early childhood education to ensure children ages six weeks to six years are on track for kindergarten.

- **Reach Out and Read**

Making sure that children enter school ready to read is a priority issue for United Way Fox Cities. Piloted by St. Elizabeth Hospital, and now expanded by the Appleton Public Library, Reach Out and Read is putting books in the hands of children when they visit their pediatricians and family practitioners.

Statistics from Reach Out and Read Wisconsin show that 34% of American children start kindergarten without the skills needed to learn to read. Funding from United Way buys the books that are given away by the clinics. Nationally Reach Out and Read was impressed with the encouragement from United Way to expand the program to all clinics in the area, and is looking at the Fox Cities as a model for other communities.

- **Habitat for Humanity's Rock the Block**

United Way Fox Cities is supporting The Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity's neighborhood revitalization initiative Rock the Block® with a \$300,000 grant. The grant invests in neighborhoods struggling with decreasing property values and an increasing number of rental properties. Over the next few years, Habitat will build new homes, rehab and repair homes and help develop neighborhood leaders. The goal of the initiative is to increase property values, maintain home ownership rates and restore pride in ownership.

“Reaching the 8.3 million dollar campaign goal is a tribute to the incredible individual and corporate donors who support our efforts to invest in the most pressing needs facing our community,” said Peter Kelly, president and CEO of United Way. “Because of that support our United Way will continue our work of bringing together people and organizations from all across the community who bring the passion, expertise and resources needed to get things done.”

The campaign celebration was held at Fox Cities Stadium. Miron Construction sponsored the event. In addition to the goal announcement, individuals and/or teams who displayed exemplary leadership in their company's United Way campaign were recognized:

Employee Campaign Awards:

- Small company: NAMI Fox Valley
- Medium company: Miron Construction Co.
- Large company: Menasha Corporation

Leadership/Emerging Leaders

- TIDI

Sustained Excellence

- Wipfli
- Community First Credit Union
- Kimberly-Clark Corporation

Kimberly Clark Corporate Challenge Awards:

Employee Participation Award for the company that saw the greatest increase in employee participation, with a minimum of 100 employees and 25% employee participation:

- Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley

Employee Giving Award for the company that saw the greatest percentage increase in employee giving, with a minimum of \$20,000 raised the previous year.

- Miron Construction

The winner of the United Way Car Sweepstakes featuring a 2015 Volkswagen Jetta donated by Bergstrom Automotive was Mary Chapin.

Joining Mike Weller as Campaign co-chair in 2016 will be Dave Voss, president and CEO of Miron Construction.

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.