



## **United Way Sets Goals with 2009-2010 Campaign Kick-Off**

Bloomington, Ind. – United Way of Monroe County began this year’s fundraising campaign with a successful kick-off event Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup>. Sponsored by Indiana University, the outdoor luncheon was held at the DeVault Alumni Center, and featured the President of the Indiana University Research and Technology Corporation, Tony Armstrong. Other speakers included:

- Barry Lessow, United Way Executive Director
- Judy Sharp, Monroe County Assessor, Campaign Chair
- MaryFrances McCourt, IU Treasurer, IU Campaign Co-Chair
- Anna Weigand, United Way Board Chair

Campaign leaders announced a fundraising goal of \$1,375,000. Last year, the campaign raised \$1,355,106, and the board set a goal that recognizes the current economic pressures, but also hopes that people will be generous so United Way can help those who are in significant distress.

Executive Director Barry Lessow remarked, “We are here today to help create opportunity for more kids, more families, more seniors... for people who work through illnesses and disabilities, and for people who sometimes need a boost to remember that they are working toward a bigger goal for themselves and their families.” He reminded volunteers that, “Our efforts today and during this campaign help us build the resources we will use throughout the year to improve people’s lives... people having the building blocks for success ripples out in some very direct and very subtle ways to the entire community. We all give to United Way and we all benefit from United Way.”

Judy Sharp, Campaign Chair, recognized the importance of the campaign and United Way’s commitment to local residents. “The funds we raise over the next few months will provide agencies with the resources to do their work... work that we know is increasingly important when we see friends having trouble making ends meet. For instance, the Hoosier Hills Food Bank this year will provide over

2.6 million pounds of food to 85 agencies in 6 counties. According to those agencies, over half the people who need food are working. Agencies that provide childcare after-school programs are seeing the demand for those spots increase as parents take on extra work, but don't have the money to pay much, if anything, for those services. Seniors and those with disabilities are experiencing a harder time finding jobs and facing cuts in the reimbursements that provide them with medical and job-support services.

MaryFrances McCourt, IU Campaign Co-Chair, said, "I want my kids to grow up in a community that makes it easier for me to learn what I need to know when my baby is 3 days old... or 3 months old... a community in which my kids and their classmates all graduate from high school and go on to higher education... a community in which there are good jobs... and a community in which it is easy to walk and stay well... a community in which everyone has the income to buy their own food, and afford a decent place to live... and where nonprofits are strong."

Anna Weigand remarked on the value and quality of the services provided by United Way's 25 member agencies. "Nonprofits know that sometimes change comes slowly, but it is with great rewards... one family, one neighborhood, one community at a time. We need to make sure that everyone has the cornerstones for success – education, earnings, and essentials. United Way is our chance, as a community, to fulfill the vision we have for our families."

IURTC President Tony Armstrong spoke about the technologies being developed at Indiana University and how those will translate into jobs for Hoosiers with the appropriate skills. He spoke about the importance of the work done by United Way and its partners to ensure that young children enter school ready to learn and that all young people stay in school through graduation. "If we work hard and work smart, good things will happen. We have a real opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. These are really challenging times and it's very important to work together as a team... to meet the milestones that are set."

To reinforce the theme of "Take Action. Create Opportunity. LIVE UNITED." the campaign will feature photos and stories of people throughout our community who give, advocate, and volunteer.

Those wishing to join United Way in making a lasting impact on our community can visit United Way's web site at [www.monroeunitedway.org](http://www.monroeunitedway.org) and securely donate online via PayPal or credit card. Donors can also download a pledge card and contribute in the form of cash, check, credit card, automatic bank withdrawal, stocks and securities, or can choose to be billed. Those participating in workplace campaigns can contribute via payroll deduction. Any company interested in having a workplace campaign or any group that would like a presentation about United Way or our member United Way Sets Goals with 2009-2010 Campaign Kick-Off

agencies is encouraged to call Resource Development Director Lori Garraghty at [lori@monroeunitedway.org](mailto:lori@monroeunitedway.org) or 812-334-8370.

United Way of Monroe County is a nonprofit organization that improves people's lives by addressing critical needs today and working to reduce those needs tomorrow. Through its Community Action Fund, it allocates resources to 25 member agencies that ensure Monroe County residents have the building blocks for a better life: education, earnings, and the essentials. You can find more information at [www.monroeunitedway.org](http://www.monroeunitedway.org).

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