



July 18, 2006

## TWO AGENCIES JOIN UNITED WAY OF MONROE COUNTY NETWORK

United Way of Monroe County, celebrating 50 years of improving people's lives, proudly announces that two local social service agencies have been added to the United Way network. The UWMC Board of Directors voted unanimously to certify Options for Better Living and the Shalom Community Center. In addition, nine existing member agencies were re-certified. Each of these agencies passed a rigorous set of standards in the areas of governance and oversight, effectiveness, finances, and fundraising practices.

Options for Better Living provides tailored services enabling people with disabilities to live, work and fully enjoy the community. By providing quality group living, in-home assistance, supported employment and targeted case management, Options for Better Living empowers individuals with disabilities to lead self-directed and fulfilling lives. Executive Director of Options for Better Living, Susan Rinne, commented, "We are very excited about becoming part of United Way of Monroe County. It gives Options the chance to further our mission while partnering with many other talented organizations in our community. With over 50 years of experience, the UWMC will provide Options with a wealth of knowledge and resources allowing us to better support people with disabilities to be at home in their community."

The Shalom Community Center is a daytime respite and resource center for Monroe County residents experiencing homelessness and poverty. Through their own services and

# 50 years of improving people's lives.

collaborative work with other community organizations, they help bring stability and a greater degree of self-sufficiency to those in need. “We are thrilled to become part of the United Way of Monroe County family of agencies,” said Joel Rekas, Executive Director of the Shalom Community Center. “United Way membership remains the gold standard for non-profit agencies, and we are pleased that the community recognizes the vital role that the Center plays in the social safety net for our most vulnerable citizens in Monroe County.”

Executive Director of United Way, Barry Lessow commended the decision, “One of the goals that United Way has for our community is ensuring that everyone has a safe place to live. Both of these excellent organizations work toward that objective every single day. We look forward to facilitating strong partnerships between these two new agencies and our existing 25 member agencies.”

Each year one-third of the current member agencies and applying agencies are reviewed by a committee, including UWMC board members, agency representatives, and community volunteers. Under this certification process, agencies retain their status for up to three years. The agencies recertified in 2006 are American Red Cross – Monroe County Chapter, Amethyst House, Community Health Access Program, Indiana Legal Services, MCCSC School Assistance Fund, Middle Way House, Planned Parenthood, RBB School Assistance Fund, and Rhino’s Youth Center.

United Way is a nonprofit organization that improves people’s lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community. Through the Community Care Fund, United Way allocates resources to 27 member agencies that address the most pressing human service needs in Monroe County. United Way can be reached at 812-334-8370 or [www.monroeunitedway.org](http://www.monroeunitedway.org).

**50 years of improving people’s lives.**