



UNITED WAY OF MONROE COUNTY RAISES \$1,465,803; CELEBRATES 50th ANNIVERSARY

United Way of Monroe County had two reasons to celebrate Wednesday, March 8th. The 2005-2006 community campaign raised \$1,465,803, exceeding this year's \$1,450,000 goal and last year's total of \$1,448,472. The organization also marked 50 years of improving people's lives..

Barry Lessow, United Way Executive Director, commended those who helped with the campaign. "This was a year in which people responded to crises around the country, but also remembered generously the needs here in our own town. We appreciate the extra work of our campaign chairs, their cabinet, and the workplace campaign coordinators. Those volunteers, along with our Board of Directors, brought excitement to the campaign and were instrumental in helping the community exceed its goal."

Campaign Chair Mark Moore, President and CEO of Bloomington Hospital, remarked "This was a critical year for the campaign, and we appreciate the generosity of everyone who committed to helping us reach the campaign goal. Individuals, organizations, and businesses came together, and the entire community will benefit. The impact of this generosity will allow United Way and its 25 partner agencies to continue addressing the most pressing human service issues in our community."

Indiana University Campaign Co-Chairs Gerardo Gonzalez and Lauren Robel announced that IU raised a record \$637,135, exceeding last year's contributions from IU employees and annuitants by 5%.

Debbie Sibbitt, Director of Hoosiers for Higher Education chaired the Vanguard Leadership Giving program, which recognizes gifts of at least \$1,000. This year, there were 364 leadership gifts totaling \$555,979.

Several workplaces received awards for their outstanding contributions to the campaign. Indiana University, Bloomington Hospital, and General Electric received the Pillar Award for each raising \$50,000. In the past three years, Bloomington Hospital employees have doubled their contributions.

Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis, IU's University Chancellor, was presented with the Mary Alice Gray Memorial Award for Extraordinary Service to United Way. Over the past twenty years, Gros Louis has chaired community and university campaigns. He was also honored for his work in ensuring accessible higher education, supporting service learning and volunteerism, and promoting town-gown relationships.

At the event, United Way celebrated its 50th anniversary of service to Bloomington with a slide show, historical timeline, and campaign memorabilia displays. The organization was initially founded as a United Fund on February 27, 1956, and the first campaign raised \$118,184. The United Fund evolved from the Community Chest, which had existed since 1936.

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 25 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.

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