



**United Way  
of Monroe County**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 14, 2007

Contact: Pam Thrash-Cocalis, United Way Resource Development  
Barry Lessow, United Way Executive Director  
812-334-8370  
barry@monroeunitedway.org

## **United Way Sets Goals with 2007-2008 Campaign Kick-Off**

United Way of Monroe County began this year's fundraising campaign with a successful kick-off event Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. Sponsored by Indiana University, the luncheon was held at the DeVault Alumni Center, and featured the Superintendent of Richland-Bean Blossom Community School Corporation and UWMC Board President, Dr. Tom Edington, as the keynote speaker. Other speakers included:

- Kevin Osborne, Business Development Officer at the IU Credit Union, who is serving as the Community Campaign Co-Chair
- Jim Grandorf, Clinical Associate Professor at the IU Kelley School of Business, and Vanguard Chair for the United Way Campaign,
- Barry Lessow, Executive Director of United Way.

The theme of the campaign is "Creating Lasting Change in our Community." The campaign leaders announced a campaign goal of \$1,440,000, nearly 2% over last year's total pledges of \$1,414,183.

Executive Director Barry Lessow identified the impacts of United Way's 26 member agencies on the community during 2006 and reported that demand at many agencies was already up during 2007. "More than 4,500 area youth participated in after-school programs, day care, mentoring, therapy, advocacy, and other organized activities. Over half of these youth live in low-income households. An after-school program with 22 high-school seniors saw every one of them graduate, with 18 heading to college or technical school. Partner agencies helped 252 individuals with disabilities find and keep a job, which increased their self-esteem and their earning power . . . Those are the accomplishments our community wants for all its citizens and our 26 certified member agencies are ready and able to make that happen."

Kevin Osborne recognized the importance of the campaign and the commitment to local residents by United Way. "In Monroe County, we have decided we don't want people to have to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine, between disrupting your family by continual moves or taking

out a payday loan, and between affordable child care and pursuing training that will lead to a better job and a better life for you and your kids.”

Jim Grandorf commented that, “In a broad sense United Way provides three fundamental opportunities to help the community. First, it helps children grow and prosper with child care and after school activities designed to improve their education and make them more responsible. Second, it provides opportunities for adults and seniors to better their financial status with skills training and other assistance to help them be more self-sufficient. Finally, it provides a safety net for those who unfortunately need specific current support such as sufficient food, basic health care, a safe place to live, or special emergency services.” Grandorf called on those who felt they could contribute \$1,000 or more to join the United Way’s Vanguard Givers.

Dr. Tom Edington reported on the value of United Way services that strengthen our community. “We all have hard times, and with the help of United Way, we have an opportunity to give and uplift those in need. Anyone of us could be faced with making tough choices in life, but thanks to your United Way contributions, we have support available to help people through the rough patches.” He further noted, “As a community, we have the chance to raise more donations this year than we ever have before, and with it receive a sense of satisfaction from giving.”

To reinforce the theme of “Creating Lasting Change in our Community” throughout the campaign, accounts of community members overcoming obstacles with the help of United Way member agencies will be highlighted.

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 agencies is encouraged to call Resource Development Director Pam Thrash-Cocalis at 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 Care Fund, it allocates resources to 26 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).

###