



United Way exceeds campaign goal, continues to impact thousands in the Mid-Ohio Valley

Parkersburg, WV – April 12 – United Way Alliance of the Mid-Ohio Valley announced today that the 2015-2016 United Way fundraising campaign raised \$815,000, the largest campaign on record since 2008 and the second highest total in the organization’s 91 year history.

This past year, the Board of Directors set the annual campaign goal at the highest number in the history of the organization,” said Aaron Stone, United Way Board and Campaign Chairman. Even in the midst of an uncertain economy, there were large increases in the number of new donors, new workplace campaigns and our loyal Pacesetter donors continued to increase their annual gifts. This is such a positive statement about the overall support our community provides to the United Way,” said Stone.

United Way Alliance has continued to expand in every area, reaching out to eight WV and two Ohio counties in their footprint to ensure those who work hard but fall short receive the help they need. “Every day, we hear from people who are working to provide for their families but are humble enough to ask for help,” said Andrea Shirey, Executive Director. “What we give them is so much more than financial help. We give them hope that their tomorrow can be better and that their children can be equipped to succeed in life, because of our programs and the work of our funded partners,” Shirey added.

United Way has made concerted efforts to communicate the impact of their work over the last several months, understanding that many in the community do not realize where and how United Way funding is critical. “When you take your kids to summer reading programs, when your son gets involved in Boy Scouts, when a survivor of domestic violence has a safe place to turn – those are all funded programs of United Way,” said Shirey. “It’s our job to make sure everyone has the opportunity to be a part of the solution to our most pressing needs. We want people to understand that when you give to United Way, it really makes our entire community stronger.”

The process for investing funds raised in United Way’s campaign is underway, with hundreds of volunteers involved in evaluating applicants and final decisions made by the United Way Board of Directors. “It is my privilege to serve as the Co-Chair of the Community Investment Committee,” said Scott Oran, Plant Manager at Kraton Polymers. “Our committee has already spent countless hours reviewing applications and evaluating the best use of United Way funding. Over the next four weeks, we’ll have to make difficult decisions but in the end, we know we are investing these dollars in the very best local programs,” Oran said.

United Way Alliance is much more than just a fundraising campaign. In addition to the 53 local programs it funds, United Way has several initiatives of its own that benefit the greater Mid-Ohio Valley. United Way serves as the 2-1-1 provider for Wood and Wirt counties, handling calls every week from individuals looking for assistance and referrals, coordinates 16 local food pantries in Wood County, and manages the Warming Hands and Hearts initiative which provides utility assistance for individuals in crisis situations. And, this summer, United Way will work together with Community Resources Inc. and the Family Resource Network to distribute thousands of backpacks to students in need. United Way Alliance recently coordinated efforts to engage over 250 local high students in a community service day, and will replicate that effort with adults during their Day of Action on June 21. They also host volunteer.org, an online platform to promote local volunteer opportunities.

“This work is exhausting, humbling and inspiring,” Shirey said. “We have the opportunity to see a need, bring folks to the table that can meet it and then make it happen. At the end of every day, I continue to marvel at what we can do when we work together. It’s just incredible.”

“United Way Alliance of the Mid-Ohio Valley treasures our community, our faithful and generous donors and our partner agencies. The most recent campaign success is proof that the feeling is mutual,” said Stone.

To celebrate the campaign and the work of United Way and its funded partners, United Way Alliance is hosting an event, Laugh United, this Saturday at the Smoot Theatre, featuring Parkersburg native Anthony Mossburg and the hilarious stand-up comedian, Alington Mitra. Tickets are \$35 each and can be purchased online at www.uwamov.com/laughunited or at the door Saturday night.

Campaign recognition

The top 10 workplace campaigns were:

1. Kraton Polymers
2. Chemours
3. DuPont Washington Works
4. Highmark WV
5. Camden Clark Medical Center
6. United Bank
7. WesBanco
8. Momentive Performance Materials
9. SABIC innovative Plastics
10. Dominion Hope

The top five foundation gifts came from:

1. Bernard McDonough Foundation
2. First Energy Foundation
3. Fenton Foundation
4. Spartan Foundation
5. Dominion Foundation

A final list of United Way Pacesetters is listed on the United Way website at: www.uwamov.com/pacesetters