



United Way
of Greater Battle Creek

NEWS RELEASE

United Way of Greater Battle Creek

For Immediate Release: November 15, 2007
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United Way Invests in Community Food Programs

Battle Creek, MI – United Way of Greater Battle Creek has committed \$20,000 to support Battle Creek area food pantries and feeding programs through the Food Bank of South Central Michigan. The commitment of resources is possible thanks to a pool of funding that the United Way board of directors approved at the October 18, 2007 board meeting, to address identified basic human needs through June 2008.

“The board approved this pool of funding to address some of the most essential and basic human needs facing many residents of the community, access to food, shelter and necessary utilities,” said Mike Larson, president and chief professional officer for United Way of Greater Battle Creek. “We are grateful that our board had the foresight to acknowledge these needs as being issues that were going to need additional attention as winter approaches.”

The funds will be distributed to seven local feeding programs including the five-site Neighborhood Food Pantry Ministries, Tri-County Labor Pantry and the Salvation Army. Each organization will receive a credit to their account at the Food Bank helping enable them to meet the ever increasing demand for food assistance.

This is the second disbursement of funds from the United Way’s Community Basic Needs Investments. The first, in the amount of \$32,000, was emergency funding provided to Washington Heights Community Ministries soup kitchen program that was facing their last supper earlier this month as other funding sources dried up. United Way was able to provide the emergency assistance enabling the program to continue through May of this year, allowing time to develop a plan to create a sustainable source of funding.

United Way has been very fortunate over the past several years to have had very successful Community Solution Campaigns and this additional money being made available is only possible thanks to the generous support of donations made to United Way’s Campaign.

Since receiving approval for the distribution of these additional funds, United Way staff has been busy researching what the current and arising emergency issues are and how best to address them.

Food assistance showed up at the top of the current 2-1-1 Call Center report as the most requested service by clients, with 367 referrals being made. With the impending winter months just ahead, it is anticipated that the daily balance of being able to afford food, rent/mortgage, medical expenses, will only be compounded by increased heating/fuel costs, making it more difficult for individuals to stretch their already tight budget.

The Volunteer Center of Battle Creek's 2-1-1 Call Center is a nationally accredited information and referral system.

Teresa Osborne, director of public relations for United Way of Greater Battle Creek was present at today's Neighborhood Pantry annual meeting held at the Urbandale Seventh Day Adventist Church, to announce the \$5,000 contribution to their network, \$1,000 for each pantry site.

United Way of Greater Battle Creek addresses some of our community's most pressing problems and measurably improves the lives of individuals in need. United Way does this by raising dollars that fund more than 50 local programs operated by 33 non-profit agencies or organizations. United Way also collaborates with local organizations and people to identify and address emerging needs and issues.

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United Way of Greater Battle Creek's mission is to mobilize the caring power of our community to measurably improve lives. For more information, visit United Way's office at 34 W. Jackson St., Ste. 4B, Battle Creek MI, 49017, call 269.962.9538 or visit the website at www.unitedwaybattlecreek.org.

Photo Caption:

Teresa Osborne, director of public relations for United Way of Greater Battle Creek was present at today's Neighborhood Pantry annual meeting held at the Urbandale Seventh Day Adventist Church, to announce a contribution of \$5,000 from United Way to their network, \$1,000 for each pantry site. Pictured are: Bruce Newhard, Neighborhood Food Pantry Ministries, Sheila Smith, Mt. Zion Food Pantry, Teresa Osborne, United Way of Greater Battle Creek, Margaret Squires, Franklin Pantry, Dick Raber, Lakeview Pantry, Haroldine Colwell, Archie MacGreagor, Northeast Neighborhood Pantry and Bob Randels, executive director of the Food Bank of South Central Michigan.