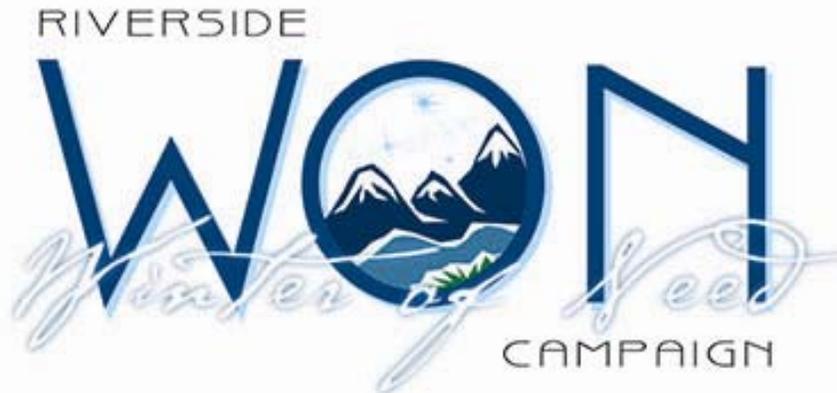


Mayor Launches *Winter of Need* Campaign to Fund Basic Needs



Riverside, CA –(February 20, 2009) Mayor Ron Loveridge recently launched the United Way of the Inland Valleys' *Winter of Need* (WON) fundraising campaign designed to meet the immediate emergency needs of the Riverside community. Mayor Loveridge challenged community leaders at a reception in the Grier Pavilion, sponsored by Altura Credit Union, to take a stand and become community heroes by collaborating in efforts to meet the public's basic needs like food, shelter and utility assistance during the current economic crisis.

"Despite the economic challenges we face today, I believe these are the days that reveal the depth of social capital in a community," Loveridge said. "I am confident that Riverside residents will give to those in crisis during this *Winter of Need* campaign."

It is predicted the winter of 2009 will be the toughest since the Great Depression with Riverside County's unemployment rates skyrocketing from 5.7% in 2007 to approximately 10% currently. The Inland Empire is one of the hardest hit regions regarding foreclosures.

Kevin McCarthy, president/CEO of United Way of the Inland Valleys, cited increased needs for services. *211 Riverside*, Riverside County's information call center for social service resources, reported rental assistance calls increased from 564 in the month of July 2008 to 635 in September 2008, and calls asking for utility assistance grew from 440 in July to 965 in September.

According to Darryl Brock, Executive Director of Second Harvest Food Bank, requests for food assistance, a daily basic need, have risen over the past 6-8 months by 25-30%.

"Extraordinary times call for people with extraordinary vision," urged McCarthy, "As a patient needs a shot in the arm to begin recovery from an illness, our community needs this shot in the arm to begin its economic recovery."

A significant need in this current crisis is the ability to get the funds to work quickly to begin alleviating the pain. United Way of the Inland Valleys knew they needed to be proactive in spearheading this effort because of its unique position in the community. Although not a direct service organization, it already has funding relationships with agencies that have been vetted and have systems in place to immediately meet community needs once funding is available.

“We study the needs and place funds with organizations that can deliver. Not all agencies are equal. We only fund those nonprofits that can meet our very high standards, those that can make the expected return on investment,” said McCarthy. “United Way is the vehicle for free enterprise to fund the building blocks of our community ... all we need are the resources.”

By mid-February, several thousand dollars have been raised through the *WON* Campaign with high expectations for continued support.

Donations will be accepted in forms of cash, checks, credit cards, or billed. Mayor Loveridge encourages “Challenge Grants” that will match \$1 for \$1 any donations to better help leverage funds.

For more information, call United Way of the Inland Valleys at 951. 697.4700, email jroberts@uwiv.org or check the website at www.uwiv.org.