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For More Information Please Contact:

Sandie Talbot, 414.263-8132

Cell: 414.350.0903

United Way Campaign Regaining Ground

-with three weeks left, \$15.4 million still needed-

(November 11, Milwaukee) – Giving to United Way’s annual campaign is on pace, with \$26.3 million contributed thus far. Last week, the organization reported it was not yet to 50% of the campaign goal, but officials are beginning to see an increase in new donors.

“We believe that Hurricane Katrina has heightened awareness of poverty, which may broaden support for United Way of Greater Milwaukee, which recently instituted a specific initiative on breaking the cycle of poverty.

“We believe that the poverty made transparent by Katrina importance of breaking that cycle of poverty here at home,”

but with new and increased gifts gaining ground, United Way is both anxious and optimistic.

What many nonprofits are referring to the “Katrina effect” is an unknown for United Way.

“We don’t yet know the full impact Katrina has had on local giving,” said Ed Zore, president of Northwestern Mutual and 2005 campaign co-chair, “But what we do know is that it has delayed some giving from companies who were concerned about running an employee United Way campaign coming off the heels of Katrina fundraising efforts.”

About 56% of the total campaign dollars come from employee campaigns at area companies.

“We are optimistic that the people in the Milwaukee area will rise to the challenge,” said Sue Dragisic, president of United Way, “It’s critical for people to maintain or increase their giving locally. With 186,000 people living in poverty here at home, United Way of Greater Milwaukee’s campaign is crucial to the strengthening of our community. We applaud those who have given to the Katrina fund, but are asking people to remember to give the United Way community campaign as well.”

Last year, this group accounted for \$20 million dollars, or half of the dollars raised. Approximately three weeks are left in the United Way community campaign, which ends on Thursday, December 1.

United Way of Greater Milwaukee invests dollars raised from its campaign in safety net services that address immediate needs, as well as its *breaking the cycle of poverty* initiative. Poverty is an increasing problem with

Milwaukee jumping from thirteenth to seventh in the percentage of people living in poverty – higher than even New Orleans, who ranks ninth. United Way's *breaking the cycle of poverty* initiative supports education, job training, asset building and programs that support healthy choices for girls.

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United Way of Greater Milwaukee has been raising money for the community for over 90 years and has invested over \$125 million dollars in the last five years alone. Recently, United Way expanded its funding to support education and job training programs as part of its *breaking the cycle of poverty* initiative. By requiring results from its 82 partner organizations, United Way of Greater Milwaukee improves the lives of one in every five people. United Way multiplies the impact of donors by bringing together the financial and human resources of the whole community. To be a part of building hope and improving lives and help ensure United Way meets its goal for the community, make a pledge through your workplace campaign or visit www.unitedwaymilwaukee.org