

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**A region gives thanks.
Funds distributed to United Ways from CNN Telethon**
In support of long-term recovery efforts for Gulf Oil Spill

In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, CNN hosted a star-studded telethon on Larry King Live in late June to raise money for the people, animals, and environment of the Gulf Coast. The two-hour CNN show raised \$1.3 million with proceeds benefiting three charities deeply involved in emergency assistance efforts: United Way (people), National Wildlife Federation (animals) and The Nature Conservancy (environment).

Thousands of people called, texted, tweeted or visited web sites to demonstrate their support financially. United Way's portion of the proceeds, now finally collected, totaled \$425,000 for the United Way Gulf Recovery Fund, an emergency fund created by the leadership of United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area and supported by United Ways along the Gulf from Louisiana to Florida.

A regional allocations board worked with community partners to assess the ongoing and unmet needs of the people impacted by the oil spill and to facilitate the distribution of funds. Earlier this month, the \$425K was distributed to four Gulf States: Alabama (\$98,090), divided between three coastal United Way's; Florida (\$107,355), divided between six coastal United Way's; Louisiana (\$162,605), divided between seven coastal United Way's; and Mississippi (\$56,950), divided between two coastal United Way's.

The United Way Gulf Recovery Fund was established to provide emergency assistance as well as support long-term recovery efforts to rebuild lives by addressing educational, financial and health-related challenges. Thousands found their lives and livelihoods impacted by the Gulf Coast oil spill. The economic ripple effect reached far beyond the fishing, hospitality and tourism industries.

Families have received assistance through the Gulf Coast Recovery Fund to help with food, clothing, utility assistance, rent and mortgage relief, and access to health and mental health care. "United Way will remain on the ground to support long-term recovery efforts, working side-by-side with Gulf Coast residents to build more resilient communities. This includes helping people as they re-imagine their lives and livelihoods, take care of long-term health and mental health issues, and learn how to become more financially stable to face any future challenges," said Gary Ostroske, President and CEO of United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area.

About United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area

United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area is advancing the common good. By partnering with donors, employers, nonprofits, faith groups and government, United Way brings a coordinated approach to solving community problems in Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa and Washington Parishes. For more information, please call 504.822.5540 or visit www.unitedwaynola.org. You can find us at www.facebook.com/UnitedWayNola or follow us on twitter: @UnitedWayNola.

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