

United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area



For Immediate Release

Contact: Beth Terry (504) 827-6806

United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area Receives National Award For Its Work with Children and Families

The **Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)** has announced **United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area** as the 2009 recipient of its Champion for Children award. The award will be presented on Tuesday, **February 24 at 7:30 p.m.** at a dinner at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC.

Each year CWLA presents an award to an individual or organization who has made a difference in a child's life and/or who has dedicated their work to helping and encouraging children, and United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area (UWGNOA) is committed to the success of its communities' children and families. United Way's Success By 6 collaborative focuses on children being ready to learn when they enter school. Its public policy work has been successful in the creation of a statewide quality rating system for childcare centers; meanwhile, home-based childcare providers receive instruction through United Way's First Teacher program. Also, childcare centers demolished by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are being rebuilt by the Greater New Orleans Rebuild Child Care Collaborative with \$3.3 million to bridge the gap between private resources and the cost to build to quality standards.

United Way focuses on older children through its participation in the New Orleans Kids Partnership, a 40+ member collaborative created after the 2005 hurricanes, which provides wrap-around services at 15 public schools. United Way's School to Career Initiative has developed an engaging, career-focused curriculum and further work has been done with the area's eight school systems to increase the high school graduation rate. "Thanks to these initiatives, many disadvantaged children will have hope in their lives and an opportunity to see a clear path to a successful future," said Beth Terry, Executive Vice President of UWGNOA. "That's our goal: that our children grow up to be productive, engaged adults."

United Way is committed to that goal, under any circumstances, a commitment that was tried and tested after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Despite suffering major damage from extreme flooding at its own corporate headquarters and being unable to return to the facility for over 5 months, United Way used its fiscal reserves to keep all its partner agencies fully funded in the immediate aftermath of the hurricanes. When many federal, state and local funding sources disappeared, United Way assistance proved instrumental in the continued operations of 60 human and social service agencies throughout the Greater New Orleans Area.

Over the past two years, almost \$3.8 million has been provided by United Way to programming specifically supporting the solid development of children and families in the New Orleans area, from quality childcare and academic support to early intervention for children with disabilities. An additional \$1.7 million has gone to provide assistance to those in crisis, including intervention in cases of domestic violence and abuse. Together, these amounts make up 30% of all funds granted by the United Way since 2007.

"Because of United Way's heroic and tireless efforts, our region's recovery has been greatly advanced and hundreds of thousands of children and families have been able to receive the comprehensive array of supports and resources they need to regain a healthy quality of life and a brighter future," said Dr. Keith Liederman, Executive Director of Kingsley House, a United Way Partner Agency, who nominated UWGNOA for this award. "I believe that there can be no greater friend to children and families in our country than the United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area."

CWLA is the trusted authority for professionals who work with children and the only national organization with members from both public and private agencies. To receive this award from such a respected and revered organization is an honor for the United Way, and for the city of New Orleans.

United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area serves the people of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Parishes.

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