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United Way announces record campaign, honors volunteers, donors, and businesses

Leaders and supporters of United Way of Sumner County came together to celebrate a record-setting 2017 fundraising effort on April 20, with the local charity honoring individuals and businesses for their dedication to helping others in the community.

According to United Way of Sumner County (UWSC) officials, the 2017 Campaign raised \$967,611, making it the largest campaign in the organization's 40-year history. The 2017 total represents a 2.4% increase over the \$945,224 raised in 2016. UWSC has seen its fundraising total grow and set new records in six of the past seven years.

According to UWSC Board Chair Dr. Del Phillips, the continuing success of the annual United Way campaign is a reflection of the generosity and compassion found throughout the community.

"We live in a wonderful county filled with wonderful people who give back to help those who need it most in our community," Phillips told the audience at UWSC's annual celebration breakfast. "I couldn't be happier about what we've been able to accomplish this year. This was our fourth year in a row to have a record-setting campaign, something that hasn't been done since 1991. I can remember just a few short years ago when we were trying to reach \$800,000 for the first time, so to raise \$967,000 this year sure feels good."

After four straight years of raising more than \$900,000, 2017 United Way Campaign Chair James Fenton said the organization's continued success will be needed as the population of Sumner County continues to increase.

"This campaign has increased 55% over the past eight years, which is just incredible growth," Fenton said. "However, our community continues to grow, and as it does, the number of needs grows with it despite the good things that are happening around us. Because of that, United Way continues to remain relevant. The work this organization is able to do with your support will continue to be needed in our community."

United Way provides funding to 34 health and human service non-profit organizations serving resident across Sumner County with the proceeds from its annual campaign. These partner agencies meet more than 50,000 needs each year in the areas of education, health, financial stability, and rebuilding lives.

With the 2017 fundraising campaign in the record books, UWSC Board Chair-Elect Lindy Gaughan is preparing to lead the organization into its fifth decade of helping others. Gaughan told the celebration audience that she is looking forward to increasing the number of United Way supporters across the county.

“After spending a year celebrating our 40th anniversary, it’s time to start a new chapter for our United Way,” Gaughan said. “We want to show the community that United Way of Sumner County is here to make this a better place to live for all of us. Our goals for the coming year will be to establish new partnerships, but we also want to reach out to those we have lost touch with over the years and invite them back into our United Way family. We have a lot of momentum, and the commitment to our cause is strong. I am looking forward to getting started and working with all of you on another record-setting year of making a difference.”

In addition to announcing 2017 fundraising results, the event honored fundraisers and volunteers who helped make the past year a successful one for UWSC. Award winners announced at the breakfast were:

- **Hugh Carpenter Award for Best Fundraising Campaign** – Sumner County Schools for raising \$162,000 through its campaign.
- **Regina Bartlett Fundraiser of the Year** - Sumner County Schools Assistant Director for Maintenance and Support Services Andy Brown for organizing a vendor fair special event that raised more than \$16,000.
- **Advocate of the Year** – Amie Davenport from ITW CIP for her outstanding efforts to promote United Way to coworkers and throughout the community.
- **Terry Colwell Volunteer of the Year** – UWSC Board Treasurer Michael Morrison for providing direct staff support during the organization’s management transition.
- **Leadership Givers Award** (*Most funds raised through donations larger than \$500*)– Publix Super Markets in Gallatin, Goodlettsville, and Hendersonville.
- **Torchbearer Award** (*Highest total of employee giving*) – Sumner County Schools.
- **Learning to Give Award** (*Largest school campaign*) – Hendersonville High School for raising more than \$10,000.
- **Most Improved Campaign** – Sumner Regional Medical Center for boosting its United Way contributions by \$11,000 (176%).
- **Best Campaign Event** – ITW CIP for its year-round employee engagement efforts on behalf of United Way.
- **Most Innovative Campaign Activity** – Sumner County Schools Maintenance Department for its Vendor Fair event.
- **David Brown Parrish Award** (*Best Partner Agency Campaign*) – Salvus Center, for raising \$2,162.

Photos and additional award details can be found on United Way’s website, www.unitedwaysumner.org, in the 2017 Campaign Celebration Photo Blog.

United Way of Sumner County is a non-profit charity that works to improve the daily lives and future opportunities of Sumner County residents through its financial support of 34 local health and human service agencies that meet needs in the areas of education, income/financial stability, health, and rebuilding lives. In addition to its fundraising efforts, the organization works to address needs in the community through its Days of Action events: Days of Caring community projects, Stuff the Bus school supply drive, and Kids Coat Drive. For more information on United Way of Sumner County and to find out how you can get involved in making a difference in the community, visit www.unitedwaysumner.org.