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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Ways statewide voice support for pre-k education

AUSTIN, Texas – March 31, 2009- In a united show of support for quality pre-k in Texas, 28 United Ways from across the state signed on to the United Way Pre-K Resolution. The resolution, authored by United Ways of Texas in conjunction with United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, outlines the numerous social, economic and educational benefits of pre-k education. Local United Ways were invited to accept the resolution to display support for pre-k both within their communities and in the state of Texas.

Research has proven that the returns on high quality pre-k education far exceed the costs. According to a report conducted by the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, for every \$1.00 invested in pre-kindergarten education, \$3.31 is returned to Texas communities. Further research indicates that the benefits from pre-k education continue into the first years of school and even into adulthood.

“United Ways understand that investing in pre-k directly benefits their local communities,” said Karen R. Johnson, President and CEO at United Ways of Texas. “Therefore, it is no wonder that we have garnered such strong levels of support for the resolution from local United Ways. When we invest in pre-k, we not only invest only in positive outcomes for each child but for local communities and the state of Texas as a whole.”

Two critical pieces of proposed bipartisan legislation fall in line with the distinct calls to action set forth in the United Way Pre-K Resolution. Senate Bill 21, authored by Senator Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) and a bipartisan group of Senators, and House Bill 130, authored by Representative Diane Patrick (R-Arlington) and a bipartisan group of Representatives, outline increased funding for classrooms to provide high quality pre-kindergarten education to Texas’ youngest learners.

The following local United Ways have voiced their strong support for pre-k education in the state of Texas by signing on to the resolution:

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
Dallas, Texas

Lubbock Area United Way
Lubbock, Texas

United Way of Midland²
Midland, Texas

United Ways of Texas
Austin, Texas

United Way of Capital Area¹
Austin, Texas

United Way of Greater Tarrant County³
Fort Worth, Texas

United Way of Orange County
Orange, Texas

United Way of Williamson County
Round Rock, Texas

United Way of Greater Jasper Area
Jasper, Texas

United Way of Coastal Bend
Corpus Christi, Texas

Greater Longview United Way
Longview, Texas

United Way of South Texas
Mc Allen, Texas

Erath County United Way
Stephenville, Texas

Nacogdoches County United Way
Nacogdoches, Texas

United Way of the Concho Valley
San Angelo, Texas

United Way of Lamar County⁶
Paris, Texas

United Way of Brazoria County
Angleton, Texas

United Way of Greater Houston
Houston, Texas

Montgomery County United Way
The Woodlands, Texas

United Way of Denton County⁴
Denton, Texas

United Way of Southern Cameron County
Brownsville, Texas

United Way of San Antonio/Bexar County
San Antonio, Texas

United Way of Mid & South Jefferson County
Port Arthur, Texas

United Way of El Paso⁵
El Paso, Texas

United Way of Beaumont/North Jefferson County
Beaumont, Texas

Matagorda County United Way
Bay City, Texas

North Texas Area United Way
Wichita Falls, Texas

United Way of the Baytown Area⁷
Baytown, Texas

¹ Accepted with suggested change "Board of Capital Area United Way"

² Accepted with suggested change "one of the key priorities"

³ Accepted with suggested change "one of the highest priorities" and edits regarding additional research, impacted children, workforce impact and pre-k funding; however, supported the broader context of the resolution

⁵ Accepted with suggested change "among the highest priorities" and edits regarding additional research, impacted children, workforce impact and pre-k funding; however, supported the broader context of the resolution

^{4,6} Accepted with edits regarding additional research, impacted children, workforce impact and pre-k funding; however, supported the broader context of the resolution

⁷ Accepted with suggested change "Board of the United Way of Baytown Area" and "one of the highest priorities"

For more information about the United Way Pre-K Resolution, please contact Stephanie Guidry at stephanie.guidry@uwtexas.org or (512) 372-9209.

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United Ways of Texas is the voluntary state association of Texas United Ways. United Ways of Texas is committed to statewide leadership that measurably improves Texas communities as places to live and do business. For more information, please visit www.uwtexas.org.