

# United Way of Central Minnesota

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**ATTN:**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 4, 2009**

**Noreen J. Dunnells**  
**Chief Professional Officer**  
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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **\$214,014 in Federal Funding for Agencies to assist with Emergency Shelter & Rent/Mortgage Available**

The local Emergency Food & Shelter Program Board, coordinated by United Way of Central Minnesota, was recently notified of federal program dollars available in our area. Funding levels are determined based on poverty and average unemployment statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor for the most current 12-month period. Benton, Stearns and Sherburne counties will receive \$214,014 this year, a 35% increase from last year.

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program began in 1983. The program was created by Congress to help meet the needs of hungry and homeless people in the United States and its territories by allocating federal funds for the provision of food and shelter. A national board chaired by a representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) governs the program. United Way of America (UWA) serves as the fiscal agent and secretariat for the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program (EFSP). The staff at UWA provides support to the national board, allocates and disburses funds, provides consultation and technical assistance to local boards and agencies, offers training, and conducts compliance reviews of funded agencies.

United Way of Central Minnesota annually convenes a local board of community partners to determine which organizations can best use these emergency dollars. Our local board also has representation from governmental agencies, non-profits that address food and shelter issues, businesses, the religious community and consumers.

Last year, the area board allocated \$159,008 in funding to six organizations that provide direct assistance to people in need: The Housing Coalition of St. Cloud Area, The Salvation Army, Tri-County Action Program, Place of Hope, Anna Marie's Alliance and CAER Center in Elk River. These funds helped provide 113 low-income households with emergency rent/mortgage payments that helped people stay in their current housing. In addition, 7,527 nights of stay were provided at emergency shelters for men, women, and children.

Applications for 2009 dollars are now being accepted from human service agencies for use in Stearns, Benton and Sherburne counties. Organizations that apply must be private voluntary non-profits or units of government, have an accounting system and conduct an annual audit, practice nondiscrimination, have demonstrated capability to deliver emergency programs, meet all required codes and, if a private voluntary organization, have a volunteer board. The board has identified emergency rent/mortgage and emergency shelters as local priorities for these funds. The deadline for submission of applications is 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 17, 2009.

For more information and an application form, contact Betty Schnettler, Director of Partnerships & Services, United Way of Central Minnesota at (320) 229-3507.