

## CVS chips in \$50,000 for United Way Fund

PROVIDENCE — United Way of Rhode Island announced today that the CVS Caremark Charitable Trust has made a \$50,000 contribution to United Way's Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island.

The contribution made within the first 30 days of launching United Way's community-wide education and fundraising initiative — Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island — pushed the total dollars raised to top \$100,000. UWRI matched those funds dollar-for-dollar and, to date, has distributed more than \$200,000 to 23 agencies around the state.

The nonprofit — in an effort to respond rapidly to the continuing negative impact of the economic crisis on our neighbors — announced a second \$100,000 dollar-for-dollar match. United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in R.I. will be accepting donations through March 31 as part of a major appeal to see this important fund top \$400,000.

United Way of Rhode Island launched the fund in

mid-January as part of an urgent call to stem the rapidly growing homelessness numbers caused by Rhode Island's severe economic downturn. The three-month education and fundraising effort is heightening the public's awareness of the foreclosure crisis and economic plight of working families and raising money to help keep people in their homes this winter. One hundred percent of the contributions made to the fund are being distributed directly to people who need assistance to meet rent, mortgage and utilities payments.

"When we learned of United Way's Homelessness Fund, we responded quickly to support this very needed program. CVS Caremark has a long history of being involved in giving back to the Rhode Island community," said Eileen Howard Dunn, senior vice president of corporate communications and community relations for CVS Caremark Charitable Trust. "We're hopeful that our contribution will help offset some of the financial hardship for families who face homelessness during these difficult times."

In addition to soliciting contributions from the community, United Way invited those in need of help to dial its telephone referral hotline, 2-1-1. Calls during January approached 10,000 and came from people who had lost their jobs and exhausted their unemployment benefits; renters who had been evicted

when their landlords faced foreclosure; and scores of people who for the first time have needed assistance.

"This very generous gift from the CVS Caremark Charitable Trust comes at a time of great need when we are receiving a huge volume of calls to our 2-1-1 social services hotline," said UWRI President & CEO Anthony Maione. "After achieving decreases in homelessness in Rhode Island for the past two years, recent months have shown alarming increases. I call it 'middle-class drift,' and it is disturbing. We all know the toll of homelessness in human terms."

United Way is calling upon the entire community to support the United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island. Credit card contributions may be made by dialing 2-1-1, online at [www.LIVEUNITEDri.org](http://www.LIVEUNITEDri.org) or by mailing a check payable to the United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness, 50 Valley Street, Providence, RI 02909.

"Each time we help someone from falling into homelessness, it is a win for all Rhode Islanders," said Maione. "In times like these, we are all in it together. When we reach out a hand to one, we improve the condition of all."

Anyone in need of assistance can visit [www.211ri.org](http://www.211ri.org) or dial 2-1-1, United Way's confidential, around-the-clock health and human services hotline staffed by information-referral professionals.

