

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release



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Caption: Sovereign's CEO and President Steve Issa, of Cumberland, right, hands Anthony Maione, CEO and President of United Way of Rhode Island, left, a \$10,000 dollar donation to UWRI's newly formed Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island. The funds will be matched \$1-for-\$1 bringing the total donation to \$20,000. Photo by Keri-Lyn Ducharme/United Way of RI

## Homelessness Prevention Fund receives key donation *Sovereign CEO praised for \$10,000 gift*

**Providence, RI** (Feb. 2, 2009): The day after United Way of Rhode Island launched its three-month awareness and fundraising effort to raise money to prevent homelessness, Sovereign Bank made a donation of \$10,000 to the newly formed *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island*. Steve Issa, President & CEO of Sovereign in Rhode Island and a former United Way of Rhode Island board member, announced the gift.

“This generous donation from Sovereign is a home run for us,” said Anthony Maione, President and CEO of United Way of Rhode Island. “This is very important money because it will go directly to keeping people out of shelters and in their homes.”

United Way of Rhode Island (UWRI) responded to the urgent call for need on Jan. 12 with the announcement of the community-wide effort, the *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in*

*Rhode Island.* As the recession deepens in the coming months, projections show many more Rhode Islanders will become at risk of losing their homes.

“Every day we hear stories about people affected by these tough economic times -- families becoming homeless due to loss of jobs, among other stories,” said Sovereign CEO Issa, who lives in Cumberland. “We are all facing tough economic times, however, it’s during these times that we need to stick together and help make a difference. There is a significant need here, and Sovereign wanted to take this opportunity to reach out and help keep families in the comfort of their homes.”

One hundred percent of the contributions made to the Fund will be distributed directly to people who need assistance to meet rent, mortgage and utilities. United Way also announced that the organization will match contributions to the Fund dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000 between now and March 31.

“This is an issue that is not going away any time soon,” Maione added. “We need to keep drawing attention to what is occurring currently in our community in hopes of affecting change.”

Anybody can help support the *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island*: Credit card contributions may be made by dialing 2-1-1 or 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.

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.

#### **About United Way of Rhode Island**

United Way of Rhode Island has been working to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island communities for over 80 years. UWRI’s mission is to mobilize the caring power of the community to improve the lives of people in need and address the issues Rhode Islanders care most about. United Way’s

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goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. We believe that all Rhode Islanders deserve the opportunity to have a better life, as when any one of us succeeds, we all succeed. At United Way, we refer to this as advancing the common good. For more information, visit [www.LIVEUNITEDri.org](http://www.LIVEUNITEDri.org).

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