

Press Release



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From left to right, Jack Corry, principal of St. Paul's School, Cranston, kindergarten teacher Mrs. Kimberly Rezendes of Providence, kindergarten assistant teacher, Mrs. Ann Anesta of Cranston, (behind all the kids in the back toward the middle), pre-kindergarten assistant teacher Mrs. Stephanie Lopes of Cranston and pre-kindergarten teacher Mrs. Betsy Wolfe of Cranston.

Photo by Keri Ducharme/United Way of RI

Dress-down day at Cranston school yields \$862 for *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island*

Cranston, RI (Feb. 4): When John F. Corry, principal of St. Paul's School, announced a dress-down day to raise funds to prevent homelessness, he never expected the tiniest students to participate with so much enthusiasm.

The Catholic School on Broad Street requires all students wear a uniform except for the pre-kindergarteners and kindergarteners. On this recent dress-down day, students at the pre-k to 8th grade school could wear everyday clothes if they made a donation to the *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness in Rhode Island*.

That is when the unexpected occurred. No one had expected the pre-kindergarteners or kindergarteners to participate. After all, they are exempt from the uniform requirement. Yet, the

tiny students surprised and impressed the staff and faculty with an unusual outpouring of donations.

“This is the most amount of money our pre-kindergarteners and kindergartners have brought in for a cause,” said Corry. “It was very touching to see such an outpouring. It was out of the ordinary.”

The students raised \$431. United Way of Rhode Island matched their contribution to the Fund dollar-for-dollar bringing it to a total of \$862. UWRI will match contributions to the Fund dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000 between now and March 31. The goal is to keep people stable and out of the already over-burdened shelter system as well as help those hardest hit by the economic downturn and in need of assistance.

“United Way has doubled the students’ gift,” said UWRI President and CEO, Anthony Maione. “We are pleased to see young Rhode Islanders step forward and give to help others in our state.”

Monies contributed to the Fund will be distributed to people in need through the following agencies: Amos House, Bradford Jonnycake Center, East Bay Community Action Program, Family Resources Community Action, Salvation Army, Pawtucket Corps, Salvation Army, Providence Corps, WARM Shelter, Westbay Community Action Program, Wood River Health Services, Comprehensive Community Action Program, Crossroads R.I., Providence Neighborhood Agency Association members, Tri-Town Community Action Agency and South County Community Action.

“We can’t stand by while we watch hard working Rhode Islanders become homeless because they can’t pay basic household expenses,” said Maione. “We are hopeful that all of Rhode Island will come together to help our neighbors in need by contributing to the Fund.”

How to Give

50 Valley Street
Providence, RI 02909
tel 401.444.0600
fax 401.444.0635
www.LIVEUNITEDri.org



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 or by mailing a check payable to the *United Way Fund to Prevent Homelessness*, 50 Valley Street, Providence, RI 02909.

How to Get Help

Anyone in need of assistance can dial 2-1-1 or visit www.211ri.org, United Way's confidential, around-the-clock health and human services hotline staffed by information-referral professionals. In 2008, *United Way 2-1-1 in Rhode Island* received nearly 100,000 calls. 2-1-1, backed by a yearly commitment of \$500 thousand from United Way, is also supported by a grant from the Hasbro Children's Fund as well as additional funds from the state.

To qualify for assistance from this special fund a family or person should meet with the caseworker at one of the participating agencies. The caseworker will determine what other state, federal, or nonprofit assistance is also available to the family/individual. As demand for assistance is great, the general limit on assistance is \$1,200 per individual or family, although the caseworker has some discretion in very special cases. The money must be used to keep a person or a family in a home or an apartment. Participating agencies will pay bills on behalf of the persons requesting help. No money will go directly to families; the agency will pay bills to the appropriate vendor.

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 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.

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