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For Immediate Release

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**United Way of Rhode Island Welcomes New Board President
and Announces Community Awards**

*Annual Meeting Highlights Recent Accomplishments,
Opportunities to Help More People in Need*

Providence, R.I. (November 8, 2011) The past year has been one full of challenges for United Way of Rhode Island as more people than ever before find themselves struggling to meet their basic needs. As the organization remains steadfast in its dedication to improving the lives of our neighbors in need, both for the short and long term, it used this year's annual meeting to highlight recent progress while stressing the importance of the work still needed to build a better community. The annual meeting also served as an opportunity to welcome a new President to the Board of Directors while announcing three community awards.

After leading United Way's Board of Directors over the past two years, J. Michael Costello, managing partner of Endurance Wealth Management, turned the leadership gavel over to Barbara J. Silvis. "It gives me great pleasure to pass the reins to Barbara, who has invested a great deal of time and effort in the work of United Way of Rhode Island to further its mission," said Costello.

Silvis, who is vice president, loss prevention web resources at FM Global, previously served as First Vice Chair of the Board of Directors in addition to her role as Vice Chair of the Community Investment Advisory Committee.

"Today is a celebration of all that United Way has accomplished over the past year, but I first want to acknowledge the leadership of Michael Costello for his vision and dedication to the people of Rhode Island," said Silvis. "United Way of Rhode Island is focused on making our state the best place it can be, and I couldn't be more honored to be a part of it and continue the momentum that Michael has created."

Other new appointments to United Way's Board of Directors include Maria Barry of Bank of America, Meghan Grady of YWCA of Northern RI, Gertrude Jones of Lifespan, Maureen Martin of RI AFL-CIO, Bob Nowak of Rhode Island Novelty, Mim Runey of Johnson & Wales University, and Oswald Schwartz of Piccerelli, Gilstein & Company, LLP.

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The annual meeting also featured the presentation of three special awards. The first was the Corporate Partnership Award, presented to Bank of America. Over the past four years in Rhode Island, Bank of America and its employees have donated more than \$2.1 million to United Way. A significant portion of the contributions were invested in United Way's Community Impact Fund, which supports the organization's work in the areas of Education, Income, Housing, and Safety Net. Additionally, Bank of America employees contributed 27,000 hours of their time to volunteer projects in our community last year alone.

"I want to say how proud we are to be affiliated with the United Way," commented Bill Hatfield, market president of Bank of America, upon receiving the Corporate Partnership Award. "They are making a huge impact in the community every single day and we're excited about what we will accomplish together in the future."



United Way of Rhode Island Board Chair Barbara J. Silvis presents the 2011 Corporate Partnership Award to Bank of America; accepting the award for Bank of America is Market President Bill Hatfield.

Zechariah Chafee, the son of late Rhode Island Senator John Chafee, presented Paula Murray McNamara of The Murray Family Charitable Foundation with the prestigious John H. Chafee Lifetime Community Service Award. The award is given to a person in the community who has consistently shown dedication and action on behalf of

underserved people. Since its establishment nearly 20 years ago, The Murray Family Charitable Foundation has faithfully and generously supported United Way's work in early childhood education and high-quality out-of-school programs through its investment in the Community Impact Fund.

In recognition of the strong partnership between the Labor Community and United Way of Rhode Island, Marcia Reback was presented with the Dante F. Mollo Award, honoring her outstanding support of United Way and its work to improve the lives of young people. Marcia spent many years as a member of United Way's Board and is the longtime President of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers. She was instrumental in securing over \$300,000 from the Innovation Fund of the American Federation of Teachers to develop a teacher evaluation system for our state.

"It gives me great pride to help United Way meet the needs of those in difficult situations," said Reback. "The dedication that we have all made to improving early childhood education is making an enormous difference and will help to better shape the future of our communities."

As Rhode Island's troubled economy and high rate of unemployment continue to create crisis situations for individuals and families across the state, United Way is there to answer the calls for help. *United Way 2-1-1 in Rhode Island*, a 24-hour information and referral helpline, handled more than 152,000 calls last year, an increase of 26% over the previous year.

"Looking around this room you see the power of United Way in bringing people together for a common goal - to make Rhode Island a better place today and for the future," said Anthony Maione, president & CEO, United Way of Rhode Island as he delivered the meeting's closing remarks. "We live in times now where each year brings new challenges, and we need to do more now than ever before. But, you can see the progress we've made in our work from Newport to Woonsocket, and from Providence to Westerly. If even one family does better, we all benefit. By continuing to work together, there is no problem we can't solve."

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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