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Nevada and the Sierra**

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## **UWNNS Announces Changes to Make Greater Impact in Community**

**Reno, Nev.** —United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra (UWNNS) has announced upcoming changes that will make an even greater impact in the northern Nevada community and provide a new structure for solutions to pressing issues in its three focus areas - education, income and health.

“This is a new and exciting way of doing business for us,” said Karen Barsell, chief executive officer and president of United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra. “We’re engaging with our community in different and more substantive ways. United Way is in the business of creating a positive impact in the community by ensuring that people have the basic building blocks for a good life. Fundamental change in communities cannot happen, unless there is sustained involvement of individuals and institutions working together.”

UWNNS will phase in a more strategic means of funding organizations and partnerships that truly can make a measureable impact. UWNNS will concentrate more on taking a stronger role in creating measureable results, and will fund initiatives in large enough dollar amounts in order to make a greater impact.

“This change will help United Way be a major player in community change and, therefore, more valuable to the community,” said Paul Dugan, chairperson of the UWNNS board. “This also makes it clear that we are willing to measure results of community change and not just the amount of dollars raised. The change will create a shared, common vision for our work and makes United Way even more credible and visible to stakeholders. UWNNS will become even more relevant to donors in this changing environment, and be able to measure and report results more effectively to them - something we’ve heard the donors ask for.”

In the current traditional allocations model, UWNNS has only been able to fund small components of partner agency programs, which does not allow the organization to measure results because of the funds’ smaller impacts and is difficult for UWNNS to administer. These smaller grants have also deterred some non-profits from applying for funds in the past due to it not being efficient.

However, in the new model, UWNNS’s non-profit partner agencies and, even more importantly, coalitions of its partner agencies, will have the opportunity to respond to UWNNS’s request for funding proposals (RFPs) in the areas of health, education and financial stability with the possibility of receiving substantive grants of at a larger level at a minimum of \$50,000. Grants will be awarded for winning proposals that best meet community impact objectives.

The traditional model also encouraged competition rather than collaboration among partner agencies. The new model will also encourage partnerships among non-profits to make an even greater impact in the community with its collaboration and will take this into account during the new funding process.

UWNNS will continue to work with community stakeholders and area experts who have previously been involved in the allocations process to determine priority action items in the three focus areas of health, education and financial stability. UWNNS will also partake in a more formal input and research process involving the community called “Community Conversations” in order to best determine the region’s priority needs. These will also help set measureable goals that in each of the three focus areas, as well as assist in the development of the RFPs that solicit proposals to address them. As part of the “Community Conversations,” UWNNS is asking the northern Nevada public to take an online survey found at [www.unitedwaypriorities.com](http://www.unitedwaypriorities.com) and [www.unitedwayprioridades.com](http://www.unitedwayprioridades.com) (in Spanish).

For the 2010-11 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2010, UWNNS will begin to phase out the traditional smaller allocations by allocating a combination of grants in the traditional model and several larger, strategic allocations. UWNNS will allocate \$450,000 for one year giving \$150,000 for each of the three focus areas – education, income and health. UWNNS will then phase out traditional small allocations to partner agency programs by June 2011.

**About United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra**

United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra brings the community together to identify our most pressing needs, produce measurable results, and, thereby, improve lives. United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra is achieving meaningful impact here in our community. We use our expertise and knowledge through innovative funding of programs and initiatives that have a positive influence on the people of northern Nevada and the Lake Tahoe communities. Our Mission is to link the community's will and resources to improve lives. Call 775-322-8668 or visit [www.uwnns.org](http://www.uwnns.org).

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