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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way of Onslow County Exceeds Campaign Goal AGAIN

Jacksonville, NC Despite tough economic times, United Way of Onslow County exceeded their campaign goal of \$600,000 by raising \$600,463.53. This is the second year that United Way has exceeded their campaign goal. Last year, United Way set out to raise \$550,000 and collected \$551,420.33. United Way concluded their 2009/2010 campaign yesterday, January 28, with their Campaign Celebration at Hilda's Restaurant. The Celebration was sponsored by Marine Chevrolet, Marine Federal Credit Union, and Jones-Onslow EMC.

The Celebration honored many businesses that conducted workplace campaigns. Every business that raised \$1,250 or more was recognized. In total, there were 39 businesses. Four businesses received the special recognition of campaign of the year: AT&T (under 49 employees), Enterprise Rent-A-Car (50 to 199 employees), Onslow County Schools (200 and more employees), and Carobell, Inc. (nonprofit sector). AT&T raised \$9,448 with 12 employees. Enterprise Rent-A-Car raised \$11,736 with 50 employees. Onslow County Schools raised \$161,892 with 3,500 employees. Carobell, Inc. raised \$6,526 with 130 employees. SIA Group received the special recognition of largest campaign increase. Last year SIA Group raised \$1,200 and this year they raised \$5,427. Coastal Carolina Community College and Jones-Onslow EMC both received United Way's most prestigious award to a business, the circle of excellence. This award was given to both businesses for their significant in-kind donations and successful workplace campaigns for United Way.

Behind each workplace campaign is a coordinator. Two exceptional workplace campaign coordinators were recognized: Wendy Barahona of Mine Safety Appliances and Harley Jones of Carolina Forest Elementary. Another volunteer was recognized, Karen Salefsky. She received the Leroy Greth Memorial Award. This award was created in honor of Leroy Greth and is given each year to a dedicated volunteer who has made considerable contributions to United Way.

Six businesses that did not do a workplace campaign, but participated in United Way's Small Business Blitz back in October received recognition for donating \$1,000 or more. Those businesses that were recognized were Atlantic Coast Foods, Jacksonville Board of Realtors, Onslow Animal Hospital, Scott Rainville CFP®, First Command Financial Services, Thomas W. Bell, Jr., D.D.S. and Edward G. Covert, D.D.S., and W.T. Humphrey. Also, those businesses that gave major in-kind donations were recognized as campaign superstars. These businesses help United Way keep its overhead expenses low. 26 businesses received this recognition.

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When asked how United Way surpassed their campaign goal, Sherri Francescon, executive director of United Way, said, "Through the generosity of Onslow County residents. Without hesitation, the residents of Onslow County gave financially and their time to make sure that those in need in Onslow County would continue to receive the indispensable services our partner agencies provide."

United Way funds 35 community programs within 14 nonprofit organizations in Onslow County. These nonprofit organizations are their partner agencies. Francescon said, "It was especially important that we reach our campaign goal this year to help our partner agencies meet the increased demand for their vital services." Francescon explained that with tough economic times, the demand for their partner agencies' services has increased dramatically.

Before the conclusion of the Celebration, a \$2,500 preloaded bankcard was given away to Chris Moore, a Social Studies teacher at Swansboro High School. Moore was one of 11 incentive program finalists who attended the Celebration. During United Way's campaign, an 11-week incentive program was run from September 25 to December 11. In order to be a part of the incentive program, one had to pledge an annual amount of at least \$78. The other ten finalists each won a \$200 preloaded bankcard. The incentive program was sponsored by Bank of America.

Francescon highlighted that this year's campaign success is just a preview of United Way's future campaign success. Francescon said, "With help from the United Way selfless staff and volunteers, United Way's campaign will continue to grow each year. We aspire to reach every business in Onslow County to offer them the chance to invest in their community. With an expanded funding base, United Way will be able to support more community programs through more nonprofits and have a greater impact on the needs of residents in Onslow County. We are greatly looking forward to next year's campaign!"

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