

LIVE UNITED



United Way of King County

CONTACT:

Michael Beneke, Director of Communications

206-461-8414 | 206-250-4993 (cell)

mbeneke@uwkc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Solid results help community get behind United Way of King County's fundraising campaign, raise \$112 million.

Investments are focused on building a community where people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable.

SEATTLE - July 28, 2015. United Way of King County today announced its overall fundraising total of **\$112 million** for the campaign year ending June 30, 2015. **\$35 million** of the total was given directly to United Way of King County to invest in solving the community's toughest challenges.

When someone becomes homeless, it is a personal and a community crisis. Through United Way, donors are working to ensure that people in our community have homes and if they do fall into homelessness that it is brief and one-time. For the more than 5,000 young people each year who don't have a safe place to live, investments in family reunification, new shelters and housing as well as employment services are helping them get back on their feet. In the past year, donors provided 412,500 nights of shelter for people struggling with homelessness in King County.

Support from donors like **Microsoft** is helping to assure that King County's children are on track to graduate from their earliest years. These investments bring to scale programs like the Parent-Child Home Program which helps 1,000 parents every year become their children's first and best teachers. Children who complete the two year program are 30 percentage points more likely to graduate from high school. Many other investors joined Microsoft in supporting the program, among them the Renton School District.

For the more than 15,000 youth between the ages of 16 and 21 who have stopped their education short of a high school diploma, United Way donors and partners like **The Boeing Company** have launched the Reconnecting Youth pilot program. Leveraging state funds recently made available for teens and young adults who have dropped out of school, Reconnecting Youth pairs a young person with a caring adult who helps them connect to available resources and earn their high-school equivalency while gaining the skills and credentials they need for a solid career. The program has been awarded a Federal Social Innovation Fund Grant and is on track to engage 50% of King County's disconnected youth by 2020.

“People respond to the results we accomplish in the community,” said **Jon Fine**, President and CEO of United Way of King County. “They want to know they are making a wise investment and what their donations are accomplishing. United Way provides an easy way for people to connect with their community and turn their generosity into large-scale good.”

Fine points to donor supported programs like United Way’s Free Tax Campaign which has a broad reach and really makes an impact on the stability of families and neighborhoods in King County.

“The Free Tax Program is one of the tools helping struggling families become financially stable. United Way volunteers filed nearly 20,000 returns this year, bringing \$27.2 million dollars in refunds back to families to be reinvested in our community. People are able to spend their hard-earned dollars on food not fees.”

United Way credits the success of the fundraising campaign to strong leadership from volunteer campaign co-chairs Colleen Brown, Fred Devereux, Sandra Madrid, and Matt Nickerson as well as particularly generous corporate support from **Holland America Line, PACCAR Inc, the Polyclinic and Starbucks.**

In addition to a clear vision and strong results, many donors point to the organization’s efficiency as a reason for strong and sustained giving. United Way of King County benefits from an endowment started by the Gates Family to offset a portion of its operating expenses each year. As a result, this year more than 98 cents of every dollar raised went directly to meeting community needs.

The 2015-2016 fundraising season officially launched on July 1 and will be led by campaign co-chairs **Richard and Barrie Galanti.**