



United Way
of Bradley County

FOR RELEASE:

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First Lady Crissy Haslam praises community for United Way support

Tennessee's First Lady Crissy Haslam said that she wanted to come to Cleveland to help United Way of Bradley County kick off its annual campaign because she has been touched by the way people in this community come to the aid of their neighbors.

Mrs. Haslam was the guest speaker for the United Way of Bradley County's campaign kickoff luncheon on Tuesday, where pledge totals of \$902,280 were announced. The luncheon was held at the Peerless Road Church of God of Prophecy.

"What a great start to your campaign," Mrs. Haslam said following the announcement of the early pledge totals. These pledges were from companies that are serving as Pacesetter and Challenger firms, and many were from company campaigns that are not yet complete.

Companies serving as Pacesetter and Challenger firms for the 2011 United Way campaign are: Arch Chemicals, Athens Federal Community Bank, Bank of Cleveland, BB&T Bank, Bradley County Schools, Brenda Lawson & Associates, Cleveland City Schools, Cormetech, Easy Auto, Hardwick Clothes, Lee University, Life Care Centers of America, Manufacturers Chemical, Peyton's Southeastern, Pioneer Credit, Procter & Gamble/Duracell, Regions Bank, SkyRidge Medical Center, Southern Heritage Bank, SunTrust Bank, United Community Bank, Whirlpool Cleveland Cooking Products, and Whirlpool Customer eXperience Center.

"Most of these pledge reports are still incomplete and will have updated totals at our report luncheons," explained United Way Board Chairman Terry Henry. "They show us what can be done in only a month and they are examples of model campaigns. They stand ready to help other companies and offer suggestions for increasing the giving, and they are strong United Way contributors. We appreciate their taking the time to start early and be ready to kick off our community-wide effort."

Mrs. Haslam said that this community-wide effort, especially following the tornadoes that struck the area on April 27, is what attracted her to come here to help kick off the campaign.

"I can't go to speak at every United Way fundraising launch, but I wanted to come to Bradley County because I was so proud and touched by the way you surrounded your neighbors, pitched in and helped," she said. "What a great job you did."

Mrs. Haslam stressed that it is that effort to help others that makes United Way so successful. She should know, as she has a background with United Way in Knoxville, where her husband, father-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law have all headed campaigns.

She has also visited United Way agencies in Knoxville back when she and her husband lived there. Bill Haslam served as Mayor of Knoxville for several years before becoming Governor of the state.

"I remember going with Bill and visiting the many agencies in Knoxville and dragging our children along so they could see the good work being done there through these United Way agencies," she said. "I see that good work is being done here too, by the many agencies that you support."

United Way of Bradley County funds 20-plus agencies, programs and services that provide help to children, to the elderly and homebound, and to families.

Mrs. Haslam was especially excited to see that the 2010 United Way Needs Assessment pinpointed one of the top needs in the community as helping parents prepare their children for entering schools. United Way of Bradley County funds several programs that help in this area, including the Imagination Library and the Starfish Program (which receives a United Way grant made possible through the Bradley Memorial Health Endowment Fund).

"You're right on target," she said of United Way's working to help these parents and families prepare their kids for school.

Campaign Co-Chairs Brenda Lawson and Tanya Mazzolini introduced their campaign teams, and also told those in attendance how important it is to be involved in helping others.

"We know that the quality of life of our friends, neighbors, and those we don't know personally will be impacted by the gifts donated during this campaign," Mazzolini said.

"I know people are receiving services they would not have if it were not for United Way and the many, many volunteers who give their time and efforts to this important campaign each year and the donors who want to help others," added Lawson. "The needs are always there and they continue to grow each year so it is important that we help our neighbors by working together to meet those needs."

Mrs. Haslam said that this combined effort is what makes United Way able to help so many.

"Working together, we can multiply our impact," she said. "It is good for those individuals we touch ... it's good for our community ... and it's good for you, it's good for me, and it's good for each of you that give and who ask others to give."

The 2011 United Way of Bradley County campaign's schedule includes four report luncheons, the last of which is set for Nov. 16. The first report luncheon, where the Pacesetter and Challenger firms will receive special recognition, is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 12, at noon at the Mountainview Inn.

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