



United Way of King County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2009

CONTACT:

Jared Erlandson

206-461-3742

206-380-4916 (cell)

jerlandson@uwkc.org

United Way 'Hunger Action Week' culminates in release of a bold plan to address hunger in King County

SEATTLE - Today United Way of King County released **Hunger Relief Now!**. The plan is the first ever of its kind in the Puget Sound region and was created through collaboration with the existing network of providers, nonprofits, advocacy organizations and governmental agencies. It outlines 12 key strategies both short and long-term that are required to address hunger in King County.

The announcement comes on the final day of United Way's Hunger Action Week, sending out the message that we all have a role to play to end hunger in our communities.

"In support of Hunger Action Week, my family and I ate for just \$22 per day, which is the maximum benefit a family of four could receive from food stamps," said community volunteer, **Karen Solimano**. "Having to worry about stretching our food budget and what my family is going to eat next has really been distracting. I can't imagine living with this stress every day and my heart goes out to those who have to."

Success for the plan will depend on that very empathy to create a hunger free King County. The plan calls for an immediate outreach effort to enroll the lowest income and most vulnerable people into the federal Food Stamp Program. Currently 40% of the individuals and families who could be receiving food stamps are not registered to receive them. The swelling ranks of community volunteers will play a key role in this outreach.

"Prior to the release of this plan, there was no overall framework for making sure that people in our community do not go hungry," said Paul Haas from Solid Ground. "This plan mobilizes resources and maximizes efficiencies in a way that feeds more people and moves us closer toward solving the problem of hunger."

"This is where United Way is uniquely positioned to bring fundamental and lasting change in the community," said **Jon Fine** President and CEO of United Way of King

County. "In the creation of this plan we are able to leverage the power of volunteers and federal dollars to make the greatest impact."

The Hunger Relief Now! plan can be downloaded at unitedwayofkingcounty.org/research.

###