

***For Immediate Release***

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## **United Way Announces Agenda for Change**

United Way of Southwest Wyoming announced its agenda for change during their Annual Meeting held July 23. Children, families, safety and independence have been identified as areas of critical need for Sweetwater County. Kathy Tacke, Director of Community Impact stated that to meet the needs of our community United Way has conducted in-depth research that will direct the dollars where they are needed most.

The areas of critical need were targeted after six months of research and discussion by United Way community volunteers and stakeholders who make up the Community Solutions Team (CST). This team has created a vision statement and measurable goals for each area that will guide United Way in its funding process, as well as forming community partnerships. "In order to obtain these goals, simply raising money is not enough to create the long-lasting change that our community wants to see. We are forming collaborative efforts with those who can help implement a strategy for change. The Community Solutions Team is leading this transition. They place focus on the root causes of these areas to understand what is needed to create long-lasting change," said Tacke.

CST's vision for families and children is to invest in children and youth to help them become healthy and productive citizens. This will be accomplished through adequate, quality and affordable care of children, quality out-of-school programs, and learning opportunities for teen to develop into community focused adults.

The team's vision for a safe and healthy community focuses on partnerships. The critical needs identified include available and safe housing for all community members, and a call-in center that provides individuals with information on available local services.

CST's vision for the independence area is to provide quality services that support independent living. This will be accomplished by educating citizens on the importance of financial stability and by increasing accessibility to healthcare and transportation.

“Kathy Tacke was hired specifically to form community collaborations that address the areas of critical need . United Ways across the country have used the community impact model for over 10 years. It’s a long process to make the change and United Way of Southwest Wyoming has been moving in this direction for the last five years. We are excited to announce that we are now ready to make the shift and be recognized as a leader in community impact,” said Suzanne Zutter, Executive Director.

Community Solutions Teams are now being formed in Lincoln, Sublette, and Uinta Counties with local volunteers from each county. They will go through a similar process to identify their critical needs areas and set their agenda for change.

At the annual meeting United Way of Southwest Wyoming announced its 2008 Annual Campaign goal of \$1.92 M. This year’s campaign is chaired by Buzz, Carole and Erik Shafer. “This ten percent increase over last year’s campaign goal was set by the Campaign Cabinet. This increase will assist our community to further the United Way’s agenda for change,” said Carole Shafer. To date the Campaign Cabinet includes Buzz, Carole, and Erik Shafer, Michael Castleberry, Bret Pizzato, Ben Taylor, Paul Grube, Craig Sorensen, Pete Branjord, Rick Lee, Elise Timlin, and Monte Morlock.

Board members and officers were elected at the United Way of Southwest Wyoming Annual Meeting. Liisa Anselmi-Dalton was appointed as President, Dwane Pacheco was appointed VP of Community Investment, Kyle Martodam was appointed as a board member, Jeff Nieters was appointed as Secretary-Treasurer, and Carole Shafer was appointed as a board member and VP of Communications. Out-going board members included Jan Macintosh, Janet Montz, and Robert Saunders.

Former Board President Bob Arambel will continue to serve on the board of directors. Arambel expressed his gratitude to the United Way of Southwest Wyoming staff, board members and community partners for their hard work and dedication over the last year. “The efforts of the United Way staff in working with our community partners is beginning to have long lasting impact on the community,” said Arambel.

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Photo: United Way of Southwest Wyoming held its annual meeting on July 23. Former President Bob Arambel expressed his gratitude to the United Way Board of Directors, staff and community partners for their hard work and dedication during the meeting. Back row: Dwane Pacheco, Tami Christensen, Gloria Adair, Janet Montz, Ellen Smith, George Jost, Bob Arambel, Kathy Tacke, Jennifer Melvin, Mike Bauer, Christie DeGrendele, Elise Timlin, Ann Owen, Kathy Hodges, Pam Spivack, Carole Shafer. Middle row: David Thorne, Matt McBurnett, Pam Christiansen, Debra Hokanson, Leah Lassise, Linda Gardner, Ann Coplan, Patsy Sorensen. Front row: Kelly Frink, Jasmine Weaver, Suzanne Zutter, Jeanine Cox, Emily Gomez, Erin Teichert, Kolbi Williams, and Melissa Searle.