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Contact:

Elizabeth Ash, Communications Manager (904) 390-3226
Janet Owens, Vice President of Marketing and Communications (904) 390-3245
Connie Hodges, President and CEO (904) 390-3218

United Way of Northeast Florida Sets Community Goal of \$26,350,000

JACKSONVILLE, FL – United Way of Northeast Florida kicked off the 2008 community campaign today at the Jacksonville Landing. With nearly 1,000 guests in attendance, 2008 Campaign Chair Marty Lanahan, North Florida Area Executive and City President of Regions Bank, announced the campaign goal of \$26,350,000 that will allow United Way to create opportunities for a better life for First Coast children, youth, seniors and families.

Unlike the organization's traditional sit-down luncheons, the outdoor evening event was electric, drawing community citizens as well as company employee campaign leaders to the Landing. Decked out in t-shirts emblazoned with the words "LIVE UNITED", the new United Way call to action, guests were reminded by United Way Trustee Chair Kevin Twomey, "when you reach out a hand to one, you influence the condition of all."

As a group of volunteers unveiled signs revealing the goal, Lanahan led the crowd in cheers of "LIVE UNITED". She explained, "With these funds, United Way will continue working to make measurable, long-term improvement in people's lives and in the quality of life for our community."

While today officially kicks off the beginning of United Way's annual giving campaign, many businesses and organizations held workplace campaigns early as a catalyst to jumpstart the Community Campaign. The dollars raised from participating Pacesetter organizations and other

early gifts totaled \$7,165,280. The results of the Pacesetter campaigns were announced during the kickoff (See attached list).

In addition, United Way has identified many new businesses that will be running first-time campaigns this year. United Way Board of Directors Chair Barbara Drake stated, “The Northeast Florida community is doing all that it can to rally and demonstrate support for its citizens.”

The campaign kicked-off with local band, Sugar Bear, playing upbeat rock ‘n’ roll music onstage. Describing the goal, Lanahan stated, “This is a big number, but we need to reach this goal in order to ensure that our region’s children, seniors, and families will thrive.”

Connie Hodges, United Way of Northeast Florida’s president, explained, “United Way’s Community Fund supports programs that target the building blocks for a good life: early childhood success, helping students at risk of dropping out, and keeping seniors active and independent.”

United Way of Northeast Florida works to create real, long-lasting change in Northeast Florida by focusing on the building blocks for a good life. In partnership with volunteers, community organizations, and leaders, United Way is creating opportunities to improve life for people in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and northern St. Johns counties. In addition, United Way leads United Way 2-1-1, a 24/7 information referral hotline; Life: Act 2, a pro-active response to an exploding senior population; and Full Service Schools, a community approach to removing barriers to academic success. For more information, call 904-390-3200 or visit www.uwnefl.org.

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