

Rappahannock United Way



News Release

Tuesday, August 31, 2010

Contact:

Janel S. Donohue / Rappahannock United Way

jdonohue@rappahannockunitedway.org

540-373-0041 ext. 307

Community Member Input Sought on Impact Strategies

Rappahannock United Way Launches Community Engagement Initiative 2010

Fredericksburg, Va.— [Rappahannock United Way](http://www.rappahannockunitedway.org) (RUW) announced today at its Annual Campaign Kickoff Breakfast the launch of its 2010 **Community Engagement Initiative** as a means of gathering community input for its future impact strategies, which will guide RUW's program decisions and grant funding in the key areas of Education, Income and Health between now and 2020. Between August 31 and October 31, all community members in Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford counties and the city of Fredericksburg are invited to actively participate in proposing goals and priorities for consideration by RUW leadership.

“The people who live and work here in the Greater Fredericksburg Region can provide us with great ideas and insights for enhancing the quality of our community, because they know what's needed and what has and hasn't worked,” said Shawn Sloan, Chair of the RUW Task Force and President of The Media Partners, LLC. “We're inviting anyone with an interest in improving our community in the areas of Education, Income and Health to tell us what we should be focusing on over the next 10 years and also how we might best accomplish those goals.”

Over 250 participants at the Campaign Kickoff Breakfast participated in the first community engagement activity. Participants completed a survey to share what they think RUW should aspire to achieve in the areas of Education, Income and Health.

Community members can participate in the Community Engagement Initiative in one of five ways: (see the RUW Online Community at <http://www.RUW2010.blogspot.com> for details).

- Completing an in-person survey at an RUW event
- Attending an in-person Community Meeting
- Submitting input through the RUW 2010 Online Community
- Participating in a Telephone Meeting
- Volunteering to lead a Hosted Meeting on your own and then report back on the discussion

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At the conclusion of the Community Engagement Initiative, members of the community will be asked to rank the suggested goals and strategies that have been received through the community, telephone, and hosted meetings, the online engagement portal and the surveys.

As part of the Community Engagement Initiative, RUW seeks individuals interested in volunteering to lead a Hosted Meeting. Community volunteers host and lead a meeting and then report back the findings from the discussion. Interested individuals are invited to attend the *Friday, September 10 Hosted Meeting Leaders Training* from 12-1pm at the RUW office, 3310 Shannon Park Drive, Fredericksburg, VA, 22408.

The training will review how to plan and host a meeting as part of the Community Engagement Initiative, with the support and guidance of Virginia Tech and RUW. Training materials will provide complete instructions for leading the meeting, including a proposed meeting agenda, text for invitations, flyers and other information. Learn more about the Hosted Meetings and RSVP at the [RUW 2010 Online Community](#).

The Community Engagement Initiative is being led by RUW in partnership with [Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University](#)'s (Virginia Tech) Center for Survey Research and its Center for Public Administration and Policy.

About [Rappahannock United Way](#): Founded in 1939, Rappahannock United Way is a local nonprofit organization serving the city of Fredericksburg, and the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania and Stafford. Rappahannock United Way is working to advance the common good by focusing on education, income and health. These are the building blocks for a good life—a quality education that leads to a stable job, enough income to support a family through retirement, and good health. Our goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place.

We invite our community to be part of the change. Together, united, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow. That's what it means to LIVE UNITED.

About the Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research: One of 10 University-Level Research Centers at Virginia Tech, the [Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research](#) completes 60-65 research projects each year. The Center develops research designs, plans and administers surveys, performs statistical analyses, and provides other vital data functions for virtually every area of social research, evaluation, and policy analysis. The Center has conducted more studies for public agencies than any other academic survey research center in the Commonwealth. CSR is a research leader across Virginia and nationally in designing and conducting local (city, county, regional, PDCs, MSAs) surveys of residents on wide range of policy issues.

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About the Virginia Tech Center for Public Administration and Policy: The [Center for Public Administration and Policy](#) (CPAP) at Virginia Tech offers masters and doctoral degrees through its three locations in Alexandria, Blacksburg and Richmond. In addition to scholarly contributions in the fields of public policy and public administration, CPAP faculty and students are engaged community members, sponsoring educational programs and partnering with local and national organizations to advance Virginia Tech's mission of service and outreach. CPAP's faculty and students draw on a wealth of experience in policy research, non-profit and "third sector" governance, planning, and public management.

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