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NEWS RELEASE
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United Way Hosts Project: LIVE UNITED Runway Event May 7
Fundraiser Features Student Designers, Local Celebrities and Miss Arkansas USA

Fayetteville, ARK – University of Arkansas students are putting the final touches on their fashionable designs, and local “celebrity” models are practicing their runway struts in preparation for the United Way of Northwest Arkansas Project: LIVE UNITED event.

Along with presenting sponsors Masons and Liberty Bank, the United Way will host a fundraiser inspired by the hit reality-competition show “Project Runway” on Thursday, May 7 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Masons on Joyce in Fayetteville.

Dana Sargent, Fox 24 Main Anchor, will emcee the event and serve as our “Heidi Klum,” telling the designer’s who’s in or who’s out. A panel of judges, including Mason Hiba, owner of Masons; Brenda Jonze, community advocate; and Dean Redford of Liberty Bank will determine the winning design. The winning student designer will have their design displayed at Masons and take home additional prizes and gifts worth \$500. (More information about each judge is attached.)

In keeping with the Project Runway inspired event, United Way is pleased to announce the participation of special guest judge Chanley Painter, the reigning Miss Arkansas USA. Chanley recently participated in the Miss USA pageant where she placed in the Top 10 overall; the first time in more than 20 years that a Miss Arkansas has come so close to winning the Miss USA crown. (More information about Chanley is available in the attached bio.)

Once again this year, the runway will also feature 40 local “celebrity” models walking the runway wearing the official LIVE UNITED t-shirt in jeans and accessories from Masons. These models, including community members like Dick and Nancy Trammel, Springdale Mayor Doug Sprouse and Citiscapes executive editor Aaron Bleidt, showcasing how they LIVE UNITED through giving, advocating and volunteering around the issues of education, income and health.

Last year, in the first year of the event, the United Way raised \$10,000. In our sophomore effort, we are hoping to match that amount through special edition t-shirt and ticket sales.

Tickets are available now for \$35 by calling the United Way office at 877.750.1221. Tickets are also available at the Masons on Joyce or Liberty bank locations in Springdale and Fayetteville.

Special edition LIVE UNITED t-shirts and tanks are available now at Masons on Joyce. T-shirts in black with LIVE UNITED in white are \$12 and grey tanks with LIVE UNITED in white are \$10.

The event takes on added importance this year as United Way works to overcome the difficult economy which makes fundraising even more challenging despite the increased needs. In spite of those challenges, this promises to be a fun event that showcases the work of amazing, upcoming apparel studies students while also celebrating those special people in our community that LIVE UNITED each day by making our community better through giving, advocating and volunteering.

About United Way of Northwest Arkansas

United Way is dedicated to helping advance the good of all in our community through focusing on key issue areas such as education, income and health to create lasting changes in our community. By engaging individuals and companies around giving, advocating and volunteering for these types of issues we can all work to Live United in Northwest Arkansas. For more information about how to Live United, please visit our website at www.unitedwaynwa.org.



**Bio for
2009 Miss Arkansas USA
Chanley Painter**

This past November, Bentonville Arkansas was the site where Chanley Painter became the new MISS ARKANSAS USA. Painter, 24, is an intelligent, southern beauty: and, a world renowned fiddle player. Born and raised in Arkansas, a state that has a rich historical legacy of southern traditions, where the fiddle is the official state instrument and the state song is a fiddle tune titled, "Arkansas Traveler," Chanley embraced the ole time art-form and fell in love with fiddle playing. In April, this Arkansas girl, who says she never leaves home without her fiddle, will travel to Las Vegas and represent the Natural State at the 2009 Miss USA Pageant.

A 4.0 Presidential Scholar, Chanley attended the University of Central Arkansas and graduated Summa Cum Laude with Departmental Honors in Political Science. She was also selected UCA's 2007 Outstanding University Student. Currently, Chanley is in her second year as a joint-degree law student attending the University Of Arkansas Bowen School Of Law and the William J. Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock. She finished her first year of law school at the top of her class and was selected for a position on the coveted Law Review.

In 2004, Chanley won the Arkansas State Fiddle Championship and went on to form, manage, and arrange the music for her own bluegrass/old time fiddle band, "Chanley and The Ready Boys." She also established and managed (prior to law school) her own school of music, Chanley's Fiddle Academy, teaching students of all ages and authoring a workbook entitled, "Fiddle Basics." In 2005, Chanley traveled to China as an invited guest of the Chinese government to perform as the featured soloist in two concerts with the Fuzhou Symphony Orchestra. The tour, which included 7 cities, also offered her the opportunity to teach American Heritage music to Chinese music students. Last year, Chanley realized one of her lifetime goals when she played live on the Grand Ole Opry stage in Nashville, TN.

Philanthropy and volunteerism are important components in Chanley's life and she has several charities that are especially close to her heart. Currently, she is assisting in a needs assessment for Heifer International's new educational center, "Heifer Village." In preparation for work with the juvenile justice system after law school, Chanley also joined the Arkansas Attorney General's office program, "Smart Choices, Better Chances." Two years ago, she began traveling around the state working with students in the Arkansas school system, as a spokesperson and Adjunct Volunteer Instructor. She also enjoys working with the children at Arkansas Children's Hospital, fundraising for the American Lung Association, and being a Locks of Love donor and advocate.

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Beauty, brains, and a Black Belt - that's right! Chanley is a Black Belt in Grandmaster Han's World Youn Wha Ryu Martial Arts and feels strongly that all ages, male and female, should have training in self-defense and personal safety skills. This passion led to authoring a safety awareness brochure entitled The Three G's. In fact, Chanley proudly boasts of the trained ability to break a 1x12 board with one hand! In addition to board breaking, she also trains in sparring, one and three-step fighting, forms, and weaponry.

Chanley enjoys modeling and schedules in photo shoots during breaks in her law school schedule. She also loves to play fiddle with her band and friends (especially her 86 year old fiddle buddy, who has taught her many "ole timey" fiddle tunes). Every chance she gets she makes time to work out and train for her 1st degree Black Belt testing. Other favorite pass times include cooking desserts, riding wave runners and roller coasters, watching movies, eating, laughing, and making memories with the ones she loves!

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Project: LIVE UNITED
Judges Bio's

Brenda Jones has lived in Northwest Arkansas most of her life, graduating from the University of Arkansas with a degree in Retail Marketing. Brenda has worked in retail and corporate buying for many years. Married to Greg Jones for almost 24 years, she has three children, Clancy 18 years, Chloe 15 years, and Ramsey 13 years. Brenda is involved with many groups and fundraisers, particularly children's charities, including the United Way and Pel's Pals Foundation. Brenda and her family have committed to living united in Northwest Arkansas by volunteering their time, energy and resources to make our community a better place for children to live.

Dean Redford joined Liberty Bank of Arkansas in February 2009 as the Northwest Arkansas Regional Sales Coordinator. He spent the past 36 years in retail with JC Penney, and was store manager for the Northwest Arkansas Mall location from 1994 until he retired this past January. Dean has been involved with the Apparel Studies advisory board at the University of Arkansas where he has taught Fashion Merchandising. He also has been actively involved in the community, and has served as a past member of the Board of Directors for the United Way.

Mason Hiba is the owner of Masons and has been in retail for 17 years. Mr. Hiba is always on the forefront of fashion and is involved with all of the buying for Masons. One of his greatest qualities is his love for giving back to the community.