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**NEWS RELEASE
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Mike Duke Encourages Community Leaders to Support Community, United Way

Rogers, ARK – At a breakfast for CEO’s and other community leaders in Northwest Arkansas today, Mike Duke, President & CEO for Walmart spoke about the importance of supporting your community even when economic times are tough.

The crowd of approximately 175 people listened as Duke spoke about the need to support United Way in the difficult economy, how Walmart’s business priorities align with United Way’s mission and Walmart’s culture of giving back locally. On a personal level, Duke shared a story about his involvement in the community, and why he and his family have been proud supporters of United Way over the years.

“The need is greater,” Duke said about the difficult economy, “but for those that provide for the need, the strains are even greater.”

Duke pointed out that right here in Northwest Arkansas we have more than 1,200 people each night who have no where to call home; 30,000 children are on the area’s free and reduced lunch program and many of those are going hungry at night and on the weekends; and as many as 6,900 people are not claiming more than \$12 million in Earned Income Tax Credits that could increase their financial stability.

Duke issued a call to action for those in the audience, “This is a difficult time. But this is not a time to step back from our priorities. It is about giving, not just dollars, but time and commitment.”

During the event, 2010 United Way Campaign Chair Rich Kley, talked about how people can work to give, advocate and volunteer with United Way around the areas individuals care about most. United Ways goals going forward will be more than just monetary, but also focused on the needs, and what resources – whether dollars, partnerships, or time – are necessary to address those needs to continue making our community stronger.

Additional speakers, Jay Howard, CEO of I.O. Metro and Gary Gatton, Sr. Vice President for Kellogg’s Walmart team talked about how supporting United Way in both traditional and non-traditional ways are beneficial, not only for a company, but for the community.

Jay Howard described I.O. Metro’s involvement over the past year with United Way of Northwest Arkansas. He focused on utilizing his company’s strengths in order to support an organization like United Way. From sponsoring the Young Leaders Society to hosting a preview event prior to the Parade of Homes to raise money – I.O. Metro has taken a non-traditional route in supporting their community.



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Gary Gatton, while new to Northwest Arkansas, is a long-time Kellogg's employee, and is familiar with their corporate commitment to United Way. Gatton spoke about the local Kellogg's team's efforts to increase their giving last year, resulting in an increase of more than 406 percent over the previous year.

A video presentation illustrating what Northwest Arkansas would look like if we were a community of just 100 people facing the same issues we face today. Some of the statistics highlighted by the video include:

- 12 people would be on food stamps, six of those children
- 18 people receive the Earned Income Tax Credit helping to increase their income, 4 more are eligible, but don't know they qualify
- 7 children are going hungry on weekends and during the summer

The video concluded by asking people how they will LIVE UNITED by giving, advocating or volunteering in Northwest Arkansas.

United Way of Northwest Arkansas will officially kick off its major fundraising push of the year on September 1 with a kickoff event at Arvest Ballpark. More details about this event will be available soon, but it will be an opportunity for everyone in the community to celebrate each other and the efforts they will put forth in making our community better in the years to come.

For more information on any of today's speakers, or the event, please contact Brooke Benoit at 479-750-1221 or via e-mail at bbenoit@unitedwaynwa.org.

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 help ensure our vision of having a LIVE UNITED story from every voice. For more information about how to Live United, please visit our website at www.unitedwaynwa.org.

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