



For Immediate Release

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United Way Thomas Fire Fund Gets Foundation, Corporate and Individual Support from Across the Country and Locally—\$2.25 Million to Date

Ventura and Santa Barbara, CA, Dec. 19, 2017 – In response to an outpouring of support, United Way of Santa Barbara County and United Way of Ventura County have established a joint fund to directly support those individuals and families affected by the fire in both counties—The United Way Thomas Fire Fund. Major donations have come in from local and national businesses, foundations, and individuals. To date, nearly \$2.3 million has been raised. One-hundred percent of the donations will support those in communities affected by the wildfires.

Donations include \$400,000 from Annenberg Foundation, \$350,000 from Kaiser Permanente, \$250,000 from JPMorgan Chase, \$200,000 from Amgen, \$200,000 from Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, \$100,000 from SoCalGas and \$25,000 from Community West Bank.

“We are incredibly grateful that corporations, organizations and individuals are stepping up and recognizing the huge financial toll that this unprecedented fire has had on hundreds of thousands of people in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. It’s even more heartening when local organizations pitch in because this is their community and they want to support it,” said Eric Harrison, CEO, United Way of Ventura County and Steve Ortiz, CEO, United Way of Santa Barbara County, in a joint statement.

How to give:

- Online at www.unitedwaythomasfirefund.org
- By texting UWVC to 41444
- By phone or mail: call (805) 485-6288 or checks may be sent to the United Way office at 702 County Square Drive, Suite 100, Ventura, CA 93003. Please write “Thomas Fire Fund” in the memo.

Local community partners determined that the United Way organizations, in both counties, are uniquely positioned and qualified to manage the disaster fund, accept contributions, make distributions, promote the fund and provide a report to the community on how the funds were used.

The massive Thomas Fire, now second largest in California history, continues to burn in both Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. To date, the fire has destroyed more than 1,000 structures and is threatening thousands more. Over 100,000 residents have had to evacuate their homes in both counties. Over 270,000 acres have burned with current containment at 50 percent.

United Way of Ventura County

In the aftermath of a disaster, United Way's Ventura County Volunteer Center will serve as an online, call, and walk-in center for spontaneous volunteers. The Volunteer Center will register

volunteers and coordinate with the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services to place them where they can do the most good for the community. 2-1-1 Ventura County will also be available 24/7 to register volunteers, answer questions, and connect those in need with the resources to help them.

United Way of Santa Barbara County

United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC) has the unique and positive vision that “in our community, everyone has a hopeful future.” Since 1923, UWSBC has served Santa Barbara County community through funding, volunteer development, and by utilizing its own unique initiatives that involve dozens of local non-profit and public sector agencies. UWSBC’s local community driven Power of Partnership™ priorities help children, families & seniors with a focus on Education, Income and Health.

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