



United Way of  
Ventura County



United Way  
of Santa Barbara County

For Immediate Release

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## 7-year-old Raises \$350 from Cocoa Stand for Thomas Fire Victims



*Grayson Knowles and her little brother Rex worked together to raise \$350 at their cocoa stand for those impacted by the Thomas Fire.*

**Ventura and Santa Barbara, CA, Dec. 28, 2017** – Wanting to help those impacted by what is now the largest wildfire in California history, a 7-year-old Lompoc girl donated \$350 she raised from a cocoa stand to the United Way Thomas Fire Fund.

Grayson Knowles along with her family presented the check at the offices of the United Way of Santa Barbara County, which has partnered with the United Way of Ventura County to establish the fund for all of those impacted by the fire. Although she lives dozens of miles from the blaze, Grayson could still see the toll the fire was taking through the ash and smoke that was filling her own town and wanted to help.

“We were driving and out of the blue, she told her grandma and I that she wanted to do a hot cocoa stand for the Thomas Fire,” Grayson’s mother Meredith Knowles said.

The poor air quality from the fire shut down Grayson’s school for winter break early, so she set up her stand with the help of her little brother Rex.

“We’re super proud of her for thinking of others and being so eager to help!” said Meredith.

One-hundred percent of the donations to the United Way Thomas Fire fund will support those in communities affected by the wildfires. To date, more than \$2.25 million has been collected.

How to give:

- Online at [www.unitedwaythomasfirefund.org](http://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.

### **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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