



For Immediate Release

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‘Round Up’ Fundraiser at Home Improvement Center to Support United Way Thomas Fire Fund

Customers can round up purchases to nearest dollar.

Ventura and Santa Barbara, CA, Jan. XX, 2018 – With impacts from the Thomas Fire Fund still being felt, Santa Barbara Home Improvement Center is now giving shoppers the option to round up their purchases to the nearest dollar to benefit the United Way Thomas Fire Fund. Home Improvement Center will also gladly accept larger donations.

Home Improvement Center, 415 E Gutierrez St, Santa Barbara, held “Round Up” campaigns for several community organizations throughout 2017, and the first of 2018 holds a special meaning for store owner Gary Simpson. He is one of the many Central Coast residents whose home was burned in the Thomas Fire, the largest in state history.

“In solidarity with everyone who has lost their home and businesses that have been left struggling, it’s a pleasure to support the United Way Thomas Fire Fund,” said Simpson. “I’ve been astounded by the generosity of our customers, and I know this is a great cause we can all get behind.”

One-hundred percent of the donations to the United Way Thomas Fire fund – established by United Way of Santa Barbara County and United Way of Ventura County -- will support those in communities affected by the wildfires. To date, more than \$2.5 million has been collected.

“Spread of the fire has thankfully slowed greatly, but people throughout our community will be fighting its impacts for years,” said Steve Ortiz, United Way of Santa Barbara County President & CEO. “We’re thankful that Gary and Home Improvement Center recognize this need and have generously stepped in to help everyone affected move forward.”

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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