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United Way of North Central New Mexico Celebrates 90 Years of Caring

Albuquerque, NM – United Way of North Central New Mexico (UWNCNM) will kick off its celebration of its long history in New Mexico with a news conference on March 12, 2024. For 90 years, United Way has been a caring connector that collaborates with like-minded individuals, businesses and nonprofits to make a transformative impact in the five-county area it serves.

The announcement will be at 1 p.m. at Explora, 1701 Mountain Rd NW in Albuquerque, following UWNCNM's Annual Meeting. Several speakers will provide information about the history of the organization, which was founded in 1934 as the Community Chest.

“For 90 years, United Way has worked with our whole community to affect positive change,” said Rodney Prunty, President and CEO of United Way of North Central New Mexico. “The impact from the many gifts and the community’s participation has meant that our neighbors have had food on their tables, clothes for their children, opportunities to excel in their educations, and help to build a better future for themselves and their families.”

Speaking will be Rodney Prunty; Ari Herring of Rio Grande Food Project, whose grandfather led the founding of the organization; and Robin Divine, CEO of TriCore, who is an honorary Co-Chair of the 90th Anniversary Campaign.

UWNCNM was founded as the Community Chest in Albuquerque in 1934, when 100 Albuquerqueans gathered and committed to raising money to assist the community’s charities.

In its 90 years, United Way has raised more than \$636,218,254 to support organizations large and small that work to ensure all people have the opportunity to thrive. The organization has also developed services that provide access to resources including through the 211 helpline, the Family Advocacy Center, Tax Help New Mexico and Ride United in Santa Fe County.

UWNCNM’s community impact efforts have fostered many cross-sector partnerships that help ensure we are connecting with others who also have our community at heart. Through its community impact work, UWNCNM is focused on helping families build strong foundations and giving children the support they need to be successful today in school and tomorrow in the workforce.

Some noteworthy highlights from the organization's history include:

- The first campaign slogan was “Put all your eggs in one basket.”
- In 1944, \$121,000 was raised and distributed to 14 agencies under the campaign slogan “Come On, Contribute!”
- In the 1950s, Community Chest volunteers went door-to-door collecting “Red Feather Dollars” with a “Light Up Albuquerque” campaign. Those who wished to contribute left their porch lights on and roving teams would travel between homes to collect donations.
- In 1969, the call for support of the United Community Fund was “Sock it to the UCF!”
- By 1980, the then-United Way of Greater Albuquerque expanded its support to four counties. That recently changed, when Santa Fe was included, in 2022.
- Mission: Graduate was launched 2013 and Mission: Families started in 2018; these efforts are now combined as Rising Together.

For more on the history of the organization, information about special events, and more, visit www.uwncnm.org/90th-celebration

United Way of North Central New Mexico, founded in 1934, serves a five-county region. UWNCNM brings together donors, businesses, nonprofits, government and others to create better solutions to our community's challenges. Our programs and donor dollars ensure that individuals and families in north central New Mexico have the opportunity to achieve potential through education, that they are healthy and safe, are financially stable and live life with dignity. To learn more, visit www.uwncnm.org or call 505-247-3671.