

Business Plan Executive Summary April 2008

The New United Way— Building a better future through the *Power of Partnership*™!

Background

Right here, right now, our community finds itself in a time of both unprecedented change and considerable opportunity. **By all accounts, as we look to the near future, our community will be faced with some enormous challenges:** shifting demographics and a greater percentage and number of local people in poverty; affordable housing issues; transportation issues; a reduction in government funds spent on social services; greater numbers of seniors needing services; the academic achievement gap between Latino and White children; the shifting nature and needs of local businesses; gang violence; reduced resources for our school districts; the retirement of many of our community's long-time leaders; the growth of competition among social service providers; and the growing complexity of many of the issues and possible solutions confronting our citizens.

At the same time, this is a moment of far-reaching potential. Nonprofit organizations are creating more and more effective partnerships; grant makers are aligning to address common goals; our community has the capacity to unite and support important projects, e.g. simultaneously funding the Cottage Hospital and Granada Performing Arts Center campaigns while maintaining funding for vital nonprofit programs; there is a much greater emphasis on achieving real measurable progress; and for the first time, members of every sector of our community are willing to meet to set common goals to achieve measurable outcomes for the future.

The New United Way—Meeting the Challenge

United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC) believes that for the local community to successfully address the difficult challenges that lie ahead and to take advantage of the opportunities, we must do so collaboratively and with a heightened focus. No longer can our community's organizations and individuals work alone or solely in their specialty area if we want to make real progress towards vital community goals.

UWSBC believes that to build a stronger community, we must mobilize the strengths of our individuals, families, associations, organizations, and institutions in new and more effective ways to improve people's lives. When we act together, we can begin to address the root causes that give rise to many current problems. Other communities around the country have created innovative ways to share a vision for the future and set goals for community-wide action. The results—demonstrable improvements to longstanding community issues. Now is the time for our community to take advantage of our strengths and seize this opportunity to make sustainable progress towards the most compelling issues we have in common. UWSBC finds itself in the unique position to help make this happen. **With UWSBC leading the way, our community can and will create a positive future for our children, families, seniors, and you!**

Strategic Plan

Recognizing the challenges and opportunities in the local environment, United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC) began a strategic planning process in 2005 to plan for the changes that would be needed if we were going to strengthen our capacity to better create meaningful improvements in people's lives. As part of this process, we convened community meetings and focus groups, held listening sessions, and received survey feedback from thousands of donors, stakeholders, and community leaders as well as hundreds of organizations such as businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, local school districts, and foundations.

We asked them some important questions: What does the future of our community look like? What does the community need? How can UWSBC best serve the community? What are UWSBC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats? How can UWSBC build on past and current strengths and successes to lead the way into this complex future? Can UWSBC sustain our old business model given the changing economic landscape? What will our donors support? How can we further strengthen the community's nonprofit and local social service infrastructure? What issues are important to people? How can we attract more resources and focus them on vital issues? What should UWSBC focus on in the future?

As a result of their feedback, our Board and staff came to better understand that UWSBC's true value resides in the *Power of Partnership*[™]—United Way's ability to deliver more powerful results by bringing together diverse partners and resources to focus on crucial issues. In 2007, the UWSBC Board of Directors approved a new Strategic Plan incorporating this approach into our new direction.

UWSBC's new Mission Statement reflects this shift in direction: **“Right here, right now, with the *Power of Partnership*[™], we are improving lives for children, families, seniors, and you!”** UWSBC's Vision, **“In our community, everyone has a hopeful future,”** reflects our aspirational focus. Our supporters also helped to identify the core values we exemplify in our work: Caring, Innovative, Trustworthy, and Leadership.

Key Findings & Opportunities

During the strategic planning process, we discovered some key findings:

- Economic changes in the community, as well as shifting donors' priorities, have rendered UWSBC's old business model less effective as evidenced by decreasing workplace fundraising results and the decreasing numbers and average size of workplaces.
- UWSBC donors prefer our focus of working in partnerships to create solutions.
- There is a greater willingness in the past few years throughout the community's sectors to join together to focus on pressing community issues.
- Our community has the true potential to make sustainable improvements to longstanding community problems.
- UWSBC's value is much more than simply the dollars we raise, but rather the ability to create and utilize our relationships, expertise, and reputation to leverage greater results.
- Without making strategic changes, UWSBC would become less effective in helping the community to improve its future.

- Through the *Power of Partnership*[™], UWSBC has been able to attract and coordinate significant resources from non-traditional funding partners such as foundations.
- UWSBC was identified by more than one hundred organizations – nonprofits, businesses, schools, foundations, etc. – as the local organization best suited to bring our community together and lead the way as we address both present and future challenges.

History & Credentials

UWSBC's current transformation is not taking place in an historical vacuum. Since 1923, United Way of Santa Barbara County has been bringing resources together to solve a wide variety of health and human service needs. However, the way we achieve these results has continually shifted to meet the needs of the community. For the past 30 years, UWSBC has been in the process of gradually transforming itself from a traditional United Way organization primarily focused on workplace fundraising and grant making into a community solutions provider—one that focuses on bringing people, organizations, ideas, and resources together in partnerships to align efforts to improve longstanding social issues.

In order to find innovative solutions to these pressing issues, United Way has taken the lead in collaborating and partnering with other organizations and fostering public/private partnerships. Since the 1970's, we have created, led, directed, or participated in more than 50 partnerships, creating an unrivaled expertise in the art of collaboration. Moreover, we created the Linkages Funding program in 1994 to foster innovative start-up collaborations and sustain effective ongoing partnerships. Through that program, we have trained dozens of local nonprofit organizations in the craft of successful partnering.

Over this time, we have recognized that targeted partnering with a specific goal, outcome, and focus is UWSBC's most effective and efficient mechanism for producing results. Our Fun in the Sun program and Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes are both a case in point. Evaluations of both of these programs have revealed startling positive increases in the behaviors, attitudes, and skills children need in order to succeed. Recognizing the power of these partnerships to create meaningful improvements in people's lives, UWSBC now directs more than 60% of its current unrestricted funding to partnership projects. Currently, UWSBC participates in more than 28 collaborative projects. The *Power of Partnership*[™] has now become the chief driver of how UWSBC is pursuing the fulfillment of its organizational mission.

Impact on United Way of Santa Barbara County's reputation and ability to deliver meaningful results

As part of the strategic planning process, UWSBC began communicating and vetting the *Power of Partnership* message to the community. The response has been nothing short of remarkable. In our annual campaign, donors have recognized the impact and value of the *Power of Partnership*[™] projects. For example, the percentage of gifts being designated away from UWSBC to other local and national charities has remained between at 25% while the average for California United Ways is more than 55%. We have been attracting more and more volunteers to key United Way projects. Last year, approximately 700 volunteers helped mentor Fun in the Sun children in the Lunch Bunch program—an increase of 40% from the previous year. There are an

increasing number of diverse organizations who want to partner with us from a broad cross section of community sectors including nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, schools, service clubs, etc. Local foundations have sought out UWSBC on their own to join forces with us and invest in our projects. In fact, despite some recent decreases in UWSBC's annual fundraising campaigns, the 2006/07 fiscal year ended with UWSBC receiving more total revenue and having more resources under management than ever in local history—all during a time frame that has seen the vast majority of California United Ways organizations losing revenue.

If history is an indicator of future trends, United Way of Santa Barbara County's reputation and ability to attract resources and partners will continue to grow as we implement the strategic plan and deliver more meaningful results.

Results & Benefits of the *Power of Partnership*™

The implementation of our new strategic direction will result in significant benefits for both the community as a whole and for United Way of Santa Barbara County.

Through *Power of Partnership*™ activities, UWSBC will mobilize and enhance our communities' capacity to exert a greater influence on community conditions in order to deliver more powerful results. Through our cooperative effort, we will identify the improvements needed in systems and current activities and then develop and promote partnerships to achieve better outcomes.

We have conducted extensive research on other United Way organizations and communities who have implemented a similar direction. Evaluations of their community change efforts have shown some significant benefits including:

- Measurable progress on longstanding community issues.
- Increased awareness of issues (e.g., business leaders have a shared understanding of the extent and causes of homelessness and how it effects their community).
- Changes in community attitudes (e.g., residents of a neighborhood voice their disapproval of violent child discipline).
- Changes in the practices of organizations, including human service providers (e.g., businesses provide new internship and apprenticeship opportunities for youth; local media convey the messages of an initiative media campaign; service providers improve accessibility—geographic, financial, cultural, temporal—or quality of service).
- Improved coordination between organizations and systems (e.g., non-profit and public providers of senior health services have formal interagency agreements; memorandums of understanding; joint planning; shared responsibility for helping seniors in the community maintain an independent lifestyle).
- More focused policies (e.g., city agencies adopt new regulations/protocols that make it easier to track cases of domestic violence).
- More alignment in community resource allocation (e.g., the child welfare system allocates/distributes funds or other resources differently; private investors join together to support the efforts of a child abuse initiative).

How will United Way create these benefits?

To guide efforts to create these results and benefits, UWSBC has developed four organizational goals:

1. Vision/Mission Goal:
Sustain and expand as the *Power of Partnership*TM leader for the communities that we serve.
2. Resource Development Goal:
Seek and develop resources for the purpose of meeting the requirements of our Vision and Mission.
3. Legacy Goal:
Secure the *Power of Partnership*TM through long-term committed volunteer and staff leadership, resources, and endowment.
4. Capacity Goal:
Build quality-based capacity to deliver the *Power of Partnership*TM.

We will create these benefits and reach our goals by:

- Focusing on both short and long-term results.
- Implementing a community engagement, planning, and implementation process—the *Power of Partnership*TM Initiative.
- Helping set and engage others in priorities and community goals.
- Developing long-term volunteer involvement strategies and involving volunteers in every aspect of our work.
- Develop a sustainable plan to recruit, train, and retain UWSBC's staff.
- Conducting best practice research on creating real results and implementing the most effective, proven strategies.
- Expanding the existing, highly effective *Power of Partnership*TM initiatives like Fun in the Sun and the Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes to serve greater numbers of people in need.
- Building a representative range of partners from all sectors.
- Acting with a proactive, strength-based focus rather than on a reactive needs or gaps-in-service focus.
- More clearly articulate and communicate UWSBC's unique value.
- Attracting and leveraging greater resources (e.g. financial, expertise, volunteers).
- Building focused endowment funds so that we can sustain our efforts.
- Focusing community resources and activities on targeted goals.
- Analyzing local data on community conditions, assets, and progress towards goals.
- Raising awareness of pressing issues and reporting on results.
- Promoting collaboration.
- Advocating for policy change -- public/private/nonprofit.
- Linking donors' and funding partners' philanthropic goals with related issues and strategies.

Capacity & Operational Growth

To realize the benefits mentioned above and to implement the necessary strategies to achieve those benefits, United Way of Santa Barbara County will necessarily have to grow our capacity and operational infrastructure. Some of this growth has already been implemented. Other steps will be staggered over the next several years as we ramp up efforts and attract additional resources.

Some of the key steps already taken over the past two years to implement our strategic plan are:

- Assigned United Way's Special Projects Director to a staff leadership role with the *Power of Partnership*[™] Initiative (POPI).
- Focused our marketing and communication efforts on the *Power of Partnership*[™] message.
- Hired and trained Program Coordinators for the Fun in the Sun (FITS), Building Strengths in Young People, and volunteersbc.org initiatives.
- Hired and trained administrative staff to support the Community Impact Dept. and POPI.
- Hired a Community Impact Director and Community Impact Manager to direct our programmatic activities, fund distribution system, and grant writing activities.
- Retained a PR Firm that specializes in nonprofits to help promote key initiatives and the new direction.
- Outsourced much of United Way's Human Resources activities.

Over the next 3 years, the full implementation of the plan will require substantive additional growth in multiple areas of our organization—all of which are dependent upon receiving additional funding. Some of the steps we will need to take are:

- Hire and train additional POPI support staff.
- Hire and train additional staff for the Fun in the Sun (FITS) and Building Strengths in Young People initiatives as those programs grow.
- Hire and train additional staff for the Leadership, Workplace, and Endowment departments to increase resource development and provide longer term sustainability.
- Hire and train an additional support person for the Finance department due to increased revenues and the increased requirements of funders and the government.
- Hire two program specialists to serve as Community Impact Council managers.
- Hire a part-time data specialist to set up tracking for community-wide outcomes activities.
- Rent additional office space.
- Implement a revised and expanded financial reporting system to allow for program reporting by fund, program, location, multiple fiscal years, and dozens of other criteria.

Financial Projections

Delivering the results and benefits outlined in this plan will require increased financial resources. Given the response from UWSBC donors, key volunteers, philanthropists, and community funders to our recent successes, United Way recognizes that the community is ready to invest in real results. In that accord, we have developed a financial forecast and resource development plan to create the short and long-term sustainability needed for UWSBC to implement the strategic plan.

For the fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10, UWSBC estimates it will need a total of \$300,000 in additional revenues focused on increasing our organizational capacity to deliver the *Power of Partnership*[™] Initiative and current Community Impact Initiatives such as Fun in the Sun, the Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes, Building Strengths in Young People, KinderBooster, and additional Days of Caring. To meet this need, UWSBC will launch the “Bridge to Success” campaign. This fundraising campaign will focus on raising dollars over and above UWSBC’s Annual Campaign from 5/1/2008 – 6/30/2009.

The Bridge to Success campaign will focus on raising additional funds from three groups:

1. Key current supporters
 - a. UWSBC’s Board of Directors.
 - b. Current Alexis de Tocqueville (\$10,000+) and Leadership Circle (\$1,200+) donors.
2. Prospective high-net worth donors who are identified as having an interest in these goals and outcomes.
3. Local, regional, and national foundations

To continue to meet the increased expectations of the Strategic Plan in the succeeding years, United Way will be launching the “Dare to Dream” campaign. This long-term campaign will allow for the continued sustainability of the *Power of Partnership*[™] Agenda. United Way has already received a professional fund raising organization’s proposal for this phase.

Conclusion

Imagine a community where we have actually erased the academic achievement gap between children of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Or broken the cycle of poverty so that all families are able to provide a healthy, nurturing environment for their children. Or all of our seniors are active and engaged to the best of their potential and leading safe lives while avoiding the threats of hunger, isolation, and institutionalization.

United Way of Santa Barbara County has done just that—imagined the future... and created a strategic plan to help make real progress towards these goals. Using our strengths as a community building organization, partnership leader, resource provider, and volunteering champion, United Way is poised to tackle some of the pressing issues that give rise to many of our community’s most vital issues.

United Way cannot do it alone. But it can be done. Together, through the *Power of Partnership*[™], our community can and will create a more hopeful future for children, families, seniors, and you!