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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAPPAHANNOCK UNITED WAY READY TO CHANGE THE STORY IN OUR COMMUNITY

August 18, 2015 – Fredericksburg, VA – Do you remember reading the “Choose Your Own Adventure” books as a kid? You’d get to a pivotal point in the story and then decide which path you’d like to take by turning to a specific page. You had the ability to change the story.

Today, Rappahannock United Way (RUW) officially kicked off its 2015 Annual Giving Campaign at the Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center with one objective in mind: changing the story in the lives of those in need in our community. By giving to Rappahannock United Way, you can help change the story from a negative outcome to a positive outcome in the lives of those in need right here in our own backyard.

Over 160 members of the Greater Fredericksburg community, representing over 25 local companies and nonprofit organizations across our region attended the event. “Today we are encouraging individuals and companies to answer one of our calls to action: GIVE,” said Ron Branscome, Executive Director of Rappahannock Area Community Services Board and Chairman of the RUW Board of Directors. “Today we hope to inspire you, encourage you, and motivate you to continue to change the story for those individuals and families living in poverty.”

Creating long-lasting change in our community cannot be done alone, explained RUW 2015 Campaign Committee Chairman, Fred Rankin as he announced the 2015 fundraising goal of \$3,165,000. “For over 75 years, RUW has been a vital part of our community and is committed to making an impact,” said Rankin. We cannot achieve this impact alone. We must LIVE UNITED and be part of the change. By working together, we can accomplish more than any single group can on its own.”

Rankin then recognized all attendees who have given to United Way in the past. All attendees in the room had contributed to United Way in the past. Four attendees had contributed to

United Way for 40 years or more. Rankin also gave special recognition to GEICO, who raised over \$1 million during the 2014 campaign. "We are honored they are our partner," Rankin said.

Attendees were able to preview four campaign videos that will be shown throughout the campaign season. The personal stories captured in these videos show how RUW funds programs in our community that help more households emerge from poverty and achieve greater financial stability by focusing on Education, Income, Health and Basic Needs.

The audience also listened to a "Choose Your Own Adventure" story about a local man who was helped by 9 Rappahannock United Way funded programs throughout the course of his life. RUW President Janel Donohue reminded the crowd that giving to Rappahannock United Way helps support a variety of local programs in our community that touched the lives of more than 25,000 local people last year alone.

"By giving to Rappahannock United Way, you don't have to choose just one organization that can help people in need in our community," said Donohue. "When you give to Rappahannock United Way you are able to help thousands of local individuals and change the story in the lives of those in need. Will you help us change the story?" All attendees in the room enthusiastically stood to confirm their support in encouraging our community to give to the 2015 Rappahannock United Way Campaign.

It is easy to give to Rappahannock United Way:

You can give online at <http://www.rappahannockunitedway.org/> and click on the "DONATE NOW" button.

You can mail a check to: Rappahannock United Way, 3310 Shannon Park Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408, ATTN: Resource Development.

You can give during your workplace campaign through payroll deduction. If you're interested in running a workplace campaign, please contact Mary McFarland today at 540-373-0041 x.304 or mmcfarland@rappahannockunitedway.org for details.

About Rappahannock United Way

Founded in 1939, Rappahannock United Way is a local nonprofit organization serving Fredericksburg, Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania and Stafford. Rappahannock United Way's mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community. Rappahannock United Way's goal is to have more households emerge from poverty and achieve greater financial stability by focusing on the three building blocks for a better life: Education, Income and Health.

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