

News Release

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Youth United Way Raises Record Funds with Annual “Empty Bowls” Dinner Stillwater, Minn. – April 7, 2009

Local youth served a simple meal of soup, bread, and water as a powerful reminder of hunger in their community at the “Empty Bowls Dinner,” held on March 3, 2009. **Youth United Way of Washington County-East** hosted the annual event to raise funds for and awareness of hunger by serving bowls of fine quality soup from local restaurants. Each guest also had the opportunity to select an empty bowl, crafted by local artists, to take home as a reminder of hunger in their community. The meal, and the accompanying art silent auction, raised over \$3,000— surpassing the amount raised in previous years.

Youth United Way of Washington County-East is a unique service and leadership program for youth in grades 8-12 in Washington County. Youth United Way is an initiative of United Way of Washington County-East, which serves the cities of Stillwater, Lake Elmo, Grant, Afton, Marine on St. Croix and parts of Woodbury. In 2008, this Youth United Way was honored by Community Volunteer Services and the Washington County Board of Commissioners with the *Outstanding Group Award for Excellence in Volunteering*.

Area restaurants participating in this year’s event included: the Lake Elmo Inn, Sal’s, Marx Wine Bar & Bistro, Mai Thai, Water Street Inn, Grand Pizza & Grill, Bread Art, Fresh Field’s, Acapulco, and The Madcapper. Notable artists from local galleries such as Dyann Myers, Dick Morse, Warren Mckenzie, Joe Samuelson, James Harvieux, Randy Raduenz, and Season’s of St. Croix all helped by donating fine pieces of art and pottery.

Proceeds from the meal totaled \$2200 and were presented to the Valley Outreach Food shelf in Stillwater. These essential funds will enable the local food shelf to purchase large quantities of food needed to help feed the growing number of area residents seeking food assistance.

Proceeds from the silent auction were combined with funds from other youth fundraisers and will be distributed to support selected non-profit programs that directly benefit local youth. In early April, members of Youth United Way will review grant proposals submitted by area non-profits, and make funding decisions.

For more information regarding Youth United Way of Washington County-East, to get involved, or to support this effort, please call the United Way of Washington County-East, at 651-439-3838 or visit our website at www.uwwce.org.