**United Way of Kern County (UW Kern)**

**And Its Role in the Local Fight Against Homelessness and Hunger**

**WORKING INTEGRALLY WITH THE KERN COUNTY HOMELESS COLLABORATIVE**

* ***UW Kern is the Fiscal Agent of the Kern County Homeless Collaborative (KCHC),*** which is made up of dozens of nonprofit homeless service providers, faith-based organizations, advocacy groups, government agencies, businesses and private persons working together to address the needs of Kern’s homeless and at-risk families and individuals.
* With a full-time Homelessness Project Manager on staff, UW Kern is helping the KCHC to achieve its mission: ***To put an end to homelessness in Kern County through collaborative planning and action.***

Recent KCHC accomplishments include:

* Conducting U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated countywide counts of the homeless in 2007, 2009 and 2011. Each ***Kern County Homeless Census*** helps to spot trends and identify needs among the local homeless community.
* Drafting and implementing ***“Home First! Kern County’s 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness,”*** which Bakersfield Mayor Harvey Hall presented to the community in 2008.
* Ensuring the signing by the Kern County Board of Supervisors in 2009 of Administrative Bulletin 29 (AB-29), whereby HUD-funded local programs must work to prevent the discharge into homelessness of individuals exiting hospitals, mental health facilities, foster care or other youth facilities, or correctional programs and institutions.
* Launching a public service announcement campaign, ***“The Faces of Homelessness,”*** in 2010, to erase stigma and raise awareness about homelessness. These PSAs were aired on local television and continue to be available online (<http://www.facebook.com/fohkern>).
* ***Bringing in more than $3 million in HUD funding to Kern County this year*** for the purpose of housing the homeless and providing supportive services to help them get off the streets and achieve long-term self-sufficiency.

 **STRATEGIC GRANT MAKING**

* ***UW Kern invests $250,000 annually, on average, in the fight against homelessness and hunger.*** Working with food banks, emergency homeless shelters, domestic violence service providers, community resource centers, and faith-based groups in every corner of our county, UW Kern is helping to reduce homelessness and food insecurity through strategic grant making.

**ADMINISTERING FEMA’S EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER PROGRAM LOCALLY**

* ***UW Kern also administers FEMA’s Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EF&SP) locally.*** This program aims to help the homeless—as well as those experiencing a financial crisis—with the basic needs of emergency shelter, temporary lodging, warm meals and groceries, and one-time rent/mortgage and utilities assistance. ***This year, UW Kern’s EF&SP work ensured an infusion of* *$560,400*** in FEMA funding to 12 local partners, to help them respond to the financial emergencies of countless Kern families in their care.