

NEWS RELEASE

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#Unite419 Raises over \$20,000 for United Way Emergency Response Fund

[TOLEDO, OH] – On Sunday, April 19, Buckeye Broadband brought media outlets across the greater Toledo area together for a new campaign entitled, “#Unite419,” which had the goal of spreading positive, uplifting stories as the community battles the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The call-to-action for this campaign was for residents to donate to United Way of Greater Toledo's (UWGT) Emergency Response Fund, which will deliver direct-funding to community-based organizations, in the health and human services space, who are managing unprecedented numbers of clients as layoffs and furloughs continue.

“We are so proud to announce that the #Unite419 campaign raised \$20,367 for United Way’s Emergency Response Fund,” said LeAnne Markins, BCSN/BCAN market manager and the individual who developed the campaign.

“On behalf of all the media partners, I want to thank the community for their overwhelming response to this campaign. The success of #Unite419 is a testament to the amazing people that live and work in our area, never hesitating to help others in time of need. Truly incredible,” stated Markins.

April 19 is known as “419 Day,” which is a regional celebration of all things local. Full restaurants, bars and local shopping stores, as well as celebratory gatherings are a common site for the day. But, with ongoing social distancing and continued business closures, #Unite419’s objective was to showcase the many positive things still occurring, despite COVID-19.

Participating media partners were 13abc, WTOL 11, Fox 36, NBC24, iHeart Radio, Cumulus Media, The Blade, Buckeye Broadband, BCSN and BCAN.

“I cannot tell you how proud we are of this amazing effort. These dollars will go on to help so many in our community during this incredibly difficult time,” said Wendy Pestrue, president & CEO of UWGT.

“Buckeye Broadband has been such a strong, long-standing partner of United Way. We were thrilled when LeAnne came to us with this innovative idea and, as always, we are amazed by the community’s resounding reply to help,” said Pestrue.

UWGT’s Emergency Response Fund was shortly founded after COVID-19 began to impact the region. The goal of the Emergency Response Fund is to address ongoing, emerging community needs as COVID-19 continues to impact every corner of UWGT’s three-county footprint (Lucas, Wood and Ottawa County).

The fund has already raised over \$300,000 due to United Way’s incredibly generous individual and corporate donors.

UWGT hopes to initially invest \$100,000 in total to tackle food insecurity, as pantries and meal service entities manage record figures of those seeking nutrition resources. Grant applications for the Emergency Response Fund are now open and will close on Monday, April 27. Community-based organizations can apply at UnitedWayToledo.org/EmergencyFund. Grants will vary in quantity and size based on the request outlined in the application, with singular grants being capped at \$25,000.

If individuals would like to contribute to the Emergency Response Fund, they can visit UnitedWayToledo.org/Donate.

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