



**United Neighborhood Centers
of Northeastern Pennsylvania**
www.uncnepa.org

Contact:

Michelle Williams
Communications Coordinator
(570) 346-0759 ext. 104
mwilliams@uncnepa.org

For Immediate Release:

November 16, 2009

United Neighborhood Centers' Thanksgiving Program Struggles to Meet Need
Feed-A-Friend Food Collection Levels Low Compared to Recent Years

Scranton, PA – Each year at this time, UNC staff begin making their rounds to the Feed-A-Friend donation sites throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania hoping to pick-up the donated canned goods and trimmings necessary to provide Thanksgiving Food baskets to local families in need. However, this year, as the program marks its 30th anniversary and staff begins the collection process they are finding that more and more of the barrels aren't as full as they expected. The agency has also found that monetary donations are down this year as well, and with the Thanksgiving Food Basket distribution just one week away, UNC fears it will be unable to meet the community need.

Registration for the Thanksgiving Food Basket program has already reached 1,189 families, and the agency expects this number to increase to approximately 2,000 before the registration period ends. While this number has remained consistent with previous years, the agency's main concern is this year's decrease in community donations.

“One of our goals is to be able to serve every family that wishes to receive a Thanksgiving basket this year, however, without an increase in donations, that may not be possible,” said Michael Hanley, UNC Executive Director. “This community has always been remarkable in helping to assist those less fortunate, particularly during the holiday season. We're asking now that the community makes every effort to participate by dropping a donation at a Feed-A-Friend location site. Whether its one canned good, or multiple items, every little bit helps.”

Community members can also choose to assist through monetary donations. This assistance is used to purchase the perishable portions of Thanksgiving dinner such as turkeys, and fresh fruits and vegetables. The cost to provide these items for a single family is \$35.

The Feed-A-Friend Thanksgiving Basket Program feeds families with children in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and provides each with a turkey and all the trimmings of a traditional

-more-

Thanksgiving dinner. Any family seeking a basket can register at UNC's Community Services Building located at 410 Olive Street in Scranton; Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Thursdays until 6 p.m. Distribution of baskets will take place on Tuesday, November 24 at the Watres Armory in Scranton.

For more information or to make a contribution, please contact United Neighborhood Centers at 570-346-0759.

About United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA

United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania is a private, not-for-profit, grass-roots United Way agency that offers direct and general advocacy services for youth, singles, families and senior citizens in combination with programs that foster independence and self-sufficiency. The agency's mission is to work together with neighbors to provide services and create opportunities which empower individuals and build strong interdependent communities.

###