



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 18, 2009

Media Contact: John Turner  
United Way Capital Area  
P: 512.225.0359  
C: 512.636.1497

## **UNITED WAY & HANDS ON CENTRAL TEXAS RELEASE FINDINGS OF FIRST HISPANIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT “MAKING THE CONNECTION”**

*This new study provides a unique insight into the civic interests and participation of  
Central Texas’s fastest growing population, the Hispanic/Latino community.*

**Austin, Texas** – Tonight at 6pm, at the Mexican-American Cultural Center (MACC), United Way Capital Area (UWCA) and Hands On Central Texas (HOCT) present the findings of “Making the Connection.”

Making the Connection, is an examination of volunteerism and community engagement in the Austin Hispanic/Latino community. The research was commissioned by HOCT, a program of UWCA, and conducted by Adelante Solutions. The research provides a unique insight into the civic interests and participation of Central Texas’s fastest growing population, the Hispanic/Latino community. The full report will be available for download by July 31 from [www.unitedwaycapitalarea.org](http://www.unitedwaycapitalarea.org)

The study surveyed more than 1,000 individuals and is a starting point in examining such important questions as:

- What issues do Hispanics/ Latinos believe need to be addressed in their community?
- What role can volunteers play in addressing these issues?
- Is there a need to increase Hispanic/Latino volunteerism and engagement?

Overall, Hispanic/Latino respondents ranked **Education, Health Care and Employment** as the most critical issues facing their communities, linking these issues to the well being of their families and their future.

“United Way recognizes the value of diversity and connecting with all communities, and our goal is to take action to foster that connection,” said Debbie Bresette, Interim President and Chief Professional Officer of UWCA. “That diversity and connection is sought not only across racial and ethnic lines, but also in regards to faith-based communities, age, gender, socioeconomic background and family structures. United Way is committed for the long haul, because this effort is a marathon, not a sprint.”

“Austin’s ethnic minorities have maintained a rich history of volunteering and philanthropy,” added Armando Rayo, Director of HOCT. “The insights the survey will provide, will allow us to deliver a variety of signature projects designed to positively impact their lives.”

The event tonight, called [VIVIR UNIDOS](#), is hosted by Austin City Council member Mike Martinez and Univision TV host, Leslie Montoya. Over 300 people are expected to attend, to learn about opportunities to get more involved in the Austin community, as well as enjoy a host of fun activities for all the family including Latin-American food, music, dancing and a loteria!

#### About Hands On Central Texas

Hands On Central Texas, a program of United Way Capital Area, strengthens communities through meaningful volunteer action.

Hands On Central Texas is a member of the [Hands On Network](#), whose mission is to inspire, equip, and mobilize people to take action that changes the world. At the center of the network are more than 250 affiliates, called HandsOn Action Centers that serve 83% of the American population and located 12 international communities. The vast majority of Points Of Light Institute’s work and activity happens through HandsOn Network’s Action Centers and its expanded network of hundreds of nonprofit, community and faith-based and government organizations. HandsOn Network. Generated by Points of Light Institute.

#### About United Way Capital Area

United Way Capital Area (UWCA) is working to advance the common good by focusing on the building blocks of a better life, education, financial stability and health. UWCA helps individuals and families in need, and works to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. Our vision in Central Texas is a caring community where the opportunity to fulfill human potential is always within reach.

###