

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

United Way Capital Area  
2000 E. MLK Jr. Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78702  
(512) 472-6267

Media Contact:  
Andy Buck, Communications Manager  
C: (512) 300-7838  
[andy.buck@unitedwaycapitalarea.org](mailto:andy.buck@unitedwaycapitalarea.org)

**United Way Brings J. Barry Griswell, Chairman and CEO of  
Principal Financial Group, to Austin to Speak on the  
Economic Impact of Early Childhood Education**

Date: Wednesday, February 20

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Hyatt Regency Austin (208 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX)

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**February 14, 2008 (Austin, TX)** – As Chairman and CEO of Principal Financial Group, one of the world’s leading financial companies and Fortune 500 member, J. Barry Griswell knows a thing or two about smart investments. And on February 20, he’ll be in Austin to talk to the community about the astonishing economic impact of early childhood education.

“Early childhood education is good business,” Griswell said. “By better preparing students today we will have a stronger and brighter workforce in the future. We must help our children succeed – this is a responsibility we must all take on.”

Prior to his compelling presentation, TXP (Texas Perspectives) economist Jon Hockenyos will unveil findings from the soon-to-be-published Travis County Child Care Economic Impact Study.

“United Way is aware of the long-term importance of quality childhood education, which is why we’ve identified it as one of our Focus Areas going forward,” says David Balch, President and Chief Professional Officer of United Way Capital Area. “We’re excited to bring Mr. Griswell to Austin. His expertise and vision will serve as another reminder that investing in our children’s education is an investment in our community’s future success.”

E3 Alliance Executive Director Susan Dawson will also speak to chosen regional priorities around early childhood education. Closing remarks by David Balch will provide a call to action for the top-level business and policy leaders in attendance.

**\*\* Media is welcome to attend the event. To arrange an interview with any of the speakers, please contact Andy Buck, UWCA Communications Manager, at [andy.buck@unitedwaycapitalarea.org](mailto:andy.buck@unitedwaycapitalarea.org) or (512) 300-7838.**

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United Way Capital Area (UWCA) is focused on narrowing the opportunity gap in Central Texas between those who are getting ahead and those who are falling behind. By engaging the entire community around critical social issues, UWCA aims to make lasting, fundamental change in community conditions.

Through research into the Central Texas community, UWCA has identified three Focus Areas that it intends on improving through fundraising, volunteerism, and engagement. These Focus Areas are (1) Education, (2) Financial Stability, and (3) Individual and Community Health.

In addition to funding nonprofit agencies, United Way manages a number of programs and collaborations that are improving the lives of Central Texans. They include: (1) 2-1-1, the free dialing code that connects individuals to health and human services; (2) Hands On Central Texas, the volunteer center that matches tens of thousands of volunteers each year to meaningful volunteer opportunities; and (3) Success By 6, the regional collaboration that aims to have all Central Texas children “healthy, happy, and smart” by the time they enter school for the first time.

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