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United Way Bay Area CEO Anne Wilson to Retire February 28

SAN FRANCISCO (January 21, 2020)—United Way Bay Area (UWBA) CEO Anne Wilson has announced her retirement after 40 years of service—she joined the nonprofit in 1980 and became its first female CEO in 2000. Under Anne's leadership, UWBA has raised more than \$580 million from corporate and individual donors who trust the nonprofit organization to meet pressing community needs by creating and supporting effective poverty-fighting programs. Anne's last day at the helm of UWBA will be February 28, 2020. United Way Worldwide (UWW) is conducting a national search for her replacement and she will work with UWBA to facilitate a smooth transition this Spring.

“Anne is an exemplary CEO who led the transformation of UWBA into a modern, effective organization committed to improving lives in the Bay Area” said Pierre Breber, UWBA board chair. “She united non-profits, businesses and others in the community to work together in the fight.”

In her 20 years as CEO, Anne has worked effectively to address the dramatic rise in income inequality in the Bay Area and fundamental changes in philanthropy while maintaining UWBA's focus on alleviating poverty. She deftly managed the 2016 merger with United Way of Silicon Valley to form a more efficient UWBA that improves lives in eight Bay Area counties. Also, during her tenure, Anne led UWBA in responding to new expectations from donors who want to be more engaged and better understand their personal impact on the causes that matter to them. UWBA, UWW and leading United Ways across America recently partnered with Salesforce to offer a CSR platform called Salesforce Philanthropy Cloud that changes how corporate employees give and volunteer.

UWW President and CEO Brian Gallagher said, “From one United Way lifer to another, I want to thank Anne for her incredible service to the Bay Area, the United Way network and communities near and far. Like Anne, I started my career at United Way as an intern and never left. Anne felt the same calling that I did, and from Day One she committed herself to making a difference in the lives of individuals and families who deserved greater opportunity and a helping hand. I will miss Anne's passion, dedication and leadership, but her legacy will inspire us and help drive our mission.”

Anne's most important legacy is the development of several UWBA programs that improve the lives of thousands of vulnerable Bay Area people every year. For example, free tax preparation program Earn It! Keep It! Save It! ensures that low- and moderate-income residents claim all of the deductions and tax credits available to them. Since 2003, volunteers have facilitated more than half a billion dollars in refunds to Bay Area households. For 2020, there are more than 200 sites across eight counties that will be open by the first week of February.

Anne also spearheaded SparkPoint, a proven homelessness prevention program primarily based at community colleges. SparkPoint offers free, integrated services to help people end the cycle of poverty through one-on-one job coaching and training, education and financial literacy. Since 2009, UWBA has served more than 25,000 people by opening 21 SparkPoint centers with more planned for 2020.

Local impact of national programs such as 211 and the Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) is another result of Anne's leadership. UWBA has awarded \$59 million in EFSP grants to food and shelter programs since 1983 and its 211 program receives more than 108,000 calls and 53,000 online visits each year from people in crisis who are swiftly connected to the basic needs of life. Anne also enabled UWBA to function as an incubator for poverty fighting programs by leading her team in developing and spinning off successful initiatives, including Rise Together and Raising a Reader.

Anne grew up in New Jersey, earned a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and headed west to the Bay Area to pursue a master's degree in social welfare at the University of California, Berkeley. When her advisor encouraged her to apply to United Way in San Francisco to fulfill the internship requirement, Anne took the advice, finished her master's and went on to play many roles at United Way. She worked in planning, grant making, communications, marketing and then individual giving where she oversaw major gifts and all non-workplace giving.

"My work at United Way has inspired me every day for 40 years. It has been such a privilege to serve our community alongside extraordinary United Way volunteer leaders, visionary donors and our talented staff team. Together, we have built enduring cross-sector coalitions to break the cycle of poverty in our region. I know that United Way will continue to fight for the education, health and financial stability of every person in every community."

About United Way Bay Area

United Way Bay Area (UWBA) fights for financial stability and equal opportunity for residents in eight Bay Area counties. UWBA takes an innovative, holistic approach to ending the cycle of poverty through advocacy and programs that support all ages—providing free access to family support, financial and career coaching, job opportunities and basic needs. www.uwba.org

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