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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Peter Theisen, United Way of Whatcom County, ptheisen@unitedwaywhatcom.org, (360)733-8670

UNITED WAY ALLOCATES FUNDS TO LOCAL EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROVIDERS

Bellingham—Whatcom County has received federal funds through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program. The program awards funds to each county in the United States based on demographics, local employment rates and economic data.

This year, Whatcom County has been chosen to receive \$121,655 to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the county. The program is intended for the purchase of food and shelter and to supplement and expand current services; not to substitute or reimburse ongoing programs or start new programs.

Once the National Board makes an award, a Local Board decides which agencies are to receive funds, and then those agencies receive funds directly from the National Board. United Way of Whatcom County is the administrative agent in charge of allocating the funds to emergency food and shelter providers in the county.

“This program is designed to be a quick and efficient way for the Federal Government to handle poverty issues in the local community,” said Peter Theisen, President of United Way of Whatcom County.

Under terms of the federal grant, local organizations chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary non-profits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice non-discrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capacity to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, they must have a voluntary board.

This year, the Bellingham Food Bank, Opportunity Council, Salvation Army, Womenscare Shelter and the YWCA were the agencies in Whatcom County that were chosen to receive funds. The agencies were chosen because of an increased demand of agency services and the benefit their programs provide to the community.

United Way of Whatcom County has worked for over 50 years to increase financial resources for local health and human service needs, and to seek and invest in community-building opportunities to improve the health and welfare of Whatcom County residents.

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