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May 21, 2013

Statement from United Way Services of Geauga County and United Way of Greater Cleveland Regarding Chardon Healing Fund

It is impossible to quantify the terrible loss of life and other suffering from the tragic events at Chardon High School on February 27, 2012. Our thoughts and support continue to go out to all those impacted. United Way Services of Geauga County was asked by the community to help facilitate the Chardon Healing Fund and has donated its work. We are confident the Fund has been managed in an open and transparent manner according to its Guiding Principles.

The Mission of the Chardon Healing Fund is to facilitate the long term recovery and healing of the community from the profound events at Chardon High School to address the immediate needs of the families directly impacted by the event effectively, and to foster the on-going emotional and physical well-being of the students and staff of the Chardon Local Schools and the greater community.

The Chardon Healing Fund is administered by an 11-member, all-volunteer Board from a wide range of the community, including business leaders, civic and public officials, the religious community, the school district, and more. All of the funds, 100%, are going to meet the charitable mission of the Chardon Healing Fund to benefit the healing of the community. The fund distributed more than $417,000 to the six families of children killed or injured by the tragedy. This includes paying bills, making home modifications and providing counseling and supportive services as needed. Out of respect for the privacy of the families, the specifics of that assistance are confidential between the Fund and each individual family.

In addition, the Fund has received much guidance from national trauma experts and others who have experienced similar tragedies that healing is a long-term process. Acting on that advice, and being true to our Mission, the Fund has worked continually and in a collaborative manner with mental health experts, the schools and others in the community to identify ways to help in the healing process and move the community forward in a positive direction. The Fund has sponsored numerous community educational sessions on grief, trauma and healing, enhanced the intensive treatment and support provided at Chardon High School, partially funded a school resource officer at the high school, and more.

The Fund remains committed to serving as a leader of community collaborations and as a conduit of support from many generous businesses, individuals and organizations to the Chardon community.

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