



Sioux Empire United Way

News Release

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500 Women Inspired to Fight Child Hunger

Sioux Falls, SD – Earlier today the Sioux Empire United Way hosted its 6th Annual *WomenUnite!* Event at the Convention Center. The room was filled with excitement as 500 women united to learn how to make a difference in a child's life. This event gave women in the community an opportunity to educate, inspire, and unite together to fight a cause in the community.

The event featured Backpack, a program that provides at-risk children with nutritious, easy-to-prepare foods for the weekends until school and access to meals resumes. In Sioux Falls, 40% of elementary students and 35% of middle school students rely on free or reduced cost school meals. Last school year, Backpack distributed over 2,700 food packages to 31 different schools.

“Research shows that children who are hungry are often fatigued, unable to focus, and have lower academic achievement than their peers,” said Pam Hanneman, *WomenUnite!* Co-Chair. “The Backpack Program provides children with the nutrition they need for the weekends.”

At the event the women heard from Pam Homan, Superintendent of Sioux Falls Schools, as she spoke on the impact the Backpack Program has on families in the community. She noted that programs like Backpack are shown to help students develop better relationships with their school staff and peers, improve their attendance at school, and improve their grades.

“It is always so inspiring to see the women of our community rally around a need in our community,” said Kim Burma, *WomenUnite!* Co-Chair. “We are excited about United Way’s partnership with the Backpack Program and ready to ensure that no child in our community suffers from hunger.”

For more information about the WomenUnite! Event or Sioux Empire United Way contact
Sioux Empire United Way at 336 -2095 or womenunite@seuw.org.

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