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| **Address:**  1116 SW A Ave  Lawton, OK 73501 | **Media Release**  September 16, 2016 | **United Way Contact:**  Sarah Head  Community Collaborations Director  (580) 355 0218  Sarah.head@uwswok.org |

**United Way of Southwest Oklahoma’s 70th Campaign is Underway**

**Lawton, Okla.** – The United Way of Southwest Oklahoma (UWSWOK) is working to raise funds to support 29 local programs and initiatives provided by 19 local community partners focused on solving some of community’s most pressing issues in the area of education, health and safety, and income.

UWSWOK works with local community non-profit partners to ensure that the needs of those most vulnerable in our community are met. The UWSWOK even has an in-house education initiative, Success By 6, to help ensure that all kids enter school ready and able to learn. The focus areas of education, health and safety, and income were determined as a result of a community needs assessment. Every year the Board of Directors for UWSWOK reviews the most recent community needs assessment to evaluate the focus areas named in the previous year, and determine relevancy.

In order to make the impact our community so desperately needs UWSWOK enlists the help of small businesses, individuals, retired workers, city employees, community non-profit partners, industry, social clubs, civic clubs, government officials, and the media to get the word out about the need in our community. “Everything from a payroll deduction every pay period, to a corporate gift, to fundraisers help ensure UWSWOK will continue to support initiatives and community partners in our area,” says Jennifer Ellis, UWSWOK Campaign Chair. J. Ellis went on to state, “If everyone who donated in 2015 would have given just one dollar more think of the impact that our community would have seen? Just one dollar. So I urge you, if you are able, to increase your gift to UWSWOK this year by one dollar.” “Without the generosity of our community we would be unable to help our partners and see new initiatives created to help solve problems in Southwest Oklahoma,” stated UWSWOK Board President, Chearlene Glover-Johnson. Lauren Ellis, United Way’s President/CEO, said “We raised $1.5 last year and we are committed to do everything to raise that amount and more this year to meet the growing needs of our community partners and initiatives.”

While the UWSWOK raises funds year-round to meet the needs of our initiatives and community partners our big fundraising push happens during our “Campaign” which runs from August to November of every year. If you are interested in donating you may do so through your place of employment or by contacting the UWSWOK at 580-355-0218.

**About the United Way of Southwest Oklahoma:**

*The United Way funds 19 local partners and their various programs (29) that address community issues. The United Way is a charitable organization and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the local community to fulfill its mission. For more information, please visit* [*www.uwswok.org*](http://www.uwswok.org) *.*

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