



United Way
of Greater Battle Creek

NEWS RELEASE

United Way of Greater Battle Creek

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Sargent named to lead UWGBC

Battle Creek, MI – In a unanimous vote on Thursday, January 15, 2009, United Way of Greater Battle Creek’s (UWGBC) board of directors named Chris Sargent, president and chief professional officer.

Sargent succeeds Mike Larson who accepted the position of president and chief executive officer of Greater Kalamazoo United Way, after leading the Battle Creek organization for more than nine years.

“We are very fortunate that our board has taken a proactive approach to succession planning,” said Denise Phillips, United Way of Greater Battle Creek board chairperson. “Mike had much input into the process of who would succeed him should the occasion arise and Chris was that candidate.”

“The brief period of naming Chris as interim president and chief professional officer was merely a formality until the full board was able to meet and vote on the issue,” said Phillips.

Sargent has over ten years experience working with United Ways and over twelve years of non-profit experience. He began his career path with United Way as an annual campaign associate for the Gratiot County United Way while still attending college. In 1997 he joined the staff of Heart of West Michigan United Way in Grand Rapids as a campaign associate and was eventually promoted to lead the annual campaign team. Sargent has worked with UWGBC for the past four and a half years as director of resource development and was named vice president of resource development in December 2007.

Phillips added, “We want the organization to continue its success by providing leadership and working with our community partners to Advance the Common Good by focusing on the building blocks we all need for a good life: education, income and health. Additionally, we will continue to prioritize access to basic needs.”

The board expressed their confidence that with his experience with UWGBC as well as with Heart of West Michigan United Way in Grand Rapids, Sargent has the skills needed to keep the organization moving forward with the support of the leadership team.

“I am passionate about creating change in the community in a positive way,” said Sargent. “I hold myself to a very high standard of being a good steward of the resources of which our donors have entrusted United Way. I sincerely believe that through my role with United Way along with the great organizations that we partner with that we can truly create a better life for all.”

Upon his departure Larson said, “I have nothing but confidence in the staff in Battle Creek. They don’t just work for United Way, they believe in what they do for the community. There is a lot of momentum here and I believe that with Chris’ leadership and the team you have, that momentum will continue.”

United Way of Greater Battle Creek’s mission is to mobilize the caring power of the community to Advance the Common Good by measurably improving lives. They do this by addressing some of the community’s most pressing problems by raising dollars that fund more than 50 local programs operated by 33 non-profit agencies or organizations. United Way also collaborates with local organizations and people to identify and address emerging needs and issues.

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For more information, visit United Way’s office at 34 W. Jackson St., Ste. 4B, Battle Creek MI, 49017, call 269.962.9538 or visit www.unitedwaybattlecreek.org.