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Money Smart Week to Help Consumers Manage Their Money

*Lake Area United Way Joins Collaboration to Promote Financial
Stability & Independence*

(Gary) - More than 100 free classes, workshops and activities that help consumers learn to better manage their personal finances will be offered October 10-17 during Indiana's fourth-annual Money Smart Week®. A free public Money Fair will be held at Indiana University Northwest on Saturday, October 17 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.



This public awareness initiative, coordinated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, began in 2002 and has grown to include hundreds of educational programs across Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin. Lake Area United Way is one of the initiative's organizers.

The regional event will be hosted by the Northwest Indiana Money Fair Council and the Northwest Indiana Asset Building Campaign whose coalition partners include Centier, Consumer Credit Counseling Service of NWI, First Midwest Bank, Harris, Indiana University Northwest, Lakeshore Public Television, Lake Area United Way, The Nia Group, Inc., Northwest Indiana Community Action Corporation, and SDM Investments.

"The goal of Smart Money Week® Indiana is to increase financial literacy," said Michael Davis, chairman of LAUW's Vision Council. Davis is Team Leader of New Business at NIPSCO.

"Members of our community are hungry for this useful information, but don't always know where to get it, or how to access local experts," added Davis. "With more than 100 free seminars including many on-line workshops and activities, there's something for everyone."

"United Way advances the common good by creating opportunities for all by focusing on the building blocks for a good life: a quality education that

leads to a good job, earning enough income to support a family through retirement, and good health," Davis said.

"We all win when a child succeeds in school, when families are financially stable and self-reliant, and when people are healthy," he explained. "That's what it means to live united."

"In this shaky economy, everyone is looking to learn how to manage money wisely," Davis explained. "Lake Area United Way is very excited to be part of this regional collaboration.

The courses cover a variety of topics targeting children, seniors, future homebuyers and business entrepreneurs, consumers with financial troubles, and those simply looking to wisely manage their money. Other classes include identify theft protection; foreclosure prevention; starting your own business; managing utility costs; saving for college; and how to save money at the store.

Space is limited and attendees must register in advance. The free fair includes breakout sessions, breakfast on-the-go and a box lunch. Door prizes will be awarded at every workshop and vendors will be present with valuable information. A group discussion as well as a question and answer session with Money Fair presenters will take place 1-2 p.m.

Fun activities are planned for children and teens as well. Award winning magician and educator Christopher Klocek will present a workshop on basic financial concepts. The Network Financial Institute's Money Bus will offer tours to kids all day.

To register for the Money Smart Fair, please call (219) 980-2093. To learn more on Money Smart Week®, please dial 1-877-669-7678. You can also find more information on scheduled events through Lake Area United Way's website at: www.lauw.org.

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