

**United Way's June 18 Day of Action Brings 4,000 Books to Murphy Canyon Military Families
Community Block Party and Fun Run Helps Prevent "Summer Slide" at
World's Largest Off-site Military Housing Complex**

SAN DIEGO (June 18, 2016) – School may be out, but learning must continue ... United Way of San Diego County celebrates its annual "Day of Action" on Saturday, June 18 with a huge community gathering to kick off summer and promote year-round reading. Larger than ever, the event features the "Murphy Canyon Community Block Party" and "Fun Run" where hundreds of military families will gather at Miller Elementary School. The event is in coordination with SAY San Diego, among other community partners.

The culmination of United Way's annual book drive, the Day of Action helps children throughout San Diego have books to read during the summer. Without age-appropriate reading material at home during the summer months, children get behind in reading once school starts, also known as the "summer slide."

"Almost 40 percent of San Diego third graders aren't reading at grade level. And children who aren't reading proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school," said Karen Sprigle, United Way's interim president and CEO. "Our book drive and Day of Action are critical to help keep San Diego's children reading when not in school."

Juggling military life and raising their children, hundreds of Murphy Canyon residents will receive the donated new books. The event also includes a one-mile fun run, free lunch for the first 500 attendees, a block party with literacy, art, sports and nutrition activity centers, games, music, a classic car show, and much more.

More than 150 community volunteers will be on-site, including San Diego Chargers running back Branden Oliver, along with retired NFL athlete ambassadors and San Diego residents. The NFL players will help children "shop" for books that match their interests.

"The Murphy Canyon Fun Run and Block Party is the perfect end to a year-long strategic partnership with United Way, the schools and the San Diego Military Family Collaborative, designed to ensure the most supportive community in the country for active duty families," said Nancy Gannon Hornberger, President and CEO of SAY San Diego. "We are truly honored to join with United Way, the families, and community to celebrate!"

This "Day of Action" is part of United Way's ongoing partnership and work in Tierrasanta and Central San Diego. Last year, the organization began funding the Military Family & School Success Impact Network, led by SAY San Diego, to help young students and their families get ready for kindergarten, read at grade-level and avoid chronic absences.

The event is free and open to the public. Miller Elementary School is located at 4343 Shields Street, San Diego, CA 92124. The fun run starts at 9 a.m., with the block party kickoff at 10 a.m., including United Way's book giveaway. To pre-register for the fun run, visit <http://bit.ly/millerblockparty>. No registration required to attend the block party.

Book drive sponsors include: The Molina Foundation, Depend, GEICO, AT&T, United Way's Women's Leadership Council, California Bank & Trust, and San Diego Regional Airport Authority.

About United Way of San Diego County

By working with nonprofits, schools, businesses and community leaders, **United Way of San Diego County** tackles issues impacting children and families in San Diego. It is focused on education and academic success via three milestones: kindergarten readiness, third grade literacy and making sure students are prepared to graduate high school and go on to college and career. The nonprofit plays a unique role, bringing the right people and resources together to spark breakthrough community action that elevates every child and family toward a brighter future.

Through a **Collective Impact** model, United Way solves complex problems by maximizing existing community partners/resources and establishing common goals to create permanent change in the community. United Way's efforts include anchoring the **City Heights Partnership for Children** and the **Vista Partnership for Children**. LIVE UNITED is a call to action for everyone to get involved by donating and volunteering. Learn more at www.uwsd.org, the [blog](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About SAY San Diego

SAY San Diego advances the vision of opportunity, equity and well-being for all San Diegans. We partner with youth, adults, families and communities to reach their full potential by focusing in three key areas:

Child and youth development, including before and after school programs for grade K-8, and preschools, across more than 40 sites.

Youth, adult and family wellness, including child abuse prevention, foster care and kinship parenting support, juvenile delinquency prevention and youth development, family strengthening and self-sufficiency, as well as mental health counseling, case management and related services for youth and adults.

Community engagement, including community organizing, coalition building and collective impact that increases resident and youth involvement in improving neighborhood safety and well-being, as well as operating multi-service family resource centers to provide vital support to military, refugee and economically insecure families.

To learn more about SAY San Diego go to: www.saysandiego.org

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