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28th Annual Christmas Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 21, 2011

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SPONSORS **STILL** NEEDED FOR VAC'S 28TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Voluntary Action Center (VAC) has had a record number of clients sign up for its 28th Annual Christmas Program, which means a record number of sponsors are needed to meet this need. VAC's Christmas Program is the biggest one of its kind in Central Missouri, and this year it promises to be the largest ever.

With the holidays fast approaching, it is once again time to prepare for our annual Christmas Program. Our objective is to match needy families with individuals, families, businesses, or groups who wish to sponsor them for the Christmas holiday. Last year, with the help of many generous sponsors, 1,175 families were assisted through our program!

If you or your business, organization, group, school, or family wishes to sponsor any size family from one to 10, please call VAC at 874-2273. We will match you with a family (or individual) and provide you with a description of the family (or individual) and gift ideas.

We know how hectic the holidays can become and we want to make this an enjoyable and easy project for you, and at the same time make it very worthwhile. If you choose to sponsor a family, we request that you provide the makings for the holiday

meal and at least one new gift per family member who is under the age of 18, elderly, or has a disability. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Purchase the food and gifts yourself, and deliver them to our holiday distribution center in December. Your drop-off date will be either December 5, 6, 12, or 13.
- Purchase the gifts yourself, and deliver them to our holiday distribution center with a gift card for food or a donation for VAC to write a food voucher for the family. This is the most popular option.
- Purchase gift certificates at local grocery and department stores and bring them to VAC before November 18. VAC will deliver them to the family.
- Provide VAC with a monetary donation and we will write vouchers to a local grocery and department store to let the family do their own shopping. On the average, a \$60 donation will sponsor one person for Christmas with food and gifts.

For more information, please contact VAC at (573) 874-2273 or vac@vacmo.org.

The Voluntary Action Center (VAC) is the Heart of Service in Boone County. VAC, a not-for-profit social service agency, was formed in 1969 by Hazel Riback. The Voluntary Action Center's Core Services include:

- Family Assistance and Emergency Services (Year-Round)
- Special Assistance and Services
- Volunteerism

Family Assistance and Emergency Services (Year-Round)

Financial Assistance with:

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| • Baby formula | • Medical/dental copayments |
| • Driver's licenses/state I.D.s | • Minor car repair for employed persons |
| • Educational/employment programs | • MO birth certificates |
| • Emergency motel stays | • Prescriptions |
| • Gas for work and/or medical appointments | • Required work uniforms for new jobs |

Providing:

- | | |
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| • CATS bus tickets | • Emergency food |
| • Clothing referrals to the Wardrobe | • Hygiene/household products |
| • Diapers | |

Special Assistance and Services

In addition to these very important year-round direct services, VAC also sponsors many special initiatives throughout the year. These invaluable programs help families and individuals meet unique needs and take advantage of opportunities that would have otherwise been out of their reach. Some examples are:

- Youth Enrichment Fund
- Homes for Computers
- Summer Fun program
- Lunch in the Park
- Christmas in July
- School Supplies program
- Warm Up Columbia
- Christmas program

Volunteerism

And, of course, VAC is still an advocate for volunteerism in the community. Through community presentations, the coordination of local volunteer fairs, and the development and distribution of the Helping Hand catalog, the Voluntary Action Center helps connect volunteers to hundreds of valuable community events and programs. VAC also helps celebrate the importance of community volunteers through its co-sponsorship of the annual Hero Awards, which celebrates volunteers who have made a significant impact through their donation of time and resources to local agencies.

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