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## United Way of South Mississippi kicks off 2013 campaign

Posted: Aug 20, 2013 1:06 PM EDT  
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By Christina Garcia - email

SOUTH MISSISSIPPI (WLOX) - The footballs were being tossed Tuesday morning at the IP Casino Resort and Spa in Biloxi during the annual United Way of South Mississippi Campaign kickoff.

Each year the nonprofit holds a football themed kickoff where participating local companies wear their company's jersey or a football jersey of their favorite football team.

Several of the nearly 200 local companies that take part in the fundraising efforts attended the ceremony that featured speakers and drawings for prizes including a Drew Brees signed football.

Two of the New Orleans Saintsations Jerami of Long Beach and Brandy of Ocean Springs attended the event.

This year's company pacesetters, which are the companies who started their employee fundraisers early, are Arcata Associates Inc., Butler Snow O'mara, Stevens and Cannada, PPLC, Center Point Energy, the Grand Biloxi Casino, Hancock Bank, Mississippi Power, Regions Bank, Target, Walmart and United Way.

Collectively the pacesetters have already raised \$500,000 towards United Way's goal of \$1.5 million.

This year the United Way will focus on early childhood education specifically for children 0 to 8 years of age. According to the United Way, improving education ultimately improves quality of live for communities.

In addition to education the United Way also supports income and health programs or initiatives and agencies, United Way Director of Marketing and Communications Colleen McAdams said.

The United Way of South Mississippi serves 10,000 individuals in Harrison, Hancock and Pearl River counties. There is also a United of Jackson and George Counties their number is 228-762-7662.

Any individual or company interested in taking part in the United Way of South Mississippi's fundraising efforts can do so by calling 228-896-2213 or clicking <http://www.unitedwaysm.org/>.

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United Way kickoff attendees standing as the national anthem is sung.



Companies taking part in the football toss.



(L to R) Santsation Jerami, WLOX Chief Meteorologist Mike Reader, WLOX Digital Content Director Renee Johnson and Santsation Brandy.

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