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# PRESS RELEASE

## **For Immediate Release: United Way 2-1-1 Goes Live, Unexpectedly, on a Connecticut Radio Morning Show**

2-1-1 call specialist Laura got a surprise when she took her first call of the day on December 16<sup>th</sup>. What seemed like a normal call requesting information on energy assistance turned out to be part of a morning radio show chat with Governor M. Jodi Rell. WPLR morning show host “Chaz” was in the midst of an interview with the Governor about the energy assistance resources available to Connecticut residents. When the Governor mentioned that residents can call United Way 2-1-1 for information on energy assistance, “Chaz” thought he would give it a try. He said he wanted to find out if he would be connected to a live person when he called 2-1-1.

The WPLR morning personality decided to call 2-1-1 anonymously and make a request for information about energy assistance. He made up a story about his elderly father, who had no income, needing help paying for heating oil. He did not identify that the call was being broadcast live nor that the Governor was listening in. Laura asked questions to determine financial status and eligibility and made a referral to CEAP (Connecticut Energy Assistance Program). When Laura asked how the caller had heard about 2-1-1 that is when “Chaz” identified himself and fessed up that the call was live on the air and that the Governor was listening in.

Governor Rell quickly praised Laura, for her professionalism and for the wonderful job that she did providing the information. Rell also praised 2-1-1 for the great service it provides to state residents. The Governor went on to emphasize that 2-1-1 is a free service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

UWC President and CEO, Richard Porth praised Laura and the staff of UWC for “Maintaining a reputation for providing consistently high level professional and courteous service to the people who come to us for help.”

The United Way of Connecticut’s mission is to help meet the needs of Connecticut residents by providing information, education and connection to services. UWC furthers its mission by providing 24/7 toll free call center access to health and human services information through 2-1-1; specialized services in child care, child development and disabilities, and HUSKY health insurance; and by collaborating with local United Ways and Connecticut state agencies and elected officials. For more information about United Way of Connecticut, visit [www.ctunitedway.org](http://www.ctunitedway.org).