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Mayor Rawlings-Blake Announces Collaborative to Promote Healthy Living in Baltimore Region

Molly Shattuck named Healthy Food Ambassador by United Way of Central Maryland

BALTIMORE, MD (March 11, 2011)—Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake today announced a new collaborative between United Way of Central Maryland (UWCM) and Baltimore City, which will focus on making affordable, fresh, and healthy foods available to underserved communities in Baltimore City and the surrounding counties, and promote an overall healthy lifestyle. Molly Shattuck, former Baltimore Ravens cheerleader and healthy living advocate, will serve as United Way's "Healthy Food Ambassador."

"I'm pleased to welcome United Way of Central Maryland and Molly Shattuck as collaborators in our efforts to increase access to healthy and affordable foods here in Baltimore City and across the region," said Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. "Through the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative, the Virtual Supermarket and 'Get Fresh Baltimore', we can support the battle against poor eating habits, obesity, diabetes, and heart disease and help our citizens lead healthier and happier lives."

The collaboration will focus on increasing access to healthy foods in underserved communities across central Maryland. "We welcome UWCM as the newest member of the Food Policy Advisory Committee (Food PAC) to collaborate in implementing the Food Policy Task force recommendations," says Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Director for Baltimore City.

"United Way of Central Maryland, with the help of volunteers and strong advocates, strives to help our most vulnerable neighbors across the region meet their basic needs and enjoy a better life," said Mark Furst, president and chief executive officer, United Way of Central Maryland. "We understand that healthy and affordable food in local communities is a top priority and we are grateful to have Molly's support in advancing our work."

The announcement, made at Real Food Farm in Baltimore, coincides with the launch of Molly Shattuck's Vibrant Living initiative and website, www.MollyShattuck.com. Shattuck also released a workout DVD entitled: *The Vibrant Living Workout*. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the DVD will benefit the UWCM.

“I am excited to share my energy and passion for healthy living with Baltimore City and United Way of Central Maryland to help make a difference in people’s lives,” said Molly Shattuck. “As a mom and as someone who has supported United Way and its mission for many years, I understand that not everyone has access to the healthy and affordable foods that every family needs to thrive. We are going to work together to address that need in our local communities.”

As a former Baltimore Ravens cheerleader and mother, Shattuck has developed a vibrant living philosophy, which is reflected in her new DVD and website, which stress the importance of exercising on a regular basis, making healthy eating choices, being well hydrated and giving back to the community. The Vibrant Living Workout showcases life-shaping, total body workouts, including a stretch and cardio dance ensemble, full-body strengthening, and a fun workout for parents and children.

The collaboration was announced at Real Food Farm, located near the Lake Clifton High School campus in Baltimore City. Real Food Farm works to improve neighborhood access to healthy food by growing produce and making it accessible and affordable to low-income residents. Real Food Farm also works to increase Baltimore area students’ nutritional knowledge and positive attitudes toward healthy food choices through experience-based educational programs.

“By providing locally grown food and education, we are working to invest not only in the health of our young people and families, but in the health of our entire urban community,” said John Ciekot, project director, Real Food Farm. “Good food and physical exercise are the building blocks of personal health. We know that access to healthy foods and exercise can make a difference and we appreciate the example set by Molly Shattuck in developing and encouraging healthy eating and exercise habits.”

About UWCM:

For 86 years, United Way of Central Maryland (UWCM) has been the region's human service leader, encouraging all central Marylanders to give, advocate, or volunteer.

Its mission is to mobilize the community to improve people's lives. UWCM is dedicated to helping individuals and families who are vulnerable and at risk meet their emergency needs, stabilize their lives and ultimately achieve a better quality of life. By drawing upon local knowledge, data and expertise to understand the community's needs, UWCM is able to identify where gaps exist and concentrate on what works in addressing them, serving as a powerful advocate on critical health and human issues.

UWCM supports programs and initiatives in the City of Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard counties. For more information, visit www.uwcm.org.

About Baltimore Food Policy Initiative (BFPI):

BFPI was established in May 2010 with the goal of developing a comprehensive food policy, facilitating community partnerships, and supporting local food-access related projects. BFPI is housed within the Baltimore Office of Sustainability. For more information, visit <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/FoodPolicyTaskForce.aspx>

About Real Food Farm:

Real Food Farm is Civic Works innovative urban agricultural enterprise engaged in growing fresh produce on six acres of land in Clifton Park in northeast Baltimore. Real Food Farm works toward a just and sustainable food system by improving neighborhood access to healthy food, providing experience-based education, and developing an economically viable, environmentally responsible local agriculture sector. For more information, visit <http://real-food-farm.org>.

About Molly Shattuck:

Healthy living, staying active, living life to the fullest, family and philanthropy are the qualities that define Molly Shattuck. Beginning in 2005, Molly, a full-time mother, first received national media exposure from ABC's 20/20, Today, CBS Evening News, People Magazine, USA Today, Sports Illustrated, Inside the NFL and others for being the oldest cheerleader in National Football League history by becoming a Baltimore Ravens cheerleader at the age of 38. Today, Molly remains involved with the organization by helping to coach the squad on a part time basis. In 2008, Molly also gained national attention by being featured in the Fox TV series, The Secret Millionaire.

As part of her philanthropic efforts, Molly serves as a member of both the Board of Overseers for the Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA) and the National Advisory Board for The Johns Hopkins Children's Center. She is Chair of the BSA's Performing Arts Family Series, and a member of the Advisory Board of Young Audiences of Maryland. Molly is also Chair of Families Living United, a United Way initiative that creates opportunities for parents and children to volunteer together. In addition, Molly is actively involved with a variety of organizations related to homelessness and inner-city youth, helping to provide basic needs and access to healthy food. For more information, visit www.MollyShattuck.com, www.YouTube.com/MollyVibrantLiving, or www.Facebook.com/MollyVibrantLiving.

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