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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Centre County United Way Announces 2026 Taste of the Town; Early Bird Tickets On Sale October 6
Annual signature fundraiser returns December 6 with 30+ local restaurants, live and silent auctions, interactive experiences and an expanded regional reach

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. – Centre County United Way (CCUW) will bring together great food and greater community impact when **Taste of the Town returns Sunday, December 6, from 5-8 p.m. at The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center. Early Bird ticket sales will open October 6 at ccunitedway.org.** For nearly three decades, Taste of the Town has brought the community together in support of Centre County United Way and its network of local nonprofit partners. This year's event will feature tastings from more than 30 area restaurants, eateries and beverage partners, along with live entertainment, interactive activities, a silent auction and a live auction led by **Tammy Miller**. Local radio personality **Jeff Brown** will serve as emcee for the evening.

While food and fun have made Taste of the Town a community tradition, the purpose behind the evening is increasingly urgent. Thousands of Centre County households are ALICE – **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed**. These are individuals and families who earn above the federal poverty level but still struggle to afford the basic costs of living in Centre County. They are working, raising families and contributing to the community, yet often face difficult choices between necessities such as housing, food, transportation, childcare and health care.

Guests at this year's Taste of the Town will have an opportunity to experience those choices firsthand through an interactive **ALICE simulation**, offering a glimpse into the financial decisions many of their neighbors navigate every day.

"Taste of the Town gives us this incredible opportunity to bring people together for a genuinely fun night while connecting them to something much bigger," said **Ja Nae Wian, Brand & Engagement Manager and 2026 Taste of the Town event lead**. "Every tasting, every auction bid and every ticket purchased helps strengthen the network of programs our neighbors turn to when they need support. As we introduce some new experiences this year, we're also being very intentional about honoring what has

made Taste of the Town so special for nearly 30 years – the restaurants, sponsors, volunteers and guests who show up for this community. I have an incredible team of volunteers helping bring that vision to life, and I can't wait for Centre County to experience what we're creating together."

Taste of the Town is Centre County United Way's signature fundraising event, with proceeds supporting United Way-funded programs and services that reach **more than 40,000 Centre County residents annually**. Through its nonprofit partner network, CCUW invests in programs addressing **Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security and Community Resiliency** – helping ensure neighbors have access to resources that allow them not simply to get by, but to thrive.

This year's event will also reach farther than ever before. With support from a **Happy Valley Adventure Bureau tourism grant**, Centre County United Way is expanding its Taste of the Town marketing campaign through digital, radio, social media and print promotion across the region.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available, offering businesses and organizations the opportunity to support local impact while benefiting from this expanded marketing campaign and year-round recognition. "Whether someone joins us as a guest, restaurant, sponsor, auction donor or volunteer, they're becoming part of the same effort," Wian added. "Taste of the Town is one evening, but the impact of what we accomplish together lasts throughout the year."

Early Bird tickets go on sale October 6. Additional event details, participating restaurants, sponsorship opportunities and ticket information are available at **ccunitedway.org**.

About Centre County United Way

Centre County United Way mobilizes the community to action so everyone can thrive. Through strategic investments, partnerships and community engagement, CCUW works alongside local nonprofit organizations to address Centre County's most pressing needs across Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security and Community Resiliency. **United is the Way™. Learn more at ccunitedway.org.**

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