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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**The Second Annual Virginia Saves Week Forges Stronger Financial Future**

*Hampton Roads, Virginia- February 18, 2011-* Virginia Saves is helping consumers create a stronger financial future by celebrating and raising awareness with Virginia Saves week from February 20-27, 2011.

Virginia Saves Week is a local affiliate of the national America Saves Program, a grass roots movement to equip people of all ages to take control of their financial futures through money management, savings and debt reduction.

In South Hampton Roads, Virginia Saves celebrates and encourages families and children to get involved with savings through a virtual Piggy Bank Pageant. People can vote for their favorite hand-crafted piggy bank at Virginia Saves' Facebook page. The week also serves to raise awareness about enrolling in the Virginia Saves Program at [www.virginiasaves.com](http://www.virginiasaves.com).

Savers can find a wealth of resources from video, to calculators and articles with helpful how-to's to help savers forge a stronger financial future. Savers can also set goals for future savings. As little as \$10 a month can go a long way to establishing savings for an emergency fund, debt repayment, large ticket items, homeownership, or even retirement.

Benefits include monthly e-mails from financial experts, a monthly newsletter, access to online member-only savings tools and calculators, and savings strategies to help achieve set goals. The funds can be saved at home or a local bank and are not collected by Virginia Saves. Many financial institutions have partnered with Virginia Saves and offer free or low cost, low minimum balance savings accounts. Savers are also reminded to use tax time as a way to jumpstart savings as well as pay down debt with their 30-40-30 tax refund plan.

By speaking the language of potential savers, Virginia Saves equips consumers to have greater financial control.

The aim of Virginia Saves is to raise awareness about the need for savings and encourage people to actively save for their goals. Anyone may enroll in Virginia Saves and obtain access to free budgeting tools and resources. These tools will help individuals and families begin to save and track their savings progress. Visit: [www.virginiasaves.org](http://www.virginiasaves.org) to sign up to save.

For more information contact Lori Irwin at 757-853-8500 ext. 112, or email [lirwin@unitedwayshr.org](mailto:lirwin@unitedwayshr.org).

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**About the United Way of South Hampton Roads**

United Way of South Hampton Roads advances the common good by creating opportunities for a good life for all. Our focus is on Education, Financial Stability, and Health-the building blocks for a good quality of life. We recruit the people and organizations from the community who bring the passion, expertise and resources necessary to get things done.

We invite you to join us. You can GIVE, you can ADVOCATE, and you can VOLUNTEER. That's what it means to LIVE UNITED.

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