

November 15, 2010

MORE HEARTS REQUIRED

Red Deer, Alberta – Monday November 15th 2010 – After eight weeks of energetic campaigning, the United Way community campaign has reached 50% of its \$2 million goal. A team of volunteers and staff continue to work diligently sharing the stories of how people's lives are changed through United Way.

"The beauty of the community campaign is that everyone can participate because the issues touch each one of us," says Lars Rogers, 2010 Campaign Chair. "We all know someone who has been struggling recently. Through United Way support, friends, family and neighbours can access a program or service that will help them get through the tough times.

"Many people don't know that United Way is the single largest source of stable funding in Central Alberta outside of government. It is also one of the leanest funding organizations, as people in the community canvass for the community, says Rogers. This approach means it's the most efficient way to raise funds. It's also the most cost-effective way to invest funds back into the community, as United Way support means agencies don't have to hire fundraising, marketing and communications staff. We do it on behalf of them."

So far this year (as but a small sample) four United Way agencies have:

- helped eight clients, aged 4 to 43, who have been sexually, emotionally or physically abused receive short-term individualized counseling
- helped pair 18 Big Brother Big Sister mentors with 18 young energetic kids
- connected 232 individuals with high risk behaviours to health or other social services
- prevented 15 people from being evicted from their home, (helped) 30 people to find affordable housing and a further 35 individuals to receive on-going support to maintain their current housing situation

"All of this has been done with only \$50,000. The above results are but a fraction of what local agencies are doing each and every day with funds received through United Way," concludes Rogers.

"The campaign goal is truly not the goal, says Heather Gardiner, CEO, United Way. It's the people who we help that urge and encourage us to do more. It's unfathomable to think that as a community we may not be able to help feed young kids because one of their parents lost their job, or to say that it's okay to leave our teens on the streets during winter because they don't have a safe home to go to. These challenges are real, and they're happening right now all around us. There is no choice but for us to ask everyone to help. We are compelled to ask everyone to open up their hearts and say, I care. I will help my community by giving to the local United Way campaign."

To help the 1 in 3 people in our community who need help, go on-line at www.caunitedway.ca and make your donation today. Together, we can ensure nobody is left behind.

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