



UNITED WAY MAKES AN UNPRECEDENTED INVESTMENT INTO THE COMMUNITY

Red Deer, Alberta – Tuesday, April 26, 2011 – This morning, United Way of Central Alberta announced that it is investing an unprecedented \$1,556,000 into the community. Thanks to the incredible response from donors in 2010, more people will be helped than ever before.

The majority of funds, \$1,556,000 will be used to address community priority areas such as reducing the rate of homelessness, helping families escape violence, enabling seniors to live independently, and empowering children and youth to be all that they can be. Last year, programs supported by United Way provided 92,000 opportunities to assist individuals and families in need.

Broad strategies will continue to receive funding in the amount of \$100,000 through the Community Initiatives fund. Resources will be used to develop strategies to reduce poverty, increase awareness and advocacy for the sector, support agency leaders and staff, and build individual, agency and community capacity. These areas were identified as priority issues by Central Albertans during an extensive community engagement project undertaken by United Way in 2010. A further \$117,000 will be directed to charitable agencies through the donor designation program and \$216,000 will be used to support the community through United Way.

Donors trust United Way to ensure that measurable change happens with every dollar invested. In stewarding the public's donations, United Way has rigorous standards that agencies must meet to receive funding. All applications are considered and measured on multiple performance levels, including the ability to demonstrate strong community collaboration, program effectiveness and sound governance. The standards also help agencies increase their own internal policies and controls.

Cathy Peacocke, Chair of the Citizens Review Committee (CRC), acknowledged that "this year's decisions were especially difficult due to the continued financial pressures being felt by local agencies. With various economic challenges in mind, the CRC team carefully considered all funding requests and provided recommendations that rewarded agencies and programs that demonstrated strong value for the investment, showed responsiveness to the changing landscape, and embraced new and increased collaboration with a diverse range of partners. It is relatively uncommon for the CRC to approve all requests for funding, and this year was no different. Four programs did not advance through to the final stage. In the end, however, the CRC unanimously agreed on the investment plan, and their decisions were wholly endorsed by the Board of Directors."



Heather Gardiner, Chief Executive Officer, added “the heart of our investment strategy is to foster resiliency in people and to ensure that the community is able to address key priorities. The high quality human care services supported by United Way help people get back on their feet sooner, which leads to a more robust and prosperous region. We all want to live in strong, vibrant communities, and this investment plan brings us closer to that vision. Thank you to everyone who donated and volunteered in 2010 - it was an incredible year. Together, we will celebrate the results of our efforts.”

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