

Stampede Float Focuses on Youth

July 6, 2010 – Calgary, Alberta – For the past 14 years, during Stampede, the Calgary Ismaili Muslim Community has celebrated being part of Calgary by building award winning floats that feature their partnership with Calgary institutions and inviting everyone to their huge pancake breakfast. The aim is to have fun whilst celebrating the work being done to strengthen Calgary.

This year, the Ismaili community has partnered with United Way of Calgary and Area to promote the importance of education, in particular high school completion, through the creation of an Achievement through High School Fund.

“We traditionally have used the parade float as an opportunity to highlight an issue or need within the larger Calgary community,” President Zaver of the Calgary Ismaili Muslim Community said, “this year we are very excited to initiate the first year of a multi-year partnership with the United Way by contributing to a fund which will both encourage youth who have no family support to stay in school, and to help youth who have left high school go back and complete their education.”

Ruth Ramsden-Wood, President of United Way of Calgary and Area echoed President Zaver’s sentiments around the partnership. “United Way believes all children and youth must be encouraged to stay in school. This partnership is a step in the right direction, and shows the Ismaili Muslim Community recognizes how important it is to see our city’s youth succeed.”

The partnership is working to raise \$75,000 that will be put towards a school youth bursary fund that will help pay for living expenses while youth attend school. And, it will also support the construction of an on-line back to school guide for youth who wish to return to school, but aren’t sure about how to do it.

The project augments several other current United Way initiatives which prepare youth for school, support family relationships, increase educational opportunities, and connect youth with career opportunities.

“For youth to succeed as adults, they must have a successful transition into adulthood,” Ramsden-Wood said, “currently, 30 percent of Alberta students don’t graduate within three years of starting Grade 10, so support from the community is key to our efforts to ensure all children and youth have every opportunity available to them.”

For more information on this project, log onto www.calgaryunitedway.org

Media Contact:

Kate Smitko
Media Relations Specialist
United Way of Calgary and Area
Cell: (403) 836-0162
Email: kate.smitko@calgaryunitedway.org

Karam-Ali Talakshi
Volunteer
Ismaili Muslim Community
Cell: (403) 667 9912
k.talakshi@gmail.com