

We Need U Now More Than Ever

September 2nd, 2009 – Calgary, AB – More than 1,000 Calgarians hit the streets today to kick off United Way's 2009 campaign. The community came together to recognize the need to support our neighbours during these difficult economic times.

"We need you now is the message we are sending to every Calgarian," says Ruth Ramsden-Wood, President of United Way of Calgary and Area.

"This has been a challenging year and because of it Calgarians need our support. We all, most likely, know someone who has been impacted by the economy. We need Calgarians to pull together this year to help support their neighbours," she says.

This year's campaign co-chairs, Art Korpach and John Masters, will lend their extensive business knowledge, leadership and influence to what promises to be an exciting campaign.

Art Korpach is Vice Chairman and Head of Global Oil and Gas at CIBC World Markets Inc. He is a chartered accountant, and MBA, with extensive experience on more than 300 financing and merger and acquisition advisory assignments

John Masters, President and CEO of Calgary Technologies Inc., leads a successful not-for-profit that helps communities and individuals make connections, find resources and gain the knowledge they need to develop their hi-tech business.

From United Way's Resiliency Report, we know that our partnering agencies are feeling the impact of this recession.

- 211 has experienced a jump in the number of callers. Over the course of April, May and June of 2009 the information referral number saw an increase of more than 11 per cent, that's more than 1,000 additional callers. The majority of those calls were to address financial stress.
- The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter reported that in February 2009 it had the highest number of domestic violence calls received in a month ever recorded in the shelter's history. There was a 300 per cent increase in February 2009 compared to February 2008.
- The Calgary Counselling Centre saw a 40 per cent increase in stress-related calls in the first three months of 2009 compared to the first three months in 2008.

In addition to today's formal kick-off, more than 1600 workplaces across Calgary and Area are also in the process of kicking off their own campaigns in support of United Way.

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