

MEDIA RELEASE



Change Starts Here

September 12th, 2011 – Calgary, AB – Hundreds of volunteers, staff, supporters and more than 100 partnering agencies gathered at Eau Claire Market this morning to officially kick off United Way's annual fundraising campaign. Each year, Calgarians hit the streets to rally together and inspire people to give, volunteer and act towards strengthening Calgary's diverse community.

"It is incredible to see people from all across the city and our surrounding communities come together to celebrate the beginning of our campaign. It shows how committed Calgarians are to building a great city for everyone," says Ruth Ramsden-Wood, President of United Way of Calgary and Area.

The high-spirited event led supporters in a parade along the streets of downtown Calgary with one key message of action: Change Starts Here.

"We want people to know that change starts when we work together," adds Ramsden-Wood. "It starts here, it starts now and it starts with you."

Ramsden-Wood says United Way is committed to creating opportunities that focus on moving individuals and families from a life of poverty to one full of possibilities, giving kids the chance to be all they can be and helping people build strong, healthy communities.

"This year's strong attendance showcases the enormous caring spirit that is alive and well in our great city," she shares. "It is because of the support we receive that we can continue to create viable solutions to affect long-term, positive change within the community."

This year's volunteer Campaign Co-Chairs, John A. Manzoni, President and CEO of Talisman Energy Inc. and Susan Riddell Rose, President and CEO of Perpetual Energy Inc., will lend their expertise, leadership and passion for their community to what promises to be an exciting campaign.

Manzoni, a graduate of Stanford University, is a highly respected industry and community leader, with almost 30 years of experience in the international oil and gas business.

Rose has 25 years of experience in the Canadian oil and natural gas industry with a deep commitment to community philanthropy.

In addition to today's formal kickoff, more than 1,200 workplaces across Calgary and Area are also in the process of kicking off their own campaigns in support of United Way.

For more information on United Way's work in the community log onto www.calgaryunitedway.org



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Media Contact:

Kate Smitko – Manager of Media and Strategic Initiatives
Phone: (403) 836-0162
Email: kate.smitko@calgaryunitedway.org

Joey Sarpal – Communications Advisor
Phone: (403) 231-6268
Email: joey.sarpal@calgaryunitedway.org