



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 7, 2017

United Way Annual Campaign launches with a parade and a bold challenge for our city

Calgary, AB – Thousands of Calgarians rallied in support of United Way of Calgary and Area as it launched its annual fundraising campaign today. The organization's new President & CEO, Karen Young, rallied citizens to get involved in the campaign.

"Last year 34,000 people donated funding and positively impacted 178,000 Calgarians. Those who love our city can truly change it. This year, we are asking the same generous individuals to continue their support for programs and services that are essential to this city, but we are further challenging the rest of Calgary to be inspired by the collective impact so few made for so many. Calgary, imagine what we will be able to achieve when we all work together."

The celebration began with a colourful parade of more than 2,000 Calgarians, led by Young and her campaign co-chairs, Manjit Minhas and Rich Kruger. The Grand Entry featured Elder Randy Bottle, surrounded by First Nations dancers and drummers. Participants showed their community spirit in bright costumes and company t-shirts as they paraded to Olympic Plaza where celebrations continued with entertainment and inspirational addresses.

While many of those in attendance were long-time participants in the annual kickoff, new faces were acknowledged as this year's campaign goal focuses on inspiring more people to give because the need in Calgary is great.

"Last year, less than three per cent of Calgarians provided 100 per cent of the financial resources raised by United Way. In 2016, 178,000 Calgarians relied on United Way, and its agency partners, for essential social programs and services that were made possible by the generosity of these donors. Although, agency requests for funding from United Way in 2016 far exceed the dollars available, and United Way's valued and loyal donors cannot alone continue to meet the rising demand," said 2017 Campaign Co-Chair Manjit Minhas, CEO, Co-Founder of Minhas Breweries and Dragon on CBC Dragons' Den.

The crowd enthusiastically cheered and pledged to inspire more Calgarians to join the loyal United Way donors. Every donation to United Way sees an amplified impact, explains Young, "The strength at United Way is our ability to make connections among agencies, governments, corporate partners, volunteers, and philanthropists who come together to use the donations to make long-term lasting impact in our community."

"In a city of 1.2 million, we can do better," said 2017 Campaign Co-Chair Rich Kruger, Chairman, President and CEO of Imperial Oil Limited. "The simple fact is that more donors are

needed. Every donation counts. A donation as little as \$25 is a valuable contribution to the collective impact needed to ensure social programs and services are available to Calgarians who need them most. Please give if you are in a position to do so. We are all Calgary.”

United Way of Calgary and Area drives social change in three focus areas: poverty, kids and communities. Since 1940, United Way has supported agencies that assist vulnerable Calgarians. Today, United Way invests in programs and collaborations that tackle root causes of social issues, connecting Calgarians with opportunities that help them flourish.

Thanks to our partners Pembina Pipeline Corporation and Imperial no donor dollars were used to host this event.

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