



United Way
of Burlington
& Greater Hamilton

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton Annual Campaign Nears the Finish Line Campaign Chairs Urge Donors to “Take Twenty” With Goal In Sight

Hamilton – January 8th, 2010 – There are just 27 days to go in the 2009 annual campaign for the United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton and only 10 per cent of the goal is left to achieve: (10% or \$200,000 for Burlington, 9% or \$400,000 for Hamilton). Campaign Chairs Gaston Germain (Burlington) and Anne Bermingham (Hamilton) are excited about the results to-date with the finish line in sight. The campaign was launched on September 8th with a combined goal from both communities of \$6,940,000.

United Way is entering the home stretch in the midst of the **Take Twenty Challenge** which urges donors to take twenty seconds to think about the one in three who access a United Way program or service each year, and consider making a difference in the life of a family member, a neighbor, a friend or a colleague by donating \$20.00 to the United Way.

“Our Take Twenty Challenge is helping to infuse our campaign with some last-minute energy and enthusiasm. Our donors are responding -- which is terrific -- but in order to reach our goal, to help our agency partners deliver much needed services to our community, every dollar, every donation counts – particularly now,” said Campaign Chairs Gaston Germain (Burlington) and Anne Bermingham (Hamilton).

The Challenge is being launched as a means of reaching out to existing donors as well as those who might not have had an opportunity yet to give by asking them to **Take Twenty and Give Twenty**.

“All it takes is twenty seconds to donate, twenty dollars to invest -- and the results could last a lifetime. We are asking donors to “Take Twenty and Give Twenty” -- and help us change a life,” said Germain and Bermingham.

“This special appeal comes at a time when so many in our community are suffering as a result of difficult economic circumstances and our partners and agencies are experiencing increased demand for their services. Our volunteers are hard at work and fundraising efforts are still under way in many workplaces. With their support, we will be working tirelessly to ensure that our commitment to the community is realized. We hope people understand that we need the community’s support to reach our goal,” said United Way CEO Len Lifchus.

In terms of the campaign’s overall progress United Way volunteers and staff expressed their gratitude to the community, particularly given the impact of the recession: “The results to date, given the impact of the economy on workplaces and on our donors are inspiring. Our donors are

incredibly generous and they have once again, stepped up to the plate. We know we can count on them to help us reach our goal but it is going to require all of us, working together to reach it. ”

Both Campaign Chairs noted that the 2009 campaign thus far has had some wonderful highlights, from long time United Way supporters to those who have recently decided to support United Way.

“In Burlington, we have had so many examples of generosity, but two campaigns stand out with a combined total increase of more than \$18,000. The City of Burlington workplace campaign increased by close to 15 per cent -- an outstanding result. And technology company L-3 Wescam, in only their third year of running a United Way campaign, increased their donation by 20 per cent over last year. This company’s special “Computer Giveaway” program is a year-round success story. Computers which are being retired from use are offered to employees for purchase, with the cost of the purchase price going directly to United Way as a donation,” said Germain.

“At the City of Hamilton employees increased their donation by more than 7.5 per cent and their commitment to community is clearly part of the City’s culture -- new hires are being introduced to United Way via an innovative outreach program. And Community Living Hamilton’s enthusiasm was clear for all to see when they used the display board in front of their offices to urge the community to donate to United Way. This after raising 30 per cent more this year than last,” said Bermingham.

“These examples demonstrate the incredible enthusiasm and creativity exhibited by organizations committed to making a difference in the lives of others,” noted Germain and Bermingham.

The campaign update was held at St. Matthew’s House in Hamilton today. St. Matthew’s House is a charitable, non-profit multi-service agency that serves the needs of families, children, youth seniors and individuals living in poverty as well as children with special needs and their families through a variety of services and programs. The mission of St. Matthew’s House is to give hope, help improve the lives and build the capacities of people most in need, living across the city of Hamilton.

Executive Director the Reverend Canon Wendy Roy spoke about the importance of United Way donations and support, to her agency’s mission. “Our work would not be possible without the generous support of United Way donors. Our message to the community is in line with this year’s campaign theme: “A community is not truly great until it is great for everyone”. I would urge all of those who have not yet done so to donate to United Way, or if they have, to consider an added contribution. We know and have seen just how many lives can be changed and enhanced as a result of every dollar which we receive.”

United Way stresses there is still time for people to participate in the 2009 campaign. Take the Take Twenty Challenge **TODAY!** It’s as easy as going to the United Way’s website www.uwaybh.ca and donate online or call 905-527-4543.

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For further information:
Len Lifchus
CEO, United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton
905-527-4576 Ext. 230
llifchus@uwaybh.ca