

## In a time of hurt, citizens responding to United Way

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THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

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The goal is within reach.

The United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton is \$400,000 short of its \$4.86 million Hamilton goal and \$200,000 short of the \$2.08 million Burlington target.

But officials are optimistic about reaching the combined \$6.94 million goal in the last stretch of the 2009 campaign ending Feb 4.

Campaign organizers are surprised only 9 per cent remains to be raised in Hamilton and 10 per cent in Burlington, given the disastrous 2009 economic turndown that caused both job losses and increased food bank needs.

Fundraisers worked hard to make sure donations were still coming in during the downturn. New initiatives, such as encouraging dentists to contribute or raise \$1 per client visit for example, helped.

While Hamiltonians have kept up with campaign fundraising so far, the needs in the community are greater, say organizers.

Cannon Wendy Roy, executive director of St. Matthew's House that helps the poor, knows how desperate the need is for food, clothing and basic items. St. Matthew's saw a 17 per cent increase in 2009 in people using its assistance programs funded by the United Way.

About 25,000 families and individuals now use the programs, she said.

"A poor economy unfortunately means there are a lot more needs," said Burlington campaign chairman Gaston Germain. People are urged to take 20 seconds to think about those in need in our community, and take another 20 seconds to donate \$20 to help change a life.

"No child should go to bed hungry. No senior should be left alone and lonely," says CEO Len Lifchus.

To donate, go to [www.uwaybh.ca](http://www.uwaybh.ca) or call 905-527-4543.

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#### 2009 FUNDRAISING GOALS:

Total: \$6.94 million

Hamilton: \$4.86 million

Burlington: \$2.08 million

As of Jan. 8:

Burlington

\$1,880,000 (90% of goal)

Greater Hamilton

\$4,460,000 (91% of goal)

Total to date:

\$6,340,000

For information or to donate, go to [uwaybh.ca](http://uwaybh.ca)