

United Way Contributions Critical to Community Campaign dollars strategically invested in youth-related issues

The annual United Way campaign is a work in progress that will benefit all Winnipeggers. Tom Bryk, United Way of Winnipeg's 2005 Campaign Chair, announced today at the second public reporting session that Winnipeggers have contributed \$10.5 million or 63% of the organization's most ambitious community goal ever at \$16.6 million.

Billed as a "work of art", the report session highlighted the work of Employee Campaign Chairs who head up workplace campaigns, and featured a live art display from Graffiti Art Programming students, including Cody "Art" Starr, the face of "successful youth" in the 2005 United Way campaign. Hosted by Laurie Mustard, the report session also included a presentation by Steve Wilson, Executive Director of Graffiti Art Programming, whose timely speech about creative alternatives to youth gangs struck a chord with the audience of about 170.



Cody "Art" Starr, the face of "successful youth" in the 2005 United Way campaign.

on track when they take a wrong turn."

Bryk is optimistic about Winnipeg's future, noting that we live in a strong city that continues to gain momentum. "Winnipeggers are not content to sit back and let gangs take over our streets. By donating to United Way, we can build a strong future for our city," he said.

"It's refreshing to hear some much-needed positive news about youth in our city," said Mr. Bryk. "We've heard so much lately about gangs and young criminals and how we, as a community, need to address this issue."

"United Way's youth strategies address the root causes that turn kids into criminals," he continued. "We believe the best way to deal with crime is to prevent it from happening in the first place and make sure there are supports in place to get individuals back



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Money raised during the annual campaign is invested in strategies that reduce poverty; build safe, vibrant neighborhoods; and provide support for healthy, successful youth. Some of the strategies United Way invests in to provide long-term solutions to youth issues include positive role model and mentorship programs to help children and youth make positive choices; computer literacy programs that level the playing field and offer youth a chance to develop contemporary skills; and youth drop-in centres that provide safe, healthy alternatives and enhance knowledge and capacities. Sixteen per cent of donors' dollars last year were invested in enabling successful youth and children by providing safe and positive learning environments, such as after-school and mentorship programs. Other monies raised by United Way would ultimately benefit youth by strengthening families, neighbourhoods and reducing poverty.

"Our contribution to United Way has never been more critical," concluded Mr. Bryk. "With a gift to United Way, we have the ability to change lives. "

The next Report Session is Monday, November 21 at 7:30 a.m. at the Union Centre.

For more information, please contact:
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