

# MEDIA RELEASE

Phone: (204) 477-5360 Fax: (204) 453-6198 Website: [www.unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca](http://www.unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca)

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**For Immediate Release:  
Monday, April 2, 2007**

## **ASPERS DONATE \$500,000 TO UNITED WAY TO HELP INNER CITY YOUTH**

United Way is getting a big boost in support of its work with inner city youth, now and in the future. It is with extreme gratitude that United Way has accepted a generous gift of \$500,000 from David and Ruth Asper to the Tomorrow Fund.

David and Ruth Asper, Winnipeg philanthropists, have been long time supporters of United Way. "Sometimes, all it takes to make a difference in the lives of young people is for someone to believe in them," said David Asper, Executive Vice President, CanWest Global Communications Corp. Ruth adds, "It's our hope that this donation, now and in the years to come, will help surround hundreds of Winnipeg young people with mentors, opportunities, and hope – the thing each one of us needs to be successful."

The Aspers' gift will have a direct and lasting impact on young people in the inner city. As soon as a gift is made to the Tomorrow Fund, United Way's endowment fund, it generates a new, ongoing source of revenue. Every year, the investment income is used to support innovative projects throughout the city, allowing United Way to carry out its mission: To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action.

The money will be used to fund United Way's partner youth agencies to improve the lives of young people. One of them is The Coalition of Community-Based Youth-Serving Agencies, which is made up of 17 local organizations that offer free leadership coaching, life-skill development, mentorship and recreation programming for children and youth. These organizations work together to provide collaborative programming for youth, and to advocate on behalf of marginalized youth in our city. Member organizations include Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg, Rossbrook House, Teen Stop Jeunesse, Graffiti Art Gallery, and Ndinawe Youth Resource Centre.

At United Way, we realize the importance of investing in our community's future generation. Research shows students who spend three or more hours alone or without purposeful activity per day show an increased risk of drug and alcohol use, more stress, anger, depression and behaviour problems. However, research also shows that 80% of children whose family depend on social assistance that have access to mentoring and after school activities no longer rely on social assistance as adults. Thanks to United Way funding, more than 16,000 Winnipeg youth currently access mentorship programs and after school activities each year.

Supporting inner city youth is a longtime passion of David and Ruth Asper. To that end, they are issuing a friendly challenge to fellow Winnipeggers to follow their example and consider giving to United Way's Tomorrow Fund.

The Tomorrow Fund was officially launched in 1990 and its capital is currently valued at \$6.5 million. More than 1,000 people have made gifts in support of the endowment. Anyone can establish a lasting personal legacy for their community by making a gift to United Way's Tomorrow Fund.

*For more information please contact:*

Kate Taylor  
Manager, Media Relations and Communications  
United Way of Winnipeg  
477-5360 ext. 234  
[ktaylor@unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:ktaylor@unitedwaywinnipeg.mb.ca)

Kim Jasper  
Director of Communications  
989-5525 (office)  
293-0578 (cell)

### **Media Opportunity:**

\*The media is invited to drop by Rossbrook House, a neighbourhood centre for children, youth and young adults to speak with representatives from United Way, and The Coalition of Community-Based Youth-Serving Agencies about the impact and results of United Way dollars at work. The centre, at 658 Ross Avenue, will be open to the media at 3:30 p.m. Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.