



## United Way Centraide

### THE MARKET

The United Way-Centraide Movement (UW-C) in Canada is made up of 124 autonomous, volunteer-based UWs-Cs located in ten provinces and two territories and a national organization, United Way of Canada-Centraide Canada (UWC-CC). Its mission is "to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action." UWC-CC acts as a voice for its members within the Canadian voluntary sector and internationally and provides leadership, programs and services to its members. The national organization also maintains a close relationship with United Way of America, United Way International (UWI) and through UWI, with other UW organizations around the world.

Next to governments, the UW-C Movement is the largest funder of the voluntary sector and social services in Canada. Each year, UWs-Cs raise upwards of \$430 million, the vast majority of which is reinvested in local communities to support programs and services directed at improving the social conditions of Canadians. The UW-C Movement employs approximately 900 staff and engages tens of thousands of volunteers in various capacities.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

UW-C achievements are measured by the communities they strengthened, the people they touched, the resources they mobilized and the productive partnerships they forged. UW-C is about attracting or engaging people who want to achieve lasting impact in their community in order to meet the needs of individuals whose lives are changed as a result of its work. There are many examples of UW-C achievements in communities across Canada. To know more about your community UW-C, visit [www.unitedway.ca](http://www.unitedway.ca).

As a collective, the achievements of the UW-C will lead to improved social conditions for individuals and families across Canada. This is best highlighted by pan-Canadian initiatives. For example, 211 is a free, easy-to-remember three digit



phone number to non-emergency human services that is located in five centres and growing. There are plans for a national roll-out, with the goal of extending 211 to all Canadians by 2011.

UWC-CC is also leading a national children's initiative focused on improving the well being of children and families and ensuring that all children in

Canada have the opportunity to succeed. Finally, Action for Neighbourhood Change is a unique learning initiative that is exploring and assessing approaches to locally driven neighbourhood revitalization in order to enhance the capacity of individuals and families to build and sustain strong, healthy communities.

### HISTORY

The UW-C Movement was born out of a "community collective" philosophy which began in Denver in 1887 and spread to Canada prior to the 1920s. This was a turbulent time in world history. Canada was enmeshed in the Great War to end all wars and the first threads of our social safety net were still almost 30 years away. Individuals and families were reliant upon their own ingenuity and the generosity of their neighbours and community. It is in this environment that UW-C first emerged. In 1917 in Montreal and Toronto, charities started community collectives to raise funds to strengthen their communities.

Additional community collectives sprang up across Canada over time. Known originally as Red Feather, Community Chest and the United Appeal, it was not until the 1970s that these organizations took the name of United Way and Centraide (in 1973 and 1975, respectively). A national office was first established in 1939. Today, there are 124 UWs-Cs across Canada, with a presence from coast to coast.

In the 20th century, UW-C gained a reputation as a premier umbrella fund-raiser and became particularly active in workplaces due to a partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress and agreements

with corporations and all orders of government. Each year, millions of dollars have been raised and reinvested in communities through funding of voluntary, not-for-profit, human and social service organizations.

Today UW-C is a catalyst for community action — bringing people and resources together to create positive change in communities across Canada.

### THE PRODUCT

UWs-Cs have the dual strengths of being locally driven and nationally connected. This unique feature allows them to remain responsive and accountable to local communities while drawing on the strength of a pan-Canadian Movement.





UW-C recognizes and appreciates the significant role they have, as community organizations and as a Movement, to be a catalyst for effective community action. UW-C is committed to bringing citizens together to identify and realize a vision of better lives, improved conditions and stronger communities for everyone.

Achieving the vision requires input and involvement from people across all parts of our communities. Whether they participate by volunteering, contributing financially or providing knowledge and expertise, people are seeing the powerful results — the impact — of collective action.

By providing safe, healthy environments for children and youth — opening doors for their lifelong success. By supporting people's efforts to escape poverty, live independently and overcome challenges — building self-reliance and capacity to give back. By building safer, more welcoming and economically strong neighbourhoods — creating a vibrant community that can better respond to challenges now and in the future.

In 2005, Canadians invested over \$430 million in the UW-C Movement.



## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

UWs-Cs are keenly aware that the environment in which we operate is always changing. Public policy, demographic and social trends, technological innovations, economic changes, and shifts in individual and corporate values and expectations have all experienced major change in recent years.

With significant changes in their local environments, and with the issues facing their communities becoming more and more complex, communities across Canada were looking for leadership. UWs-Cs challenged themselves to respond and united behind a common mission, aspirations



and values and a commitment to “achieving community impact through community building.”

By bringing together a broad cross section of society to identify, track and address community issues, to raise and leverage funds and to engage individuals through volunteering, UW-C mobilizes communities into action. Integral to their community building efforts is the belief that all communities have assets which need to be identified and built upon and that societal issues must be dealt with holistically and at their root.

## PROMOTION

Campaign achievement is demonstrated through the strong commitment of our UWs-Cs who marshal local, provincial and national media channels; through corporate and union workplace campaign support; from individuals who provide support financially and/or through time; and through cross promotion and sponsorship partnerships — all of which support the annual fall UW-C campaign and year-round awareness of creating community impact through community building efforts.

As part of the partnership between UWC-CC and the Canadian Labour Congress, unions encourage their members to work with and volunteer for UWs-Cs and community agencies all year long. Many unions get directly involved in workplace campaigns, promoting member donation and volunteer activities during campaign.

The “Thanks a Million” national award of UWC-CC recognizes the corporations and unions that have facilitated their employees or members raising \$1 million or more for UWs-Cs across the country. An advertisement is generally run in a nationally distributed newspaper, which offers further recognition to the UW-C Movement.

With the continued rapid evolution of technology, UWC-CC has updated its public Web site at [www.unitedway.ca](http://www.unitedway.ca). The Web site acts as a portal for Canadian citizens to connect to their community UW-C. It also serves as a valuable marketing tool as it can be viewed and accessed by virtually anyone.

National initiatives and partnerships such as Action for Neighbourhood Change and 211 have received attention from various constituents through different local and national networks.



## BRAND VALUES

Organizations that are successful in this turbulent, complex and fast-moving environment share common characteristics. First, they have a clear mission and brand position. Second, they work differently, investing heavily in knowledge and knowledge management and redesigning their processes. Third, they boast strong leadership and a laser-like focus. Fourth, they deliver against their clear mission and objectives.

UWs-Cs are doing just that. In May 2003, the UW-C Movement adopted a Movement-wide mission: “To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action,” as well as aspirations and values to support this mission.

The goal of the UW-C Movement is to achieve community impact through community building. Community impact has been described as “cumulative, lasting, measurable change that improves

lives, builds resilient communities and mobilizes collective action.”

Through Interbrand research conducted in the United States, the calculated brand value of \$34.7 billion U.S. would place it in the top ten of the world's most valuable brands.

Photos: cscottrobinsonphoto.com

## THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT UNITED WAYS – CENTRAIDES IN CANADA

- Day of Caring® is a UW-C program that connects organizations and employees to spend a day working directly with the agencies and programs that help people in the community.
- The number of Canadians with access to 211 grew in 2005 from 3.2 million to 4.6 million or from 10 to 15 percent of the total population.
- UW-C-funded union counselling courses train union members to link other members in need with the agencies and services their donations have supported through the annual campaign.
- UW-C Leadership Development Services delivers training to voluntary boards to strengthen their governance and accountability.