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YWCA CALGARY

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VISION STATEMENT

A CORNERSTONE FOR WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

MISSION STATEMENT

TO OFFER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES, PROVIDING THEM WITH THE SKILLS, ABILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND BENEFIT FROM HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

MESSAGE

FROM THE CEO AND PRESIDENT
YWCA of CALGARY

Dear Friends,

Like many other organizations and businesses, the YWCA of Calgary is holding its breath because of the downturn in the economy. We have moved quickly to contain costs; unfortunately, this also means we may not be able to look after some of Calgary's most vulnerable citizens.

Last year, we served nearly 4,000 children and more than 11,000 women and men. We expect these numbers to grow in 2009. Already this year, we have seen an increase in need at our emergency shelter, our crisis and transitional housing facility and our skills training centre, as well as for counselling, among our other programs and services. We know more women and children will become homeless in the next few months, more will fall below the poverty line and there will be a higher number of domestic violence cases.

The YWCA of Calgary is, and always has been, a lean organization — engaging people who have made service to our community a life choice over personal wealth. We have also been fortunate to have corporate partners, community groups and individuals who understand and have seen the results of our work. We do not take their commitment to us for granted, and hope that they will ask others to support the YWCA of Calgary as well.

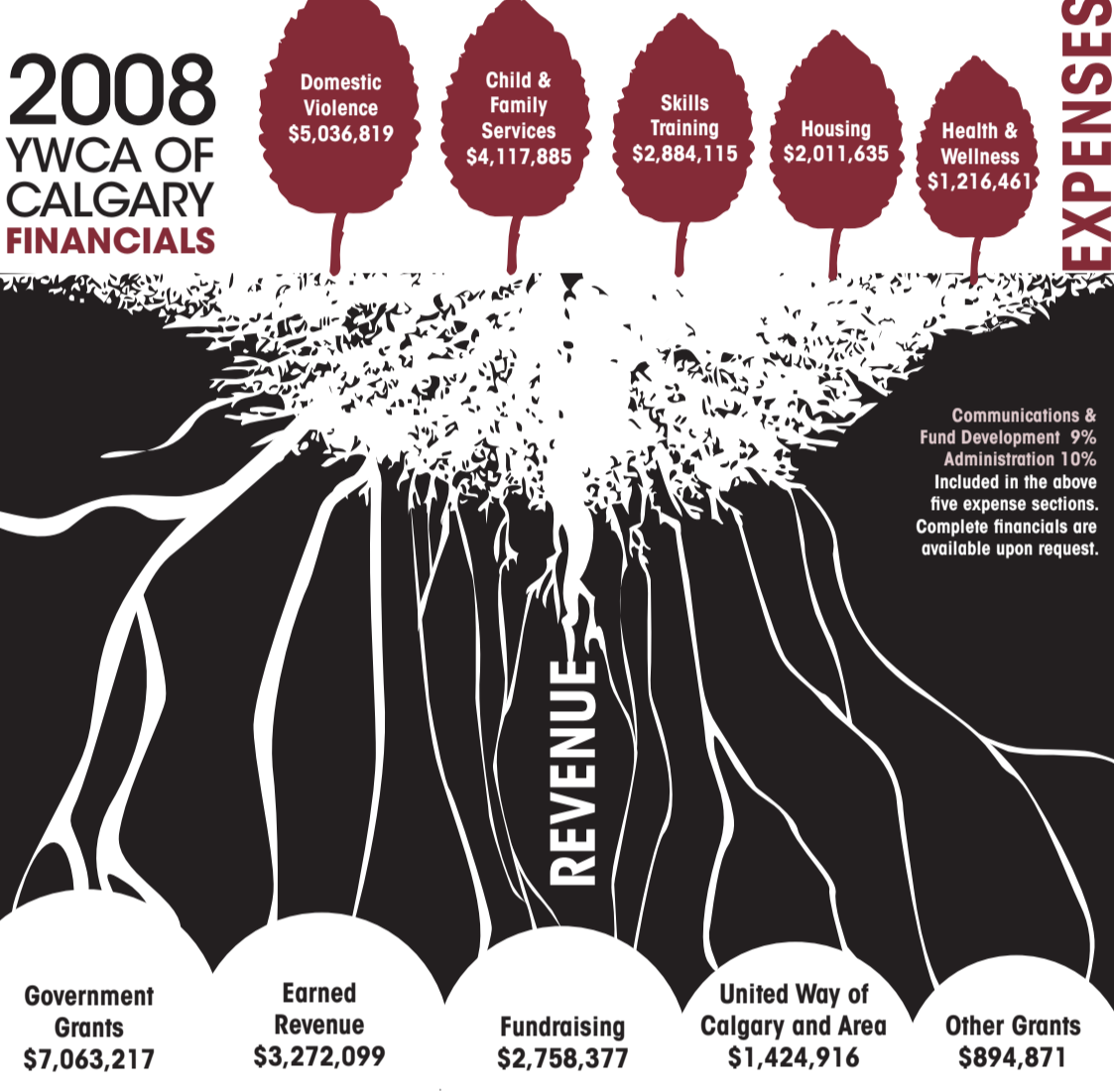
We know that everyone is hurting in these tough economic times; but most of us are not starting out with nothing. If as individuals we all do a bit, together, we can ride these rough economic waters and make sure to look after those women and children in our community who are in crisis or transition.

Like all Calgarians, the YWCA of Calgary will take this opportunity to stay focused on our core work. We will use creative ways to contain costs and generate revenue, while continuing to deliver on our promise — to build a better community free of domestic violence, poverty and homelessness much the same way we have been doing for the past 98 years, in both good times and bad.

Jill Wyatt, CEO

Mary Ellen Neilson, President

2008 YWCA OF CALGARY FINANCIALS



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2008

Our warmest thanks to all contributors from the smallest donation to the largest corporate sponsorships, your generosity is what makes it all possible.

The YWCA of Calgary receives the Embracing United Way award for its ten-year history with the United Way of Calgary and Area and year-round promotion of the campaign.

Global Calgary and the YWCA of Calgary celebrate a decade of the Woman of Vision initiative, recognizing extraordinary women in our community.

RBC partners with the YWCA of Calgary for the first annual RBC Keep A Roof Over Their Heads fundraiser in support of crisis and transitional housing for women and children in Calgary.

Vermilion Energy Trust presents a \$625,000 cheque to the YWCA of Calgary as part of a combined \$4-million commitment the company and the "Friends of Vermilion" — business founders, board of directors, senior management and staff — made to the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre. The Centre gives Calgary women training in carpentry and life skills so they can move their families out of poverty and into independence.

CTV Calgary, Energy 101.5 and Golden Acre Garden Centre pick the YWCA of Calgary for its first-ever Christmas fundraising campaign, Give the Gift of Safety.

For the fifth consecutive year, the Calgary Herald selects the YWCA of Calgary's emergency shelter - YWCA Sheriff King Home - as a recipient of the Calgary Herald Christmas Fund in support of therapy for children of trauma.

The YWCA of Halifax adopts the YWCA of Calgary's Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, a highly successful fundraising initiative.

ARC Resources, a long-time supporter of the YWCA of Calgary, invests in the YWCA's infrastructure needs.

A CLIENT STORY

Calgary Herald
Feb. 18, 2009
Byline: Valerie Fortney
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At the tender age of 20, Jillian Ashley was living in a basement suite, a single mother of a three-year-old and "barely surviving day-to-day" in a dead-end job. Each day on her drive in to work, she'd pass by the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre in southeast Calgary.

"The sign saying they were looking for women to train for trades intrigued me," she says. "But it took me months to get the guts to go in."

Two months after she screwed up her courage and walked into the centre, Ashley's life has taken a decidedly different turn. On Monday morning, the young mom takes time out of her busy day of honing the skills of her trade to talk about her current project and her ambitious plans for the future. One of 16 female aspiring carpenters from the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre participating in a new partnership with Habitat for Humanity—called the Habitat for Humanity's Women Build initiative—she's spending the next week doing a variety of construction jobs in a new partnership with Habitat for Humanity—called the Habitat for Humanity's Women Build initiative—she's spending the next week doing a variety of construction jobs in the Mayland Heights neighbourhood. As she provides a tour of one of the closer-to-completion homes, a beautiful, sunlit three-storey with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a back deck for entertaining, it's clear this project has more meaning for the petite carpentry student than the mere opportunity to learn her trade. "Look at that big master bedroom, can you imagine how excited some single mom will be when she sees it?" she tells me as we tour the upper floors of the bright, high-ceilinged, white-walled home.

"It's pretty neat to me, that I've come full circle, from not knowing what I was doing with my own life to helping create homes for women whose situation I understand so well."

When you find out where Ashley's come from in a few short years, it's pretty neat indeed. At the tender age of 13, the former Vancouverite ran away from home. "I wasn't an abused kid," she says of her only childhood raised in a loving family. "I just had this idea that I wanted to skip childhood and go straight to adulthood, and I wasn't going to sit around at home and wait." Over the next few years, she lived on the streets of Vancouver, then Calgary. A two-year relationship with a young man resulted in the birth of her daughter, Chloe.

"I saw more in my teen years than some people see in a lifetime, and I got pretty street smart," she says of those years. "But I knew I needed more than street smarts to build a good life for me and my daughter."

The Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre, says Arlene Adamson, is not only exciting but symbolic. "This new program gives our clients a chance not of just a job, but a career," says Adamson, director of fund development for the YWCA of Calgary, of the centre that's been in operation for two years. "They can actually plan, not just dream, of owning a house one day." It all makes perfect sense for Jillian Ashley, who's gaining a little inspiration in the midst of helping other low-income families realize their dreams. Ashley and her young daughter still live in that basement suite, but she's confident that in time, she too will have the kind of home she's now helping to build for someone else.

"This program will give me a trade, and it's teaching me life skills I need to find my place in the world," she says with a smile as she looks up at the pretty row of soon-to-be-homes. "It means a lot to me that I get to learn and help others at the same time."

To find out more about the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre, call 403.705.7550

www.ywcaofcalgary.com/training/

