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OUR VISION: A COMMUNITY WHERE NO FAMILY IS HOMELESS

Calgarians Standing Behind Effort to End Family Homelessness Inn from the Cold Releases 2010 Report to the Community

Calgary – The battle to end family homelessness is far from over, but progress is being made thanks to the support of the Calgary community.

“This year, Calgarians truly demonstrated their engagement with the Inn’s vision of a city where no family is homeless. Their generous financial donations, thousands of hours of volunteer time and participation in Inn events and grassroots initiatives was extraordinary,” says Yvette Rasmussen, Executive Director, Inn from the Cold.

In 2010, the Inn served 217 families, including 319 children, with over 34,000 nutritious meals served and 10,361 beds provided through the organization’s emergency shelter program. Over 72,000 hours were given by more than 3,200 active volunteers.

Aligning with the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, Inn from the Cold expanded its program offerings and resources at the emergency family shelter, where families receive on-site support and benefit from comprehensive community outreach efforts.

“We saw a dramatic decrease in the amount of time families stay at the emergency shelter, moving from a 2009 average of three months to a 2010 average of just 21 days,” says Rasmussen. 117 families moved into housing through the support of Rapid Exit and the Inn Family Support Team (Dec 09 – Dec 10) and 160 families were assisted through Inn from the Cold’s pilot Diversionary program, which helped at-risk families remain in their homes.

Highlights from the Report, that focuses on the growth and change within the 15-year-old organization, include a glowing endorsement by Mayor Nenshi, who says, “Through the provision of shelter, help and hope, Inn from the Cold demonstrates that passion to make our city even better...As an important partner in Calgary’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, Inn from the Cold is demonstrating that we can end homelessness by participating in a system reform based upon interventions that work.”

The first quarter of 2011 shows upswing in the number of low-income families struggling to remain in their existing housing. This trend is consistent with what is happening in the international community, where unprecedented numbers of families are entering homelessness, without the available resources or ability to respond to the need.

Adds Rasmussen, “Inn from the Cold continues to work diligently with community families to sustain housing and prevent homelessness. In the first two months of 2011 our Floating Case Management Prevention Program intervened to save the housing of 59 families destined for the shelter system.”

The Inn will build upon the supports established in 2010 to continue to develop innovative and collaborate responses to the existing and emerging needs of Calgary’s most vulnerable families. Inn from the Cold’s 2010 Report to the Community is available at www.innfromthecold.org or by emailing inn@innfromthecold.org.

