

May 24, 2009

The Community Welcomes Edmonton's Homeless

The Shaw Conference Centre was host to Edmonton's homeless today. Over 1000 people attended this special event where they were offered free services from more than 50 agencies. Some of the services offered include: haircuts, counseling, birth control, long distance phone calls, and immunizations. Guests had the opportunity for valuable face time with organizations that offered information about housing, employment and training services. Each guest also left with a care kit containing items such as a hair comb, shampoo, lip balm and sanitary protection for women.

"An event like Homeless Connect is invaluable to Edmonton's less fortunate," says Susan McGee, Executive Director of Homeward Trust Edmonton. "When trying to get assistance, people can be overwhelmed with the number of service providers and the layers of government they have to deal with. Having one place where they can seek help and ask questions goes a long way toward simplifying the entire process for everyone."

Edmonton's second Homeless Connect event featured many exciting new additions this year, including a Volunteer Rally with guest speakers, dental services, and a speaker's corner. Aboriginal elders also offered counseling in a teepee and held a smudge ceremony.

"We couldn't be any more pleased with the day's proceedings," says Ione Challborn, Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association – Edmonton Region. "The volunteers were smiling. The guests were smiling. I'm certain we made a positive contribution to our guests' lives today."

The support from the community has been tremendous. The 230 volunteer positions were filled one month before today's event, and most were eager to report how meaningful the experience was for them.

"Today was a reminder that the homeless are mostly kind, talented people who just need a hand overcoming their barriers," says volunteer Lindsay Cave. "I'll definitely be at the next Homeless Connect."

For more information please contact:

Kalpana Robbins
Director of Communications,
Homeward Trust Edmonton
krobbins@homewardtrust.ca
780.496.2632 or 780.700.2602

Crystal McPhee
Communications Coordinator
Shaw Conference Centre (EEDC)
cmcphee@edmonton.com
780.917-7897 or 780.862.6474

Homeless Connect Edmonton is organized by volunteer committees that provide direction and support for the event. Homeward Trust Edmonton, a not-for-profit organization providing leadership and resources towards ending homelessness, coordinates the overall work plan and ensures the event aligns with similar Edmonton initiatives.

Aboriginal Health Services-
Capital Region

Alberta Employment and
Immigration Services

Alberta Envirofuels Inc.

Alberta Health Services

Alberta Housing and Urban
Affairs

Alberta Research Council

Angela Ostafichuk Photography

Beth Shalom Synagogue

Betty Dewar

Bissell Centre

Blue Kettle Foods

Boyle McCauley Health Centre

Boyle Street Community
Services

Bridge Brand Foods

Canadian Native Friendship
Centre

Canadian Mental Health
Association - Edmonton Region

Caritas Health Group

Casino Yellowhead

City of Edmonton

Coinamatic

Coca-Cola Ltd.

Correctional Services of Canada

Curves for Women

Darren James Harkness-*Web
Design*

Dorcas Circle of Peace Lutheran
Church

Edmonton Dental Assistants
Association

Edmonton Community Legal
Centre

Edmonton Economic
Development Corp.

Edmonton Eskimos

Edmonton Food Bank

Edmonton John Howard Society

Edmonton Journal

Edmonton North Primary Care
Network

Edmonton Oliver Primary Care
Network



THANK YOU Service Providers & Sponsors

Edmonton Public Library

Edmonton Transit System (ETS)

Elizabeth Fry Society

Flo's Beauty Salon

George Spady Centre

Goodkey Show Services

Homeward Trust Edmonton

Hope Mission

Institute of Advancements of
Aboriginals

Kindness in Action-*Dental
Services*

Leduc Food Bank

Marvel College

Mike McLaughlin-*Videographer*

Pattison Outdoor Advertising

Peace Lutheran Church

Priority Printing

Prostitution Awareness and
Action Foundation of Edmonton

Realtors Association of
Edmonton

Running Room

Salvation Army

Sharp's Audio Visual Ltd.

Shaw Communications

Shaw Conference Centre

Showtech Power & Lighting

Spark - The Branding Shop

Starbucks

Street Works

Student Legal Services

Sysco Foods Canada

The Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel

United Way InKind Centre

WCB Staff

Woodward Design

Youth Emergency Centre

14222591 AB Ltd.