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September 16th, 2015

**Media Advisory
For Immediate Release**

United Way's 2015 Campaign Has Officially Kicked Off!

United Way Cambridge and North Dumfries is proud to have officially kicked off our 2015 Campaign today at Transchem Inc. We were honoured to be joined by over 100 members of the community who represented the diversity of our partners within all levels of the government sector; the corporate, public, and non-profit sectors; the labour movement; donors; volunteers; family members, friends, well-wishers, and supporters from all walks of life. We could not have asked for a more solid footing from which to launch our annual campaign.

This is an important year for us at United Way. This year marks our 75th anniversary in Cambridge and North Dumfries. For 75 years, we've been bringing people and organizations together to make our community stronger. To celebrate that history, we shared with our community today that we will be collecting and sharing 75 stories of the incredible people who have rallied with United way at some point or another over the past 75 years to make a lasting difference in Cambridge and North Dumfries.

Today therefore marked the beginning of two very important campaigns: our campaign to raise \$2,325,000 to impact as many as 51,000 lives over the upcoming year; and our campaign to share our community's stories of determination, generosity, and strength.

This year's campaign goal was announced by Nathan Ewing, President of Transchem Inc. and our volunteer Chair of the 2015 United Way Campaign.

"Like many others who've lived and worked in this community for a long time, I felt fairly familiar with United Way," said Ewing. "I was astonished when I learned that we impact 1 in 3 people through United Way." Ewing went on to share that United Way has given him the opportunity to give back. "This is what the annual United Way campaign does for so many of us. It creates an opportunity for us to get involved, get connected, and make a difference."

CEO Ron Dowhaniuk shared his sincere thanks with all those who respond to United Way's call for action, year after year. "Every year, more than 10,000 individuals and organizations in Cambridge and North Dumfries join forces with United Way. What unites us is a shared vision. In that vision, children reach their highest potential. People have the resources and opportunity to move from poverty to possibility. Individuals, families, and entire neighbourhoods are resilient and thriving. And people are empowered to make a difference through volunteering." Dowhaniuk acknowledged that this shared vision is what brings people out to our events, particularly our campaign kickoff. "Thank you for continuing to rally with United Way to make our community stronger."

Amanda Melnick, Director of Resource Development, acknowledged the generous contributions of United Way's Campaign Pacesetters, which are organizations that pledge their support, even before the campaign has begun. "Pacesetters help to set the bar for the community and help to inspire and motivate others to join them," Melnick said.

To launch our campaign to share "75 stories for 75 years," United Way's Marketing and Community Engagement Specialist, Suhanya Ketheeswaran, told the first of those stories to all those who were gathered at today's kickoff event. "I'm here to share the story of an incredible woman who knows firsthand what it's like to not have a support system," Ketheeswaran said. Ketheeswaran went on to describe how someone who found herself completely alone was able to find stability, a safe place, and an opportunity to succeed through the support provided by her local community centre and United Way partner agency, the Preston Heights Neighbourhood Group.

This and upcoming stories will be posted to the United Way website at www.uwcambridge.on.ca.

The event ended with Campaign Chair Nathan Ewing challenging the community to "set the bar just a little bit higher this year." "We have an opportunity," he said, "to do more; give more; and demand more from one another. Together, we truly are Possibility."

Our annual campaign will end January 2015 and our fundraising total will be announced in February 2015 at United Way's 4th annual Community Achievement Night.

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Further information about United Way of Cambridge and North Dumfries is available at <http://www.uwcambbridge.on.ca/>