

**News Release**  
**For immediate release – May 28, 2009**



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***United Way expands to become a truly provincial Organization.***

**St. John's** - United Way of Avalon was founded only recently in 2005 and is the only United Way organization in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

While it was always envisioned that United Way presence would be established throughout the province, the decision was made to start with the Avalon Peninsula. This geographic focus was seen as being more manageable for the start-up organization, and would ensure the successful integration of the United Way movement in the province. Over the last five years, the most common barriers to our growth have been the limited geographic scope of our organization, and the local implication of "Avalon" as a title. The provincial government, labour organizations and large companies have indicated that they could only truly support the organization if it was provincial in nature.

With the organization's measurable success and growth in its first years, the demand and need to service areas outside the Avalon Peninsula both in Campaign activities and in the ability to support Registered Charities has increased. Since 2005, United Way has raised over \$2.5 million dollars through its workplace campaign activities. These funds are raised through individual donations; special events held in workplaces; and corporate donations that match all or a portion of their employee contributions. Donors are given the choice to invest in the United Way Community Fund (which is then distributed to Registered Charities through an application process) or to the charity of their choice.

Brenda Kitchen, Executive Director of The Arthritis Society has seen first hand the benefits that United Way brings to the community. "The funds raised through United Way workplace campaigns are pooled, giving a huge impact to these individual donations. The Community Fund support we receive at the Arthritis Society, and that other Charities in our province have been fortunate to receive, allow us to focus our time and resources on the programs and services we provide to our clients. Having United Way expand to encompass the entire province will do wonders for many grassroots charities, and The Arthritis Society wholeheartedly endorses and supports the work they do. They have been doing great things for several years, and this move will only increase their ability to help our province become a truly great place for everyone."

Taking all of these factors into consideration, effective April 1, 2009 United Way of Avalon officially became United Way of Newfoundland and Labrador. A Steering Committee has been struck to ensure that stakeholders are informed and consulted with the implementation of this expansion.

***Now more than ever, we are: United. In Our Backyard.***

**For further information, contact:**

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