

NEWS RELEASE

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FEET AND HEARTS STEP LIVELY TO KEEP NEIGHBORS HOUSED AND WARM
United Way of Anchorage calls community members to join the Walk for Warmth

Anchorage, AK – Put your feet and warm heart in action to help keep our neighbors and friends housed and warm. United Way of Anchorage seeks more caring neighbors to join a community of people who are uniting to end family homelessness by telling friends, raising money and walking in the 4th annual WALK FOR WARMTH.

On Saturday, February 8, individuals, families, even costumed teams of co-workers, will brave the cold for a fundraising and advocacy walk downtown to help families on the financial brink remain warm, housed, and avoid homelessness so they can create brighter futures for their children.

“For an Anchorage family with a household income of \$35,000, more than 50% of their income will likely go to housing. What’s left is some tough decisions when it comes to food, utilities, child care, needed medicines and transportation,” said Michele Brown, President, United Way of Anchorage. “The light is coming back. Spring is only a few months away. We can help our less fortunate neighbors get over financial hump this year. We want you to join us on February 8th. It’s free to walk and you’re sure to meet some like-minded people. Your feet may get a little cold but it will warm your heart.”

In 2013 Alaska 2-1-1, United Way’s statewide help line, provided more than 30,000 referrals to Anchorage residents seeking help. The lion’s share of those referrals – 52% – were for basic needs such as food, shelter and rent and utility assistance.

This year's goal is \$60,000. All proceeds directly benefit families by providing assistance to help keep them housed and warm this winter. To further the impact this year's community of walkers will have, the Rasmuson Foundation will generously match Walk for Warmth contributions \$1 to \$1, up to \$25,000.

“For those barely balanced on the financial tightrope, all it takes is a single upset, a temporary job loss, an unexpected medical bill and suddenly they're forced to leave their home altogether – maybe to double up with extended family or couch surf between family and friends, or find a shelter bed.” said Brown. “Imagine what that feels like to a nine year old? A little financial help now to keep that child housed is a simple choice.”

There's still time to take action and sign up. You can walk on your own, with friends, family, form a team, join a team, or make a donation. For more information on how to participate, visit <http://www.liveunitedanchorage.org>

Enstar Natural Gas is the 2014 Walk for Warmth presenting sponsor. Other major sponsors include Teamsters Local 959 and Fairweather LLC. Supporting sponsors and media partners include Aleut Corp, Anchorage Marketplace & Festivals, Carrs Safeway, La Touche Pediatrics, Odom Corp, Anchorage Daily News and YourAlaskaLink.com.

The February 8th Event Schedule: First United Methodist Church, 725 W. 9th Avenue.

- 9:30 a.m. Registration and team activities open
- 10:30 a.m. Brief program
- 10:45 a.m. Walk begins
- Door prizes and pizza from Moose's Tooth Pizza after the walk

Walk for Warmth is part of United Way's ongoing work to ensure the building blocks for a good quality of life are in place for everyone. Because we all have a stake in the health and vitality of our community, we invite you to join our movement. For more information, visit <http://www.liveunitedanchorage.org>

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