



For Immediate Release
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FROM HERE TO THE BAY

United Way Program Unites Partners to Support Hamilton Waterfront Neighbourhoods

HAMILTON – The Hamilton Port Authority, along with several major Port Companies, in conjunction with the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton has partnered to create a unique initiative called **“From Here To The Bay.”**

Building on a partnership with the United Way that began nearly 18 months ago, the Port Authority approached its valued tenant base to create a program which will be sustained over the next three years by a total of more than \$300,000.

“I know, from personal experience, how important education is to an individual’s future opportunities and visited Mike Rehill, the Principal at Sir John A. to talk about what his needs were and what we could do to help further”, said Hamilton Port Authority President & CEO Keith Robson.

Mr. Robson approached the port authority Board of Directors to approve a more extensive donation program. The result was a newly focused Donation Policy to direct additional funds to the local schools. In 2006, two Secondary Schools were awarded \$2,500 each, a bursary for a first year Mohawk College tuition was also offered to each school and \$1,000 was given to each of three Elementary Schools. The total donations amounted to \$11,800. The program is scheduled to repeat again this year.

“The collective strength of our partnership will translate into a marked difference in the lives of many residents in the port community”, added Robson.

Key port partners have championed the cause, taking a lead role in supporting new multiple initiatives at United Way in neighbourhoods connected to the waterfront.

The three Co-Chairs, Blair McKeil, President and CEO of McKeil Marine Ltd., Don Pether, former President and CEO and current Executive Chairman of Dofasco and Demetrius Tsafaridis, President and CEO of Steelcare Inc. are delighted to announce commitments from companies including; Biox Canada, Fairmont Minerals, Federal Marine Terminals, Heddle Marine Services, Sylvite, Tradelink International, Steelcare Inc., McKeil Marine Ltd., The Hamilton Port Authority, Mr. Don Pether, Bitumar and Great Lakes Feeder Lines.

United Way CEO Darrel Skidmore says, “As a member of the Poverty Roundtable, United Way is committed to 'Making Hamilton the best place to raise a child'. This initiative will allow us to work with our other community partners such as the Hamilton Community Foundation, School Boards, Agencies and others in making this goal a closer reality.”

“The engaging of our partners will bring significant resources to a program which fills a great need in our community,” says Blair McKeil. “I’ve grown up around the Port my whole life. Each day, as all of us drive through these neighbourhoods, we see first hand the needs. Our employees see it first hand.”

“All of us support many worthy causes in our city and beyond. We should all continue to do so. However, what we are talking about here today, is the potential to make a real difference in our immediate community,” adds McKeil.

“I am very pleased to have been asked to help provide leadership to this critical initiative in this part of our city,” says Don Pether. “I am equally pleased that both Blair and Demetrius have similarly stepped up to jointly lend their leadership and support to this undertaking.”

“How we collectively approach this initiative is critical. As much as we are anxious to support the people in these neighbourhoods, we must do it from the perspective of assisting them, not from the perspective of doing something for them. It is important that we be seen to be, and to be, people and companies who recognize the need and are demonstrating our willingness to work alongside people”. There are already wonderful programs and services supporting these neighbourhoods; however, they are not enough. They need to be expanded and enhanced through new and creative initiatives,” adds Pether.

“I too am very pleased to providing leadership to this exciting new initiative,” says Demetrius Tsafaridis. “This is an initiative that I believe has wonderful possibilities to truly help people.”

“As business people, we look for outcomes, measurable results and a return on our investment. What appeals to me personally about the approach being suggested here is that the initiative is focusing on long-term impact not on a band-aid approach.”

“As a group of Port Champions, we, along with our staff have committed time to help understand the needs in our neighbourhoods and a willingness to help develop the expectations and to be directly involved in the allocation process,” adds Tsafaridis.

“This year's campaign has been a real challenge on many fronts”, says Bob Crockford, Hamilton Campaign Chair. “We have experienced significant campaign losses in the manufacturing area due to layoffs and plant closures. Not only does this create losses on the revenue side of campaign, but equally importantly, it creates greater demands for the services United Way provides through its nearly sixty agencies.” Today's announcement

not only provides a huge boost to the current year's campaign, but also to future campaigns given the program's three-year funding commitment.

"We are absolutely thrilled with today's announcement," says Paul Chapin, Chair of United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton. "Over the past few years, our Board has made a concerted effort to re-engage the business community and to seek new areas of support. This is one more example of this renewed relationship." Mr. Chapin congratulated the Hamilton Port Authority, the Port Champions and the program Co-Chairs for their dedication to our community.

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