



Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee

December 2009

United Way of Saskatoon & Area
**Strength of Spirit Advisory
Committee Members**

Cornelia Laliberte (Chair)
Gord Bedient
Leanne Bellegarde
Shirley Greyeyes
May Henderson
Shirley Isbister
Bob Kirkpatrick
Betty Nippi-Albright
Darlene Speidel
Colleen Thomas

“The Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee has allowed the United Way of Saskatoon & Area to have an Aboriginal voice within all areas of the organization.”

Cornelia Laliberte, Partnership Facilitator, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee Chair, United Way Board Member.

About the Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee...

The United Way of Saskatoon and Area has reached out to community leaders within the Aboriginal community and asked for their advice and guidance in helping the United Way build stronger partnerships with the Aboriginal community in Saskatoon.

In January 2007, a group of approximately ten leaders came together with volunteer board members and staff from the United Way to begin a conversation about how we could work together. These discussions culminated in the development of a Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee Charter* which was approved by the United Way Board of Directors in spring 2007.

The Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee has played a critical role in the addition of questions to the United Way annual investment application that ask each of the thirty-four United Way funded agencies how they are working with the Aboriginal community. These questions illustrate how United Way funded agencies are responding to the changing demographics of our community and how they are involving the Aboriginal community in making decisions around programming that affects them.

(*For a copy of the Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, call the United Way office @ 975-7700.)

Work of the Committee this year...

In summer 2009, with funding provided by the United Way of Saskatoon & Area, the Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee secured ACS-Aboriginal Consulting Services to review the United Way's processes and make recommendations as to how the United Way of Saskatoon & Area could better serve Aboriginal peoples and organizations.

ACS-Aboriginal Consulting Services began in 1997 to fill the need for Aboriginal awareness education in Saskatchewan and now delivers a wide range of marketing, communication, and consultation services. In March 1998 the company started publishing Eagle Feather News, Saskatchewan's most widely read Aboriginal newspaper. Owner/ Publisher John Lagimodiere is a Saskatoon born Métis entrepreneur with a diverse background. John is a much sought after board member and speaker. Working on this project with John is Deirdra Ness. Deirdra is a communications consultant with fifteen years experience.

In February 2010, ACS will host a focus group with Aboriginal community members and representatives from Aboriginal organizations to further explore how the United Way investment practices could better serve Aboriginal peoples and organizations. A final report will be presented by the Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee to the United Way Board of Directors in April 2010.

For further information...

For Terms of Reference for the Strength of Spirit Advisory Committee or any further information, please call Sheri Benson, Executive Director, United Way of Saskatoon & Area @ 975-7704 or email sbenson@unitedwaysaskatoon.ca.

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