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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The United Way of Thunder Bay Announces COVID-19 Community Response Funding

Thunder Bay, ON, March 18, 2020- In response to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), the United Way of Thunder Bay is announcing two funding initiatives to help mitigate the social, economic and community impacts of this unprecedented outbreak.

The United Way of Thunder Bay is establishing the COVID-19 Community Response Fund. The fund will provide additional support for the work of frontline organizations striving to ensure that community members affected by the pandemic stay safe, healthy and have access to basic needs such as food, clothing, hygiene products, shelter and crisis counselling. Funds collected will stay in Thunder Bay and go directly to organizations requiring additional support to cope with increased demands for assistance.

The United Way of Thunder Bay Board of Directors has also approved the provision of extraordinary grant funding for United Way partner agencies from the existing Community Impact Fund. These one-time grants will provide flexible funds to human service organizations with deep roots in the community and strong experience working to address issues of poverty in our community.

Says Albert Brulé, Chief Executive Officer; "We have been in communication with many of our local partners and have heard that they will be facing extraordinary financial strain as well as other pressures as they respond to this crisis. This is a difficult time for everyone, and we know those who are already vulnerable in our community will be disproportionately impacted. We want every resident in Thunder Bay and our partner agencies doing crucial work on the ground to know that we're here to support them."

According to Kelly Gallagher, President of the Board, "These funds will increase capacity and enhance the resiliency of frontline organizations, allowing them to quickly put in place the resources required to meet the needs of individuals and families affected by reduced or lost employment, school and service closures, self-isolation and other impacts related to COVID-19."

The United Way of Thunder Bay will continue to work closely with community leaders and agencies in Thunder Bay over the coming weeks to respond where support is needed most and, with the community's help, the organization aims to ensure that the basic needs of residents are met.

While the United Way office is closed to the public at this time, donations to the COVID-19 Community Response Fund can be made online at www.uwaytbay.ca or by mail to: United Way of Thunder Bay, 1006-715 Hewitson Street, Thunder Bay, ON, P7B 6B5.

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