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United Way exceeds \$21M target

PROCEEDS WILL FUND COUNSELLING, CRISIS INTERVENTION, EMPLOYMENT SKILLS PROGRAMS

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DOUG LITTLE

The United Way Winnipeg announced Thursday it surpassed its \$21-million fundraising goal. Campaign chairwoman Barb Gamey credited the result to generous donors and volunteers.

The United Way Winnipeg's fundraising campaign didn't just meet its financial goal — it blew well past it.

The United Way announced Thursday night that it raised \$21.3 million — \$300,000 more than the goal it set in September for its annual drive that just concluded.

Barb Gamey, this year's campaign chairwoman and the chief executive officer of Payworks, said she credits many people with the campaign's success.

"It's the result of very generous Winnipeggers understanding the need for a community fund," she said Friday.

"And it's through a fantastic group of volunteers... this really is a collective effort."

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The United Way has three focus areas: helping youths get into counselling and crisis intervention programs; assisting people living in poverty with their employment skills; and helping youths into life-skills programs.

As well, the extra help the United Way will be able to give, because it reached its campaign goal, will allow it to help youths receive mental-health support and connect with mentors, assist adults to learn job- and money-management skills, as well as providing help for people through family resource centres.

Just before Christmas, Gamey said the campaign was at 90 per cent of its goal and she hoped for a final push.

"I think every campaign chair probably approaches the waning weeks of the campaign with some trepidation," she said. "Yes, I was worried."

The United Way supports more than 100 community organizations and programs in the city.

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