

Media Release

Buy a toque and help break the cycle of homelessness!

VANCOUVER, BC (January 31, 2008): February 5th is *Toque Tuesday*. As Vancouver commuters head to and from work, they'll be greeted by enthusiastic toque-selling community volunteers who are supporting Raising the Roof – Canada's only national charity devoted solely to finding long-term solutions to homelessness. Raising the Roof's annual national Toque Campaign – its signature fundraiser – runs from November through the end of February. *Toque Tuesday* is the charity's national public awareness day – a day when all Canadians have the opportunity to come together in support of solutions to homelessness.

The stylish, Canadian-made head warmers will sell for a minimum donation of \$10. Eighty percent of proceeds raised in Vancouver will go directly to support two local homelessness-serving community agencies – **BladeRunners** (Vancouver) and the **Progressive Housing Society** (Burnaby).

“By buying a toque you are helping homeless Canadians to get the affordable housing, education and skills training, employment opportunities and mentoring that they need to succeed,” says Garry Jobin, Manager, Vancouver BladeRunners. “One thing is clear we *all* have a part to play in solutions to homelessness. Buying a toque is one way to get involved and show your support.”

As a five-year national Raising the Roof partner, Direct Energy and its employees have already donated over \$1.8 million to Raising the Roof. Direct Energy employees have been involved in *Toque Tuesday* activities in many cities across Canada. This year, the Vancouver office team will join in, selling toques with other community volunteers at Burrard Street Station and several New Westminster Skytrain stations. “We are delighted to once again take part in this annual Toque Tuesday event,” says Janice Thomson, Executive Vice-President, Human Resources and Communications, Direct Energy. “Direct Energy is proud to have so many employees engaged in and committed to the well-being of the communities in which we work. We ask everyone to help put a cap on homelessness in their community by purchasing a toque from one of our volunteers on Toque Tuesday.”

“Today Raising the Roof is proud to be working with our partners and supporters throughout the nation raising awareness and funds to solve homelessness in Canada. By simply buying a toque Canadians are helping homeless youth in Vancouver and across the country to get the opportunities they need to succeed and overcome life without a home,” says Sean Gadon, President of Raising the Roof.

For more information, contact:

Brice Evans
Raising the Roof, Toque Campaign Manager



Cell: 604-338-1658

Maureen Deery
Director of National Campaigns
Raising the Roof
Cell: 416-346-4910

Media Photo and interview opportunities

We would be pleased to facilitate Interviews with representative of BladeRunners agency + Raising the Roof President, and a previously homeless youth (the latter two by telephone). *Please call Brice Evans (information above) or Maureen Deery, Raising the Roof, at (office): 416-489-9531, or (cell) 416-346-4910 to facilitate.*

6:30 – 9:30 a.m., 11:30 – 1:30 p.m. and 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Over 150 toque-selling volunteers will be stationed at Burrard Street Station and select New Westminster Skytrain stations.

Volunteer representatives, Garry Jobin of BladeRunners and Raising the Roof spokesperson available for interview

Please contact Brice Evans (information above).

Saturday- Tuesday

Interview with Local Senior BladeRunner and RtR Campaign Manager

Gerry Green, a previously homeless youth in the BladeRunners program & Brice Evans
Please contact Brice Evans (information above).