**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Women In Need Society (WINS) Asks Calgarians to Donate Grocery Gift Cards to Combat Rising Food Insecurity**

Calgary – October 19, 2022 - Calgary’s Women in Need Society (WINS) is seeing firsthand how the current financial crisis is impacting the city’s vulnerable women and their families. Record-high inflation has left many Calgarians struggling to pay for their basic needs such as food, shelter and energy bills. As a result, a shocking 20.3 per cent of Alberta households are experiencing food insecurity, making Alberta the most food insecure province in the country.[[1]](#footnote-1)

As the winter months approach, families who are already struggling are especially vulnerable to financial hardships. In 2021, 63 per cent of households relying on social assistance were food-insecure[[2]](#footnote-2). WINS encounters this reality on the front lines as struggling women and their families utilize WINS programs to help with their basic needs. To combat the pressing food insecurity crisis, WINS has implemented the **Dignity for All** campaign, where the organization is urgently collecting donations of grocery gift cards of all denominations to support women in need with food shopping.

In addition to the Dignity for All initiative, WINS offers food bank referrals, access to several food pantries, and after-school snack support at all four of its **Community Resource Hub** locations. While helpful, these services face the challenge of accommodating Calgary’s incredibly diverse population with equally diverse diets. While food bank use has skyrocketed by 44 per cent, many families are still struggling to meet their nutritional requirements[[3]](#footnote-3).

Says Karen Ramchuk, CEO of WINS, “We want to provide individuals with a barrier-free option to access food that accounts for their allergies, intolerances, and health issues with dignity. To support this need, WINS is asking for gift card donations so that women in need can have the freedom of shopping for groceries of their choice.”

The Dignity for All program at WINS is just one way the Calgary community and WINS can continue supporting vulnerable families during the current economic crisis. By donating a grocery store gift card at any WINS thrift store location, Calgarians can help WINS support women in need and their families. Monetary donations can also be made online on the [WINS website](http://www.winsyyc.ca/donate-funds).

The organization is also critically in need of men’s and women’s sweaters and furniture items for their House to Home program and to sell in their six Calgary thrift stores. Adds Ramchuk, “When Calgarians donate items, shop our stores and support our campaigns, they are directly benefiting women in our community, making our city a stronger, more resilient place.”

WINS thrift stores are an important social enterprise for the organization, with store proceeds benefiting programs, resources and employment programs to help all Calgarians thrive.

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**About WINS**

WINS (Women In Need Society) is a Calgary-based charity helping women in need and their families. WINS provides women with the resources, knowledge, skills, and confidence to achieve self-sufficiency. WINS operates four Community Resource Hubs, House to Home, Retail Ready, Warehouse Ready, a Recycling Program and the WINS Thrift Stores social enterprise, including More Store and Twice New. For more information, please visit[www.winsyyc.ca](http://winsyyc.ca).

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1. Source: [Household Food Insecurity Canada – 2021 / Proof (Food Insecurity Policy Research) and University of Toronto](https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Household-Food-Insecurity-in-Canada-2021-PROOF.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2cONMKVILoP_jAn67EeJPBU5pHUCxrJMaQCjF4XLCoeKrJVGV6QNev_qw) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Source: [Household Food Insecurity Canada – 2021/Proof (Food Insecurity Policy Research) and University of Toronto](https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Household-Food-Insecurity-in-Canada-2021-PROOF.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2cONMKVILoP_jAn67EeJPBU5pHUCxrJMaQCjF4XLCoeKrJVGV6QNev_qw) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Source: [Calgary Herald](https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/alberta-food-banks-among-busiest-in-canada#:~:text=Story%20continues%20below-,Article%20content,clients%20accessing%20local%20food%20banks.) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)