

Friday, Feb. 13, 2009 - For immediate release

Once homeless, mother now helps build homes & hope for others

Calgary, AB – Jillian Ashley knows what it means to be homeless. A ninth-grade dropout and former drug addict, Jillian lived on the streets of Vancouver for years. Now 20 she lives in Calgary with her three-year-old daughter in a rented basement suite. “We have a roof over our heads and I’m working on making life better for my daughter and me,” she says.

Jillian is hopeful for their future because she is in the carpentry program at the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre in Calgary. The Centre gives Calgary women, like Jillian, the trade and life skills they need to move their families out of poverty and into independence. “I was working dead-end jobs and never made more than \$7 an hour. In a few months, I’ll graduate and get a steady job renovating homes or in commercial construction.”

Next week (Feb. 17 – 20) Jillian and 15 classmates, will swing hammers to help other women with similar stories. The Habitat for Humanity’s Women Build initiative promotes the involvement of women and girls in the construction of Habitat homes. The crew from the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre will lend a hand building housing for eight families (four duplexes) in the northeast community of Mayland Heights. The project is slated to be finished in June. The completion of these homes will bring Habitat Calgary’s tally to 93 homes built in Calgary.

Jane Cooper, who manages the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre, explains why there is so much excitement about working with Habitat for Humanity. “The women in our program are very familiar with the issues facing Habitat’s clients and want to help in a very practical way.”

“This is a perfect partnership between the two programs,” adds Andrew MacLachlan, President & CEO of Habitat for Humanity Calgary. “In these hard economic times, there is tremendous need for programs like those at Habitat for Humanity and the YWCA of Calgary, which target low-income families. We are happy to have these women come build with us. Their hard work and dedication is an inspiration to everyone.”

The media is invited onsite from Tuesday, Feb. 17 – Friday, Feb. 20

WHAT: Women carpentry students from the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre help build new homes for families of Habitat for Humanity

WHO: Jillian Ashley, 20, single mom in Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre
Spokesperson from Habitat for Humanity TBA

WHEN: Tuesday, Feb. 17 – Friday, Feb. 20 Daily from 8:30 – 4 p.m.

WHERE: 1608 - 16th St. NE, 16th Ave. to 19th St. NE and turn south. First right/west turn onto 14th Ave. Follow road past church and it is at the bottom of the hill.

MEDIA CONTACT

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About the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre

The Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre in Calgary helps give women and their children a better future. During a four-month period, students gain skills in carpentry and communications, as well as physical fitness training, for a career in Calgary’s construction industry. The Skills Training Centre is a partnership between the YWCA of Calgary and Vermilion Energy Trust. Support for the program is also provided by Service Canada and Alberta Employment and Immigration.

For more information about the Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre, call 403-705-7526 or visit <http://www.ywcaofcalgary.com/training/>

About Vermilion Energy Trust

Vermilion is a Canadian-based international energy producer that adheres to a value creation strategy through the execution of asset optimization programs and strategic acquisitions. Vermilion focuses on the development and optimization of mature producing properties in Western Canada, Western Europe and Australia. Vermilion also exposes its unitholders to significant upside opportunities through a combination of equity sponsorship in new ventures and managed participation in high impact projects. Management and directors of the Trust hold approximately 9% of the outstanding units and are dedicated to consistently delivering superior rewards for all its stakeholders. Vermilion Energy Trust trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol VET.UN. As a responsible energy producer, Vermilion is committed to investing in the communities in which Vermilion staff live and work.

About Habitat for Humanity Calgary

The mission of Habitat for Humanity is to work in partnership with low-income families and the community to build hope through the construction of simple, decent and affordable homes for Calgary’s families in need.