



**Press release
For immediate distribution**

**A HEARTFELT PLEA FROM THE OLD BREWERY MISSION
The target: \$10 million over five years as a special fundraising campaign
is launched to solve homelessness**

Montreal, October 1, 2009 – Buoyed by the positive results obtained from a three-year pilot project aimed at solving homelessness, the Old Brewery Mission today announced that it is launching an aggressive fundraising campaign in Greater Montreal aimed at making the new program permanent. The campaign's objective is to collect a minimum of \$10 million over five years. Today, the Old Brewery Mission is the largest shelter for men in Québec and the largest shelter for homeless women in Canada.

“Our new programs aimed at providing permanent solutions for homelessness have been successful far beyond all expectations,” said Matthew Pearce, Director General of the Old Brewery Mission. “We have witnessed real change in the lives of the people we have helped. And it's thanks to these innovative programs that there's been real change seen in the state of homelessness in Montreal.”

Frustrated by only being able to intervene on an emergency basis, the Old Brewery Mission launched a pilot program three years ago with the goal of enabling men and women in difficulty to emerge from homelessness and rebuild their lives. One hundred and twenty years after opening its doors, the Old Brewery Mission came to the conclusion three years ago that soothing the problems of the homeless on a temporary basis was not enough. A radical re-think ensued, and a novel approach to the long-term solution of homelessness was the result.

Since the pilot program began in 2006, the Old Brewery Mission has been able to contribute to the social reintegration of more than 200 people a year, allowing them to leave homelessness behind and join mainstream society. This success rate, above and beyond all expectations, underscores the need to pursue a permanent transitional program for this special clientele in need.

The long-term transitional program is divided into three stages: *L'Étape*, 30 days of one-on-one support in a healthy, secure environment where the person is introduced to the tools needed to move forward; *L'Escale*, a period of three to six months during which Old Brewery Mission counselors help participants develop personal action plans and learn to take on day- to-day responsibilities and prepare for re-entry in the workforce,

and finally, on to permanent housing with mentorship and ongoing support for these men and women who are now ready to live productive lives on their own.

Over and above the emergency humanitarian services it provides, the Old Brewery Mission's raison d'être is to propose, promote and provide enduring solutions to the problem of homelessness. The transitional programs themselves cost \$600,000 a year, and financial aid from the three levels of government only covers 30 percent of its overall global budget, therefore the Mission has always counted on the generosity of the public to make up the 70% needed to meet its objectives.

In the light of its recent success, the Mission is proud to expand these programs that took much time and effort to implement. The development and implementation of the three-year pilot project was funded by private benefactors, with a clear 3 year mandate. The Mission is now seeking new sources of funding and is appealing to the generosity of the general public to maintain the existence of this effective program.

The public is invited to donate via the Old Brewery Mission website, at www.oldbrewerymission.ca or by telephoning (514) 788-1884.

About the Old Brewery Mission

Founded in 1889, the Old Brewery Mission has long offered homeless men and women in Montréal emergency shelter, meals and clean clothing. In the past couple of years, it has implemented programs to help clients to get off the streets. It provides 488 beds in five pavilions in the Montreal area. Transition programs and social housing alternatives have helped hundreds to achieve greater stability and autonomy as they rebuild their lives.

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Information:

Johanne Lépine
Torchia Communications
(514) 288-8290, ext. 234
jepine@torchiacom.com