



MEDIA RELEASE

***Vital Signs*® report profiles community progress and needs**

(Regina, SK) October 6, 2015 – The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF) has released its second annual *Vital Signs*® report as part of a national initiative involving 28 other community foundations throughout Canada.

Christina Attard, Executive Director of the SSCF, said this comprehensive report includes a wide range of factual, relevant indicators and statistics, and enables a focus and sense of purpose for community philanthropy.

“*Vital Signs*® is an important reference tool for identifying regionally-based community needs and trends to help align important resources to meet local gaps,” said Attard. “In essence, it takes the pulse of the community by evaluating progress within a number of key areas while profiling the information for additional use.”

This year, the report addresses 10 key issue areas with a special section on Children and Youth. Many important contributions in this new section were made possible through a partnership with the Regina Regional Intersectoral Committee.

“Our Community Foundation uses the *Vital Signs*® report year round to increase the effectiveness of our grant-making, and it helps us to inform our donors about issues and opportunities in the community. It assists us in making connections between individuals and groups to address those issues,” Attard explained. “It includes initiatives to celebrate as a community and identifies areas for improvement. It also provides some quick facts about various indicators that we feel will touch home for many residents.”

Community foundations across Canada support many programs and activities related to belonging – community kitchens, newcomer settlement, children’s camps, environmental clean-ups, sports events, healthy initiatives and more. SSCF’s mission is to advance community well-being by supporting and assisting charities, companies and individuals achieve their charitable goals and dreams. In 2014, the SSCF dispersed approximately \$1.6 million in grants to more than 160 different charities throughout south Saskatchewan.

“The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation has been working for more than 46 years to mobilize philanthropic capital for the charitable agencies that change lives in our community,” said Attard. “We are proud of the accomplishments of families and individuals who have established funds and made their gift to our community. We also commend the many families and individuals who have come together to create the Smart and Caring Fund which makes grants to our community based on the findings in *Vital Signs*®.”

The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation is a member of the 191 Community Foundations of Canada and is one of the largest in Canada. It serves over three hundred communities, including seven cities in south Saskatchewan. Find out more and read the full report at www.sscf.ca.

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A summary of highlights and media backgrounder is included.

For further information please contact:

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Vital Signs® – Summary from report released October, 2015

Key indicators	Things to celebrate	Things to improve
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing GDP • High employment levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for local businesses • Sharp increase in consumer and business bankruptcies
Getting started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse community • Increasing population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to newcomers • Opportunities to celebrate diversity
Gap between rich and poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty rates are lower in Regina than elsewhere in the province or country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child poverty - no child should go to school hungry • Working population not making a living wage
Health and wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of physical activity • More physicians than elsewhere in the province 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring everyone has a family doctor • Decreasing our obesity and drinking rates
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in variety and availability of housing • Increasing capacity in homeless shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home ownership and rental affordability • Youth homelessness
Arts, Culture and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of community participation in events • Opportunities for young people to learn about art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low earning potential in arts and culture • Venues for local artists to showcase their work
Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term trends show crime rates have been going down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regina is significantly above the national criminal rates in all areas
Belonging and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of satisfaction with life • Strong sense of community belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter turnout, especially at the local level • Charitable donations trending down
Young children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attention to early childhood development • Summer literacy programs for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in families in order to support children • Ensure all children are ready for school
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher hourly wage rate in Saskatchewan • Active youth population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth crime rate significantly above national average • Perception of physical and mental health
Education and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low unemployment rate • High post-secondary education rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports for entrepreneurs and small business • More job opportunities for new graduates



MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

About Vital Signs

Vital Signs® is an annual community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada. *Vital Signs*® measures the vitality of communities in key areas, providing critical information that can help set priorities and identify opportunities for action. Learn more at www.vitalsignscanada.ca.

About the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation

The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation is a member of the 191 Community Foundations of Canada and is one of the largest in Canada. It serves over three hundred communities, including seven cities in south Saskatchewan. It is the SSCF's mission to advance community well being by supporting and assisting charities, companies and individuals achieve their charitable goals and dreams. In 2014, the SSCF dispersed approximately \$1.6 million in grants to more than 160 different charities throughout south Saskatchewan. Find out more at www.sscf.ca

Community foundations are dedicated to enriching the quality of community life in specific geographical areas. Community foundations pool the charitable gifts of many donors to cultivate and grow permanently endowed funds to provide lasting support for local community needs and priorities. Income generated by permanent endowment funds is distributed to support a broad range of community agencies/charities and causes, while the original investment is left to grow over time.

Based out of Regina, the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation exists as a bridge between donors and the causes that they love most. Staff at the SSCF uses their unique understanding of the local community to inform donors in their giving decisions. They work with donors to seek personalized, innovative and tax-smart ways to support charities and pass their values on to future generations. The donor's passion combined with the in-house expertise and unique offerings such as donor-advised and donor-directed funds result in charitable giving that has a lasting effect on the most-urgent needs in our community.