

## Two Faces of Poverty



Making the Law Work for Indigenous Peoples and Women

**November 3–4, 2008**

[twofacesofpoverty.uwinnipeg.ca](http://twofacesofpoverty.uwinnipeg.ca)

# Youth Call To Action For A Poverty-free Manitoba

We address this declaration to the current leaders in Winnipeg at every level of government and to members of the private sector.

**We are young, but we are not being naïve when we say “we *get* these issues, they are *not* beyond us”.**

**W**e believe in a city where everyone can live in dignity, in communities where a culture of greed is not celebrated, and where our leaders understand that a vibrant sustainable economy is inclusive, producing people who are able to realize their full potential as human beings where laws are made to work for everyone and not just a privileged few.

At the Two Faces of Poverty Conference, we have seen that poverty has many characteristics, but most often these are seen in the faces of Women and Indigenous Peoples.

We call for action to implement strategies that address poverty generally, but in particular strategies that will focus on Women and Indigenous Peoples – of all ages and abilities.

As youth, we call upon today's leaders:

- to acknowledge that poverty reduces our potential for a shared future and;
- to initiate actions that will reduce poverty in Winnipeg which will enable us – the next generation of leaders – to follow through on our priorities.

## THE PRIORITIES OF MANITOBA'S YOUTH

### HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES

- ~ Affordable low-income housing for all, focusing on quality and safety;
- ~ Community and recreation programs in all communities.
- ~ Access to good education and alternative education
  - Education that raises awareness of poverty issues;
  - Education supported by governments to assist schools in providing a variety of programs to keep students from falling through the cracks;
  - Education that includes a Poverty Unit each year, raising poverty awareness from early learning, to high school and to post-secondary learning;

### LIVABLE INCOMES

- ~ Revamp policies from being a social welfare trap to a ladder system which will help people climb out of poverty;
- ~ Welfare programs must support, rather than punish recipients, and focus on skills and strengths of people, rather than be a band-aid solution,
- ~ Provide more job skills training,
- ~ Increase minimum wage,
- ~ Fund creation of programs,
- ~ Fair pay and better working conditions where human rights are respected,
- ~ Restore relations between the poor and law enforcers.

