

Volunteer Development Program 2007 Report



United Way
of Peel Region

Where we have come from...

In September 2005 *Volunteer Voices*, a volunteer development and engagement strategy, was shared with United Way staff members, volunteers and stakeholders. *Volunteer Voices* highlighted key issues and needs related to volunteer management and outlined strategies related to relationship building and engagement. Simultaneously, United Way of Peel Region adopted a new governance model and began developing the 2007-2011 strategic plan.

Volunteer Voices made five recommendations:

1. Implement a volunteer development strategy focused on strengthening volunteer management, fostering positive relationships and directly supporting United Way's strategic goal of establishing a leadership role in addressing human care needs.
2. The volunteer development program must have adequate resources dedicated to it. Staff support and a program budget are required
3. A centralized approach for the volunteer development program serving the entire organization is recommended, as it would be most effective. Volunteer management and development must be embedded within the organizational culture.
4. The volunteer development program must be established upon professional standards of practice related to volunteer management practices and procedures. Training of staff on volunteer development must be central to this program.
5. The volunteer development program must incorporate strategies for engagement, leadership development, relationship building and capacity building.



I enjoy being part of the committee and learning more about Peel. I am very impressed with the knowledge of the Allocations Committee and the United Way staff. I did not truly appreciate how valuable your relationships are with each funded agency. It is a pleasure and honour to be on the committee.

An Allocations Committee member of two years and former Loaned Representative



Look at what we've accomplished!

New roles for United Way volunteers

Chinese Advisory Council

This group was formed early in 2007. In 2007, seven volunteers dedicated 501 hours to United Way of Peel Region. In addition, the Council co-Chairs have continuously demonstrated their enthusiasm about United Way and have successfully leveraged their own contacts and networks to increase involvement of the Chinese community in United Way activities. In 2008, we will be engaging local Chinese businesses during the fundraising campaign.

South Asian Advisory Council

Community members and leaders from the South Asian community met at the end of 2007 to discuss forming a community outreach strategy, similar to the Chinese Advisory Council, with members from the South Asian community.

Youth Engagement Committee

The newly formed committee consists of six volunteers who have come together to work on advancing the goals of the youth engagement strategy. The group is currently working on the creation of a Young Leaders' Council aimed at both increasing the engagement of adults aged 18-35 in United Way activities and creating opportunities for young adults to become community leaders.

Creation of volunteer development policies

In April 2007, the Board of Directors approved a Volunteer Development Policy Manual and a Volunteer Development Handbook. Both documents promote a centralized approach to volunteer development and are based on professional standards of practice. In spring 2008, staff members will receive training on all components of the Volunteer Development Program.

A fresh look for Speakers' Bureau

Speakers' Bureau engages United Way funded agency staff, volunteers and clients as United Way ambassadors during the fundraising campaign. In 2006, new strategies were implemented to ensure Speakers' Bureau volunteers understood and had the ability to clearly and consistently talk about United Way key messages and the Community Fund. Through the evaluation process we learned that our volunteers now have a deeper dedication and understanding of United Way and identify themselves as United Way volunteers rather than "agency speakers."

SNAP SHOT STATS: 2005 program: 35 speakers, 188 speaking engagements
2006 program: 37 speakers, 195 speaking engagements
2007 program: 52 speakers, 202 speaking engagements

Making it meaningful

Since 2007, volunteer development best practices have been applied while working with members of the Allocations Committee. Over the course of the past two funding cycles, staff members have seen an increase in relationship building amongst committee members as well as a deeper dedication to the strategic investment work and United Way. Feedback from our volunteers tells us they feel their experience is meaningful and as a result they want to stay engaged longer.

Breaking down traditional volunteer roles

As United Way continues its transformation into a community impact organization, we are seeing an increase in leadership roles undertaken by United Way volunteers. Top executives and corporate sector leaders are crossing over from traditional campaign roles into United Way ambassador roles to facilitate community-wide discussions such as the Mississauga City Summit (September 2007) and the Thought Leaders Forum (March 2008). This shift can be attributed to a strategic approach in educating campaign cabinet volunteers about Resource Development initiatives, Community Investment activities, community outreach projects and the various partnerships between United Way and both Regional and Provincial stakeholders.

Community of caring

In the past, Day of Caring was seen as a compliment to the annual campaign where Employee Campaign Chairs and committee members were encouraged to participate in order to generate interest in the fundraising campaign. There has been a shift where workplaces now identify Day of Caring as part of their internal donor stewardship. Workplaces now view participation in Day of Caring as a way to increase internal cross-departmental team-building and as an opportunity to build a long term relationship with United Way and community agencies. This shift in thinking illustrates the enormous potential for this volunteer opportunity to grow and develop further as United Way continues its transformation.

SNAP SHOT STATS: Over a four-year period, 60 organizations have participated in Day of Caring. During this time frame a total of 269 people volunteered for a total of 1,820 hours

Understanding the impact

In April 2007, United Way invited the Board of Directors to attend the first ever Community Bus Tour. The bus tour highlighted successes made and challenges faced in a variety of neighborhoods across Peel. The bus tour was extremely successful in increasing knowledge about community issues. In 2008, this initiative, now branded as *The Detour*, will be expanded to allow politicians and other community leaders to participate.

We're still learning about...

- Best practices on data collection
- Evaluation process
- Recognition strategies
- Recruitment strategy

