



United Way
of Peel Region

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Media Contact:

Liz Leake
Director, Communications & Marketing
(905) 602-3624
lleake@unitedwaypeel.org

United Way releases study on Peel's black community

MISSISSAUGA — A study released today by United Way of Peel Region reveals tremendous diversity within Peel's black population. *The Black Community in Peel Region: An Exploratory Study* shows that Peel's black community is made up of several separate groups including: Canadian-born blacks; Caribbean; African; and those born in other countries. Each group has its own culture, language, dialect and faiths.

"This finding is key to understanding the community and providing appropriate social services and programs that address the variety of challenges and issues experienced by the different groups within this community," said Shelley White, CEO of United Way of Peel Region. "Peel is one of the most diverse communities in Canada. Understanding the challenges and needs of such a diverse community is critical to creating a community where we all thrive."

The objective of *The Black Community in Peel Region: An Exploratory Study* was to identify socio-economic characteristics, the challenges and issues affecting the black community, and the gaps in human care services. As part of the research, members of the black community participated in focus groups and interviews. The data generated can be used to strengthen existing services, develop new culturally sensitive programs tailored to address specific challenges and issues, and enhance the lives of individuals and various different groups in this community.

The study is part of a larger diversity outreach initiative by United Way to build and promote inclusion. The cultural landscape of Peel has changed dramatically over the years. Social programs and services initially set up to serve the mostly white European population of Peel decades ago, now need to be adjusted to meet the needs of the current multiracial, multiethnic and multifaith population.

Based on 2001 census data, the study reported there were more than 70,000 blacks living in Peel; 42.5 per cent being Canadian born. The study reports 66.3 per cent of blacks in Peel own their own homes and 11 per cent have a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Single parent families make up 9.9 per cent of Peel's black community, and blacks in Peel have a higher incidence of low income at 18.2 per cent compared to 11.6 per cent in Peel's total population. According to the 2006 census, the black population in Peel has grown by 36.5 per cent to 95,570.

Major issues outlined in the study include racism and discrimination based on immigration status, gender and poverty. Other issues listed include lack of affordable housing and limited recreational facilities for youth. Participants in the study also reported they feel there is limited understanding of the ethno-cultural and economic diversity of the black community by mainstream service agencies.

Recommendations from the study include capacity building for mainstream human service organizations, such as anti-oppression training and recruiting staff and volunteers from the black community. Providing settlement services specifically tailored to assist black newcomers and leadership programs for black youth were also among the recommendations.

Funding for the study was provided by Heritage Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

The complete study can be accessed by clicking [The Black Community in Peel Region: An Exploratory Study](#) or by visiting the [Reports and Publications](#) page at www.unitedwaypeel.org.

The mission of United Way of Peel Region is to engage with our community, through partnerships, to ensure people are cared for, connected and included.

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Information Contact:

Sharon Douglas
Assistant Director, Community Investment
(905) 602-3620
sdouglas@unitedwaypeel.org