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United Way invests in local neighbourhoods

MISSISSAUGA (January 26, 2009) — Thanks to funding from United Way of Peel Region, residents in seven neighbourhoods across the region will have the opportunity to work together to make their community stronger.

Through its Neighbourhood Development strategy, launched in 2008, United Way is investing more than $130,000 this year in projects that address priority needs identified by neighbourhoods in Mississauga, Brampton and, for the first time, Caledon. Funded projects include a youth leadership conference, community festivals, and an activities program for seniors.

“We are concerned about the growing concentration of neighbourhood poverty in Peel,” explains United Way CEO Shelley White. “To tackle this issue, it’s important that everyone affected has the opportunity to become involved in developing solutions,” White adds. “Our strategy focuses on enabling local residents to work with community agencies and others to create opportunities for involvement and inclusion and to improve the quality of neighbourhood life.”

Funding for the projects will flow through local registered charitable organizations — such as social service agencies and schools — that are already involved or located in the selected neighbourhoods. The projects were chosen based on criteria such as the need for neighbourhood development, the level of resident involvement and the potential for success.

Projects receiving first-time funding are:

The neighbourhood of Brampton Northwest has experienced explosive growth, expanding from 6,000 residents in 2001 to more than 50,000 today. The majority of residents are between the ages of 19 and 45 and there are more than 16,000 school-aged children and youth. The Brampton Northwest Connects Group is a newly formed group of agencies, local school administrators and residents who have come together to support initiatives aimed at building a healthy, vibrant community. They are receiving two grants totaling $20,300 (to be administered through McCrimmon Middle School) to organize events and activities in local parks, conduct an assessment of community needs and assets, and to support a youth-led local leadership conference.

/page 2 next ...