



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way to invest more than \$9.7-million in Peel

MISSISSAUGA — United Way of Peel Region will invest more than \$9.7-million this year in local services, programs and initiatives that meet immediate social needs and tackle their underlying causes. More than \$7.7-million of the \$9,770,334 contributed to United Way's Community Fund in 2009 will be used to support a network of 99 vital programs provided by 53 different social service agencies. This investment represents a slight increase over last year and will assist agencies in addressing the ongoing growth in service demands.

"Even though we are starting to see signs of economic recovery, we know that there can be a long delay between recovery in the market and recovery in the community," says United Way CEO Shelley White. "Last year more than 420,000 people in our community turned to the services and programs supported by United Way, an overall increase of 6 per cent over 2008. We expect this growth to continue as our community continues to grow. Some agencies have experienced increases of as much as 300 per cent as job loss, stress and anxiety due to the economy continue to impact our community."

Donors to the 2009 campaign also directed \$1,909,116 to other United Ways and registered charities, an increase of \$140,000 over last year.

In addition to supporting Peel's social service network, United Way's Community Fund will be used for the following initiatives:

- Grants to support the development and operation of 8 social purpose enterprises, which provide employment and training to vulnerable people at risk of falling into poverty;
- Grants for 12 neighbourhood development projects that will promote opportunities for people to become involved and engaged in their community;
- Youth in Action grants to support 11 projects led and organized by Peel youth to foster leadership and community engagement;
- Support for community partnerships including Success By 6 Peel, the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee, Fair Share Task Force, the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, and the Mississauga Summit, that draw people from all across our community to work on key social issues;
- Grants to assist agencies in strengthening their organizational capacity to delivery high-quality services and programs;
- One-time grants, if needed, to address unforeseen financial circumstances that put agencies or programs at risk.

"Thanks to the generosity of our donors, United Way can support our community in tough times and beyond," says Bonnie Waterfield, Chair of United Way's Community Investment Cabinet. "Through our Community Fund, United Way supports services, programs and initiatives that meet immediate needs and tackle their underlying causes. We want to build resilience in individuals, families and neighbourhoods so they have the capacity to cope with challenges and thrive in times of constant change."

Today's announcement represents the first allocations under United Way's new funding strategy, *Investing for Resilience*. Under its new approach, United Way is focusing on building resilience in individuals, families and neighbourhoods by taking action in four areas: meeting basic physical and emotional needs; developing coping skills and abilities; providing economic opportunities; and supporting meaningful participation in our community.

United Way is targeting its investments in programs, services and initiatives that result in:

Resilient people by:

- Supporting seniors to be healthy and live independently
- Supporting individuals with disabilities
- Supporting people who are vulnerable and susceptible to abuse, especially women and children
- Supporting and providing resources to people affected by mental health issues

Strong families by:

- Supporting newcomers and immigrants to fully integrate into community life
- Assisting families and children to have a high quality of life
- Empowering children and youth to reach their full potential

Vibrant neighbourhoods and communities by:

- Reducing poverty, eliminating hunger, and ensuring people have access to affordable housing
- Strengthening neighbourhood development efforts so that people can become involved and engaged in their community

All requests for funding are subject to an in-depth financial and program management review by experienced United Way staff and volunteers, including the Allocations Committee, Community Investment Cabinet and the Board of Directors. This process helps United Way identify trends in funded agencies and assists in future strategic planning. The predominant trends include high turnover at the leadership level at agencies, an ongoing decline in charitable giving to the agencies, and increased demand for service. United Way works in several ways to assist agencies in managing these trends, including leadership development for agency employees, assistance in developing fundraising strategies, and advocating for fair and equitable government funding for social services in our community.

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About United Way of Peel Region:

United Way of Peel Region was established in 1967 and serves the cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the town of Caledon. Our mission is to engage with our community, through partnerships, to ensure people are cared for, connected and included. United Way is the largest non-governmental funder of social services in the region.

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