

Join top athletes at the Peel 5K Run, Walk and Roll

Peel Region will be hosting its fifth annual 5K Run, Walk and Roll this Saturday (Oct. 25) in support of the United Way. Join Paralympian hopeful Anthony Lue and Olympian Michelle Hastick-Cowell in this community event, which will feature a seasonal costume contest, great prizes and a fully-accessible, wheelchair-friendly course. All proceeds raised benefit the United Way of Peel Region.

"We are really fortunate to have two tremendous athletes join us next weekend," said Meenu Sikand, co-chair of the Region's 2014 United Way Employee Campaign. "We welcome everyone across the region to join us this Saturday to participate in this family-friendly event. This is a great opportunity for residents, regardless of age, background or physical ability, to come together and support the United Way."

The Run, Walk and Roll 5K for the United Way is open to everyone. The event route begins and ends at 10 Peel Centre Dr. in Brampton and travels through scenic Chinguacousy Park. There will be three course options for participants to choose from:

• 5K Chip-timed • offering professional timing and great prizes for first place runners and wheelchair participants.

• 5K General • open to non-competitive runners, walkers and wheelchair participants.

• 1K Kid's Course • free registration for children under 12 with a donation to the United Way. All participants who complete the Kid's Course will be awarded an official race medal. Kids are encouraged to show off their Halloween costumes while they complete the course.

"You don't need to be an Olympic athlete to participate in this race," said Hastick-Cowell. "It's a fantastic event that encourages a healthy lifestyle by getting out there; you can walk, run or roll, all the while knowing you're making a difference in your community."

Hastick-Cowell is a former member of the Canadian Olympic team. She has represented Canada in various international track and field competitions, including the World Championship Games, the Francophone Games, the World University Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics. In her athletic career, she was the first Canadian triple jumper to jump more than 14 metres and was the Canadian record holder for five consecutive years.

In addition to her athletic ventures, Michelle is active in her support for the United Way of Peel Region.

"The United Way will always hold a special place in my heart as they support 54 agencies that reach out and provide the much needed resources to help our community change from poverty to possibility," she said.

The Run, Walk and Roll is hosted by the Region of Peel's United Way Employee Campaign. All proceeds from the Run, Walk and Roll benefit the United Way of Peel Region to improve lives, strengthen neighbourhoods and make our community great for all to enjoy. Everyone is invited to come out as a participant, raise funds through pledging, or join the volunteer team. Several exciting prizes will be awarded in a variety of categories, including best costume, best times, and most funds raised. Pledge forms and prize details are available at Peel5k.ca

"As an athlete and daily user of a wheelchair, a five kilometre wheelchair race is something that I would naturally be drawn to," observed Lue, a former star amateur athlete, who after a workplace accident has devoted his athletic career to competing for Canada in the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 in para-cycling. "The fact I can do this for a good cause and to raise awareness makes it that much better. Hopefully we will be able to grow in numbers and maximize the participation in this amazing event in years to come."

In addition to his athletic endeavours, Lue is a motivational speaker who has spoken to organizations such as the Toronto District School Board, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation.