

United Way of Peel celebrates achievement with community partners

More than 600 people came together at the Mississauga Convention Centre recently to celebrate United Way's Community Achievement and hear key note speaker Joe Roberts speak of his experience moving from ?skid row to CEO.?

Roberts, Canadian motivational speaker and author, shared his personal experience of moving from poverty to possibility. He went from being homeless, to becoming a well-respected business executive. Drawing on lived experience, he went on to launch a national initiative designed to help young people who are at the crossroad of being homeless. Roberts embodies United Way's spirit and his story provided the perfect platform to celebrate community achievement ? proving that ?together, we are possibility!?

?It takes all of us working together to build a better community,? commented United Way President and CEO Shelley White.

?Through our work with community partners, stakeholders, donors and over 2,000 volunteers, we've been able to impact 203,000 lives. Our 2014 campaign goal was \$12.4 million and I'm happy to say we've raised \$12.46 million to grow our impact next year. I extend my sincere appreciation to our supporters for their generosity, commitment and for their confidence in United Way.?

?I have always believed in the work of United Way,? observed Chuck Hounsell, 2014 campaign chair and senior vice-president of payment at TD Bank. ?Poverty is a real issue in Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga, and it is easy for me to get behind this unified movement.?

The celebration was hosted by Canadian Olympian, Brampton resident and United Way champion Michelle Cowell. Wali Shah, recipient of Youth in Motion's Top 20 Under 20 and United Way's 2013 Emerging Leader Award, shared his story of impact. Kim Wheatley, a proud Anishinaabe Ojibway and Turtle clan member of Shawanaga First Nation Reserve, also performed a Unity Song for those in attendance.

United Way also presented Spirit Awards to several organizations and individuals to recognize their efforts in the campaign and their volunteer work in the community.

Funds raised by United Way are invested in a vital network of community agencies and collaboration that focus on poverty ? reducing it, preventing it and supporting those who are experiencing poverty right now. As a social change organization, strategic research and engagement continues to drive impact and address the root causes of poverty.

It's not too late to donate. United Way of Peel Region is still accepting contributions to this campaign, which officially ends March 31. Visit www.unitedwaypeel.org/donate or call 905-602-3650.