

United Way of Peel Region celebrates community achievement

More than 550 people came together at the Mississauga Convention Centre to celebrate United Way's Community Achievement. Hosted by Jake Dheer, this year's event used a talk show format where special guests like Karen Grant-Carter, an outreach worker with Our Place Peel, shared their inspirational stories about the impact that United Way programs have made in the region.

Brampton South MP Sonia Sidhu and Anita Stellinga, vice-president of community investment with United Way of Peel Region, joined the stage to discuss the importance of working together to ensure a better community for all.

"Today, we celebrate United Way's community achievement," said United Way of Peel Region President and CEO Shelley White. "This achievement is the result of the commitment of our donors, volunteers and staff. Today we celebrate the impact the community has made."

She added that the agency has collectively changed more than 187,000 lives, mobilized volunteers to deliver more than 4,000 pounds of food to food security organizations, managed the distribution of in excess of 10,000 kilos of donations for Syrian refugees settling in Peel and is projected to raise over \$12 million by end of fiscal year.

"This achievement is more than a collection of donations of time, talent and money," observed Chuck Hounsell, 2015 Campaign Cabinet Chair and senior vice-president of Payment with TD Bank. "We're talking about possibility for all Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. It is people finding a warm place to sleep, enough to eat and a chance at a better future."

"Because of the work being celebrated today, we are building community supports to move the needle on poverty - reducing it, preventing it and supporting those in crisis right now," added John Russo, United Way of Peel Region board chair and a partner at Pallett Valo LLP. "I'd like to say thank you to every volunteer who has helped make this campaign successful."

At the celebration, United Way also presented the annual Spirit Awards to organizations and individuals recognizing their efforts in the campaign and their volunteer work. The recipients included Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services, Canadian Mental Health Association - Peel Branch, Family Services of Peel, Interim Place and Victim Services of Peel.

Funds raised by United Way are invested in a vital network of community agencies and collaborative partnerships. 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. Every donation makes a difference. To invest in the community, visit www.unitedwaypeel.org/donate or telephone 905-602-3650.