

Youth Volunteer Ambassadors recognized for their efforts

Last September, a dynamic group of young leaders came together to form Volunteer MBC's (Mississauga Brampton Caledon) Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Committee (SUYVA).

Over the past year, they actively got involved to help spread the message of volunteerism to youth across Peel.

Last week, Volunteer MBC held a recognition event to express the volunteer centre's appreciation for the exemplary efforts of these individuals.

The formation of the Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Committee was a proud moment for Volunteer MBC, commented Volunteer MBC's Assistant Manager of Community Engagement Shaminda Perera. The Committee provided us with the opportunity to reach out to a larger audience by appointing a group of youth ambassadors to represent Volunteer MBC and to promote volunteering among youth at their local schools. Today our community bears the fruits of their amazing contributions.

The centre strongly believes that the best way to reach out to youth is through youth; hence, they initiated SUYVA to boost youth volunteerism by empowering young leaders to inspire their peers and make a difference in their communities.

SUYVA is just one of three initiatives of Volunteer MBC's Empower Youth to Create Community Change Program. The Program also includes a Volunteer Engagement Module which connects youth to community service organizations; and the ChangeTheWorld Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge, a province-wide campaign which encourages high school youth to volunteer in the community.

In addition to recognizing members of the committee, special honour was presented to three Step Up Ambassadors. Ruhi Kokal and Nicole Hartono both have contributed more than 150 hours and were instrumental in the success of the ChangeTheWorld Fun For Change Event held in Mississauga in the spring. Linda Bui, who was also a key-note speaker at the recognition event, attended almost all SUYVA and Volunteer MBC youth events and has been a long-time supporter of the centre through her contributions on the Brampton Mayor's Youth Team.

The mission of SUYVA is to create a culture of youth engagement through volunteerism in their generation by connecting youth to meaningful volunteer opportunities and to develop events and initiatives that support causes that matter to their communities through volunteerism.

During the ceremony, Volunteer MBC welcomed a new group of committee members to represent SUYVA for the 2013-14 school year.

It feels wonderful to be among energetic youth who clearly feel appreciated and are so thankful, remarked Volunteer MBC Executive Director Carine Strong. We are so very grateful for all of your contributions and for supporting volunteerism in your community. We have, yet another, great group this year who have so much passion and we can't wait to see what lies ahead.

Volunteer MBC's Empower Youth to Create Community Change Program has a total cost of \$87,000. To date, through some government funding and the United Way of Peel Region's support, the centre has obtained \$47,000 and continues to work hard at raising the additional \$40,000 needed to meet their goal.

Donations can be made by cash or cheque, or through the CanadaHelps website at www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?charityID=s101596