

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Toronto neighbourhoods to receive record-breaking United Way funding \$59.3 million to support youth violence prevention programs, job counselling for newcomers, meal clubs for seniors and more**

**Toronto, August 14, 2006** – United Way of Greater Toronto today announced record funding in 2006 of more than \$59.3 million to help create lasting change in neighbourhoods across Toronto. The 2006 financial allocations include increased funding to agencies, many in priority neighbourhoods identified by United Way of Greater Toronto and the City of Toronto, for programs and services that will continue to strengthen lives and neighbourhoods.

United Way's community-based social and health service agencies are located in neighbourhoods across the city. They offer a wide range of programs that provide people with opportunities such as youth leadership programs, social programs for newcomers and recreation classes for seniors. These agencies are on the front lines working with residents and community leaders, with the support of United Way, to help address the root causes of our city's social issues.

"United Way works to create lasting change in Toronto," said Frances Lankin, President and CEO, United Way of Greater Toronto. "These investments, especially in the priority neighbourhoods, will help build a better city for us all. United Way and its donors work together with our agencies to create solutions and improve lives across the city."

United Way funding supports agencies like **Tropicana Community Services Organization** in Scarborough. Since 2005, more than 100 youth have participated in the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) program that helps to reduce aggressive behaviour in youth. Jessica\*, a 17-year-old Tropicana volunteer, enrolled in the ART program to learn how to control her anger. One year later, Jessica says she better understands what triggers her anger and is able to prevent her feelings and behaviour from negatively escalating. This innovative program is one approach to addressing the issue of youth violence in Toronto by training representatives from other community service organizations in ART principles to deliver similar programming in their neighbourhoods.

This year, United Way funding will support 200 agencies across the city such as:

**Yorktown Child and Family Centre** – offers a dynamic youth reconnecting program serving the Weston-Mt. Dennis area that uses arts and creative expression such as hip hop and dance to engage newcomer youth aged 13-18. Youth in the program use elements of popular culture to overcome feelings of isolation and detachment, resulting from immigration, to connect with their peers and family and to adjust to their new life in Canada. This innovative approach results in engaged youth.

**Northwood Neighbourhood Services** – offers a Cook and Talk program for African and Caribbean women in the Jane/Finch community dealing with domestic violence. Women meet to prepare meals together and discuss their experiences as part of the healing process. Abused women also access much needed support from agency staff and their peers in a safe environment.

\*name has been changed



### Other funding highlights:

- \$2.4 million to address growing social needs in the city's inner suburbs and build neighbourhood-based solutions through funding, partnerships and leadership. This is done by engaging residents in developing solutions to local issues, supporting community centres where they can access much needed services such as employment training programs, after-school homework clubs and more.
- \$2.2 million in new funding to strengthen programs and services at United Way's 148 member agencies which deliver vital support for people in neighbourhoods across Toronto.
- \$2.1 million in targeted gifts from major individual donors and foundations to fund programs such as 211 (a community information access service), initiatives to strengthen United Way agencies and other special projects and programs for children, youth and seniors.
- \$1.5 million for Success by 6® Grants to continue to support 17 programs like pre and post natal supports and family resource centres, which decrease isolation and strengthen families.
- \$1.3 million for the Toronto Enterprise Fund to support 12 initiatives that create job or training opportunities and community support for people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.
- \$300,000 in Newcomer Grants to address needs of immigrant and refugee newcomer communities through initiatives to improve service coordination and access to employment and settlement opportunities.
- \$300,000 in Winter Relief Grants for programs providing access to food, winter clothing, shelter, or drop-in services for the homeless and the under-housed during the winter.
- \$250,000 to support collaborative initiatives related to youth engagement through culture, sport leadership and educational attainment. These programs engage youth and provide them with skills, experiences and an opportunity to build productive lives.
- \$150,000 to provide support for quick response initiatives and innovative approaches to deliver programs providing support to suspended students, helping maintain their connection to school.

United Way of Greater Toronto raised a record \$96.1 million in its 2005 fundraising campaign. Total United Way allocations in 2006 are \$79.7 million. In addition to the \$59.3 million in Toronto, United Way distributed \$8.4 million to other United Ways and charities through United Ways in Ajax-Pickering-Uxbridge, Oakville, Peel, and York Region; and \$12 million to other charities designated by donors. The balance of \$16.4 million is comprised of program services provided directly by United Way of Greater Toronto, pledge losses and fund raising costs. Fundraising costs are 14.1 per cent of our campaign achievement.

For 50 years, United Way of Greater Toronto has worked to create lasting change in the lives of Torontonians. Through research, partnerships with business, labour, government, and volunteers, and by funding a network of 200 health and social service agencies, United Way identifies needs and takes action to support people and develop strong communities.