

## United Way 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fast Facts

For 50 years, United Way of Greater Toronto has been working to create sustainable 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 agencies, United Way identifies needs and takes action to support people and develop strong communities.

**Year Founded:** In 1956, business, labour, education and community leaders joined forces to create the United Community Fund and provide a seamless fundraising campaign to meet community needs. \$7.7 million was raised in the first campaign.

Simultaneously, the Red Cross formed an Association of Red Cross Branches of Metropolitan Toronto, agreeing to participate in partnership with the United Community Fund in a United Appeal.

The name “United Way” was adopted in 1973.

**Amount Raised:** United Way of Greater Toronto has raised more than \$1.5 billion for the community.

**Current Leaders:** Frances Lankin, President and CEO  
Rick Waugh, CEO, Scotiabank, 2006 United Way Campaign Chair

**Select Past Presidents:** John H. Yerger (1956)  
Michael Pfaff (1977)  
Gordon Cressy (1982)  
Anne Golden (1987)

**Special Events:** The first CN Tower Stair Climb for United Way was held in 1978. More than 120,500 participants have scaled the Tower at what is now called the Enbridge CN Tower Stair Climb. Other events: P&G Leaps and Bounds and the Scotiabank Rat Race.

**Diversity:** United Way’s relationship with Toronto’s diverse communities goes back to 1956. In 1982, it committed to a new vision of a more inclusive United Way with increased ethnocultural examination of how to meet the needs of different communities.

**Research:**

- 1961** United Way supports a major 18 month-long study to create a five-year blueprint for social welfare, health and recreation in the city
- 1971** The Re-examination Study Project looks at changing needs in Toronto
- 1997** *Metro Toronto: A Community at Risk*  
*Beyond Survival: Homelessness in Metro Toronto*
- 2001** *A Commitment to Care: Community Support Services for Seniors*
- 2002** *A Decade of Decline*  
*Opening the Doors: Making the Most of Community Space*
- 2003** *Torontonians Speak Out*
- 2004** *Poverty by Postal Code*
- 2005** *A Call to Action ... A Report of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force*

**Celebrities:** Celebrities who have supported United Way include: Comedian John Candy; Simon and Garfunkel; Bishop Desmond Tutu; Indian singer Lata Mangeshkar; Bollywood star Shah-Rukh Khan; RUSH; Gordon Lightfoot; Blue Rodeo; Barbara Walters and Lauren Bacall.