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Media Release

Volunteer MBC announces partnership with Peel HIV/AIDS Network (PHAN)

February 23, 2017 – Brampton, ON: History was made on February 9, 2017, when Peel HIV/AIDS Network (PHAN) and Volunteer MBC formed a partnership to create an increased understanding of the unique barriers and challenges faced by current and prospective LGBTQ+ volunteers. The partnership is the result of the approval of a grant application for a Partnership Grants Program and will develop appropriate strategies to increase a sense of inclusion for the LGBTQ+ communities within not for profit organizations.

Studies show that despite enormous social, cultural and legislative change in Ontario in recent decades, many from the LGBTQ+ community still face discrimination. While data exists to describe LGBTQ+ inclusion in employment, no data is available to describe LGBTQ+ inclusion in volunteerism. And just as volunteerism is a means to contribute to society, it also nurtures community connection, strengthens social networks, skill development and increased self – esteem among other benefits for the LGBTQ+ volunteers.

Speaking on the occasion, Hon Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration said, ““Not-for-profit organizations play an integral part in our social fabric and deliver programs and services that improve people’s everyday lives. I look forward to the outcomes of this project which promotes inclusivity in volunteering.”

The partnership between PHAN and Volunteer MBC will create training and tools that support the integration of the LGBTQ+ community. The project will adapt and expand upon nationally recognized best practices that not for profit agencies should strive towards in order to create safer and more welcoming spaces for LGBTQ+ volunteers in Ontario. An element of the project will also involve Volunteer MBC working with PHAN to develop and implement an LGBTQ+ inclusive volunteer management program. The two organizations will work closely to adapt existing best practices in volunteer management tools and resources to address LGBTQ+ volunteer inclusion, and where necessary, develop new tools.

Once evaluated, refined and finalized, these tools will be made available via Volunteer MBC to its members and through the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN).

In addition, PHAN will offer LGBTQ+ inclusion trainings and consultations to not for profits in the Peel region and The Gilbert Centre will be trained to offer these in Simcoe County/Muskoka as part of their mandate to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ communities in a more rural setting.

This historic partnership will create an inclusive environment that will open doors for the LGBTQ+ community, helping to establish a united community that ensures a safe and healthy environment where people truly care for each other.

About Volunteer MBC

Volunteer MBC is a volunteer centre serving the cities of Mississauga and Brampton, and the Town of Caledon. The centre strives to be a strong voice to support and promote volunteerism. The core services



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by the centre are offered in four key areas of connecting and collaborating, active participation, recognition, and education and learning within the Peel Region. The centre is a one stop shop that offers a referral and matching service connecting anyone who wants to volunteer with a volunteer opportunity and serves the corporate community with various programming services that engage individual and team volunteering and via our Learning Centre we provide a wide range of education and learning opportunities for community service organizations, volunteers and board directors. Volunteer MBC welcomes speaking and outreach opportunities to promote the value and benefits of volunteerism and the voluntary sector throughout the Region of Peel. For more information about Volunteer MBC, to access their on-line volunteer opportunities database, and to find more details on the centre's four convenient locations in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon, visit www.volunteermbc.org.

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