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*The future rests in our helping hands*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Youth Rode the Bus for Community Change**

**April 20, 2012 – Brampton, ON** – The clouds couldn't dampen the spirits of a number of youth who pitched in at community park clean-ups last Saturday, April 14, 2012 in South Mississauga. Youth travelled on a MiWay bus to three park locations - Lakefront Promenade Park, Jack Darling Memorial Park, and Lakeside Park, and were joined by the Honourable Charles Sousa, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and Councillor Jim Tovey, Ward 1 – City of Mississauga in the clean-up.

The Ride for Community Change was an event to officially kick-off of the provincial *ChangeTheWorld – Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge*. *ChangeTheWorld* is a three week campaign, supported by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, in partnership with the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN). The campaign started on April 15 and runs until May 6 with goal of engaging high school students from across the province of Ontario to volunteer in their communities. Now celebrating its 5th year, the goal is to engage 25,000 youth for a minimum of 3 hours of volunteering during the three weeks.

"For the next three weeks, youth can get out there and make an impact," stated Armin Forouzan, Communications and Outreach Coordinator for the *ChangeTheWorld* campaign. "Every single one of you can do it. Make it incredible, make it yours."

Minister Charles Sousa also stated, "The ChangeTheWorld challenge shows us just how much young people care about making an impact in their local communities. Ontario benefits from these committed and inspiring young champions, whose volunteer experience today is helping prepare them for leadership tomorrow."

The event was co-ordinated by Volunteer MBC, the local volunteer centre, with support by the City of Mississauga; MiWay – the new Mississauga Transit; the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration; and other community partners. Entertainment at the third park location was provided by Arlene Paculan, a highly acclaimed Mississauga singer. Also bringing words of encouragement to the youth participating were Patricia Runzer, Community Outreach Consultant from MiWay; and Philip Manzano, Executive Director & Co-founder of Good Movement.

"It was amazing to see how just a few hours can make such a profound difference," stated Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC and Chair of the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network. "In total we collected 80 bags of garbage, 1 tire and 3 large boxes. This is incredible!"

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Volunteer MBC is a volunteer centre serving the cities of Mississauga and Brampton, and the Town of Caledon. The centre offers a referral and matching service for volunteer placement within the community for all ages. They also provide education and support for volunteers and community service agencies and organizations, and serve the corporate community with various programming services that engage individual and team volunteering. Additionally, the centre strives to be a strong voice to support and promote volunteerism.

For more information about Volunteer MBC and to access their on-line volunteer opportunities database, visit [www.volunteermbc.org](http://www.volunteermbc.org). To find out more about the local *ChangeTheWorld* campaign, visit [www.volunteermbc.org/youth](http://www.volunteermbc.org/youth). Photos of the Ride for Community Change event can be viewed at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermbc/sets/>

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**Photo Caption:**

Officially launching the provincial *ChangeTheWorld – Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge* are (from left to right): Armin Forouzan, Communications and Outreach Coordinator for the 2012 *ChangeTheWorld* campaign; Philip Manzano, Executive Director & Co-founder of Good Movement; Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC and Chair of the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network; Honourable Charles Sousa, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; Patricia Runzer, Community Outreach Consultant, MiWay; and Councillor Jim Tovey, Ward 1 – City of Mississauga.

*Photo Credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis*



**Photo Caption:**

Participating youth, community residents and supporters who participated in the park clean-up blitz in South Mississauga.

*Photo Credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis*