



Mississauga • Brampton • Caledon

The future rests in our helping hands

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Youth Volunteers Recognized for Changing the World

August 3, 2012 – Brampton, ON – Loud cheers and applause erupted through the halls at the location of Volunteer MBC's Brampton Centre on Monday, July 23, 2012 as youth were recognized for their exemplary efforts during the *2012 ChangeTheWorld: Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge*. Four youth and the Brampton Mayor's Youth Team were recognized and thanked in the presence of their peers, family members and staff of the volunteer centre.

"Not only is volunteering helping out the cause, but when you're in the act of volunteering, other people see you helping," said Linda Bui, one of the four youth who were presented with a certificate and gift. "I hope it can strike up inspiration for them to make a difference too – a chain reaction." Ms. Bui, who is a student at Fletcher's Meadow Secondary School, has already completed her 40 hours of community service towards her graduation requirement, however, she feels that there are many benefits to volunteering and will continue to do so in her upcoming school year and in the future. The *ChangeTheWorld* campaign is an exciting initiative to help promote and encourage youth volunteer engagement.

This year, from April 15 through to May 6, youth from all across Ontario participated in *ChangeTheWorld*. The campaign's goal is to engage high school students to volunteer in their communities for a minimum of 3 hours of volunteering during the three weeks. Volunteer MBC far exceeded their local target with 5,183 youth volunteering over 24,426 hours, which represented an increase of over 66% for youth volunteers and over 102% for volunteer hours contributed compared to the previous year.

"With each year, *ChangeTheWorld* experiences growth and increased success," said Philip Manzano, Volunteer MBC's Youth Engagement Coordinator. "That just means one thing – that the bar is set even higher for the next year. But it is my firm belief that the numbers will never get so high that we won't be able to surpass them. And that is because of the unremitting support of young leaders like yourselves."

A certificate was also presented to Eugene Wilson, the Volunteer Development Programmer at the City of Brampton Community Services, who has been a strong supporter of Volunteer MBC and has provided exceptional direction to the Brampton Mayor's Youth Team, who were also recognized at the ceremony. The Brampton Mayor's Youth Team is currently celebrating its 5th year.

#

The other youth who were recognized included: Gisela Haryanto and Nicole Hartono, who are students from St. Francis Xavier Secondary School; and Michelle Osei-Bonsu, a student at St. Roch Catholic Secondary School. Each were presented with gift cards for their contributions during the campaign and for sharing their input to help with the future planning of the centre's youth volunteer engagement program.

"We are very pleased to be recognizing youth volunteers today," said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. "All of you have proven that you want to 'be the change you want to see in our world'." Ms. Strong also further noted, "I truly believe that youth volunteerism can be a preventative tool to help solve many of the social and economic problems that our communities are facing today. Youth are our future and our centre is here to support and guide them to the right path in order for them to connect and make friends while giving back to their community. The youth recognized today are amazing examples of how just one person can make a difference."

The *ChangeTheWorld: Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge* has been made possible through the support of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, in partnership with the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN). This year the campaign celebrated its 5th year and it has now become a youth movement across Ontario. For more information about the campaign, visit www.ontario.ca/changetheworld.

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 serves 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. Photos of this youth recognition ceremony can be viewed on-line at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermbc/sets/>

- 30 -

For more information and media inquiries, please contact:

Sharon Clark-Koufis
Marketing & Communications Manager
Volunteer MBC
P: 905.238.2622 ext. 221
C: 416.433.0639
E: media@volunteermbc.org



Carine Strong, Volunteer MBC's Executive Director (left), presenting Linda Bui (right) with a certificate and gift to recognize her contributions during the 2012 ChangeTheWorld campaign.
(Photo credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis)



Carine Strong, Volunteer MBC's Executive Director (left), presenting Eugene Wilson (right), the Volunteer Development Programmer at the City of Brampton Community Services, for being a strong supporter of Volunteer MBC and for providing exceptional direction to the Brampton Mayor's Youth Team, who were also recognized at the ceremony.
The Brampton Mayor's Youth Team is currently celebrating its 5th year.
(Photo credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis)



Carine Strong, Volunteer MBC's Executive Director, and Philip Manzano, Volunteer MBC's Youth Engagement Coordinator, welcoming everyone to the ceremony.
(Photo credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis)