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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Recognized for their Exemplary Efforts

**August 23, 2013 – Brampton, ON** – Last September a dynamic group of young leaders came together to form Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Committee (SUYVA). Over the past year, they actively got involved to help spread the message of volunteerism to youth across the Region of Peel. Last week, Volunteer MBC held a recognition event to express the volunteer centre's appreciation for the exemplary efforts of these individuals.

"The formation of the Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Committee was a proud moment for Volunteer MBC", said Shaminda Perera, Volunteer MBC's Assistant Manager of Community Engagement. "The Committee provided us with the opportunity to reach out to a larger audience by appointing a group of youth ambassadors to represent Volunteer MBC and to promote volunteering among youth at their local schools. Today our community bears the fruits of their amazing contributions."

The centre strongly believes that the best way to reach out to youth is through youth; hence, they initiated SUYVA to boost youth volunteerism by empowering young leaders to inspire their peers and make a difference in their communities. SUYVA is just one of three initiatives of Volunteer MBC's "Empower Youth to Create Community Change Program". The Program also includes a *Volunteer Engagement Module* which connects youth to Community Service Organizations; and the *ChangeTheWorld – Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge*, a province-wide campaign which encourages high school youth to volunteer in the community.

In addition to recognizing members of the committee, special honour was presented to three Step Up Ambassadors. Ruhi Kokal and Nicole Hartono who both have contributed over 150 hours and were instrumental in the success of the *ChangeTheWorld - Fun For Change Event* held in Mississauga this past Spring. Linda Bui, who was also a key-note speaker at the recognition event, attended almost all SUYVA and Volunteer MBC youth events and has been a long-time supporter of the centre through her contributions on the Brampton Mayor's Youth Team.

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The mission of SUYVA is to create a culture of youth engagement through volunteerism in their generation by connecting youth to meaningful volunteer opportunities and to develop events and initiatives that support causes that matter to their communities through volunteerism.

During the ceremony, Volunteer MBC welcomed a new group of committee members to represent SUYVA for the 2013/2014 school year. "It feels wonderful to be among energetic youth who clearly feel appreciated and are so thankful," said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. "We are so very grateful for all of your contributions and for supporting volunteerism in your community. We have, yet another, great group this year who have so much passion and we can't wait to see what lies ahead."

Volunteer MBC's "Empower Youth to Create Community Change Program" has a total cost of \$87,000. To date, through some government funding and the United Way of Peel Region's support, the centre has obtained \$47,000 and continues to work hard at raising the additional \$40,000 needed to meet their goal. For an investment of less than \$9.65 per youth volunteer, you can invest in the future of our youth. Donations can be made by cash or cheque, or through the CanadaHelps website at: [www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?charityID=s101596](http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?charityID=s101596).

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, to access their on-line volunteer opportunities database, and to find more details on the centre's three convenient locations in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon, visit [www.volunteermbc.org](http://www.volunteermbc.org).

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**(Note: Photos follow on the next page. Additional photos can be viewed on Volunteer MBC's Flickr page at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermbc/>)**

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*Photo caption: (from left to right) Linda Bui; Carine Strong, Executive Director, Volunteer MBC; and Nicole Hartono being recognized for their extra efforts and support of Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassador Committee (Note: absent from photo was Ruhi Kokal).*

*Photo credit: Shaminda Perera*



*Photo caption: Group shot of a few of the Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors (SUYVA) who were recognized for their exemplary efforts on Volunteer MBC's SUYVA Committee.*

*Photo credit: Shaminda Perera*

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