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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteer MBC officially launches the 2010 *ChangeTheWorld* – Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge

March 18, 2010 – Mississauga, ON – Volunteer MBC has officially launched the *2010 ChangeTheWorld - Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge* in the Region of Peel. *The Challenge* is a provincial initiative to encourage and foster a lifelong commitment to youth volunteerism and to guide youth to become a force for change and for good in their community. The initiative is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) in partnership with the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN), and it is the second year that Volunteer MBC has participated.

This year there are 21 volunteer centres across the province of Ontario that will be taking part by encouraging youth aged 14 to 18 years to be engaged in community initiatives that will be held anytime during National Volunteer Week (April 18 to 24) through to May 9, 2010. The goal is to engage 10,000 youth across the province for a minimum of 3 hours of volunteering in their community.

For this year's *Challenge*, Volunteer MBC has launched the theme to 'adopt a cause' by encouraging youth across the Region of Peel to create activities or events for their adopted cause through their schools or to participate in an existing event that is being co-ordinated by a local community service agency. The goal is for the activities or events to raise awareness of a cause that youth are passionate about or to bring attention to issues that are impacting their community.

"Last year our volunteer centre engaged an astounding 700 youth across the Region in over 33 events that our centre organized that were of an environmental theme," stated Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. "This year, we've created a youth advisory committee who have been taking the lead on helping our centre to plan and co-ordinate the *Challenge* and who will provide on-going support to student groups and the local area schools as they engage in 'adopt a cause' activities and events."

Abdullah Ishaque, Chair of the *ChangeTheWorld* Youth Advisory Committee stated, "I have always been an advocate of youth involvement in the community and I believe that each and every one of us has the potential to do something big in this world and it's just a matter of being aware of that fact." He further stated, "When I first came across the committee, I immediately thought of it as the perfect opportunity to implement my beliefs and values in a practical environment. I also saw it as an opportunity for me to grow, build new relationships, enjoy what I like, and most importantly, change something for the better."

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Coinciding with the official launch of the initiative in the Region of Peel is the launch of a dedicated Volunteer MBC - ChangeTheWorld website at www.volunteermbc.org/change.aspx. The site provides detailed information about the *Challenge* including event registration forms (for schools and for community events), a list of confirmed events, celebrity endorsement videos, helpful resources and contact information including direct links to Facebook and Twitter.

“Youth can change the world. Take up this challenge and volunteer and help make your community, your province and your world a better place,” stated Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Volunteer MBC is a volunteer centre serving the cities of Mississauga and Brampton, and the Town of Caledon. The centre offers a referral service for volunteer placement within the community for all ages to include youth, seniors, newcomers and groups. They also serve the corporate community with various programming services that engage team volunteering. Additionally, the centre provides education and support for volunteers and community service agencies and organizations through topic and issue related workshops, comprehensive and informative programs, and community outreach.

Volunteer MBC is located at 2601 Matheson Blvd. E., Unit #43 in Mississauga, with satellite locations planned for the future in Brampton and Caledon. For more information about Volunteer MBC visit www.volunteermbc.org, or call 905.238.2622, or send an email to info@volunteermbc.org.

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