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MEDIA RELEASE

Brampton Students ChangeTheWorld and Support Youth Volunteerism

May 8, 2013 – Brampton, ON – Hundreds of youth at St. Augustine Secondary School in Brampton spent the afternoon two weeks ago with their local volunteer centre, Volunteer MBC, as well as a number of invited guests, dignitaries and their peers to show their support of the difference and impact that youth volunteerism has on our community. April 18 marked the official launch of Volunteer MBC's local *ChangeTheWorld* campaign in the Peel Region.

"In 2009, Volunteer MBC presented the benefits of volunteering to St. Augustine students and introduced them to the *ChangeTheWorld* campaign," said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. "For three years in a row now, St. Augustine has had the highest number of students volunteer during the campaign, not just for Peel, but all across the province. So we just knew that St. Augustine would be the perfect choice for our local launch and to present this year's *ChangeTheWorld* campaign."

The *ChangeTheWorld - Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge* is funded by the Government of Ontario, in partnership with the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN), and is a province-wide campaign for youth aged 14 to 18 years to volunteer through a wide variety of exciting local initiatives. The campaign officially began during National Volunteer Week (April 21 to 27) and runs until May 20, 2013. The goal is to inspire youth to volunteer, develop new skills and broaden their awareness of community service organizations.

The launch included a volunteer fair component where students learned about a wide variety of difference causes, including school clubs that they could participate in. Following the fair, a presentation was held in the school cafeteria, which was attended by the Honourable Michael Coteau, Ontario's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; MPP Vic Dhillon, Brampton – West; Linda Zanella, Vice-Chair/Trustee, Brampton - Wards 2, 5 & 6; and Anna DaSilva, Trustee, Brampton – Wards 1, 3 & 4. Adewunmi (Ade) Adegbonmire, a much-admired St. Augustine Alumni, shared his volunteer story and provided an inspirational speech about the benefits that youth volunteerism has had on him as a newcomer to Canada.

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“I’m proud to be here today to celebrate your success as I know that this is the number one school in terms of hours participating across the province. Thank you very much for all that you do.” said Minister Coteau. “Volunteerism isn’t only giving something away, we also receive something. We receive something inside of us that changes us forever and it can change you as a person, it can change your circumstance in life.”

Minister Coteau further noted, “Volunteering is the perfect fit as people receive and get the help that they need, and we as individuals grow and become better. It works for everyone and we sometimes get just one chance to make a difference, the ChangeTheWorld campaign is a great way to do just that.”

Last year, Volunteer MBC engaged over 5,183 youth in 76 events across Peel Region, which totalled an astounding 24,426 volunteer hours! Across Ontario, nearly 28,000 youth participated in 2012 breaking records contributing to almost 124,000 volunteer hours. This year, 23 volunteer centres are participating across Ontario with the goal to surpass 30,000 youth volunteering for a minimum of three hours per volunteer over the four week campaign.

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 about the *ChangeTheWorld* campaign in Peel Region, visit www.volunteermbc.org. Photos of the *ChangeTheWorld* launch can be viewed on Volunteer MBC’s Flickr account at: www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermbc/sets.

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Photo Caption:

Minister Michael Coteau (Ontario Citizenship & Immigration), at Volunteer MBC's launch of the ChangeTheWorld - Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge at St. Augustine Secondary School in Brampton, on April 18, 2013.

Photo Credit: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration



Photo Caption:

Students at St. Augustine Secondary School in Brampton, creating ChangeTheWorld keepsake buttons, on April 18, 2013.

Photo credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis

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Photo Caption:

(from left to right) Adriane Beaudry, CVRM, Volunteer MBC's Program Manager;
Tom Iwasiw, Principal at St. Augustine Secondary School in Brampton; and
Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC; at the launch
of the ChangeTheWorld campaign on April 18, 2013.

Photo credit: Sharon Clark-Koufis

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