



Mississauga • Brampton • Caledon

*The future rests in our helping hands*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Volunteer Centre is Planting the Seeds to Grow Communities**

**May 26, 2009 – Mississauga, ON** – Volunteer MBC (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon), the Region of Peel's new volunteer centre, is having an Open House on Thursday, May 28 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. The centre is inviting individuals and organizations within the community, non-profit agencies who serve the Region of Peel, and members of the media to attend this event. The official cake/ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at 3:00 PM (photo opportunities will be available).

The centre, which commenced in September 2008 and moved into its new location later in the year, has the goal of being a voice for volunteers, agencies and organizations who are seeking volunteers, supporting local endeavours which engage volunteers, and providing leadership in the promotion of civic engagement and volunteerism in the Region of Peel. The Open House is the opportunity to announce the centres' plan to be 'planting the seeds to grow communities'.

"Peel is strengthened by the dedication and compassion of our volunteers, who help us to deliver excellent Regional programs and services every day," says Regional Chair Emil Kolb. "We congratulate Volunteer MBC on their grand opening and look forward to them being an integral part of the continued growth of our community."

The centre currently has a staff of four to include Carine Strong, Director; Sharon Clark-Koufis, Marketing & Communications Manager; Adriane Beaudry, Program Manager; and Marina Campos, the centre's Office Assistant. Volunteers also assist the staff with on-going support and with specific projects, as required.

"We have accomplished so much in the past few months especially with our involvement in the Youth Volunteer Challenge that was held during National Volunteer Week," says Carine Strong, Director of Volunteer MBC. "We've been out in the community meeting with various groups and non-profit service agencies in order to do research to allow us to develop services and programs to meet the needs of the community which we are here to serve," she further noted. "And we have so much more that we plan to do."

###

Volunteer MBC's main service is to be a referral for volunteer placement with non-profit community service agencies. The centre supports volunteers of all ages to include youth, newly retired seniors, newcomers and family/group opportunities, as well as team building programs for the corporate/business sector.

"It was important for the United Way to build a volunteering capacity in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon," says Shelley White, CEO of the United Way of Peel Region. "Connecting people who want to volunteer with the wide number of service agencies covering everything from social programs, the arts, immigration, healthcare, education and others is a fantastic resource to have available in our community." She further noted, "With Volunteer MBC's assistance of providing access to a pool of great volunteers and building best practices, the power of service will expand to ensure a stronger community."

Volunteer MBC's open house is a means for the community to visit the centre, meet the staff, and to find out more about the programs and services that they have and will have to offer. In the coming weeks, the centre will be launching a comprehensive on-line website/database where member agencies can post their volunteer opportunities and where volunteers can conduct detailed searches based on their location and profile information. The website will also boast various resources and helpful links.

In addition, support materials are being developed for school guidance departments in order to assist them with the communication to parents and students about the community service requirement. Marketing support materials guiding individuals to contact Volunteer MBC will also be posted at community centres and libraries across the Region of Peel shortly. As well, a number of programs and workshops will be made available through the centre geared towards volunteers and service agencies.

Volunteering Peel, a youth-led organization which partnered with Volunteer MBC in March, will also continue to provide support to reach youth and to co-ordinate group volunteering activities through the centre.

Volunteer MBC is located at 2601 Matheson Blvd. E., Unit #43 in Mississauga, with satellite locations planned in the future. More information on Volunteer MBC can be found at [www.volunteermbc.org](http://www.volunteermbc.org) or by contacting the centre at 905.238.2622 or [info@volunteermbc.org](mailto:info@volunteermbc.org).

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Sharon Clark-Koufis  
Marketing & Communications Manager  
P: 905.238.2622 ext. 21  
E: [sclark@volunteermbc.org](mailto:sclark@volunteermbc.org)