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MEDIA RELEASE

New Executive Team of Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Takes Reigns

September 10, 2014 – Brampton, ON – Volunteer MBC is pleased to announce the 2014/15 Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors' Executive Team as follows:

- Chair: Ramneek Kaur, Heart Lake Secondary School (Brampton)
- Vice Chair - Event Management: Sidra Khan, North Park Secondary School (Brampton)
- Vice Chair - Volunteer Engagement: Angela Chen, Glenforest Secondary School (Mississauga)
- Vice Chair - Learning and Development: Isheeta Sharrma, Glenforest Secondary School (Mississauga)
- Vice Chair - Marketing and Communications: Sidak Manchanda, Heart Lake Secondary School (Brampton)

Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors (SUYVA) is one of three modules that comprise the Volunteer Centre's *Empower Youth to Create Community Change (EY-3C) Program*. The SUYVA module empowers youth to inspire volunteerism in their schools and communities as "Step Up Ambassadors" by connecting youth to meaningful volunteer opportunities and developing events and initiatives that support causes that matter in our community. The Executive Team will help to lead the Committee in planning and executing events where youth can get involved and volunteer.

"Last year, Volunteer MBC referred over 23,000 youth to volunteer opportunities in Peel Region," said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. "SUYVA lends their youth voice to inspire their peers to volunteer and give back to their community. We welcome our new SUYVA Executive Team and all of the new members of the Committee and thank them for helping Volunteer MBC to promote youth volunteerism across Peel Region."

During the recently concluded 2013/14 term, SUYVA accomplished many achievements:

- This dynamic group of high school students contributed over **1,500 hours of volunteer time** towards making an impact promoting and supporting youth volunteerism in Peel.
- During the month of November SUYVA coordinated a donation drive which **collected items worth over \$700 to support youth at Our Place Peel**, the Region of Peel's only youth homeless shelter.

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- SUYVA actively supported the annual *ChangeTheWorld – Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge*, a provincial campaign with the goal of encouraging high school youth to volunteer in their community. SUYVA organized and executed **four major events that overall engaged over 300 youth** between April 6 through to May 19, 2014. *ChangeTheWorld* is delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade and the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN).
- SUYVA's flagship project during the 2013/14 term was **"MADScatter", a Mental Health Awareness** event held on April 19, 2014 at Sheridan College's Davis Campus. Over 150 youth spent a Saturday evening volunteering to spread the word about teen stress and initiating conversations about this topic. The event concluded with a dance party that provided youth with an opportunity to relieve their stress by expressing themselves through music and dance. The event was supported by a number of community service organizations, including the Canadian Mental Health Association, and local youth celebrity, Wali Shah. It was funded through a Youth in Action Grant from the United Way of Peel Region.

On August 28, 2014, SUYVA held a "Recognition and Turnover Ceremony" to recognize the valuable contributions made by its members and to announce the new Executive Team for the 2014/15 term. Recognition awards were presented as follows:

- Most Valuable Ambassador: Angela C., Glenforest Secondary School (Mississauga)
- Top Contributor (Highest Number of Volunteer Hours): Cindy N., Louise Arbour Secondary School, (Brampton)
- Top Contributor (Support at Most Number of Events): Nicole H., Francis Xavier Secondary School (Mississauga)

Volunteer MBC continuously strives to empower youth in the Region of Peel through SUYVA to enable opportunities to make an impact in the community. Leadership development and service excellence training, and an Advisory Panel comprising of post-secondary student mentors who are passionate about community service, are just a few of these efforts.

"SUYVA is taking on a new term, with new opportunities and new collaborations," said Shaminda Perera, Manager of Community Engagement for Volunteer MBC who is also the Staff Liaison for SUYVA. "We have faith that SUYVA will continue to make a positive impact in the Region of Peel by uplifting youth volunteerism. They proved this during the previous term and they are already developing plans for the new term. We cannot express in words how proud Volunteer MBC is of our amazing youth ambassadors."

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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 (youth, adults, seniors, and families). 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.

High school students in the Region of Peel who wish to become a Step Up Ambassador can forward their interest through <http://bit.ly/vmbcSUYVAintake>. Latest initiatives and meeting times for SUYVA are posted at www.facebook.com/StepUpVmbc.

For more information about Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Program, go to: www.volunteermbc.org/vmbc-suyva. 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.

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For more information and media inquiries, please contact:

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Note: A photo follows.

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Photo caption:

*Volunteer MBC's Step Up Youth Volunteer Ambassadors Committee
2014/15 Executive Team (from left to right):*

*Isheeta Sharma (Vice Chair – Learning and Development);
Ramneek Kaur (Chair);
Angela Chen (Vice Chair - Volunteer Engagement);
Sidak Manchanda (Vice Chair - Marketing and Communications); and
Sidra Khan (Vice Chair – Event Management)*

Photo credit: Shaminda Perera

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