

Message from the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees

What a year. We celebrated our 50th anniversary with a nostalgic nod to the past and an optimistic eye toward the future. Fifty years after Toronto businessman, Edgar G. Burton started the United Community Fund of Greater Toronto, United Way of Greater Toronto—along with its many partners—has become fundamental to building a stronger, healthier and safer city for all Torontonians.

In 2006, we continued to focus on three of our main priorities—strengthening neighbourhoods, creating opportunities for youth and helping to fulfill the potential of newcomers. These three areas each held its own importance in the official launch of our Building Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, a comprehensive initiative aimed at creating lasting change in Toronto's priority neighbourhoods—many of which are home to youth seeking opportunity and direction, and newcomers wishing to fulfill their potential as contributing members of society in their new country. And importantly, we maintained our critical role as a core funder by providing financial stability from The Community Fund to our network of 200 health and social service agencies.

The Youth Challenge Fund, established early last year by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, announced a total of \$3.5 million in its first round of investment for youth-based projects. Directed towards the 13 neighbourhoods prioritized by the City of Toronto and UWGT, the Youth Challenge Fund will make a significant difference in the lives of young people in our city. In addition to this initiative, we opened four more Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) offices dedicated to strengthening priority neighbourhoods through resident-led change. One of those—Eglinton East/Kennedy Park—is the site of our first community hub, in partnership with West Hill Community Health Centre and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

Partnerships were an integral part of our success in 2006. We continued to forge and nurture strong relationships with all three levels of government, foundations, donors, agencies and community leaders; thereby, creating a network of support, knowledge and resources to address the complex social issues of our city. As an example of how UWGT contributes on a national level to the social services and broader not-for-profit sector, Frances chaired a Federal Government commissioned, independent Blue Ribbon Panel, making recommendations for improving Ottawa's grant and contribution programs and processes.

United Way donors and volunteers have always been essential partners in our efforts and this year was no exception. Answering

the call of our record-breaking \$100 million goal, supporters came through with a level of generosity that was unprecedented, raising an impressive \$106.8 million for United Way, its member agencies, and other charities in our community.

Much progress was made in 2006, both citywide and organizationally, but this progress would not have been possible if it weren't for the dedication and hard work of our donors, volunteers, agencies and community partners. It's all about connecting. Through our collective efforts we are building a stronger city.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances Lankin".

Frances Lankin
President and Chief Executive Officer,
United Way of Greater Toronto



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. E. Venn".

Richard Venn
Chair, Board of Trustees

Senior Executive Vice-President, Corporate Development, CIBC
Managing Director and Deputy Chairman, CIBC World Markets Inc.

Another year of connecting with our community ... to strengthen our city

2006 was a year of exciting initiatives, new knowledge and notable achievements. Strengthening neighbourhoods, creating opportunities for youth and fulfilling the potential of newcomers continued to be top of mind priorities. Highlights included the following:

Campaign was a great success

This year we achieved a remarkable \$106.8 million—\$6.8 million above goal. Thanks to the enthusiastic leadership of Rick Waugh, President and CEO, Scotiabank and his dedicated campaign cabinet and a host of volunteers and donors, the annual campaign was an enormous success. This incredible achievement makes our work, and the work of our agencies, possible. These funds will be distributed in 2007.

Neighbourhood Strategy took root

It was Poverty by Postal Code that set United Way on its current path—finding sustainable solutions for Toronto's priority neighbourhoods. Guided by the work of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force in 2005, the City of Toronto and United Way of Greater Toronto have jointly identified 13 neighbourhoods requiring targeted investment and support.

In 2006, United Way launched a five-year Neighbourhood Strategy aimed at strengthening these underserved, inner suburban neighbourhoods. The strategy responded to the growing trends of poverty and increasing population growth in these areas—areas that are home to a significant number of newcomers and youth. The Neighbourhood Strategy involves a broad range of activities, including:

- Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) – an initiative that will strengthen 13 priority inner suburban neighbourhoods through resident engagement and community building with a view to creating long-term sustainable change.
- Community Hubs – an initiative that, by 2010, will seed the development of new community service hubs in eight of the priority neighbourhoods, where there is limited or no community infrastructure.
- Youth Programs – a series of special youth initiatives that focus on leadership, community engagement through the arts, and investment in educational success.

- Priority Funding – 75 per cent of all new funding raised annually from the United Way campaign will be targeted to inner suburban neighbourhoods.

Taking action in priority neighbourhoods

In October 2006, United Way announced the development of a 15,000 square-foot community hub that will provide residents of Eglinton East/Kennedy Park in East Scarborough with a central space for social programs and services. This hub will also be home to a new community health centre (CHC) and is being developed in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

As well, ANC established resident engagement initiatives in four of the identified priority neighbourhoods—Eglinton East/Kennedy Park, Weston-Mt. Denis, Lawrence Heights and Steeles-L'Amoureux.

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Photo: Ben Legge

Eager to hit the pitch, these cricket enthusiasts benefit from the hard work of local volunteers, community agencies and ANC staff who worked together to provide Scarborough Village youth with an opportunity to form friendships and develop leadership skills while playing a game they love.

Another year of connecting with our community ... to strengthen our city *continued*

Community funding

United Way invested \$59 million in a network of 200 health and social services agencies, providing them with core operating and program funding to deliver vital services that impact every area of our city. \$4 million in new funding was also allocated to member and grant-funded agencies, and an additional \$1.9 million was forwarded to the community through joint United Way, government and foundation partnerships.

Youth Challenge Fund established

The Ontario government selected UWGT as a partner to administer The Youth Challenge Fund (YCF), a public and private sector initiative to invest in youth-based projects across Toronto. Chaired by Michael Clemons, Head Coach of the Toronto Argonauts, the YCF Board announced its first round of investment totaling \$3.5 million in December 2006. The first round of funding supports youth initiatives in the city's 13 priority neighbourhoods for the next three years.

YCF builds on Toronto's Strong Neighbourhood Strategy

With an initial \$15 million investment from the Provincial government, this initiative makes direct, grassroots investments in projects aimed at creating spaces for youth, supporting youth employment, promoting entrepreneurial activities, and providing opportunities for education, employment and leadership.

The fund has the total potential investment of up to \$45 million thanks to a challenge issued by Premier Dalton McGuinty—if United Way donors contribute an additional \$15 million, the Province will match it.

Developing agency leaders

In 2006, 24 up and coming leaders graduated from United Way's Emerging Leaders program, for a total of 47 graduates since it was introduced in 2005. In addition, United Way offers a Leaders of Today program, which provides leadership skills training for executive directors to help build agencies' effectiveness and capacity.

Public policy leadership

As part of UWGT's strategic plan, the Board approved the development of a public policy team to leverage the impact of our funding and tackle systemic issues. United Way was the proud recipient of the 2006 Kroeger College Award in the Policy Leadership category.

New member agency

United Way welcomed York Community Services (YCS) as a new member agency. The agency works to strengthen the lives of newcomers, youth, seniors, and people who are homeless, at-risk or living with mental health issues. The agency is located in the former City of York, which includes the high priority neighbourhood of Weston-Mt. Denis.

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United Way mark its 50th anniversary at the Annual General Meeting on May 24, 2006.



Photo: Ben Legge

A once unused and unsafe space is now a lively spot for residents to meet and connect with other members of their community. It is also home to a new playground, a favourite place for play among the neighbourhood children. It officially opened at the 1st Annual Scarborough Village Community Festival in June 2006.

Frances Lankin chairs Blue Ribbon Panel on grants and funding

In 2006, the Federal Government responded to the ongoing concerns surrounding unnecessary red tape and challenges in granting and funding with the creation of an independent review panel. Frances Lankin was invited to Chair the Blue Ribbon Panel. The final report, *From Red Tape to Clear Results* was released after six months of intense analysis and consultation with approximately 1,100 grant and funding recipients, as well as over 500 federal program managers. The panel arrived at three key conclusions, including that there is a need for fundamental change in the way the Federal Government understands, designs, manages and accounts for its grant and contribution programs.

PhotoSensitive exhibit took place

In November 2006, the not-for-profit photography collective, PhotoSensitive unveiled THE STRENGTH WITHIN: A PhotoSensitive Exhibit Marking the 50th Anniversary of United Way. Showcasing the work of 23 professional photographers, THE STRENGTH WITHIN was a compelling collection of photographs featuring people who volunteer at, work in, or use the services of 23 United Way agencies. The exhibit and the book that was produced from it celebrate those who triumph over adversity when given the support and tools to succeed.