



United Way
of Greater Toronto

1956
2006

50 years. United T.O.gether

United Way's Ethnocultural History

- 1956** Churches, synagogues, inter-ethnic groups, schools, the University of Toronto, labour, corporations, housewives and media come together to create the United Community Fund (present-day United Way).
- 1959** United Way receives coverage in 15 ethnic papers in 11 languages. Special materials are also created for ethnocultural groups.
- 1960** Twenty-three people representing 12 ethnicities create a year-round committee to promote United Way to ethnic communities. United Way works with 41 ethnic media outlets.
- 1982** United Way commits to a more inclusive United Way with increased ethnocultural diversity, and sets out how to address needs in various communities.
- 1983** Ethnocultural and suburban services, as well as services to isolated people and those hurt by unemployment, are identified as top priorities by the organization. Five new United Way committees are created from Toronto's largest cultural communities – Black, Chinese, Greek, Italian and South Asian.
- Thirteen new agencies are admitted, including several ethnocultural agencies such as Tropicana Community Services and Toronto Chinese Community Services.
- Board Member Dr. Joseph Wong, founder of the Chinese Community Committee, organizes the first Walkathon (now P&G Leaps and Bounds) for United Way, attracting more than 300 walkers from the Chinese community.
- 1985** The Black Development Committee is the driving force behind the first-ever fundraising effort held by the black community for United Way in Canada.
- The South Asian Committee organizes an unprecedented charity concert by famous Indian songstress Lata Mangeshkar at Maple Leaf Gardens.
- 1986** The Black Development Committee spearheads the Toronto Arts Against Apartheid Festival, featuring Bishop Desmond Tutu and Harry Belafonte.
- 1987** United Way gives priority funding to agencies that represent and serve Toronto's ethnocultural and native communities. Five agencies, as well as United Way, participate in a two-year Multiculturalism Project that results in the adoption of multiculturalism policies and the development of action plans.
- 1989** United Way's leadership role in multiculturalism and anti-racism is widely acknowledged. Twenty-seven agencies participate in the Multiculturalism Development Program.

- 1989** Ben Sennick leads the South Asian and Black/Caribbean communities in the organization of the first United Way cricket match. This event attracts more than 40,000 people and raises over \$600,000, making it the largest and one of the most lucrative special events to date.
- 1990** Dr. Joseph Wong becomes Chair, Board of Trustees.
- 1991** The Multicultural/Anti-Racism policy for United Way and its member agencies is fully launched. Its purpose is to promote access to services by eliminating cultural and racial barriers.
- 1993** United Way creates a Community Outreach department.
- 1994** Mary Anne Chambers chairs the new Community Outreach Committee, working to enhance relationships with the Chinese, Black, South Asian, Italian, Portuguese, Korean and Filipino communities. The Committee aims to strike a balance between *friendraising* and *fundraising*.
- 1996** Bahadur Madhani becomes Chair, Board of Trustees.
- 1998** Consulting firm A.T. Kearney designs an ethnocultural strategy for United Way that recommends concentrating the organization's efforts on the Chinese and South Asian communities. United Way creates Chinese and South Asian task forces to strengthen ties between the organization and these communities.
- The Awesome Foursome concert to benefit United Way features Bollywood movie stars Shah-Rukh Khan, Akshay Kumar, Kajol and Juhi Chawla in a concert at Maple Leaf Gardens. Similar concerts to benefit United Way are held over several years.
- 1999** The first Chinese Gala for United Way, later called the Blossom Ball, is held. Volunteers play a key role, led by founding co-chairs David Poon and Sharifa Khan. The event still continues today.
- 2001** Acclaimed South Asian film director Deepa Mehta directs United Way's campaign video.
- 2002** United Way's South Asian Committee organizes several fundraising events, including a movie screening of Deepa Mehta's movie *Bollywood/Hollywood* with the director and cast.
- 2003** United Way expands its outreach work within the Chinese and South Asian communities, and hires staff to work directly with the African-Canadian community.
- 2006** DiversiPro Inc. conducts an analysis of the New Markets outreach department and helps create a road map for the future.