



**United Way**  
Burlington &  
Greater Hamilton

## HERE AT HOME ...

Your Community Impact Report 2015-2016  
United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton

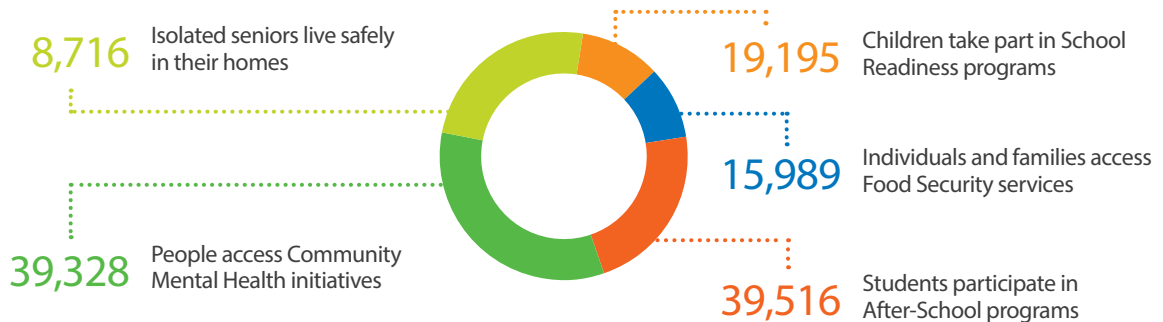




# BEHIND EVERY CHANGED LIFE ...

Donors to United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton change lives. You change the lives of seniors, children and at-risk youth. You help families escape poverty and you help kids find paths to success. You build stronger communities, neighbourhoods and families.

Last year, you gave United Way and its community partners the ability to help ...



The people affected by your generosity number in the hundreds of thousands, but the numbers are less important than the people and the stories – the stories told by neighbours, colleagues, friends and family.

Every number is a life changed.



1,275

Isolated seniors have access to friendly visits and calls providing security



60

Children with special needs experience summer camp



2,359

Children and adults receive crisis counselling



1,395

Children and youth find positive adult mentors



2,577

Adults receive mental health supports



486

Women find refuge from violent abuse



1,074

Children and youth learn anti-bullying exercises



5,081

Children participate in early learning programs



## John's Story

### Like Father, Like Son, Like Community

Like his father, John is a lawyer. He also followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a dedicated United Way volunteer. "Dad liked the United Way concept – I think he called it the Community Chest 60 years ago – a centralized funding agency that would invest in the top priorities."

Fifteen years ago, John made the observation that the "leaders" – the over \$1,000 donor list – included only a handful of lawyers and judges. John enlisted his friend the Honourable Frank Iacobucci of the Supreme Court of Canada to speak at a luncheon in Hamilton for United Way. Because the luncheon honours the late Supreme Court of Canada Justice John Sopinka, a member of that Court has volunteered every year since to speak and celebrate the outstanding community benefit of United Way. The inaugural luncheon raised \$3,000. Last year, it brought in \$182,000, lifting the 14-year total to just under \$2 million.

On November 23, 2016, Mme. Justice Suzanne Côté, one of Canada's great advocates before her appointment to the Supreme Court, will address the legal profession at the luncheon.

John finds the luncheon rewarding for a variety of reasons. "Giving is the best therapy for your mind. It's very satisfying," he says. The Sopinka United Way Legal Luncheon has been so successful and influential that it was named the United Way's 2015 Community Event of the Year.

That, however, is not the only award connected to John's volunteer efforts. In 2011, United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton created an award in his name to recognize a member of the legal profession who has made exceptional contributions to the community. John was the first recipient. He takes great pride in the now well-established generosity of his fellow lawyers. "My hope for the city," he says, "is that it continues to develop a vibrant, sophisticated culture, business and arts community. I hope we continue to support kids, building adventure in their lives and building a community that is great for everyone. Lawyers back those values to the hilt."



# OUR UNITED WAY. OUR **UNIQUE** WAY.

The Burlington and Hamilton communities have established a powerful network of not-for-profit organizations and services that support people who need help ... a little help, a lot of help, a one-time intervention or ongoing assistance. Every organization has a focus and a particular expertise in delivering on its mandate.

Our community is only as strong as these organizations.

Working with these community partners, United Way plays a unique role. Our mission is broad enough to touch any issue that affects our hometown. Our experience and network put us in a position to measure, identify, evaluate and address the challenges and opportunities that are most pressing today. We are ready to invest where and when our communities need it most.

That's the role of United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton.

**1** Our partnership with 63 community agencies gives United Way a broad view of community health, wellbeing and prosperity.

**2** We have a mission and focus that is diverse enough to allow us to engage with any challenge our community faces.

**3** We have the ability to identify and support the local agencies doing the best work on the most important and pressing issues.

These are United Way's unique strengths. We bridge gaps and help provide the connective vision that can bring together individual programs and services to solve our community's most complex problems. We bring the players to the table.

When you give to United Way, you invest in a strategy for social change that is inclusive, considered and proven. When you give to United Way, you make possibility, opportunity and support more available to all members of our community.





## Gabby's Story When Work is More than Just a Job

United Way is responsible for Gabby's first job. It wasn't through a job-search program or a resumé workshop. It wasn't by connecting her with a mentor or by helping her build her network. Instead, United Way helped by giving a local not-for-profit organization the resources to hire paid staff. Gabby did the rest.

As a college student in Belleville, Gabby had been involved with a United Way-supported children's after-school program. "That's really what got me started with United Way," she says.

"I saw where the work went, saw where the money went, saw how important it was. These kids were underprivileged. Their parents didn't have a lot of money. They had issues at home, but they got tutoring and support from this organization. And that's what got me sold right off the bat."

From her first job with a United Way supported agency, Gabby was able to get valuable experience that she has carried with her. "I was their first paid employee. I loved that job. I did everything. It was a great opportunity." When Gabby later came to Hamilton/Burlington, she says, "It was natural for me to get involved with the United Way here. Contributing was a natural thing for me to be able to do. I can, so I do."

A grandmother and now long-time Hamiltonian who works in Burlington, Gabby is a loyal United Way donor because she knows the money stays in her community. "It helps people who could be my next-door neighbour," she says. "That could be myself at some point." As a donor, she also does her homework and recommends other supporters do the same. "You'll get a better sense of confidence that you're contributing to something worthwhile. Chances are you're going to know somebody who benefits from United Way."





# ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE

United Way invests in programs that help children and youth develop into strong contributors to strong communities. This means helping kids with their cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. This means creating safe environments, enhancing learning opportunities and providing positive role models and mentors.

Last year, United Way invested in:

- ♦ After-School homework programs
- ♦ Mentoring programs
- ♦ Employment readiness programs
- ♦ Tutoring programs
- ♦ Nutrition education
- ♦ Recreation activities
- ♦ Community involvement/volunteer opportunities
- ♦ Drop-in social and learning programs

Why we care:

- ♦ Our education system struggles to prepare students for the rapidly changing youth job market
- ♦ Sedentary lifestyles are eroding the physical health of children and youth
- ♦ Emotional and mental health issues are rising among children and youth
- ♦ Changing family structures and work arrangements are leaving more children and youth unsupervised after school

## Total \$ Investment



Youth Leadership  
Development

\$10,613



School Readiness  
Programs

\$224,046



After-School  
Programs

\$655,341



## Comparing Big Numbers

### United Way – Supported Program Participation

After-School Programs

39,516



McMaster University  
total student population

30,000

School Readiness Programs

19,195



Runners in the Around  
the Bay Road Race

9,000

## What we've achieved:

More than **59,000**

children and youth depend on United Way supported programs to help them reach their potential

**43,284**

children and youth gained access to social, recreational and leadership programs

More than **12,000**

children and youth in Halton relied on a school-based meal program to provide nutritious food throughout the day





## Empress and Mumijah's Story

### The Power of Laser Tag

Twelve-year-old Empress and her ten-year-old brother Mumijah have a close-knit and loving family, but not many opportunities to try new activities and meet new people. That's why their after-school program, a program supported by the United Way, is so important. "They get a break from me and their siblings," says their mother Odette, "and they get to be on their own and do their own thing. They're excited because it's always something new." Odette says the kids are so enthusiastic about the program, they've become more motivated to do their chores and keep up with their homework because they know participating in the after-school program is a privilege.

The activities – including outings for swimming, bowling and Mumijah's favourite, laser tag – keep the time in the program fun, but the people the sister and brother meet and the lessons they learn really make the program worthwhile. "They always learn new things and come back and tell me," says Odette who also has high praise for the leaders in the program and one leader in particular. "Empress has met a role model she can really look up to."

Empress appreciates the friends she has made and the skills she's developing. "I've learned to cooperate with people I wouldn't usually talk to or hang around with," she says. Mumijah has taken to heart lessons he learned about bullying, saying, "If I saw someone being bullied, I would stand up for them." Such is the power of laser tag.



# POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY

United Way invests in a comprehensive approach to helping people move from poverty to possibility. We support not just basic needs like housing and nutrition, but a range of services that together provide the skills and opportunities that can overcome the most common obstacles to achieving sustainable financial security.

Last year, United Way invested in:

- ◆ Safe and affordable transitional housing
- ◆ Education in nutrition and food literacy
- ◆ Safe and stable supported housing
- ◆ Food banks and other emergency food programs
- ◆ Employment training and assistance
- ◆ Financial literacy and financial management education

## Fred's Story Hitting the Wall and Bouncing Back

The worst period of Fred's life ended "like a 100-mile-an-hour hit into the wall." He was the father of four, a gifted artist, a successful business owner and a trusted employee. He was also stealing from his employer to support his \$1,500-a-day addiction to cocaine and oxycontin.

"The habit took over," Fred explains. When confronted about his suspicious activity, he admitted to everything. "I wanted to get caught because that way I knew I could stop."

By the time Fred was sentenced to house arrest and probation, he was already clean. He had found satisfaction in community work and he was devoted to turning his life around. All he had needed was a little help.

"United Way came in when things first started to fall apart," remembers Fred. A social worker had connected him to United Way and from there he found a methadone program and job-search assistance. It wasn't much, but it was enough. "I had the support of my family. That was the biggest thing, so with United Way, that little bit of help at the beginning, that was all I needed."

Fred's United Way connection came full circle when he started working at Hadrian Manufacturing, a company he describes as having "amazing community spirit." When Fred had the chance to give to the Hadrian workplace campaign for United Way, he said to himself, "This is a game changer. They did a lot for me when I needed it, so I'm going to donate." He gave \$2,400 and told his surprised colleagues, "You have no idea what these guys did for me. It was the factor that someone showed they cared enough to help. I'm going to donate every year. If I can help one person change their life, that's good enough for me."





Why we care:

- ♦ 1 in 4 children and 93,000 people in total live in poverty in the City of Hamilton
- ♦ 3,770 children live in poverty in the City of Burlington
- ♦ Food insecurity has significant social and health consequences including mental illness, poor social skills, behavioural problems and a higher risk of suicide
- ♦ Approximately half of the people who need support from food banks do not access that support due to barriers like social stigma and not wanting a handout

## Total \$ Investment

Employment  
Resources  
& Supports

\$97,645



Affordable &  
Emergency Housing

\$128,800

Financial Literacy  
& Asset Development

\$35,824

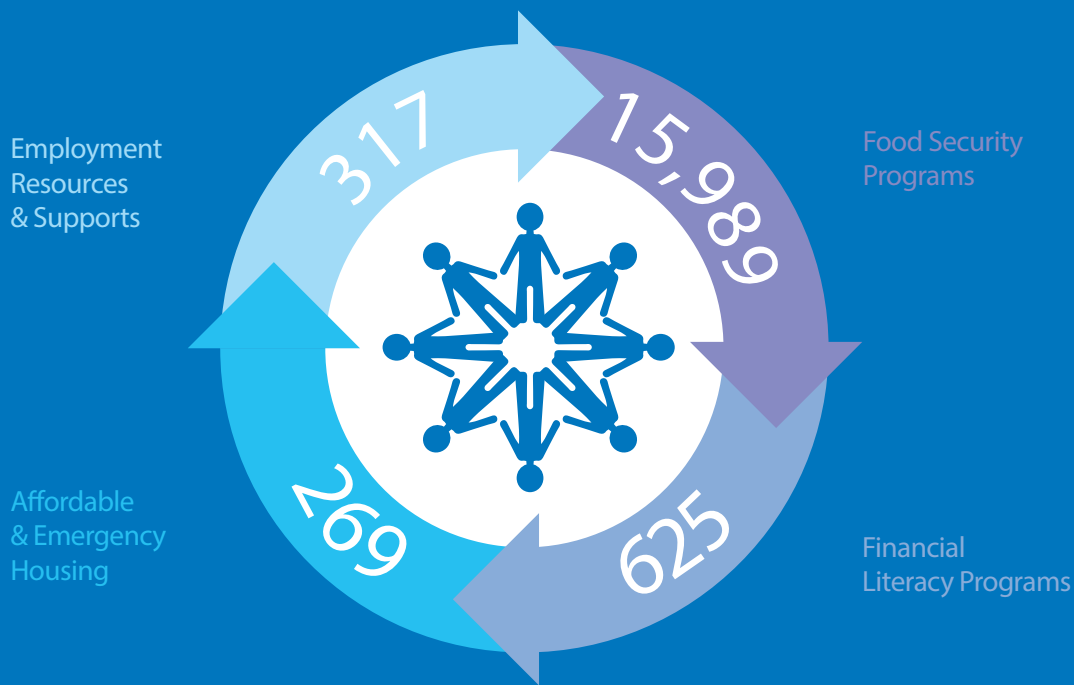


Food Security

\$144,605



## A 360° Approach to Escaping Poverty – People Helped



### What we've achieved:

**153** women who were homeless received shelter and assistance

**57** at-risk and marginalized youth received intensive construction skills training that includes job-site experience and support



# BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

By supporting the development of strong community organizations and services, United Way helps make personal and family security and development more accessible to more people. We help unite individuals and strengthen the social and community networks that keep neighbourhoods strong and provide support to people in need.

Last year, United Way invested in:

- ♦ Independent living education
- ♦ Education on health promotion and risk reduction
- ♦ Pre-crisis intervention programs
- ♦ Enhanced coordination among service providers
- ♦ Ontario 211, an award-winning phone and web helpline available 24/7 in over 100 languages
- ♦ Individual and family counselling related to mental health, addiction and trauma

Why we care:

- ♦ People often go without much-needed support because they are not aware that services exist in the community
- ♦ Common barriers to getting the right kinds of help include increasing costs, limited space, age, language ability and access to transportation
- ♦ Because our most vulnerable neighbours often face complex and interconnected challenges, there is a desperate need for preventative services
- ♦ Research shows that investing in prevention-based programs and on-going support is more powerful than equivalent investments in emergency intervention







## Mark and Tami's Story

### The Magic That You Witness

Mark often needs a little help, but that doesn't stop him from helping other people. In fact, it's a big part of what makes Mark special. Living with an intellectual disability doesn't stop him from doing everything he can to improve the lives of the people around him. Mark's sister-in-law Tami says "he wants to give back to his community. He has an awful lot to offer."

The platform for Mark's volunteer spirit is his more than three-decades connection with an organization supported by United Way. Tami says, "it makes our family so happy to know that Mark can participate in a variety of activities in a safe, accommodating and engaging atmosphere, an environment that's catering to his needs and the needs of his peers." Tami has seen what she calls the "ripple effect" of Mark's participation. "It's about the friendships that are made while attending that program. It's about the independence gained by attending that program. It's about the magic that you witness when you see the growth in your loved one because he had that opportunity."

Mark puts that magic to good use. He has developed his social skills and a love for performance through his involvement with the organization's drum corps and regular dancing and karaoke events. That led him to participate in several videos and speaking engagements over the last few years. He has become a valued member of the organization's advisory board and has been volunteering at Juravinski Hospital for a number of years. So the organization may be providing support to Mark, but it also helps Mark's community and his family. "My favourite part," says Tami, "is hearing Mark's stories about the fun he's having."

## Total \$ Investment



Community  
Mental Health

**\$1,609,584**



Neighbourhood Development &  
Engagement

**\$543,373**

## What we've achieved:

More than

**6,100**

older adults received the supports they needed – meals, transportation, social support and recreation – to age actively at home

**784**

survivors of adult and/or child sexual abuse accessed 24-hour telephone support

More than

**1,600**

vulnerable youth accessed transitional housing programs, counselling and mentoring supports











# Providing Help Close to Home

Community Mental  
Health

Neighbourhood  
Development

37

11



Agency partners supported

63

17



Programs supported

39,328

38,335




People served









## Don and Barbara's Story

### A Tale of True Love

Don and Barbara met on a blind date in 1956. "Which is ironic," says Don, "because I wasn't blind then." When he was 40, Don was on a fishing trip with friends when he suddenly lost vision in his right eye. Through multiple doctor's visits and surgeries, Don was told he would lose sight in both of his eyes due to something called retinal detachment. Though his diagnosis meant many hard days ahead for both him and Barbara, Don remained strong in his faith and in his sense of humour.

Now 85, Don cares for his 83-year-old wife despite his vision loss. Barbara was diagnosed with dementia and requires around-the-clock care. Having always been "modest," as Don describes it, Barbara is not comfortable with just anyone helping her, so she relies heavily on him for support. For Don, it's a labour of love as he helps Barbara with almost all of her daily activities.

For most of their marriage, they lived in a house in Burlington where they raised their son. Now, because Barbara can no longer use the stairs, they have moved into an apartment. They hope to stay there together for as long as possible.

Thanks to United Way and donors like you, Don and Barbara have help in that mission from a volunteer who shops for groceries, cooks meals, attends medical appointments and completes other household and personal care tasks. Don and Barbara describe their volunteer as "part of the family." They also have support in navigating the social service programs in their community. A program coordinator has offered options like friendly visiting, assistance with transportation and recently suggested a day respite program to allow Don a break from his caregiving responsibilities.

Don and Barbara had not expected to need this level of support, but they are glad it is available. "How grateful I am that our community has these types of organizations," Don says. "We are so fortunate to live here and have this help. If our care workers weren't there, if people didn't understand ... well, it's a lonely life." Fortunately, that help is available. "The volunteers make a world of difference in our lives. Without these people, I would have a world of blackness." Thanks to your support, Don and Barbara can continue their lives where they belong – together. "What can I say?" says Don. "She's the love of my life."



## HERE AT HOME

Where's home? It's a common question. In my two years on staff at United Way Burlington & Greater Hamilton, my answer has evolved because of you.

Through the lens of United Way, I watch as you define your home every time you give to help someone because they might live in your neighbourhood, in your city or in your region. With every gift, you're defining a home for all of us in Burlington and Hamilton. It's a privilege to play a small role in helping you support the people and communities you know best.

Last year at this time, I wrote about a few changes coming to United Way. This year, I'm proud to report our progress. We remain focused on achieving impact in developing children, building strong communities and turning poverty into possibility, but we are also making increasingly strategic investments as well. Our commitment to the Ontario 211 community information service is a great example. The 211 website and helpline provide a gateway for anyone (the service is available 24/7 in more than 100 languages) to access a vast network of human services.

We have also been expanding our efforts to engage our community partners in discussions about United Way's priorities and the way we do business. These consultations are helping us

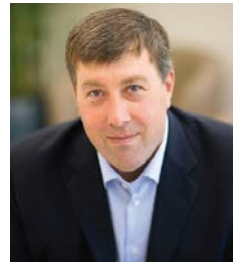
ensure that our current and future investments are responding to community needs and focused on delivering the greatest impact.

Finally, we are devoted to making our organization as efficient and effective as possible. That motive has led us to explore ways to work better, to work with our neighbouring United Ways better and to find the kinds of partnerships that allow us to do better for our communities.

I'm proud of the work our United Way has been able to do because of your generosity. Every past success and every future contribution is the result of the donors and volunteers who make everything possible. It is an honour to work with you to make lives better.

Together, we are possibility.

Jeff Vallentin  
Chief Executive Officer











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