



United Way
Toronto & York Region

MEDIA RELEASE

United Way gives Syrian refugees the right start in their new life

– Organization boosts support for refugees to 4.75 million

Toronto – Earlier today, at West Neighbourhood House's Ossington Avenue location, United Way Toronto & York Region announced its commitment of an additional **\$750,000** for new programs supporting Syrian refugees.

A total of 15 projects will receive funding to help increase the capacity of community organizations supporting Syrian refugees. These programs will add to the existing investments made in the past year. United Way currently invests approximately \$4 million through its network of agencies to support newcomers and refugees annually.

Last year, when an unprecedented number of Syrian refugees started to arrive here, United Way and its network of partner agencies took immediate action to provide the necessities of life, things like food and shelter.

Now United Way is supporting the next phase of integration to increase the capacity of existing organizations and provide more comprehensive, community-based supports.

"We need to provide help that will support this community in the long-term," said Deb Shime, Senior Vice President, Community Impact, United Way. "Because we

know that getting here is only the first step. Everyone deserves access to education, good jobs, language supports and more in order to thrive: from arrival, to settling and becoming part of the fabric of our country.”

The additional dollars United Way is investing will complement resources from government and other funders and will build upon the sector’s existing infrastructure.

West Neighbourhood House is just one example of how United Way is working to create lasting change.

“United Way funding supports the Syrian Settlement Worker on our staff team,” said Maureen Fair, Executive Director, West Neighbourhood House. “She provides vital assistance for Syrian refugees transitioning to a new and safer life in Canada. The United Way funding goes a long way as our staff also assists Syrian families who are already here and who now are sponsoring and supporting their refugee relatives.”

Thanks to the support and work of its community agencies and government partners, United Way’s investment will ultimately improve the coordination and collaboration among settlement and/or employment agencies to better serve Syrian refugees.

- 30 -

About United Way

United Way Toronto & York Region is a charity dedicated to creating opportunities for a better life for everyone from the waterfront of downtown Toronto, to the southern shore of Lake Simcoe. Working in partnership with others, we mobilize

people and resources to support a network of agencies that help people when they need it most. United Way also addresses the root causes of social problems, working to change community conditions for the better over the long term.

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