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*The future rests in our helping hands*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Opportunities for Older Adults to Learn About Volunteering in the Peel Region**

**September 16, 2011 – Brampton, ON** – Since the beginning of this year, Volunteer MBC has been providing a number of opportunities for older adults, 55 years and older, to learn about volunteering in the community. The centre has been rapidly building bridges to seniors groups and organizations in the Peel Region to promote their Older Adult Volunteer Program. In addition to doing outreach at a number of groups and seniors' centres, most recently the centre held information sessions in the Brampton community for older adults, and are co-ordinating two upcoming events for older adults to learn more about volunteering in the Mississauga and Caledon communities.

Tomorrow, on Saturday September 17, older adults are invited to attend a volunteer fair, which will be held at the Mississauga Central Library, 301 Burnhamthorpe Road from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There are over 30 community service organizations who will be attending and it is an opportunity for older adults to find out how they can share their experiences and skills as a volunteer. The Older Adult Volunteer Fair in Mississauga is hosted in partnership with the Mississauga Library System and Volunteer MBC.

In Caledon, Volunteer MBC has partnered with the Caledon Public Library to host an Open House next month on Monday, October 17 at the Albion-Bolton Community Centre, 150 Queen Street South, Bolton from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Open House will be an opportunity for older adults to meet community service organizations who serve the Caledon community and to learn more about how they can join in, help out, and meet new people while broadening their horizons and to have fun as a volunteer. More details will be available shortly.

"It has been an amazing experience meeting and speaking with so many older adults and hearing how they want to connect with meaningful opportunities to give back," said Jennifer Lalonde, the Coordinator for the Older Adult Volunteer Program. "Older adults are looking for new and interesting ways to be involved, and we're helping them find a match that suits their interests and their schedules. Volunteering can be as simple as giving your time for just one afternoon. It can fit any schedule and can suit any lifestyle. There is a role for everyone and Volunteer MBC is the place to start your search. We are here to provide guidance to help find 'the right fit'."

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In 2006 there were over 15,000 seniors living alone in the Peel Region, who may be experiencing social isolation, particularly for seniors who may have language barriers. For all older adults, regardless of languages spoken or cultural background, reaching out to help others and connecting to the community provides immediate and long-term health benefits, as well as being beneficial to community service organizations.

“As the Boomer population continues to rise in our community, there is a tremendous opportunity to promote and support volunteer engagement for older adults,” said Carine Strong, Executive Director of Volunteer MBC. “Our Older Adult Volunteer Program encourages seniors to get involved and promotes the win-win benefits of staying active as they gracefully age.” The centre offers seminars on older adult volunteering; in addition they provide support to community service organizations that are looking for seasoned experts to bring their life experiences to various volunteer programs where older adult volunteers are needed.

Volunteer MBC’s Older Adult Volunteer Program has been made possible by the generous support of the Community Foundation of Mississauga, the Brampton & Area Community Foundation and through funding by the New Horizons Seniors Program.

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. 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.

Volunteer MBC is a member of the Community Door, which is located at 7700 Hurontario Street, Unit 601, in Brampton. A new Mississauga location will be announced shortly. A satellite location is also planned in Caledon in the future.

For more information about the volunteer centre, and to access their on-line volunteer opportunities database, visit [www.volunteermbc.org](http://www.volunteermbc.org). For more information or questions regarding the Older Adult Volunteer Program, contact [olderadult@volunteermbc.org](mailto:olderadult@volunteermbc.org) or 905.238.2622 ext. 229.

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