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APRIL 19-25, 2009

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VOLUNTEER  
BÉNEVOLES  
CANADA

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

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### Message from the President

Every year, thousands of organizations come together to celebrate National Volunteer Week. First proclaimed in 1943 as a volunteer recruitment effort during the war, the week is now a nationwide recognition of Canada's volunteers who turn their compassion, passion, and dedication into action!

From the 1.8 million coaches who lend their skills to train and support individuals of all ages to the volunteer firefighters who make up 85 per cent of firefighting services delivered in our country, and the millions of volunteers giving of their time in the health care system whose contributions are valued at over \$20 billion dollars, these volunteers impact our lives and improve our quality of life every day. As a result of hundreds of photo and video submissions from individuals and organizations across the country, our website showcases this wonderful mosaic of volunteerism in action.



On behalf of the staff and board of directors at Volunteer Canada, I would like to recognize and thank Canada's 12 million volunteers who give their time to better the lives of others. With the generous support of Investors Group, I hope that the National Volunteer Week campaign is a time for all of you to know how important you are to your local community, and to our country.

### Volunteer Week around the World!

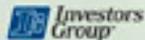
As the countdown begins for the 2009 National Volunteer Week, Canada is not the only country prepping for this year's festivities. Places such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and our neighbours to the south, the U.S., are within reach of their own nationally held event.

Held within the same timeframe as Canada's National Volunteer Week, the U.S. is gearing up for what will no doubt be a spectacular celebration. Organized by what is now known as the Points of Light Institute - the nation's voice for volunteerism - this year's event will center around the theme of

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"Celebrating People in Action." The Points of Light Institute will be hosting a grande reception in the nations' capital to ring in the week-long event. This includes a ceremony that will be held on Capitol Hill to honour Senators Kennedy and Hatch for their work behind the Serve America Act. In addition, there will be an induction ceremony for the Extra Mile - a one-mile long pathway comprising of a series of bronze medallions of founders of major service organizations and civil rights leaders.

Crossing over the Atlantic all the way to Australia, the celebrations for National Volunteer Week are still about a month away. Running from May 11 - 17, this year there will be less of a focus on volunteer recruitment and more towards the celebration aspect of all that volunteerism has done for the Australian community. Behind this year's event is Volunteering Australia Inc., an incorporated body under the Australian Capital Territory Associations Incorporation Act 1991. This organization is responsible for campaigns and events geared towards the promotion of volunteering in Australia.

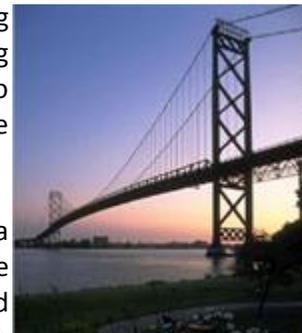
Traveling back to Europe, the UK will be hosting the 25th annual National Volunteer Week. Not scheduled to start until June 1, the event is already taking shape as interested parties can stay up to date by following the news posted on the Volunteer's Week website at <http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk/>

Volunteerism reaches far beyond our borders. No matter where you are in the world, check your local volunteer centres and see where and when National Volunteer Week is happening. This is not only a great opportunity to celebrate with your community, but also to become inspired by the contributions of your fellow neighbours.

## Feature Story: City of Windsor hosts National Volunteer Week celebration!

The city of Windsor, Ontario is quickly preparing for its day of celebrating National Volunteer Week. Called the "City Celebration," the city is expecting hundreds to come out and hear stories about volunteerism in addition to recognizing the special citizens who have dedicated their time to improving the lives of others in the city.

Nora Bertram-Romero from the office of Mayor Eddie Frances shared with us a brief history of National Volunteer Week celebrations in Windsor. "In 2007, we celebrated National Volunteer Week by celebrating the organizations and agencies that contribute to arts and culture, education, environment, health care, social services, sports and veterans. With over 450 attending, we brought two outstanding keynote speakers, held a dinner and a strong message from the mayor to thank the volunteers. We celebrated the individual, the power of one. In 2008, we increased the audience to over 700, and this



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year, on April 23rd we will celebrate the meaning of "contribution to the team," making a difference by becoming part of the movement."

With a significant auto industry in the city, Windsor is weathering a big storm, but its mayor was determined to focus on all of the things that they are proud of, added Ms. Bertram-Romero. "During these stressful times it is easy to point out what needs to change, improve and add to the community, but this will be an evening of salute, tribute and recognition of the many things we already do well and remind the community, that together we will succeed, as members of a team."

## News release



### CANADA CELEBRATES NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2009

THOUSANDS OF ORGANIZATIONS WILL PARTICIPATE IN RECOGNIZING THEIR VOLUNTEERS WITH THE HELP OF VOLUNTEER CANADA



OTTAWA – National Volunteer Week, the country's biggest celebration and recognition campaign of volunteers, runs from April 19 to 25. Through the National Volunteer Week website ([volunteer.ca/nvw](http://volunteer.ca/nvw)), created by Volunteer Canada, hundreds of individuals and organizations have submitted photos and videos of "volunteers in action," and thousands more have used the site's resources to plan their own volunteer recognition events.

"The economic recession is a difficult time for all of us," said Ruth MacKenzie, president of Volunteer Canada. "But many are using this time to roll up their sleeves, share their skills, and better their communities and the lives of others."

"The National Volunteer Week website is proof that the spirit of volunteerism is alive and well in this country."

Ms. MacKenzie will be available for interviews throughout National Volunteer Week to speak and respond to questions about the national campaign, the importance of volunteer recognition, the current trends on volunteerism, and the impact of volunteers on Canada's society and economy.

### For more information or to book an interview with Ruth MacKenzie, please contact:

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National Volunteer Week

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About Volunteer Canada [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca)

Volunteer Canada is the national voice for volunteerism in Canada. Since 1977, the organization has been committed to increasing and supporting volunteerism and civic participation through ongoing programs, special projects and national initiatives, by developing resources and by engaging in research and training across the country. Working with volunteer centres, community and national organizations and businesses, Volunteer Canada actively leads national dialogues on how volunteerism is related to citizen engagement and civil society and provides leadership on issues and trends in the Canadian volunteer movement.

National Volunteer Week was first proclaimed in 1943 as an initiative to draw the public's attention to the vital contribution of women to the war effort on the home front. In the late 1960s, the focus was revived and broadened to include all community volunteers. With the support of Investors Group, Volunteer Canada is proud to be leading the celebrations once again.