



**DALE  
BIDDELL**  
UWGSC  
INTERIM  
CEO

## SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL CHANGE ON UNITED WAY'S AGENDA

In our inaugural spring issue, you read that United Way "improves local human conditions." So what does that mean? Many people know United Way is a trusted fundraiser, but they may not know this local United Way (United Way Greater Simcoe County or UWGSC) is the #1 non-governmental source of social-service funding in our region. Putting those things together: UWGSC makes research-based community-investment decisions that put local donor dollars to work in our region to address social development.

Those investments support the programs and services of our many partner agencies that further high-priority issues including accessibility, food security, mental health, poverty and homelessness reduction, and opportunities for children and youth. And we are developing strategies to invest even more substantially in these areas in the future.

This is a complex and holistic approach to positive Community Impact that has an ultimate goal of long-term re-constructive social change. This ever-evolving process and its ongoing results, which rely on many regional collaborations, disrupts the status quo, empowers community, redistributes resources, and focuses on innovative and sustainable solutions. It is a continuous-improvement model that builds in tracking and evaluation, and invites feedback and discussion.

Many United Ways in Ontario and across the country (each autonomous and locally governed) are engaged in conversations within their communities about what matters to their residents, and what is required to improve lives there. Every community is unique and requires unique solutions, but there are lessons to be learned from all. We are inspired and motivated by the great work being done by our communities, neighbourhoods and citizens.

UWGSC has been engaged in a year-long internal transformation to ensure we're adequately resourced for this undertaking. In the coming months we, too, will be shifting our focus outward – looking to have similar conversations.

**Interested? Please let me know.**



## UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF 2014

**Friday, September 5, 2014, 11:30am-2pm**

(campaign goal announcement at 12:20pm)

**\$5 - gets a Haute Dog (meat or veg) with lots of fun toppings, a drink and an ice cream dessert**

**RSVPs to [PRObertson@UnitedWayGSC.ca](mailto:PRObertson@UnitedWayGSC.ca) are appreciated, but last-minute guests are encouraged to come as well.**

## COMMUNITY IMPACT



**A**t June's Annual General Meeting, your United Way reported a record-level community investment. Looking back at other 2013/2014 achievements, UWGSC helped strengthen valuable community programs and built on past achievements with measurable change in our three priority areas.

**LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES:**

### POVERTY TO POSSIBILITY

**5 Partner Agencies  
6 Community Programs  
3 Regional Collaborations**

- 31% of adult learners attained their literacy, numeracy and/or computer-upgrade goals within a year, and moved on to employment or further education.
- 72% people who accessed a housing resource program said they feel more secure and less stressed three months later

### STRONG COMMUNITIES

**13 Partner Agencies  
18 Community Programs  
3 Regional Collaborations**

- 80% of those attending hearing-care counselling services now understand hearing-loss issues better.

- More than 50% of mental-health program participants report increased self-esteem and job satisfaction after volunteering.

### ALL THAT KIDS CAN BE

**11 Partner Agencies  
13 Community Programs  
4 Regional Collaborations**

- 65% of children perform better in school (e.g., grades and attendance) after accessing an in-school mentoring program.
- 13,000 healthy snacks and meals were provided to local children and youth.

All donations made to United Way Greater Simcoe County's Community Fund are re-invested in local communities serving the Simcoe-Muskoka region.

Visit [www.UnitedWayGSC.ca](http://www.UnitedWayGSC.ca) to view our latest Annual Report.



**J.V.N. (VINCE) HAWKES,**  
**COMMISSIONER**

Ontario Provincial Police

**BMHS A STEP IN IMPROVING POLICE RESPONSE TO PEOPLE IN CRISIS**

Police officers are not mental health professionals, but they are often the first emergency service providers to come in contact with people who are experiencing a mental health crisis. Many police leaders from across Canada have publicly stated that a significant portion of their limited resources are devoted to these kinds of calls for service.

The core duty of a police officer remains keeping the peace and protecting the public, but how we interact with people in crisis will play a significant role in their experience and the outcome – positive or negative. The OPP recently adopted the Brief Mental Health Screener (BMHS) which is aimed at helping officers articulate in medical terms why a person is being brought to a hospital for psychiatric assessment.

Developed collaboratively by interRAI (a network of researchers in more than 30 countries) and tested through a pilot project, the BMHS is a science-based, standardized mental health screening form which our officers will use to record and communicate subject behaviours to the receiving hospital. This tool should help ensure that people in crisis who need mental health care will receive it as soon as possible. It should also improve communication between police and mental health professionals. As a result, fewer people should end up in the criminal justice system when what they really

need is appropriate mental health services.

The OPP receives about 700,000 calls for service annually. By using the standardized BMHS instrument, the OPP will be able to track all calls for service where mental health is a factor more consistently, allowing us to deploy resources more effectively and efficiently.

There is still much work to be done. Our Detachment Commanders are currently contacting hospitals and other community-based services to form a consensus to use the BMHS, but I am confident our communities will see positive results from its use.

I would also like to put my personal support and the support of the OPP behind the continued development of a mental health system where everyone gets the help they need, hopefully long before a police officer is called because someone is in crisis. If an earlier intervention or an appropriate diversion can reduce the number of these interactions, that will be a positive result for everyone.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Details: [www.UnitedWayGSC.ca](http://www.UnitedWayGSC.ca)

**100K for United Way**

SEPTEMBER 2 –  
(registration deadline)  
OCTOBER 5 – Event Day  
(7:30am start)

**UWGSC Campaign Kick-off  
“Haute Dog” Lunch**

SEPTEMBER 5 (11:30am-2pm)

**Employee Campaign  
Coordinator Training**

SEPTEMBER 10 & 11  
(am & pm sessions)

**United Way Invitational  
Golf Tourney**

SEPTEMBER 29  
(registration: 11am)

**Warden’s Gala**

OCTOBER 9 (5:30pm-10pm)

Please visit [UnitedWayGSC.ca](http://UnitedWayGSC.ca) to access links to recent reports and relevant articles on our **News** page. You can also visit our homepage to subscribe to the electronic version of this newsletter with the links built in!



**DID YOU KNOW?**

- The collective hours given to UWGSC by our generous volunteers last year have been valued at \$359,304, according to a 2013 TD report.
- Rural homelessness is largely hidden (e.g., couch surfing, sleeping in poor or un-affordable housing), but visible forms of rough sleeping are common (e.g., sleeping in cars or public places, and camping in parks). UWGSC funds Housing Resources Centres across the county.
- Childhood obesity is on the rise in Canada. In our region, UWGSC is funding initiatives to encourage healthy cooking/eating, food security and to teach about nutrition.
- Volunteers play a critical role in our region. The new program Simcoe County Volunteer Connection, funded by UWGSC, increases volunteerism/volunteer activities across the county. Details at [www.VolunteerConnection.ca](http://www.VolunteerConnection.ca).

**UnitedWayGSC.ca**

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**Feedback?**

Tweet the location of our Haute Dog Kick-off event to **@UnitedWayGSC** with hashtag **#UnitedWayGSC** by Labour Day and you could win a \$15 Tim Hortons Card.

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