



For immediate release

Changing the face of leadership: Awards recognize two GTA-based organizations

Toronto, ON, February 4, 2010 – At an awards ceremony on Thursday night, DiverseCity onBoard recognized United Way Toronto and Women’s College Hospital for embracing diversity in board governance and making it a priority to seek out board members from diverse backgrounds.

This year’s winners of the third annual Diversity in Governance Awards stand as models. Their deliberate strategies have enriched their own boards, and their example is changing the face of leadership across the GTA.

“Good practice in board governance includes finding the right people to lead,” explained Ratna Omidvar, President of Maytree and co-chair of DiverseCity. “In a city region as diverse as ours, this involves embracing the full spectrum of skills, experiences and connections available. Capitalizing on our immense talent pool is an imperative for today’s nonprofit and public boards.”

Research conducted by The Conference Board of Canada in the fall of 2008 linked diverse leadership to greater financial and organizational performance and enhanced innovation and creativity, among other outcomes.

“We are honoured to be recognized for our long-standing work in the area of diversity and equity,” said Marilyn Emery, President and CEO, Women’s College Hospital. “This award is shared with all our board members and staff – past and present – whose diverse representation underscores our abiding commitment to equity for our patients, our workforce and our partners.”

“This recognition by DiverseCity onBoard means the world to United Way,” said Frances Lankin, President and CEO, United Way Toronto. “We’re working very hard to become an inclusive and culturally fluent organization – at all levels. Our goal is for diversity and inclusion to become an integral part of who we are and what we do. While we’re proud of how far we’ve come, this award further strengthens our commitment to be as diverse and inclusive as the communities we serve.”

DiverseCity onBoard is part of DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project, a joint initiative of Maytree and the Toronto City Summit Alliance. The project aims to transform the leadership landscape across the GTA. DiverseCity onBoard connects qualified candidates from Aboriginal, visible minority and under-represented immigrant communities to agencies, boards and commissions in the public and nonprofit sectors. Since 2005, Diversity onBoard has made 323 appointments to public and nonprofit boards from its roster of more than 1,100 candidates.

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ABOUT MAYTREE: Established in 1982, Maytree is a private foundation that promotes equity and prosperity through its policy insights, grants and programs. The foundation has gained recognition for its expertise in developing, testing and implementing programs and policy solutions related to immigration, integration and diversity. www.maytree.com.

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ABOUT UNITED WAY TORONTO: Established in 1956, United Way Toronto is a charity working to advance the common good and create opportunities for a better life for everyone in our city. Working in partnership with others, we mobilize people and resources to address the root causes of social problems and to change community conditions for the better. United Way supports agencies that provide services to strengthen individuals, families, and communities. www.unitedwaytoronto.com.

ABOUT WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL: For the past 100 years, Women's College Hospital has been dedicated to groundbreaking advances in women's health. Women's College Hospital collaborated in the invention of the Pap test, opened Ontario's first regional Sexual Assault Care Centre and was the first hospital in the province to use mammography. Today, Women's College Hospital is Ontario's first and only ambulatory care centre and is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto focused on state-of-the-art care, research and education in women's health. www.womenscollegehospital.ca.

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