



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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\$750,000 OTF Grant to Boost Tax Filing and Financial Literacy for Community's Most Vulnerable

United Way Halton & Hamilton collaborates with community partners through an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant to expand Financial Empowerment and Problem Solving program, supporting low-income individuals.

Halton & Hamilton — United Way Halton & Hamilton (UWHH) announced today the expansion of the Financial Empowerment and Problem Solving (FEPS) program into Halton region, in collaboration with key community partners. UWHH is part of the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) funded collaborative currently supporting FEPS in Hamilton.

"Thank you to the United Way for supporting programs in our community that build and support inclusion, provide hope and develop future leaders in our community," said Andrea Horwath, MPP for Hamilton Centre. "Ontario Trillium Foundation Grants play a key role helping to provide opportunities to low-income individuals in need of support. Regardless of your age or income, financial empowerment programs are vital educational tools that ensure folks have the knowledge and confidence to manage their finances."

The \$750K grant will fund the project over 36 months, providing year-round tax-filing assistance and financial literacy workshops for low-income community members. The program will have a positive impact on the lives of approximately 6,500 individuals.

"This Ontario Trillium Foundation grant will bring potentially life-changing tax-filing assistance and financial skills to people in our community who need it most," says UWHH CEO, Brad Park. "We are excited to see this project come to fruition in collaboration with incredible community partners."

The leadership table for the Halton FEPS program includes UWHH, Halton Region, Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre (OPNC), Enable Education, Behavioural Insights Team Canada, Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, and Community Development Halton.

"I know the fine work that the Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre in Oakville North-Burlington does providing online tax filing and financial training to people in our communities," said Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP for Oakville North-Burlington. "I am glad the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ontario Government, will be supporting this program with a \$750,000 grant."

“When a person is unaware of their financial options, they are more likely to rely on others to make important decisions for them,” said Jane McKenna, MPP for Burlington. “Financial literacy helps with the big decisions in life, such as negotiating a mortgage, saving for retirement, or paying down debt. That’s why the Ontario government made it part of the math curriculum for elementary school students. This Ontario Trillium Foundation grant will allow the United Way of Halton & Hamilton to further financial empowerment in our community.”

Housed at OPNC, in Oakville, the program is currently running online tax filing and workshops. When regulations permit, they will also utilize a mobile response team, where Community Financial Workers will run in-person ‘pop-up’ tax clinics and financial literacy workshops at community housing locations, seniors’ centres, and food banks, and partner organizations across the region.

“We work with many people in Halton who live on low-income, and have not had support in life to navigate financial challenges. This program puts more money in the pockets of the most vulnerable in our community,” notes Michelle Knoll, OPNC executive director. “We’re so grateful to OTF and UWHH for enabling us to come alongside people to build financial security and better futures.”

The [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#) (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations. OTF awarded \$115 million to 644 projects last year to build healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario.

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About United Way Halton & Hamilton

United Way Halton & Hamilton (UWHH) is committed to leading measurable, impactful change by identifying the most challenging issues in our community, and bringing together people and resources to address those issues. We connect volunteers with local needs, and offer training and operational support to local charities. Along with our network of partners and experts, UWHH conducts research and works with key stakeholders to generate support for the not-for-profit sector. Each dollar raised is invested right back into the community. Today, 202,421 residents across Halton and Hamilton rely on 129 United Way supported programs for life-changing services.

Outside of government, United Way is the largest funder of social service programs and initiatives in Canada.

For more information and to donate visit: www.uwhh.ca

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