

# THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

## Volunteers, donors key to United Way

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November 21, 2009

**LEN LIFCHUS**

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Over the past couple of months, since I accepted the position as CEO of the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton, I have experienced firsthand the tremendous support and generosity of community donors to the United Way annual campaign.

United Way believes that for a community to be truly great, it must be great for everyone. With the help of you, our donors and volunteers, United Way is working to make Burlington and Greater Hamilton great for those who don't have the advantages and opportunities many of us take for granted.

Last year, for instance, your United Way funded more than 134 programs and services at 72 agencies in Burlington and Hamilton impacting the lives of more than 218,000 of our friends, families and neighbours.



It is sobering to realize that 90 per cent of all Canadians will require the services of a United Way-funded program in their lifetime, or that one in three individuals in our communities -- perhaps even a friend, a neighbour, or a family member -- may require the services of a United Way-funded program.

A registered charity, your United Way is funded solely through donations, both corporate and individual, and by ongoing business and community fundraising initiatives. United Way's annual campaign, more than any other community event, engages the whole community in working toward a common goal - making our community great for all

By working together, the collective efforts of hundreds of volunteers help the United Way raise funds.

These funds are invested in programs and services across Burlington and Greater Hamilton that help individuals and families in need, programs such as Meals on Wheels, family and individual counselling, and volunteer services that provide recruitment, interviewing, referral and placement of volunteers for nursing homes, children's programs, health related services, sports groups and other local community services.

In this, the first of a series of columns profiling United Way, I want to introduce you to one of the donors to the 2009 annual campaign, Dundas dentist Dr. Anil Bhalla, who is contributing to the campaign in a novel and innovative way.

I met Bhalla last week when I attended a United Way donor reception held at historic Valley City Manufacturing in Dundas. At the reception, Bhalla was presented with a United Way donor plaque to recognize his ongoing contribution to the 2009 United Way annual campaign.

For the 2009 annual campaign, Bhalla, who has been practising dentistry in Dundas for the past five years, decided to help United Way by donating a loonie for each patient visit during the next 12 months.

When I asked Bhalla why he was doing this he replied, "I see this as a way to give back to the community.

"United Way does tremendous work and funds community programs in Hamilton and Burlington, including many through Dundas Community Services."

He added: "I invite other dentists and doctors to support the United Way campaign by instituting a 'loonie a patient' program."

Bhalla is helping to make our community great for everyone and I invite you to work with United Way to do the same.

Together, we do have the power to help make our community great for everyone.

Donations to the 2009 campaign can be made through payroll deduction, pre-authorized chequing, and monthly deductions by credit card, cash or cheque or by calling 905-527-4543/905-635-3138.

You can also donate online at [uwaybh.ca](http://uwaybh.ca).

Len Lifchus is Chief Executive Officer of the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton.