

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin launches annual campaign

By Jasen Obermeyer

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin has kicked off its annual fundraising campaign, continuing to raise money to support local programs and services that deal with various social issues.

The kick-off took place at the Edlebrock Centre last Wednesday (September 20) and saw various volunteers and members from the represented organizations, along with members of the United Way. There were presentations from the organizations, information on their programs, and how others can help out. All the money raised during the campaign will stay local.

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin currently funds a network of over 80 local programs at more than 50 different organizations in Guelph, Wellington, and Dufferin County. Five Dufferin agencies are receiving funding from United Way, including Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS), Dufferin Parent Support Network, Headwaters Communities in Action, Big Brothers Big Sisters Dufferin, and Volunteer Dufferin.

Mark Rodford, United Way's director of business development, says United Way is hugely important because they touch so many people, with a number of programs that really speak to the invisible portion of our community that doesn't get seen everyday.

Mitch Marit, a former youth with Big Brothers Big Sisters, took part in the kick off event, and says he "probably wouldn't be here, where I am today" if it wasn't for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

He says with his dad not being around much, the local organization got him through "a lot of low points in my life," and his big brother essentially "became my best friend."

Mr. Marit says he tries to help out when he can as he deals with a changing work schedule, but it is always important to have local organizations come together for special events and support one another. "That's what makes communities special."

To make a donation or to get involved with the campaign, visit their website at www.unitedwayguelph.com/dufferin, or call the organization at 519-821-0571.