



## Executive summary

2010-11 marked the ninth year of the delivery of Youth in Action (YIA) and the fourteenth year of Young Leaders of Tomorrow (YLT). Once again, both programs engaged outstanding local high school, university and college students in making a difference in their community.

- 13 Young Leaders, 13 Board placements, 12 volunteer trainers
- 11 Youth in Action Advisory Committee participants, funded 19 proposals, invested \$9,850

### United Way Community Impact Agenda

Together, United Way and London Life are mobilizing the energy, interest, and excellence of youth, non-profit organizations, and volunteers to prepare the next generation of community leaders. In 2010, United Way of London & Middlesex announced that its work would focus on three impact areas: poverty, mental health and beginnings & transitions. These impact areas were developed in partnership with stakeholders, donors and other community members and provide structure and direction for organizational planning including youth engagement programming.

### Continuum of youth engagement

United Way of London & Middlesex continues to engage youth and young adults, beginning in high school, through our three youth engagement programs: Youth in Action, Young Leaders of Tomorrow and GenNext. This continuum of programming allows young people to maintain a relationship with United Way, its work and its impact as they move through various life stages. United Way youth engagement offerings include opportunities for individuals to give, volunteer and advocate.

### Strategic program review: an update

United Way continues to make progress in taking advantage of opportunities identified in the 2009-10 strategic review of the youth leadership program service delivery. The following achievements were realized in 2010-2011:

- GenNext volunteers have provided leadership for training and networking sessions with YLT;
- Partnerships continue to be developed with like-minded organizations including Emerging Leaders, London Youth Council and London Youth Service Providers;
- Young Leaders training sessions were streamlined and reconfigured to better meet needs of participants;
- We continue to emphasize education, engagement, and experiential learning in all programs; and
- Social media, including Facebook and twitter has been used as a communication and engagement tool.

**Outcome Evaluation Framework**

In accordance with United Way's program evaluation strategy, a program logic model and rigorous data collection strategy is in place for both Youth in Action and Young Leaders of Tomorrow. This includes participant evaluation at the beginning, mid-point, and end of their participation in their respective programs. Highlights of this evaluation are shared in this report, and include both quantitative and qualitative information.

## Youth in Action

**Youth in Action (YIA)** encourages youth aged 13-24 to bring together a group of individuals, plan a project that will help address poverty, mental health and/or beginnings & transitions in London or Middlesex and apply for YIA funding in order to implement their project. Successful applicants may receive up to \$1,000 for projects.

### Youth in Action Advisory Committee

Modeled on United Way's rigorous planning and investment process for community-wide funding, the Youth in Action Advisory Committee is mandated to compare the request for funds against a series of criteria and conduct interviews to decide which projects qualify for funding and at what level. Each young person showed a great deal of dedication and devoted approximately 20 hours to the program by preparing for and attending meetings, marketing the program and conducting interviews with representatives of each of the project teams seeking grants.

This year's committee included the following members:

- Saeb Omer
- Erika Lashbrook
- Hannah Litchfield
- Julia Cutt (Chair)
- Madeline Kelly (Vice Chair)
- Nnaemecra (Emeka) Agu
- Nuria Madrenas
- Phillip Kwan
- Sara Peters
- Shokhrukh Juraboyev
- Zak Chami

### Program outcomes

- 80% of our participants reported a substantially greater understanding of budgets and finances and 80% reported significant development of decision making skills upon completion of the program
- 100% of the youth indicated interest in continuing to be involved with United Way with 67% interested in staying involved with the Youth in Action program and 67% expressing an interest in the Young Leaders of Tomorrow Program.
- 80% of participants expressed interest in continuing their volunteer work in the future, either with United Way or with another local community group.

### What our participants had to say...

- *In the future, I hope to work a lot with non-profit groups and by participating on the YIA team, I got my first glimpse of the planning involved in those types of organizations. YIA was an inside look as to what I want to do with my life.*

- *I met a lot of great new people and I became aware of issues that I never thought existed in our community.*
- *YIA has encouraged me to be aware of the problems in our community and make a difference. I have improved my leadership skills and my knowledge overall.*

### Youth in Action funded projects

This year saw investment in 19 projects. Each project addressed a challenge or community issue in London or Middlesex and aligned with one or more of the United Way’s impact areas: Poverty, Mental health and Beginnings and transitions.

Project Funding – Fall 2010	Host Organization	Total Grant
ESL Outreach Program	Catholic Central High School	\$250
Celebrating Diversity	John Howard Society	\$560
Building Leaders – Building Community: Using Activities to Engage Youth	Limberlost Chaplaincy	\$555
True Beauty True You Conference/Sleepover Event	Montcalm Secondary School	\$785
Kipps Cooking Class	North Park Community Church [Life Resource Centre]	\$700
Beyond Kraft Dinner, Boys Learn to Cook	North Park Community Church Inc.	\$350
Girls Helping Girls: H.O.P.E. Helping Ourselves Possess Excellence	Sexual Assault Centre London	\$500
Young Women Flying Free: An Arts-based Urban Aboriginal Youth Initiative	Sexual Assault Centre London	\$310
Creating Safe Spaces for Young Women with Disabilities to Explore, Express and Engage	Sexual Assault Centre London	\$640
Juvenile Diabetes Camp	The Roataract Club of the UWO	\$350
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
Project Funding – Spring 2011	Host Organization	Total Grant
Art Aid	LDCSB/Catholic Central High School	\$450
Diversity Awareness Week	TVDSB/Westminster Secondary School	\$520
Girl's and Boy's Art Project	John Howard Society	\$600
Goals for a Goal	YMCA Western Ontario	\$650

Household Junk 2 Fashion Funk/A Night at the Oscars	South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre	\$700
STAND/African Students Association	London Public Library	\$400
The Aboryouth Showcase	Crouch Resource Centre	\$550
Time 4 London	South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre	\$430
Youth Fashion Show Extravaganza	London InterCommunity Health Centre	\$550
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,850</b>

### Impact of funded projects on our community

While it is difficult to formally quantify the exact reach of these 19 projects (noting that final reports are still being received), we can estimate based on the proposed activities that at least 1,500 youth and community residents have been touched by these projects including over 150 youth project leaders. Indicators of this engagement include over 400 meals served and 15 events that created engagement and further awareness and knowledge.

Examples included:

- Catholic Central High School's ESL Outreach Program hosted three field trips/special events for student newcomers in the ESL program to meet new friends, get to know their new community and country and make connections. Program leaders included senior ESL students who acted as mentors and translators.
- UWO African Students Association partnered with London Public Library to offer a twice weekly tutoring and snack program providing free homework and English help to elementary and high school students from newcomer communities in London.
- True Beauty: True You Conference/Sleepover Event for girls was held at Montcalm Secondary School and addressed positive self-esteem, confidence, personal growth and healthy relationships through keynote speakers, activities and a group legacy project.

## Young Leaders of Tomorrow

**Young Leaders of Tomorrow (YLT)** matches young leaders with Board of Directors in the non-profit sector. Youth aged 18-24 serve as interns on a Board of Directors of a non-profit organization, while also attending a series of monthly training sessions designed to give them knowledge and leadership skills necessary to be an effective Board member. In 2010-11, 13 youth, 12 volunteer trainers and 11 local organizations participated in the program.

### 2010/11 participants

Young Leader	Board placement
➤ Arjun Gupta	United Way of London & Middlesex – GenNext
➤ Constance Yoo	Neighbourhood Legal Services
➤ Jessica Bhullar	London InterCommunity Health Centre
➤ Jessica Kao	London District Distress Centre
➤ Kaitlin Goldie-Ryder	Canadian Mental Health Association
➤ Marissa Macgregor	Sexual Assault Centre
➤ Matthew Marion	Pillar Nonprofit Network
➤ Patrick Beatty	London Employment Help Centre
➤ Samara Zaifmen	United Way of London & Middlesex
➤ Sara Peters	United Way of London & Middlesex – Youth In Action Advisory Council
➤ Stephanie Libenson	Across Languages
➤ Trishul Jotangia	Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario - London Region
➤ Vivek Prabhu	Youth Opportunities Unlimited

### Volunteer engagement

United Way is grateful to our volunteer trainers for the 2010-11 year:

- Trevor Hunter, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Management, Department of Economics, Business and Mathematics, King's University College at The University of Western Ontario
- Robert Collins, Vice President, Workforce Development, Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes, Goodwill Career Centre
- Anna Barbon, Manager, Financial and Business Services, City of London
- Arden McLean, YMCA of Western Ontario
- Lauren Vandervoort, former YLT participant
- Evan Russell, former YLT participant
- Ryan Keleher, former YLT participant
- Heather Faulkner Millar, GenNext Cabinet member, Director of Marketing – OES Inc
- Mark Millar, GenNext Cabinet member, Acquisition Portfolio Manager, TD Bank Group
- Kim Forgetta, GenNext Cabinet member, Marketing Communications Specialist – London Life/Great-West Life Co Inc
- Brandon Mackinnon, GenNext Cabinet member, President, Labourers International Union of North America, Local 1059
- Robert Parker, Robert A. Parker & Associates Inc

## Participant outcomes

Once again, participating youth had the opportunity to learn a range of skills related to Board governance and leadership. Topics included:

- Leadership
- Board roles, responsibilities, liability
- Understanding the nonprofit sector
- Community trends and issues
- Group decision making
- Robert's Rules of Order
- Strategic planning
- Finances and budgeting – interpreting financial statements
- Program and outcome evaluation

Based on participant feedback:

- 100% of participants indicated the sessions on outcome evaluation were useful, along with programming on strategic planning and understanding the roles and responsibilities of a board member
- Over 66% of participants reported very strong knowledge/understanding of the functioning of non-profit boards after completing the program
- 100% of our participants indicated they will continue to serve on a non-profit board of directors in the future
- The majority of participants reported the YLT Program has been an important part of preparing them for future success

### What our participants had to say...

- *I have learned so much about the organization, its mission, and about my fellow board members. I have established a strong connection to the organization.*
- *I understood the [meeting] process and was able to add input and ask questions when they arose. That is not to say I was not nervous but as I started to make comments or ask questions, my confidence rose and I was able to add value to the meeting.*
- *This program helped give me insight not only into how organizations are run in the non-profit sector, but also an overview of how organizations are run in general.*
- *It was quite the learning experience because I walked into the internship really having no understanding of the way a board runs and their role in the organization so there was room for me to learn a lot.*
- *I hope to be able to join board(s) in the future when I am more established in my career and have more to offer the board in terms of technical skills.*
- *I think it has also given us insight into the importance and necessity of money to run these programs, and make us more willing to part with our money towards causes that we have been part of, and we believe are worthy. This experience has helped us see the challenges of working in the non-profit world, but also its feasibility as a profession.*

**Acknowledgements**

Special thank you to:

- London Life
- 2010-11 YIA and YLT participants
- YLT volunteer trainers
- YLT Board hosts, especially Board mentors
- Jeffrey Preston, United Way staff
- Youth program assistant, Hunter Foreman

For more information on YIA and YLT, please visit us online: [www.uwlondon.on.ca](http://www.uwlondon.on.ca)