

Thousands Step #Up4community At CN Tower Climb

United Way Greater Toronto's Signature Fundraising Event Helps Fight Poverty In All Its Forms



TORONTO - Nearly 10,000 people from across the region ascended the 1,776 steps up the CN Tower during the weekend, helping individuals across York, Peel and Toronto rise from poverty to possibility.

All funds raised - about \$1.4 million thus far - help United Way fight local poverty by supporting a network of over 200 community agencies.

"As thousands of families, colleagues, and communities strive for their personal best time, they're actually helping millions

of individuals live their best life. It might be 30 minutes for a climber, but it's a lifetime's worth of gratitude for those impacted," said Daniele Zanotti, President and CEO, United Way Greater Toronto.

Saturday, Nov. 24 opened United Way's 41st CN Tower Climb, with participants of all ages, abilities and motivations participating.

Participants ranged from four to 84 years old, from all the provinces except PEI. Families, friends, schools, agencies, work-

places and even corporate leaders joined in.

Donations to climbers' fundraising efforts can be made until December 14.

Anyone interested in climbing next year can learn more and sign up for United Way's newsletter for updates at unitedwaygt.org.

Climbers included: Krista Lusvardi, who has multiple sclerosis and is climbing because she was told she would be in a wheelchair by 45 - her next birthday. She supports United Way because she "saw first-

hand how it helps people go from poverty to possibility."

Jill Dilts, who came out to herself as transgender and started transitioning weeks after last year's climb.

She says United Way helped her in her darkest times when she did not have insurance but desperately needed counselling. This year's climb with the same workplace team will be very different - she says her happiness will finally shine through in team photos.

Brett Washbrook, who recalls

fondly the meals, holiday gifts and support his sister received when she and her children needed it most.

Lara and Richard Williston, a father-daughter pair who have been climbing together for the past 30 years. Richard climbed United Way's first CN Tower event 41 years ago -- when stunts like carrying up pianos and fridges were part of the festivities. After being diagnosed with polio as a child and expected not to live, he celebrates his health by walking any chance he gets.

Hindu Heritage Month Celebrated At Scarborough Temple

SCARBOROUGH: Jai Durga Hindu Society, of Scarborough, along with Bharat Mata Mandir, Brampton hosted its second Hindu Heritage Month celebration on Sunday, 25th November 2018 in the premises of Jai Durga Temple.

The event was attended by nearly 400 devotees, who were treated to an exhilarating program of music and dance performances

by some of the leading artists and performing arts schools in GTA.

Several buses were arranged to transport some 250 senior citizens from Brampton to Scarborough. Seniors who attended were from the Bharatiya Seniors Parivar, Brampton & Bharatiya Seniors and Youth Centre.

MP for Thornhill & Shadow Minister for Ethics, Hon. Peter Kent (representing Hon. Andrew



Scheer, leader of PC party), MP for Scarborough-Guildwood MP John McKay, MPP for Scarborough Rouge River, Raymond Cho, MPP for Scarborough Agincourt Aris Babikian, Councilor for Scarborough Agincourt Jim Karygiannis, representatives from the offices of MP Gary Anandasangaree and MP Shaun Chen, were some of the dignitaries present, who graced the occasion with their noteworthy speeches.

Another highlight of the event was the Tulsi Vivah Ceremony, a traditional wedding ritual performed between Lord Krishna and Mata Tulsi. Following the festivities the entire congregation was served a feast of free vegetarian lunch and snacks, specially prepared during Hindu weddings.

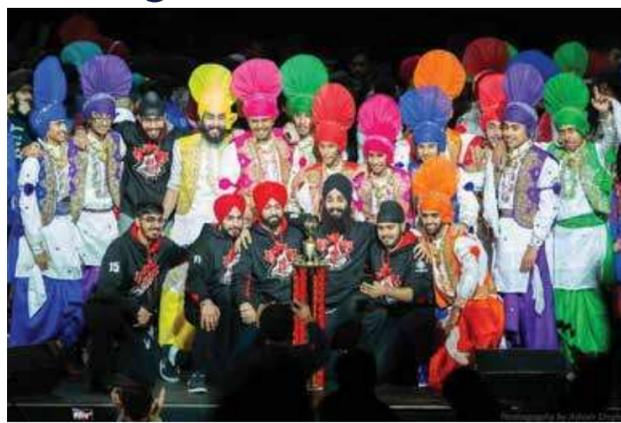
Jeff Lal, President of Jai Durga Hindu Society and Bharat

Mata Mandir thanked all board members, staff and a significant roster of senior as well as youth volunteers immensely, in his spell-binding speech. Mr. Lal then presented Awards of Honor

to all dignitaries, who applauded the cause and efforts made by both organizations in promoting integration of adults, seniors and youth through this commendable venture. *Pics: Bashir Nasir*



Bhangra Contest Winners



BOSTON, Mass.: The GTA-based Bhangra team Nachdi Jawani Folk Loverz which made its international debut four years ago, has won first place in the Boston Bhangra Competition. Eleven Bhangra teams from all across North America participated in the competition held last week.

The Apna Bhangra Crew of Seattle, WA, won the second place, while the third prize was taken by a local dance BU Bhangra of Boston University.

The competition attracted an audience of more than 2,000 people on Nov. 17 at the Orpheum Theatre in Boston and was organized by Boston Bhangra, Inc., which has been organizing the open competition for the past 15 years.

"The competition level was very diverse and extremely competitive with teams from all over North America," the organizers said in a statement.

"Teams came from Toronto, Washington State, Ohio, Illinois, New York, Texas, California, Virginia, and Boston."

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