



## **The Bhayana Family Foundation recognizes the contributions of frontline staff at United Way agencies**

***Awards honour social service workers for their dedication, innovation and creativity, partnerships, leadership, and team achievement***

May 24, 2017 – Today at Telus House in downtown Toronto, a total of 12 awards were presented to outstanding individuals from United Way Toronto & York Region agencies. These frontline workers represent the best of community builders and leaders who have demonstrated dedication, innovation, partnership, collaboration and teamwork in the social services sector.

All were nominated by their peers and recognized at The Bhayana Family Foundation Awards ceremony made possible thanks to the generosity of Madan and Raksha M. Bhayana. Awards founder Raksha M. Bhayana was present to honour the recipients. Event sponsor, TELUS, supported the awards ceremony by providing the event space and hosting the luncheon.

“The staff of United Way funded agencies are extraordinary. They are deeply caring individuals with a disciplined approach to supporting and enhancing the quality of life for a wide range of individuals and communities. Children, adults, seniors people with mental health issues, individuals with developmental disabilities, women who have been physically or sexually abused, amongst many other people in need, are assisted with expertise, knowledge, and a passionate commitment to make a difference,” said Raksha M. Bhayana, Founder, The Bhayana Family Foundation Awards. “They are driven by ideals, enthusiasm and deeply held values. They are often paid less than people in the private sector. We need to recognize the incredible social and economic contribution they make to society and create greater public awareness of their incredible work.”

United Way has been a proud and supportive partner of these awards for nine years. The Foundation is also in partnership with the United Ways of Lower Mainland, Peel Region and Halifax to recognize excellence amongst the staff of their funded agencies.

“At a time in our city and region when we see more and more people struggling to make ends meet, the nominees and recipients of this year’s awards are truly superheroes. They’re in the frontlines working hard, and inspiring a collective, United Way uprising of care that touches the lives of so many of our residents each and every day,” said Daniele Zanotti, President & CEO, United Way Toronto & York Region.

The impact of these cash awards and recognition is also significant, as recipients are inspired by the opportunity to raise awareness on their important, community-building work.



"I'm so thankful for this special recognition. We work in a sector that faces so many challenges, and these awards create a positive space where we can be supported and encouraged to continue despite the daily obstacles," said Allison Haskins of Big Brothers Big Sister, York Region (winner in the Dedication category).

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**2017 Bhayana Family Foundation Awards recipients:**

**Dedication**

Lenore Cabral, VHA Home Healthcare  
Allison Haskins, Big Brothers Big Sisters of York

**Innovation and Creativity (Individual)**

Claire Dadoun, Blue Door Shelters  
Kenneth Slater, Dixon Hall

**Innovation and Creativity (Organization)**

Dan Kershaw, Furniture Bank

**Partnership (Individual)**

Pamela Eusebio-Romansanta  
Tanisha Sri Bhaggyadatta

**Partnership (Organization)**

Bill Sinclair, St. Stephen's Community House

**Leadership**

Maurice Adongo, Street Health  
Barbara Pandza, West Neighbourhood House

**Team Achievement (2)**

*(1) Success Beyond Limits*  
Tesfai Mengesha  
Mohamed Ahmed  
Kaneka Watkins-Jackson

*(2) CRC/Regent Park Community Food Centre*  
Emily McKenzie  
Justine Barone  
Norberto Caceres  
Ashrafi Ahmed  
Leslie Johnson  
Amin Jivraj  
Valda Alleyne



**United Way**  
Toronto & York Region

**ABOUT UNITED WAY TORONTO & YORK REGION:** United Way Toronto & York Region is a charity dedicated to creating opportunities for a better life for everyone from the waterfront of downtown Toronto, to the southern shore of Lake Simcoe. Working in partnership with others, we mobilize people and resources to support a network of agencies that help people when they need it most. United Way also addresses the root causes of social problems, working to change community conditions for the better over the long term.

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