

## Focus: Inclusion and Unity

# Highlighting: Building Volunteers for Life, a CTW Youth Success Story

### *July 2021 Highlights:*

[Volunteer Markham stands in unity with every member of our community.](#)

[Volunteer Recognition NEWS...](#)

[Get Excited: MPP Billy Pang's PMB 270 has received Royal Assent and now...drumroll....Senior Volunteer Appreciation Week Act proclaims:](#)

[Volunteer Champion Awards now include a new "Team Award"!](#)

[PinkCars-Ensuring Seniors Get Vaccinated Has Gone National](#)

["Top Pick" Resources](#)

[Recently Posted Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[Change the World Markham Youth Update](#)

[CTW Success: Youth Becoming Volunteers for Life](#)

[Canada Gives Challenge - June 2021](#)

[Volunteer Markham's Annual General Meeting](#)

[Partner Spotlight: Cyber Seniors](#)

[Volunteering for Newcomers](#)

*TIP: Clicking on underlined text will direct you straight to the article*

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## Volunteer Markham stands in unity with every member of our community.



Recently we have all been greatly impacted by the various heartbreaking events that have occurred. Communities have rallied together to show unity and support for these tragic events. At Volunteer Markham, we also are learning and building supports to help show our strong sense of unity. We, as community members, need to be involved and stand together. Let's stand together and take action.

**Residential School Tragedy:** As we mourn the loss of all the lives that never came home, let's learn [how to support survivors of Residential Schools \(CTVNews\)](#). Urgent Reminder for all Canadians to work towards [Truth and Reconciliation](#).

**Islamophobic attack in London** killing a family of four and leaving a young child with serious injuries: Two leading Muslim charities have made statements: the [Muslim Association of Canada](#) and the [National Council of Canadian Muslims](#). **Call for Action:** The National Association of Canadian Muslims has also created a [petition](#) calling for the creation of a "National Action Summit on Islamophobia to take immediate action on dismantling both violent forms of Islamophobia and systemic Islamophobia."

Volunteer Markham is a safe place and has committed to ongoing actions to demonstrate our commitment to inclusion and diversity. **Volunteer Canada** has recently developed a [searchable repository of resources](#) related to diversity, equity, inclusion and volunteering. This resource can help us

better understand how volunteering helps newcomers integrate and how these newcomer volunteers help organizations increase their cultural competencies, how we can make volunteering more accessible to diverse populations (including youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous people and 2SLGBTQ+ communities), as well as how engaging volunteers from diverse populations make communities more inclusive. We are together on this journey.



For Canada Day, we're embracing all that it means to be Canadian; our warmth, our kindness, compassion, tolerance and celebrating our multiculturalism while still acknowledging our history. We also reflect on what

it means to be Canadian and as we look to our future we stand tall and united and remain strong, steadfast and true as we move forward.

*Please enjoy our 'Word Cloud' comprising the statements from our team here at Volunteer Markham on what it means to be Canadian.*

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## Volunteer Recognition NEWS...

**Get Excited:** MPP Billy Pang's PMB 270 has received Royal Assent and now....drumroll....[Senior Volunteer Appreciation Week Act](#) proclaims:



- 1) The first seven days of June in each year are proclaimed as Senior Volunteer Appreciation Week
- 2) During that week, all Ontarians who interact with a volunteer who is approximately 65 years of age or older are encouraged to wear a yellow-coloured item to display their appreciation.



**Get Inspired:** Since the inception of our year-round [Volunteer Champions Community Recognition Program](#) 2021, we have received 57 nominations!

*The spotlight will continue to shine on volunteers as they continue to give so generously of their most valuable resource....their time! Always take a moment to say a quick 'thank you' when you meet them!*

## Volunteer Champion Awards now include a new "Team Award"!



Volunteer Markham has added a new Team Award category to our Volunteer Community Champions program. This Team Award acknowledges outstanding teams of volunteers where the "Value of One, The Power of Many" is exemplified.

This new Team Award is in addition to our previous three categories: Social Services Support, Community Spirit, Global Spirit (which are used for Individual Awards). We have an astonishing 11 Individual Award Winners already. Check out our Recognition page to learn more about how to quickly nominate an individual or team and read about our latest winners.

**Please take a moment to say thank you to a volunteer individual or team who is making a difference in our community. All individual nominees will be considered for the quarterly CHAMPIONS AWARD, and team volunteers will be selected bi-annually. Every nominee will receive recognition from Volunteer Markham, including a listing on our website. Our next Volunteer Champions will be selected in July!**

It's just a [click away](#) to see your Champions and to [nominate](#) someone you know!

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## PinkCars-ensuring seniors get vaccinated has gone National

**PinkCars.ca continues to help seniors across the Country now!** 3800 senior vaccination appointments have been booked, and 400 rides offered, all with the efforts of a small group of volunteers with big hearts at PinkCars.ca! With this success and tremendous amounts of learning along the way, PinkCars is able to build out its services to support all Seniors across Canada.

*"PinkCars.ca is delighted to be able to extend our reach Canada wide. Our mission is to help all seniors and those with language barriers get that first dose as soon as possible. We have partnered with various national volunteer organizations to help offer rides to*



*and from vaccination sites where necessary and our team of dedicated volunteers are working tirelessly behind their computers booking 1st shots for all those that are still struggling to get one."* Shanta Sundarasan, Founder



Volunteer translators and ambassadors are needed. Translate for our residents, sign up to receive a lawn sign to raise awareness, share with your friends and family. Stay connected with PinkCars.ca through their website and on social media. Updates can always be found. Sign up as a [Volunteer Translator here](#). For more information reach out to [Volunteer Markham](#) or [PinkCars.ca](#)

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## “Top Pick” Resources:

In support of our communities, Volunteer Markham stands in unity with our friends and neighbours. June brought to us opportunities to support Senior’s Month, Indigenous Month, Pride Month, and others. Our “Top Pick” resources here also include links to learn and raise awareness.

[Canada’s Oath of citizenship now recognizes First Nations, Inuit and Métis rights](#)

[Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)

[Native Land Map Resource](#)



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[CMHA York and South Simcoe: Pride Month: How to be an ally](#)

[Welcome Centre Immigrant Services: Calendar of Services](#)

[CERIC Careerwise: Tips to help newcomer clients enhance their Linked In Profiles](#)

[7 Steps to a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workplace](#)

[Canada launches two initiatives in their 50 - 30 Challenge](#) asking organizations to commit to achieving gender parity (50%) and significant representation (30%) of other under-represented groups—including racialized persons, Indigenous people, people living with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ2+ community—on boards and in senior management positions.



[You are Invited to Help shape Canada's first Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#)

[Seniors Safety Calendar](#) (just hit this [link](#) to download a digital copy of this popular calendar)

[York Region Celebrates Seniors Month video](#)

[Homelessness Learning Hub: Trauma Toolkit](#)



[Charity Village: Leading From Home: Tips for managing a virtual team](#)

As always, stay on top of many resources by reviewing Volunteer Markham's [Learning and Resources Page](#) and continue to our [centralized landing page](#). Navigate through the free learnings and shared resources as a volunteer or as an organization.

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## Recently Posted Volunteer Opportunities

*Note: You will be directed to create a profile/log in to view these opportunities.*

[Agincourt Community Services Association](#) is looking for a **Marketing Volunteer** ([See posting](#))

[Results Canada](#) is looking for **Group Leader - Volunteer Advocate** ([See posting](#))

[Nanny Angel Network](#) is looking for **Nanny Angel Child Care Providers**. ([See posting](#))

[Cyber Seniors](#) is looking for **Tech and Phone Support Volunteers** ([See posting](#))

**Mon Sheong** is looking for a **Clerical Support Volunteer** ([See posting](#))

**Women's Support Network of York Region** is looking for youth volunteers for their **Youth Advisory Committee**. ([See posting](#))

**Habitat for Humanity GTA** is looking for **Re-Store and Build Volunteers** ([See posting](#))

**Toronto Wildlife Centre** is looking for **Wildlife Care Volunteers for Rouge Park** ([See posting](#))

**Power Unit Youth Organization** is recruiting **Volunteer Team Members** ([See posting](#))

**Check often:** Check **Volunteer Markham's Database** for organizations needing volunteers and volunteer opportunities. This free, easily accessible database is your connection to the community! Simply create a quick account and come back anytime.

Sign up here for the GTA Volunteer Centre's **Volunteer Drivers** 'matching' service' which addresses the most needed opportunity in our community and gets volunteers into their roles quickly.

## Change the World Markham Youth Update



Youth continue to seek out meaningful opportunities. Statistically, more and more youth are looking for short term, high impact projects. Virtual volunteering and micro-volunteering are trends that continue to grow. CTW Markham is our youth team navigating engagement during Covid and building initiatives that support our community.

*CTW Markham Youth are the voice of youth volunteerism here at Volunteer Markham. This team is working remotely and making a positive impact in our communities. All youth are welcome and encouraged to join. Connect with us to learn more about their current initiatives and plans for the next year.*

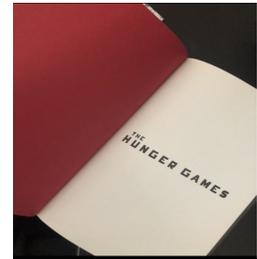
The screenshot shows the Volunteer Markham website with several sections:

- Logo:** Volunteer Markham logo with a stylized 'M'.
- Create a profile with Volunteer Markham:** A section encouraging users to create a profile, listing benefits like access to events and a bi-monthly newsletter.
- Volunteer Recognition:** A section titled "Volunteer Recognition" with a photo of a person and text about recognizing volunteers.
- Youth Groups and Councils:** A list of youth groups and councils across York Region, including Markham Environmental Youth Council, Markham Youth Council, and Markham Teen Arts Council.
- Quick Links and Resources:** A list of links to Volunteer Canada, Volunteer Markham's Awards and Recognition Program, and the Volunteer Markham Volunteer Database.
- Volunteer Markham Social Media:** A section for social media links (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube) and a list of CTW Markham social media handles.

## CTW HIGHLIGHT: Markham Mental Health Youth Discussion Team



**MMH Launch: “The wonders of mindfulness!** The newly launched CTW-MarkhamMentalhealth team has started off with their first initiative; working on mindfulness. The team had a series of days in which they participated in working on their overall mindfulness. Now, what exactly does this mean? The mental health team worked on individual activities to better their positivity and well-being. They were given a chance to complete activities that would boost their mood, such as reading, going on walks, creating art, meditation, and healthy meals. The benefit of this was to get off of screens as due to the covid-19 pandemic, everything has gone virtual, it’s important to take some time for yourself to do the things that you love. To get involved you can now join the team by directly messaging us on Instagram @MarkhamMentalHealth and joining the google classroom which is in our Instagram biography linktree!”



**By: Pooja**

**Additional CTW projects include:** Digital Support Services to non-profits as our community rebuilds from Covid, networking and connecting with other youth teams, ensuring youth representation is on Volunteer Markham Committees as well as regular monthly meetings to address and respond to needs/gaps in our community.

Meet our [Change the World Markham Youth Ambassadors](#) and watch our [CTWMarkham Youth Ambassadors Welcome Video](#).



**ChangeTheWorld (Markham)**  
Nonprofit Organization  
→ volunteerism | engaging youth  
• use our hashtag | #ctwmarkham  
• visit our home at  
VolunteerMarkham.ca and...more  
[volunteermarkham.ca/](http://volunteermarkham.ca/)



To get connected with CTW Markham, follow @CTWMarkham on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) (or [Markham Mental Health for Youth](#))! If you are a youth looking for volunteer hours or your organization is interested in working with CTW Markham, please connect with us at [shayan.baksh@volunteermarkham.ca](mailto:shayan.baksh@volunteermarkham.ca)

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## CTW Success: Youth Becoming Volunteers for Life

Change the World Markham held a vision to build youth into volunteers for life. After more than ten years of empowering youth to volunteer we went back to see what some of our volunteers were doing. Here is one of our “Success Stories”

### ***Success Story: Becoming Volunteers for Life***

My name is Riva, and I'm entering the fourth year of my undergraduate degree. My earliest experiences with volunteering date back to my high school years where I was eagerly trying to find an activity that I enjoyed whilst completing the mandatory high school community service requirement. I was always seeking out new ways to get involved so it was a no-brainer for me to join Change the World Markham (**CTWMarkham**) when I was presented with the opportunity. What I appreciate most about this organization is that they always encourage their volunteers to find a community outlet that best suits them; volunteerism is most rewarding and enjoyable when you find something you love doing! Looking back, the most important lesson I learned was that not only does volunteering allow you to give back to your community, which is remarkable and fulfilling in itself, but it fosters personal development that simply cannot be achieved elsewhere.

I have always been passionate about health and wellness, so I was ecstatic to work on developing a volunteer-driven program with Marleigh Retirement Home! Under the guidance of **CTWMarkham** I spearheaded the development of 'Brain Games,' a program hosting board games with elderly individuals living with Alzheimer's & Related Dementias to offer companionship and encourage active brain use. Seeing the smiles on the seniors' faces as they would excitedly participate or share their stories was the true symbol for how impactful volunteerism can be. From then on, I developed a passion for all-things volunteering which I actively sought out to continue in University as well. Over the past 3 years, I have continued to volunteer and have diversified my contributions. Currently, I'm a volunteer mentor to elementary-level students in my University community as well as a research volunteer in a computational medicine laboratory. Volunteerism remains a huge component of my life and I know it will remain as such for years to come.

To anyone who may be apprehensive about getting started in fear that they won't find an activity they enjoy, I urge you to try new things and seek out organizations that allow you to create your own volunteering initiatives. There are countless organizations out there that are always looking for new volunteers, and you may be surprised to find interests you had not previously considered. My biggest advice would be to dissociate volunteering from the high school requirement and find ways to make it fun because as soon as you find your niche those 40 hours will seem insufficient!



Written by Riva



## Canada Gives Challenge - June 2021

Thank you to all our donors and supporters who joined us in this challenge to win \$20,000. As a Volunteer Centre, a connector of people and opportunities, we may just have the opportunity that could change your life! To see the lucky winning charity, check out [Canadahelps.org](http://Canadahelps.org). To make a donation, please just hit this [link](#).

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## Volunteer Markham's Annual General Meeting

Volunteer Markham held its Annual General Meeting virtually on June 21, 2021. Meet our Board of Directors for 2021/2022 [here](#).

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### Partner Spotlight: Cyber Seniors



Cyber-Seniors offers a rewarding volunteer experience for teenagers, young adults, and individuals of any age who are tech-savvy looking to make a difference in their community.

Your volunteer experience will include participating in group technology training webinars (either as a presenter or part of the Q&A team) and providing one-on-one telephone tech support to senior citizens. Volunteer hours are documented, and digital badges and certificates are awarded. Students develop valuable work skills that give them a leg up when applying for a job or post-secondary school programs.

And on top of all this, it's fun! Join today and see for yourself.

Register to volunteer [here](#)!

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We couldn't say it better than the volunteers themselves. Taken straight from the Cyber-Seniors [Website](#), we highlight these testimonials and encourage you to click on this link [here](#) to watch their stories!

### **Fran Feels Connected**

Senior Testimonial – Fran shares that while learning technology through Cyber-Seniors has been helpful, the most rewarding part of her experience has been the intergenerational connections she's made!

### **Grateful Seniors Tech Training Volunteer Program**

Seniors who love to volunteer – Cyber-Seniors are here to teach you how to take your volunteer services online.

### **Meet Keshav, a Cyber-Seniors Tech Mentor**

Keshav is a 14-year-old student from Ottawa who volunteers as a tech mentor for the Cyber-Seniors Program. In his video interview he talks about how he learned about Cyber-Seniors, why he decided to sign up as a mentor and what he enjoys about it.

### **Ian Feels Invigorated**

Ian is a younger senior who loves participating in weekly tech-webinars with Cyber-Seniors. He says interacting with young people makes him feel invigorated. Cyber-Seniors is proud to be able to bridge generational divides and make a difference in the lives of seniors and youth mentors!

### **Jean's Telemedicine Moment**

Jean, a senior, expresses gratitude for being able to connect virtually with her doctor, through what she's learned with Cyber-Seniors about telemedicine.

### **A Poem About Cyber-Seniors**

A Cyber-Senior named Jean wrote this wonderful poem to thank our volunteers! Our student volunteers teach tech lessons and offer one-on-one help – they are what makes Cyber-Seniors possible! And we love hearing how much the program has improved the lives of seniors like Jean.

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# Volunteering for Newcomers



**By Manjit, VM Placement Student**

Hello, my name is Manjit and I am an immigrant woman from India. As a newcomer it was not easy to start a new life in Canada. People may face so many challenges: new language barriers, employment opportunities, housing, new environment, social networking, cultural differences and no Canadian work experience.

I am focusing on ethnic groups in the York Region during my placement. The York Region has many organizations by ethnic groups including: Chinese, Tamil, South Asian, Muslims, Iranian and many more. There are organizations that have many programs such as job training, mentorship, coaching, advice, direction and guidance to help newcomers and all people to settle in their communities. Newcomers can take part in volunteering to ease this transition. It is so beneficial for newcomers to integrate in Canadian society by volunteering. They will make a social network by meeting new people where all can share their own journey into Canada and have the opportunity to learn about Canada services, many are free of cost. It was really great to be involved in my community to gain rewarding experiences, learn interpersonal skills, gain confidence, and receive a reference for work in Canada.

Newcomers arriving in York Region, please get involved in the community, meet new people, settle down and make a difference in someone's life. Whether it is through a Church, Senior club, Youth Service, Food Bank or other communities please get involved.

Volunteer Markham is a place where newcomers, youth and families are always welcome. Volunteer Markham's [Database](#) is there for all to review. There are organizations that welcome newcomers in their

community in the York Region that are based on their ethnic group. If you are new to Canada and want to learn more about volunteering, we invite you to join this free online [Course: Orientation to Volunteering](#).

Thank you

I am sharing some links to ethnic groups in the York region.

**Bayview Hill Community Center/Asian community**

<https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/things-to-do/Volunteering.aspx>

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**Carefirst Seniors & Community Services/ Chinese community**

<https://carefirstontario.ca/about/volunteers>

**Iranian Women Organization** <https://iwontario.com/volunteer-opportunities/>

**CCYAA Canadian Chinese Youth Athletic Association** <https://www.ccyaa.org/work-with-us>

**York Region newcomer Service** [Newcomer Services | York Region](#)

**Acces Employment Service** [Markham - ACCES Employment](#)

**Iranian Women Organization** [Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario](#)

**JF&CS Jewish Family and Child Service of greater Toronto** [Jewish Family and Child Service of Greater Toronto](#)

**Welcome Centre Immigrant Services** [Calendar of Services](#)

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