

Immediate Release
April 8, 2011

The 7th Annual City Expedition Race - City Mosaic

Across U-hub is pleased to announce the launch of this year's City Mosaic Expedition Race. This year marks the seventh anniversary of the race. Since its first launch in 2005, more than 1,700 youths from different ethnic backgrounds have taken part in City Mosaic. With guidebooks at hand, participating youths have visited over twenty culturally and historically significant locations within Toronto—such as the Distillery District and the Indian Bazaar. Whether it is for the food or the customs, the architectures or the languages, it is worthwhile for youth to enjoy their time with friends while exploring the unfamiliar yet precious parts of their own city.

Breaking out of their comfort zones, entering into the local areas, experiencing the richness of the surrounding cultures, and understanding the city's history which laid the foundation to the renowned multiculturalism of Toronto is, in fact, the path to building youths' sense of belonging to this city—and that is the spirit of City Mosaic.

Across U-hub notices that most youths with bicultural identities tend to lack a sense of belonging to either culture. Dr. Eric Fong, chair, board of directors of Across U-hub says that, 'interacting with other groups can reduce misunderstanding among groups. It also facilitates the integration of immigrants in a multicultural society.'

The participants and parties involved in City Mosaic are becoming more ethnically diverse from one year to the next. Across U-hub is delighted to partner with the Korean-Canadian Scholarship Foundation, Social Services Network, Vietnamese Women's Association of Toronto and Vision Youth in the planning and execution of this year's race. Nhat Nguyen, youth from the Vietnamese Women's Association of Toronto, expressed that City Mosaic's race- and team-based format in learning about cultures and histories is far more inviting for youth than the traditional textbook style. And getting youths out of their homes, away from their computers, as well as limiting them to walking and taking the public transit is a great way for them to get in some physical activities, have a good time with friends and enjoy what the city has to offer.

Nguyen also observed that many Vietnamese youth tend to either segregate themselves in their Vietnamese cultures or become overly absorbed into western lifestyle—polarizing themselves from one extreme to the other. This bipolar trait is also prominently identifiable in the other ethnic communities including the Chinese community. He went on to explain that 'City Mosaic introduces the Canadian culture to youths in a fun way. Youth don't feel like they have to jump from one end to another. It's a

transition, it's a phase. You can learn about your heritage, your culture, the Canadian culture, in the mean time, you can learn about the different cultures in between that are in the city of Toronto. And I hope that other organizations, other ethnicities and groups can participate with us. Many people think that the event is catered to Chinese, but at City Mosaic, there are youths from all different ethnicities and different backgrounds; having fun and enjoying the event, very similar to the multiculturalism that is Toronto.'

In an interview with Cecilia Li, winner of the Top Explorer award from last year's City Mosaic, she shared her experience in coping with team members who have different strengths and weaknesses. 'Two keys that led to success for us was knowing how to turn a weakness into strength and also, not easily giving up. That's how we managed to visit all the checkpoints last year and won Top Explorer.'

Timothy Chiu, participant from last year says, 'I am more aware of my surroundings after the race. I suddenly realize how much the city has when I start looking for them. I cannot interact with them when I am inside playing video games or going on Facebook.' During the race, coordination and flexibility are needed. 'When you are in a team interacting with a vibrant environment, you must be flexible with everything around you.'

This year, Chiu volunteered his time in joining the planning committee. He expressed that the learning process in the committee is hard-earned. He is looking forward to this year's race, particularly to see the fruits of his labour from past few months.

City Mosaic is happening on May 28th at Albert Campbell Square, Scarborough Civic Centre. Participants should form a team of four and will tour around Toronto on foot or by public transit. Every team gets a guidebook with checkpoints and questions on it. Points are earned at checkpoints after fulfilling particular requirements. Awards include the City Mosaic Champion, first and second runner-ups, and more. To encourage creativity and team spirit, a new best designed team-tee prize has been added to the list. The application deadline is May 8th, and early bird deadline is April 25th. For more information about the application, cost, or any other inquiry, visit the Across U-hub's website at <http://www.acrossuhub.com> or call at 905-944-1944. You can also visit their information booth at Pacific Mall on April 16th or Fairview Mall on April 17th.