



35th Annual General Meeting: June 28th, 2011
Remarks by: Daniele Zanotti, CEO

The evolution will not start here.

The evolution will not start
at the front of a room
with a talking head like me at a mic at a podium
associating words like transformation, collaboration, innovation
summarizing 365 days of sweat work in six minutes of sweet words.

Our evolution does not start here.

Our evolution need no longer be captured in headlines, bylines, taglines
strategic plans, media releases, quotes and tweets.
We are faaar too far along for that, brothers and sisters.

Our evolution is live.

It starts here. Change does. Within.
Sponsored and brought to you by....you.
And when change calls you, stand up.
That's right. Stand up.
You did not come here at 730 in the morning to sit.
You give. You volunteer. You act. Be celebrated.
Our change is yours - starts with you.

Change is United Way funded member agencies, everyday, on the frontline for
Yakesha and Calvin and Nina and Jennifer:
Because, thanks to you, there will be no picture of 18 year old Yakesha downing
pills on a Richmond Hill street, but a picture of Yakesha graduating from college
with her certificate and of Yakesha with the keys to her new apartment.

Because thanks to you, there will be no picture of Calvin being laid off again
from a manufacturing job in Keswick or was it Vaughan, but a picture of Calvin
learning to read and write at 52, and of Calvin on his first day in a new job.

Because thanks to you, there will be no picture of Nina, homeless with her two boys after work and life and crisis collide and collide, but of Nina in her new housing, and Nina in her new job and her boys in their new school in Newmarket.

And thanks to you, no picture of Jennifer, sobbing in her wheelchair after mom passed, but a picture of Jennifer happy at her new community living group home in Aurora and Jennifer oh so able at work part time in the cafeteria at State Farm.

So stand Jewish Family, Blue Door, Social Services Network, Aids Committee of York Region and Pathways.

You too Job Skills, Sandgate, Women's Centre, Catholic Community Services, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Family Services.

Join them York Centre, Canadian Hearing Society, YRAP, Red Cross, Learning Disabilities.

Change starts – with you – every day.

Change is people helping people, the caring at work in neighbourhoods across our region – our Strength Investments in 2010.

Change is Penny, a long time resident at the Charles Darrow Co op in Aurora, determined to find a new way to help youth struggling with school and parents always in between employment, so determined she brought neighbours and groups together to do it.

Change is 50 latino women, like Idalmis, from across the region, helping each other juggle child care, find a job, learn a new language – online or in a church basement – arriba Latinos en York Region.

Change is Pat and Ian, one of the many volunteers with Markham African Caribbean Association, working with local youth to find solutions on their issues – their way.

Penny and Idalmis and Pat and Ian- local, simple and new solutions to urgent issues, our strength investments.

Change starts – with you.

Change is partnering with catalyts and champions.

The Region of York: their HSPB and its Making Ends Meet report; their CRG and recent Profile of our Low Income Population or their LIP, supporting integration for newcomers across the region.

Whatever the LMNOP we are collaborating on, the Region is the lens that shapes our work.

And then York University - the torch for community knowledge and social innovation - and our huge announcement just last week: \$93,000 from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research so we can link our frontline agencies addressing poverty, mental health, isolation to the research and academics at York U.

Too both of you, and who could forget Labour Community Services and TRIEC too. Change start with you.

Change is 18,000 donors.

6 am kick off at Miller Group in Sharon and a woman sobbing way at the back. She walks up at the end, fist clenched so tight, entrusts \$18 in our hands. "I have been working here for three months. You helped me – survive and get a job here. This is all I have."

Change is every single community leader who invests \$1000 or more: Stand up Anderton, Bonner, Gionette and Greavette, Hortie, Jones and La Rosa. You too Mahoney, McCann McNaught and the Millers, And Dr Ng, Peake, Richards, Rourke, Smith and Steele.

You gift ten at risk teens and their families too, support and counseling for a year – to stay in school, stay at home, stay alive.

Change is corporate champions like IBM – with pro bono consulting, and IT infrastructure, thousands of hours of hands-on caring, sponsorship from Celebration to our new interactive website – to be unveiled this summer in partnership with YRMG.

It is Allstate, AECOM, CGI and the Town of Richmond Hill.

And the Region of York and State Farm too – sponsoring an employee to help during our annual campaign

Every cent and dollar and donor.

Change starts – thanks to you.

And 1500 volunteers....

in workplaces planning, asking, buzzing heads, burning hamburgers and boxing bosses to the ground - in wii of course.

And Cooper and Prescod and Walsh, from the Doug Lear Award to Community Investment to deciding on our new strength funding.

Piragal, Kwak, Samras and Scuderi who travel from Milliken Mills to Jackson's Point to sit, meet and review our member agencies, stewarding donor dollar.

Change is the best darn board in the sector – bar none – from Bambra to Mamdani to Wong, Pisko Bezrucko to Ziskos Picheca, Kelly, Tuckey, Murray to Gans and a little Beer once and a while too...Charles Beer that is.

Never afraid to see anew, stretch and push, and to do so with calm and wisdom and patience.

Volunteers – our soul, our strength, our spirit.
Change starts – with you.

Change is a staff that dances and dodges and ducks and drives
Fast.

Staff who keep the goal alive

There will be no - 'no' for Roy, Leo, Tammy and Liz, Sukaina, Arlene, and Karen: yes we will hit the campaign.

There will be no - 'no' for Aamna and Andrea and Sam: yes we will make sure we speak with every agency and applicant.

There will be no – no for Adelia and Ellen and Sofia: yes we will make it as easy and painless as we can for all our accounts and donors.

There definitely will be no – no for our communications team because no –no is just not grammatically correct: Nicole

Or for the senior team of Gilles, Janice, Rickesh, Adriana and

Vicky you – who holds it, holds it, holds it all together like glue.

Change never starts with a no. Not with this team. No.
Change starts with hope and help and yes.

Change starts thanks to you and you and you.

It needs no talking head at the front of a room at a mic at a podium celebrating 2010 and pontificating on 2011.

It need no longer be captured in headlines, bylines, taglines
strategic plans, media releases, quotes and tweets

We are faaaaar too far along for that, brothers and sisters

Our evolution, our change is live.
Our evolution, our change has arrived.

Change starts here – with you.

Thank you.

In honour of the late Gil Scott Heron