

York Region residents donating to Toronto United Way

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its donation target by \$300,000 — the exact amount by which the overall campaign fell short.

Other donors, such as Costco-Markham, Compugen, Compaq Canada, Johnson and Johnson Medical Products and the Town of Markham, surpassed their individual fundraising targets by between 60 and 240 per cent.

Meanwhile, Ms Chivers said her organization is negotiating with Toronto — officially called the United Way of Greater Toronto — to change its name.

The moniker gives donors the impression the Toronto organization provides services outside the city. Ms Chivers feels many York residents donate to the United Way of Greater Toronto believing the money is going to agencies in their communities.

York's campaign organizers

decided last month to extend the campaign into January in the hopes of meeting the goal. But although an extra \$100,000 came in over the past several weeks, it became obvious the target was too ambitious.

However, because the organization raised the same amount as last year — which was \$700,000 over the 2000 campaign goal — none of the 124 programs delivered by the 37 agencies will be cut.

More than 200,000 York residents a year rely on United Way agencies for services. Agencies include Big Sisters, the Canadian Red Cross Society, Yellow Brick House and Sandgate shelters for abused women, Catholic Community Services and Jewish Family and Child Services.

"We will not have to cut back any funding to the agencies," Ms Chivers said.

"But there is no expansion

funding to them or adding any new agencies. It's pretty much status quo with regards to funding distribution."

The last time the campaign fell short was 1993, when donations actually dropped 5 per cent over the previous year.

Hoping the economy bounces back this year, Ms Chivers suggested the organization will likely set a target for next fall's campaign at slightly more than \$6 million.

At the same time, she said the organization wants to focus on improving its public education strategy so York residents are more aware of the services the United Way and its agencies provide.

"I think we have to be very aggressive about advising people about the impact of their gifts (donations)," she said.

"We have to be visible all year round, not just at cam-

paign time."

The organization has taken on Markham marketing firm Capstone Communications

Group, which is donating its time, to help raise the profile of the United Way in the community.



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