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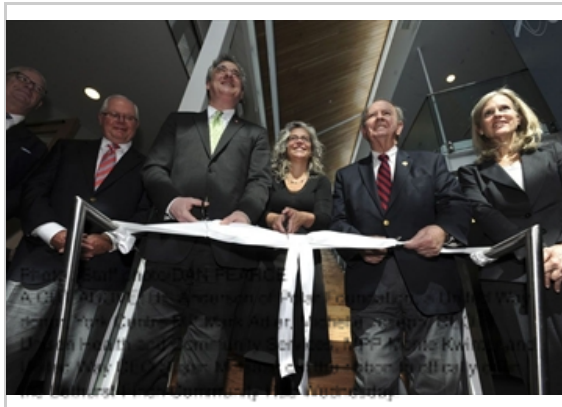
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North York Mirror by Fannie Sunshine

Viacheslav Volkov's group of Second World War Soviet veterans now has a formal place to meet, thanks to the creation of the Bathurst-Finch Community Hub.

Volkov, president of the Canadian Association of World War Two Veterans of the Soviet Union, was one of several speakers to officially open the Bathurst-Finch Community Hub Wednesday, April 3.

Located in the parking lot of Northview Heights Secondary School at Bathurst Street and Finch Avenue, the 7,000-square-foot hub has been open since October and is used as a one stop shop for social services.



Volkov said many members of the group are in their late 80s to early 90s and live in the area, making the hub an ideal place to gather.

"Now we can have meetings and events in this beautifully constructed building," he said through a translator,

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Susan McIsaac, president and CEO of United Way Toronto, called it a joyous day.

"It's very inspiring to come in here," she said. "This is the fifth of eight hubs in the city, and seven have been built."

Bathurst-Finch Community Hub, which was six years in the making, is a key element in United Way Toronto's Building Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, an initiative that creates accessible community space and brings together health and social services in priority neighbourhoods across Toronto.

York Centre MP Mark Adler and MPP Monte Kwinter were on hand to offer congratulations, with Adler calling Bathurst-Finch Community Hub a model of efficiency.

"The Bathurst-Finch Hub is a welcome addition to the people of North York," he said.

Kwinter said Ontario is about strong and healthy communities and the hub exemplifies that.

"It's a great asset for the community," he said. "It's a great day for the city of Toronto."

The provincial and federal governments each contributed \$1 million towards the Bathurst-Finch Community Hub through the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, while United Way Toronto donors the Polar Foundation and the S. Schulich Foundation pitched in \$1 million toward the project. The province has provided a total of \$4.6 million toward Unison's satellite Community Health Centre, which offers family doctor, dietician, social worker, chiroprapist and health promotion services.

Opened in October, the Bathurst-Finch Community Hub offers community and medical services, such as counselling, employment services, seniors' activities and youth groups.

The hub is a partnership between lead agency Unison Health and Community Services, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, United Way Toronto and the Toronto District School Board. Capital funding comes from United Way Toronto, the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund and Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hub partners include Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto, Circle of Care, CUIAS (Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society), Family Service Toronto, JVS Toronto, Kababayan Community Centre Multicultural Services, KCWA Family and Social Services, North York Community House, North York Women's Centre (NYWC), and Downsview Services for Seniors.

While not all agencies have catchment areas, Unison's is bounded by Steeles Avenue, Bathurst Street, St. Clair Avenue and Keele Street.

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