



**For Immediate Release**

**Dreams to reality: Youth from low-income neighbourhoods prove they have what it takes for first job**

**Ottawa, August 31, 2011**—Today, 240 youth from low-income and underserved neighbourhoods in the Ottawa region will be graduating from a Youth Services Bureau (YSB) summer employment program that's given them their first job experience. Family, friends and officials will gather to celebrate their graduation **today at 4:30 p.m. at the Jim Durrell Centre, 1265 Walkley Rd, Ottawa.**

For many young people who face barriers to entering the workforce, the YSB's Summer Jobs for Youth program gives them the tools for long-term employment success: hands-on experience, training, and employment connections in their community. The program is aimed at employing youth aged 15 to 18 from traditionally disadvantaged neighbourhoods:

- Ottawa East – (Overbrook, Vanier)
- Ottawa Central West – (Caldwell, Debra-Dynes)
- Ottawa South – (Ledbury, Banff, Heatherington, Confederation)
- Ottawa West – (Ritchie, Dumaurier, Michele Heights)

"The Summer Jobs for Youth program changes lives by giving young people an opportunity to see what's possible and the skills to find their next job," says YSB Executive Director Joanne Lowe. "The program is also a boon for the businesses, community agencies and other employers who get to work with the next generation of young leaders."

"For many, this was not just a summer job. Young people across Ontario gained valuable work experience, connected with employers and mentors and built their resumes, leaving them better prepared for future opportunities," says **Laurel Broten, Minister of Children and Youth Services**

The YSB Summer Jobs for Youth Program provides youth with training and a six week summer job placement in various industries. Employers who participate in the program are given wage subsidies. This program is part of Ontario's Youth Opportunities Strategy with support from the federal government that enables more than 5,000 youth from 32 priority communities across the province to have a chance to gain valuable work experience that will help them reach their full potential and contribute to the well-being of their communities.

The Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa delivers employment programs to youth and families in Ottawa in addition to mental health, housing and homelessness, and



youth justice programs. Every month, YSB serves between 2,500 and 3,000 youth and families.

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