



For Immediate Release

256 Ottawa youth graduate from Summer Jobs for Youth program with new experience and skills

Ottawa, August 27, 2009—Today 256 youth from low-income Ottawa neighbourhoods will graduate with valuable new job skills and work experience from the Summer Jobs for Youth program of the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa (YSB). They will receive certificates at a graduation ceremony at 4:00 p.m. at the RA Centre on Riverside Drive.

The 15 to 18 year olds, who are from priority areas such as Overbrook, Vanier, Debra Dynes and Banff-Ledbury, have worked their first summer jobs with employers as diverse as a law library and a spa. The program is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services and was partially funded by the federal government this year.

"The Youth Services Bureau is grateful to the businesses, community groups and young people who have made the Summer Jobs for Youth program a boon to local communities," said YSB Executive Director **Alex Munter**. "This exceptional program harnesses the talent and enthusiasm of young people to create a brighter future for their neighbourhoods."

"Programs like Summer Jobs for Youth are successful because of partnerships and the commitment of all those involved," said the **Hon. Deb Matthews**, Minister of Children and Youth Services. "Congratulations to the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa, all the area employers who participated and especially the youth who were part of the program this year in the Ottawa area. Together you made a difference in your community and it is the better for it."

Joining the YSB for this celebration will be the **Hon. Madeleine Meilleur**, Minister of Community and Social Services and MPP for Ottawa-Vanier, **Hon. Jim Watson**, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and MPP for Ottawa-West Nepean, **Yasir Naqvi**, MPP for Ottawa Centre, and **Abdirizak Karod**, Executive Director of the Somali Center for Family Services, one of the host employers.

Employer **Susan Dennison**, owner of a Tim Horton's franchise on Hawthorne Road, has had such a positive experience with the program that she will be offering her student trainee part-time work in the fall. This is another way that the program breaks down barriers for youth and gets them participating in the workforce.

The Summer Jobs for Youth Program is a component of the provincial government's Youth Opportunities Strategy that helps disadvantaged youth gain confidence, learn new skills and gain valuable work experience. Over \$21 million has been invested in the strategy in 2009, including \$830,000 in the Ottawa program.

The program opens doors for youth who have not yet been employed and face many barriers to getting their first summer job. Participants gain the job readiness skills they need



Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa
Bureau des services à la jeunesse d'Ottawa
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to build confidence and lead rewarding, productive lives. The program includes mandatory pre-employment workshops, followed by paid six-week work placements in a variety of fields including recreation, business, and youth leadership.