



News Release

Attention news & assignment editors

Pathways to Education launches new program in west-end Ottawa

Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services on track to deliver program designed to support high school students in low income communities

Ottawa, January 14, 2008 – Pathways to Education Canada, Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services, Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and Bell Canada representatives were joined today by Provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Jim Watson (Ottawa West-Nepean) to announce the launch of the Pathways program located in the Pinecrest-Queensway area of west-end Ottawa.

The Pathways to Education program provides support to youth in low income neighbourhoods to succeed in high school and pursue post-secondary education. The Ottawa program will be run by Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services who have a well established track record working with low income communities.

“Our organization has worked for many years to help provide the Pinecrest-Queensway community with the advantages available to other communities.” said Wanda Macdonald, Executive Director of the Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services. “Pathways to Education is an amazing initiative providing a huge benefit to our most important asset – our children and youth. We could not be happier that the Pathways program is now in place here in west-end Ottawa.”

The Pathways to Education program was first launched in Toronto’s Regent Park area in 2001. Since its creation, the program has helped lower dropout rates in this area from 56% to 10% in addition to contributing to a 60% decrease in youth with serious attendance problems.

“I’m thrilled to see the implementation of the Pathways program in Ottawa,” said Samuel L. Duboc, Chairman of Pathways to Education Canada, also speaking at today’s event. “I know that Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services will do an excellent job delivering this program to the community it already serves so well.”

The successful expansion of the Pathways program is due in large part to support from generous contributors, like Bell Canada, Pathways’ largest corporate donor.

“Bell has been a proud supporter of the Pathways Project for several years,” said Sal Iacono, Senior Vice-President at Bell. “We worked with the Pathways Development Committee to help insure that the program would be replicated in other communities and are delighted to announce

today our continued support with a contribution of \$1.5 million. This money will help hundreds of young people in communities across Canada increase their chances of obtaining a high school diploma and post-secondary education.”

The Pathways to Education Program’s mandate is to reduce poverty and its effects by supporting the educational attainment of youth from economically disadvantaged communities. Its goal is to help young people graduate from high school and move on to post-secondary educational programs.

Recognizing the program’s potential for continued growth and success the Province of Ontario recently committed \$19 million over four years in support of Pathways programs throughout Ontario.

“Ensuring a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future for all Ontarians begins with the opportunities we provide to our youth,” said Minister Watson. “The \$19 million that we have committed to Pathways to Education will go a long way towards making sure that these opportunities exist for all of Ontario’s kids.”

The OTF, one of the founding funders of the Pathways Program, was also recognized for their \$135,000 contribution to the Ottawa Pathways to Education Program. OTF also provided funding to help in the development and initial implementation of the Pathways Program in Regent Park. In addition, OTF recognized this important program with their Chair’s Award in 2002 and their 25th Anniversary Award in 2007.

Pathways to Education now operates in six communities, with programs in Toronto (Regent Park, Lawrence Heights, and Jamestown), as well as Kitchener, Ottawa and Montreal.

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