

International Day of Persons with Disabilities aimed at eliminating barriers

Peel Region recently hosted its sixth annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) with insightful speakers, award presentations, informative vendor displays and engaging round-table discussions to help promote accessibility.

More than 250 Peel residents, accessibility advocates, special dignitaries and Regional staff attended the full-day conference, which celebrated Positive Images of Disabilities.

"This event is one of many initiatives that focuses on eliminating barriers for persons with disabilities," said Regional Chair Emil Kolb. "The annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities opens the dialogue between Peel's community and disability advocates and demonstrates the Region's commitment to accessibility planning."

The 2009 IDPD was hosted by the Region's Accessibility Planning Program and Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The event featured remarks from Community and Social Services Minister Madeleine Meilleur; well-known writer and artist Michelle Amerie; and Jeff Preston, a member of the Accessibility Standards Advisory Council of Ontario and motivational speaker. In a special presentation, the Region's 2009 Accessibility Award was presented to Lt.-Gov. David Onley and six accessibility awards were presented to Regional staff for their accessibility achievements over the past year.

"After speaking with some of the conference guests, the feedback I received about the event was overwhelmingly positive," said AAC Chair William Goursky. "Attendees found the speakers informative and inspiring, and participants valued the opportunity to provide feedback through the interactive round-table discussions. The Region of Peel will be incorporating the feedback for its future accessibility planning to help Peel become a barrier-free community for all residents."