

International Day of Persons with Disabilities helps Eliminate Barriers in Peel Region

BRAMPTON,- On Dec. 2, the Region of Peel hosted its sixth annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) with insightful speakers, exciting award presentations, informative vendor displays and engaging roundtable discussions to help promote accessibility in Peel. Over 250 Peel residents, accessibility advocates, special dignitaries and Regional staff attended the full-day conference, which celebrated Positive Images of Disabilities.

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 Madeleine Meilleur, Minister

of Community and Social Services; Michelle Amerie, well-known writer and artist; Jeff Preston, Member, Accessibility Standards Advisory Council of Ontario and motivational speaker. In a special presentation, the Region's 2009 Accessibility Award was presented to the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and six accessibility awards were presented to Regional staff for their accessibility achievements over the past year. Karlene Nation, CTV Diversity Reporter, was the Master of Ceremonies. The Regional Chair and Chief Administrative Officer also provided remarks.

"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 roundtable 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."

For information about this year's accessibility award recipients or the Region's Accessibility Planning Program, contact Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist at 905-791-7800 ext. 4778 or visit www.peelregion.ca/corpserv/makingway. ■