

For Immediate Release
June 22, 2007

**MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT HELPING BUILD JOB OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PEOPLE ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**
25 Community Projects Supported By The Employment Innovations Fund

OTTAWA – The McGuinty government is opening the door to job opportunities for Ontarians on social assistance by funding innovative community projects that connect local businesses with job-ready people, Minister of Community and Social Services Madeleine Meilleur announced today.

“As part of our plan to help more people on social assistance find jobs, we called on the business community to get involved – and they responded,” said Meilleur. “The number of innovative proposals we received is a testament to the creativity and good business sense of Ontario’s employers and associations.”

The projects are funded through the \$4 million Employment Innovations Fund, which was launched in June 2006. Twenty-five projects, designed by organizations from across Ontario – including municipalities, not-for-profit organizations and employer associations – have been selected for funding.

Projects being launched in Ottawa include a customer service skills training program run by The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, and a City of Ottawa marketing campaign aimed at engaging local employers to hire social assistance recipients.

“We are very excited to have the opportunity to move forward with our project,” said Norma Ricker, Director of Employment Partnerships with The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work. “Not only will it help more people with disabilities in our community improve their lives by finding employment, but it will also provide local businesses with another resource for the recruitment of potential employees.”

“I am extremely proud of our community for stepping up and responding to the call to create opportunities for people in Ottawa,” said Richard Patten, MPP for Ottawa Centre. “These projects will make a positive difference to both individuals and our local economy.”

The fund builds on existing employment programs and is just one of many government initiatives aimed at helping Ontarians enter the workforce, including:

- Eliminating barriers to employment for people on social assistance by providing straightforward incentives and extra support to help them find and keep jobs
- Launching Employment Ontario, a new integrated training and employment system that will ensure people in rural areas have better access to skills training and labour market services that are tailored to the needs of rural communities
- Encouraging strong job creation – with 339,300 net new jobs since October 2003.

“We’re committed to building opportunity for all Ontarians to succeed in the workforce and we’re engaging others to work with us to help more people achieve this goal,” said Meilleur. “By supporting partnerships that help local businesses connect with job-ready people, we’re investing in the future prosperity of our province.”

– 30 –

Contacts:

Marc Despatie
Minister's Office
416-325-5219
416-433-8584 (cell)

John Letherby
Communications and Marketing Branch
416-325-5187

Disponible en français

www.mcsc.gov.on.ca