

Twelfth Annual Network Meeting

Employment and Training in Hard Times: Ensuring Equity and Access in the Future Economy

**Thursday, January 14, 2010, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Metro Hall Room 308/309, 55 John Street (at King), Toronto**

Participant Biographies

Rahul Bhardwaj is the President and CEO of the Toronto Community Foundation. He was formerly a corporate lawyer with a leading Canadian law firm, Vice President of the Toronto 2008 Olympic Bid, and then CEO of United Way of York Region.

He has a long history of community service, including serving currently as a Board Member of the Stratford Festival of Canada, George Brown College, and Community Foundations of Canada, and previously, United Way Toronto and past Chair of the Toronto Downtown Jazz Festival, among others. In 2007, Rahul was named by the National Post as one of the "Next Generation of Toronto Civic Leaders." In 2008, Rahul was named as a member of Toronto Mayor David Miller's "Blue Ribbon" Fiscal Review Panel. Recently, the Province of Ontario appointed Rahul to the Board of Metrolinx.

Rahul is a popular presenter and speaker, particularly on issues relating to the city, community and leadership as well as Toronto's Vital Signs®. He has been featured in local Toronto media as well as international media including CBC Newsworld, CNN, and the national Daily News in China.

Denise Andrea Campbell has been working nationally and internationally in the area of youth engagement, anti-oppression and social change since the age of 16.

Denise helped build The Students Commission as a leader in youth engagement nationally, advised on strategy development for leading foundations like the J.W. McConnell Foundation, and worked internationally on race and gender policies in numerous United Nations forums and more recently, the African Union. At age 26, she became the youngest president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. She's received numerous awards for these efforts, including being named a Who's Who in Black Canada. She has also been an avid media spokesperson on social inclusion-related issues.

Denise joined the City of Toronto in 2004. Currently, she's acting Director, Community Resources with responsibility for Community Revitalization, Youth Employment, Community Funding Programs and Community Development.

Denise holds a Masters of Voluntary Sector Management from McGill University and completed her undergraduate work in Political Science and Women's Studies at the University of Ottawa and University of Toronto.

Raquel Ingram is the former Director of project development at the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC).

Before moving to Toronto over a year ago, she worked in various corporate communications capacities with the luxury hotel chain, Sandals and Beaches Resorts International. While at Sandals, she created a marketing

communications and corporate responsibility strategy that won various industry awards. She also piloted a slew of initiatives that brought literacy and health care to children and youth at risk in under-served communities.

During the first phase of the organization's brand expansion project, she led the crisis communications team and worked closely with the company's chief economist and corporate counsel on strategic messaging for Sandals worldwide. She also helped to develop the PR strategy for the global launch of Air Jamaica's Atlantic Limousine service.

She holds a degree in journalism and is the recipient of the Vendryes Award for communications research. Her work has appeared in the Jamaica Gleaner, The Observer and Abeng News, among others.

She has lived and worked throughout the Caribbean, US, London, and Amsterdam.

Cathy Lewis is Manager of Apprenticeship Programming at Abbott Point of Care (APOC). She received undergraduate degrees from Carleton University, her Education Degree from the University of Ottawa and has additional qualifications in special education. She completed her MBA at the University of Ottawa.

Cathy joined APOC in 2007 to design and implement a three-year Microelectronics Apprenticeship program in partnership with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Algonquin College. APOC delivers innovative learning on work time to 400 registered apprentices who will earn 19 college credits through the program in areas such as Science, Math, Statistics, Communications and Quality Regulations. Additional programming has been developed for employees to earn their high school diplomas as the company builds a vibrant learning culture and invests heavily in their future workforce capacity.

Cathy is a founder and the CEO of iSisters. She was the primary onsite teacher from 2001 until 2005 (as a volunteer). Cathy has led the creation of six unique technology learning programs that support women in need. Five new technology learning centres have been built in the Ottawa/Capital region that offer employability and information communication technology learning opportunities for Inuit women, teen mothers, women who are homeless and immigrant women. iSisters has received national recognition from ITAC (Information Technology Association of Canada) and The Conference Board of Canada. Additional focus currently includes supporting the completion and launch of iTeachology, an online learning initiative and concluding a multi-year research study with the Canadian Council on Learning.

As an educational consultant for the past ten years, Cathy has led numerous online education programs for public, private, non-profit and post secondary organizations. She led the creation of educational online resources on the history and heritage of Parliament Hill for Public Works and was the education advisor to the Library of Parliament. Cathy created a national technology learning program for teachers through Nortel and for at-risk parents for Family Service Canada. She translates her overall understanding of the education sector to the corporate world and post secondary strategic projects for clients such as Carleton University.

Cathy is a passionate community member and volunteer who believes strongly in equality and providing access to education as a vehicle to promote and build healthy communities and strong business. She sits on the board of directors of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa, is an active member for the Ottawa University Telfer School of Business Alumni and is a proud graduate and supporter of Leadership Ottawa.

Patricia O'Connor has been the Coordinator of Field Programming for The Chang School's Internationally Educated Social Work Professionals (IESW) Bridging Program at Ryerson University since the program began in 2005.

Before taking up this position, Patricia worked as a social worker in child welfare, community development, and community health, with a focus on women, newcomers, homelessness and low-income families. Patricia has also taught in York University's BSW program, as well as at three community colleges, and has been a Field Instructor for most of her career. She is interested in public policy, equity and access, and strengthening social work's social justice mandate.

Bob Santos has been with Link Up Employment Services for Persons with Disabilities (Training Coordinating Group) since 1998 and CEO of Link Up since 2001. Bob brings a wealth of experience and expertise when required to provide his insight into the area of employment relating to people with disabilities. In 2005, Bob expanded Link Up and its proven methods to British Columbia and to Manitoba and is working on further expansion of these services to the eastern provinces.

Over the past 20 years, he has worked with many North American based community agencies & private sector companies serving barriered individuals. Bob has also been self employed, consulting in the area of employment of immigrants and other barriered individuals. Bob gained much of his 'business' approach to social services from his years working at Nortel on the President's Special Project Integration Team.

Bob has developed methods, models and tools to assist barriered individuals to become more employable, put these methods into action at his own company and has spoken world-wide on this. Equipped with these tools, the traditional labour market is enabled to hire and retain a non-traditional labour force.

Bob, a well sought after speaker, consultant and analyst in the area of employment relating to people with disabilities, has had world wide success with his models, methods and tools. With his methods now being utilized in every continent, Bob considers his most exciting and challenging experience being when the Peoples Republic of China sent a 20 person delegation to Toronto to meet Bob and to learn his methods and tools in order to use them in China. Most recently, in December 2007, Bob was invited to The Netherlands by the Dutch government to address the countries top manufacturers and government leaders on the issue of hiring people with disabilities as a solution to their labour shortfalls.

Bob's philosophy is that anyone who wants to work should have the opportunity to work. He believes success in employing barriered individuals comes from building enduring trust relationships between all stakeholders.

Arthur Sweetman is an economist and a Professor in the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University. He is cross-appointed in the Department of Economics, and in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology. Until recently he was the Director of the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, where he held the Stauffer Dunning Chair in Policy Studies. He is currently on academic leave.

His research interests focus primarily on empirical economic issues related to labour market, social and health policy. He also works on issues related to program evaluation. Recent research topics include education, immigration, quantitative program evaluation, health policy, poverty, employment insurance, and microfinance. He has taught graduate courses on health, social and economic policy, as well as methodological courses on program evaluation and econometrics/quantitative methods.

Barry Witkin is Chairman and CEO of HR50 Inc. He is a retired chartered accountant and former partner of BDO Dunwoody, an international accounting and consulting firm.

In 2003 Barry became interested in the older worker because of reports and statistics that indicated that a demographic shift in the workplace was looming. This would be due to less younger people entering the workforce because of a decline of baby births and older workers living longer and wanting or needing to work. Over the past six years Barry has dedicated his time and energy to become an advocate for the older worker and employers who recruit and retain them. In 2007 as an expert in this area, he was invited by The Federal Task Force on Older Workers to give his views and opinions on what the government needed to do for the older worker. Unfortunately the deep recession has limited their ability to act on the recommendations.