



## Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR)

1092 Speers Road, Oakville ON, L6L 2X4  
Tel: 905-842-2486 x 227  
Fax: 905-842-8807

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### Media Release For Immediate Release

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### Halton becoming more inclusive thanks to the work of the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable

#### NEWS

The Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR), a new community collaborative of over 60 organizations, groups, businesses, and community members, is able to officially provide resources and training to create a more inclusive and equitable Halton community, thanks to a three-year, \$225,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) made in Fall 2013.

The Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR) was formed in March 2013 as a result of multiple community consultations which highlighted the community's demand for more resources, training and support on how to address the needs of the growing diverse populations in Halton. Diversity includes but is not limited to race, socio-economic status, nationality, age, language, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, physical or mental abilities.

Halton's population has grown 14.2 percent from 2006 to 2011 and continues to increase and diversify (Statistics Canada, 2011): for example, 26 percent of Halton's population are immigrants and 18 percent are visible minorities (Statistics Canada, 2011). Islam is the fast growing, largest non-Christian religion in Halton and this trend is expected to continue (Community Development Halton, 2013). Families are also changing, with one in three in 2011 comprised of a common-law couple family or a lone parent family (Community Development Halton, 2013).

"We are thankful for the Ontario Trillium Foundation's commitment to, and investment in, building an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and safe Halton community," says Paula Lam, HEDR's Coordinator. "We hope other sectors including business, municipal government and other stakeholders will also see the value of participating in our initiative to develop a stronger Halton."

Funds from the OTF grant are helping to support staffing and the development of communication resources, a website, and shared learning opportunities.

With a variety of social service agency partners and some individual community members, HEDR is seeking additional partnerships from community services and human services providers, the public, health services, government agencies, labour organizations, politicians, and business. With knowledge and input from all sectors, HEDR will be able to respond to the community's call to action for more support in developing equitable and inclusive practices, policies and services.

"Our membership on the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable allows us to share best practices, strategies, and resources, as well as access a variety of training opportunities that highlight the diversity in our community," says Diane Rabenda, Milton Trustee and Chair of the Halton Catholic District School Board.

"We have invested in HEDR because we believe it is important to share our inclusion policies and practices with the community and we have benefited from learning about the equitable programs, services, and practices that other organizations have developed," says Kathryn Baker-Reed, Executive Director of Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services (SAVIS) of Halton.



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The Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR) will benefit everyone. By delivering new equity and diversity training and resources and exchanging promising practices amongst members, HEDR will help organizations and businesses become better able to serve diverse clients and employees. Businesses can benefit and become more profitable by increasing their ability to attract and retain diverse markets and talent. Training and resources will also be offered to individual community members.

“HEDR is helping us reach our mission to be an inclusive and equitable agency and we encourage every organization and individual to join and partner with us on HEDR,” says Cindy I’Anson, Executive Director of Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services.

### **ABOUT**

Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR) is a community collaborative of organizations, businesses, groups, and community members who are dedicated to being inclusive of and equitable to all human diversity. HEDR strives to build a community where all individuals feel empowered to realize their full potential. A full list of our members and associates as well as how to become a member, can be found on our website at [www.hedroundtable.com](http://www.hedroundtable.com).

A leading grant-maker in Canada, the Ontario Trillium Foundation strengthens the capacity of the voluntary sector through investments in community-based initiatives. An agency of the Government of Ontario, OTF builds healthy and vibrant communities. For more information about the Ontario Trillium Foundation, visit: [www.otf.ca](http://www.otf.ca)

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***For more information, please contact:***

Paula Lam, Equity and Diversity Coordinator  
Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR)  
905-842-2486 x 227  
[plam@hedroundtable.com](mailto:plam@hedroundtable.com)



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### Supporting Full Text Quotes for the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable:

“STRIDE is pleased to be involved with the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable so that we may enhance inclusion and diversity competence within our organization, which results in greater equity within our core values, structures, workforce, policies and services.”

- Anita Lloyd, Executive Director of STRIDE

“CNIB is a proud partner of the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable and we look forward to promoting systemic inclusion and equity in our community. Through awareness projects and advocacy partnerships with people who are blind or partially sighted, we aim to shape public policy relating to vision loss and create a more inclusive and accessible society.”

- Chris McLean, Regional Director, CNIB Ontario-GTA

“As a Catholic school board, we are committed to providing an equitable and inclusive environment for our students and their families. We know that this is best achieved through a collaborative approach. Our membership on the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable allows us to share best practices, strategies, and resources, as well as access a variety of training opportunities that highlight the diversity in our community.”

- Diane Rabenda, Milton Trustee and Chair of the Halton Catholic District School Board

“The Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services (SAVIS) of Halton is pleased to be a founding member of HEDR. We have invested in HEDR because we believe it is important to share our inclusion policies and practices with the community and we have benefited from learning about the equitable programs, services, and practices that other organizations have developed. We encourage all agencies, businesses and groups to become members of HEDR and be part of creating a more equitable and inclusive Halton community.”

- Kathryn Baker-Reed, Executive Director of Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services (SAVIS) of Halton

“An inclusive and equitable Halton community is important to Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services. By being a member of HEDR, we are able to work with multiple organizations and groups in Halton to share resources and gain training opportunities to better serve our diverse clients and employees. HEDR is helping us reach our mission to be an inclusive and equitable agency and we encourage every organization and individual to join and partner with us on HEDR.”

- Cindy l’Anson, Executive Director of Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services

“All our members are passionate volunteers striving to move the equity agenda forward in Halton so this grant has helped us coordinate our efforts and develop resources, a website, and shared learning opportunities to benefit the entire Halton community. We are thankful for the Ontario Trillium Foundation’s commitment to and investment in building an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and safe Halton community. We hope other sectors including business, municipal government and other stakeholders will also see the value of participating in our initiative to develop a stronger Halton.”

- Paula Lam, Equity and Diversity Coordinator, Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR)