

Youth Summit Wrap-Up

Date:	April 1, 2009
To:	Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services
From:	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services
Ward:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The second annual Volunteer Youth Summit was held on Friday, February 13, 2009 at Toronto City Hall. Twenty-five youth volunteers representing eight City-operated long-term care homes attended the half-day session designed around peer discussion and program development.

The Volunteer Youth Summit supports the direct divisional work underway and complements the Mayor's initiatives to expand opportunities for Toronto's youth.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

In January, the Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services endorsed a request for up to \$500.00 expenditure from the General Donation Account to provide refreshments to the participants and an honourarium to the Volunteer Toronto presenter at the second annual Volunteer Youth Summit. The actual expenditure was \$383.95 net.

ISSUE/BACKGROUND

Community involvement is a high school requirement and volunteering with Toronto Long-Term Care Homes and Services is a rewarding way for students to earn community service hours. Youth are an important part of the volunteer team and by encouraging young people to give their time and talents we are able to enrich the lives of residents in student-led intergenerational programs and activities.

The Volunteer Youth Summit brings volunteers from across the division together to network, share and learn in a leadership-building exercise.

COMMENTS

Marisa Gelfusa from Volunteer Toronto began the session with a warm up activity which resulted in the participants breaking into four smaller groups. She then made a presentation “Real Action for Real Change” which highlighted the scope of volunteerism in Canada, as well as the motivation and expectations of youth volunteers.

Returning to the four smaller groups, work began on ways to enhance programs for residents. Summit participants were asked to think about: (a) what works well; (b) obstacles to success; and (c) a wish list – what is still needed from the home to assist and improve opportunities for and the experience of youth volunteering.

The four Coordinators of Volunteer Service in attendance joined the discussion groups to monitor, learn and share information. The discussions in all groups were lively, on topic and provided good insight as summarized by the following:

What Works Well:

- Coffee programs
- Arts and crafts
- Baking events
- Movie programs
- Bingo and games
- Music and singing
- Birthday parties
- Carpet bowling

Identified Obstacles:

- Nursing involvement required to identify and locate residents;
- Creative yet simple art projects needed, not too complicated;
- Access to supplies, especially on weekends when fewer staff are available; it was noted that youth volunteers are the best equipped to set up and play the Wii™ games with residents but don’t have access or the keys to get the games out;
- Youth volunteers leaving once 40 hours are complete – belief that knowledge of Youth Council with added responsibility and leadership in home will keep more student volunteers as long-serving;
- Food and Nutrition support needed to advise on the types of food allowed at events and assistance to prep and serve for residents;
- Better and more frequent communication between staff, residents, volunteers and the Coordinator.

Wish List – “what we need to do, what we want to do”:

- Access and availability of supplies for arts, crafts, parties and games;
- Themed events;
- More dancing;
- Language – learning and teaching phrases to residents;
- Gardening clubs – potted plants inside or working on the grounds;
- Facebook group within home to communicate.

Once all of the breakout groups had reported back to the larger group through an interactive information sharing exercise, the Coordinators from Carefree Lodge, Cummer

Lodge, Castleview Wychwood Towers and Kipling Acres provided their perspective on the importance of youth volunteering, the opportunities for advancement, participation in fundraising and leadership positions as well as very practical tips on improving their volunteer experience in the home.

All representatives were asked to complete an evaluation form: 85 percent said they are “definitely” committed to getting more youth involved with the residents at the home; 96 percent said they would recommend Long-Term Care Homes and Services as a place to volunteer; and 89 percent rated their experience as a team member in the group exercises as either “very good” or “excellent”.

The volunteers also received a loot bag, posed for a group photo and shared a pizza lunch. Certificates of participation signed by the General Manager have been provided for each representative in attendance and will be presented in recognition during the National Volunteer Week.

CONTACT

Erin Mulcahey Abbott, Manager Fundraising & Volunteer Programs
Phone: 416-392-8489; Fax: 416-392-4180; Email: eabbott@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Sandra Pitters
General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services