

November 22, 2010

Board of Health announces 2010 Public Health Champions

Toronto's Board of Health today announced the recipients of the 2010 Public Health Champion Awards. The awards recognize one individual and one agency for making outstanding contributions to protecting and promoting the health of Toronto residents.

The recipient in the individual category is Sudharshana Coomarasamy (nee Rajasingam), Community Development Worker and Mental Health counsellor at the St. Joseph's Women's Health Centre and an active community volunteer. In 1999, Ms. Coomarasamy co-founded the Tamil Service Providers Coalition (TSPC), which has grown to include approximately 45 member agencies providing a diverse range of services to Tamil communities across Toronto.

Ms. Coomarasamy also initiated the Tamil Woman Abuse Prevention Working Group in 2005. This Working group focuses on identifying gaps in services, and takes action to ensure services are more effectively and equitably delivered within the Tamil populations.

The recipient in the agency category is The Stop Community Food Centre. The Stop is a thriving community hub where neighbours participate in a broad range of programs that provide healthy food, as well as foster social connections, build food skills and promote civic engagement. The Stop's programs include: community gardens and a Green Barn; community cooking programs; bake ovens and markets; food bank; drop-in meals; pre- and post-natal nutrition and support program for women living on low incomes; and community advocacy aimed at poverty reduction.

"Individuals and organizations play a big part in making communities, and residents, stronger and healthier. Sudha and The Stop both deserve recognition for their community involvement, and we are proud of the work they do," said Board of Health Chair Councillor John Filion.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents. For information about non-emergency City services and programs, Toronto residents, businesses and visitors can dial 311, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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