



WHITBY — Lorne Coe MPP for Whitby and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier and the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and MPP for Northumberland-Peterborough South announced that the Ontario government is providing \$596,000 to Melly's Market + Café in Whitby as part of the Skills Development Fund Training Stream. The funding will enable Melly's Market + Café to empower adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Whitby and other parts of the Region of Durham by providing comprehensive training, work experience, mentorship, and advocacy. This will be accomplished through three main phases: Practical Learning, Development and Coaching; Paid Work Experience; and Job Advocacy and Sustainable employment in the community. "Melly's Market + Café empowers individuals of all abilities to build confidence, gain valuable skills, and

achieve their aspirations," said Lorne Coe, MPP for Whitby and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier. "Our Government is proud to continue to support Melly's Market, enabling them to provide meaningful work experience and advocacy to more individuals with varying abilities in Whitby and across the Region of Durham. Melly's Market creates opportunities for personal growth and success, proving that with the right encouragement, everyone can thrive." The Ontario Government's investment will also help Melly's Market + Café foster inclusivity in the workplace, and support individuals of varying abilities integrate into the workforce by addressing the fragmentation of services and promoting early engagement through focused workshops and initiatives. "Our government has delivered on our promise to transform pre-employment and employment services to help people leave social assistance when they are ready to work, empowering them to find rewarding jobs where

# ONTARIO HELPING THE VULNERABLE ONTARIANS

they can support themselves and their families," said David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. "Our integrated services and skills training are making a difference in Ontario's job market, ensuring job seekers of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can connect with opportunities, join the workforce and help build a stronger Ontario for all of us." Ontario is investing over \$1.1 million to two SDF Training Stream projects. These projects will provide free training to 150 jobseekers, helping them land in-demand, rewarding careers, while meeting the needs of local employers. Building on the success of the SDF Capital Stream announced in 2023, Ontario will open a second round on November 29, 2024, with an enhanced, streamlined application process that includes a new SEED pathway to help with the upfront costs of developing construction proposals, such as design drawings and technical plans. This addresses the needs of businesses and training providers who may lack the in-house capacity to develop complex construction plans. As a further improvement, the Capital Stream will

now also accept funding proposals all year round, which enables faster application reviews. "We are immensely grateful to the Ontario government for their support of jobseekers with intellectual and developmental disabilities through the Skills Development Fund Training Stream. This significant investment has enabled us to make substantial strides in our program, assisting over 45 youth and adults who are eager to work. With this funding, we are providing participants with real work experience, in-person skill development, personal growth opportunities, and networking with employers. They leave our program equipped with resumes packed with skills, over 100 hours of work experience, and firsthand experience applying, interviewing, and navigating the job application process. The funding also supports us in connecting with employers across Durham Region and the GTA to help our participants find employment within the community. This investment is opening doors to real work opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who want to work, can work, and just need support getting

there. Together, we are building bridges to a future where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and succeed." - Aimee Ruttle and Ellen McRae, Directors at Melly's Market + Café

- SDF comprises two streams: the Training Stream supports hiring, training and upskilling programs for jobseekers, apprentices and workers; and the Capital Stream supports upgrades or construction of training centres for the skilled trades. The total investment for both streams is to up to \$1.4 billion.
- SDF Capital Stream Round 2 will open on November 29 and will allow a continuous intake of applications. This improved application process allows interested organizations to apply year-round through Transfer Payment Ontario. Inquiries can be sent to [SDFCapitalProgram@ontario.ca](mailto:SDFCapitalProgram@ontario.ca).
- The new SEED pathway of the Capital Stream will help fund the development of capital plans for training facilities and will complement the already established GROW pathway that will continue to support projects to build, upgrade and expand new training infrastructure.
- So far, the Skills

Development Fund Training Stream has supported over 700 training projects across the province.

- More than 420,000 of participants are expected to be from an underrepresented group such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, racialized groups and Indigenous peoples.
- Ontario's \$5 million investment through round one of the SDF Capital Stream will go to support the construction of IUOE's \$25 million crane training facility.
- Over 21,000 jobs were recently going unfilled in Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie region, including jobs in the construction sector.
- The Training Stream of the SDF is supported through labour market transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.
- As the Government of Canada has unilaterally cut over \$230 million annually from Ontario's Labour Market Transfer Agreements, which supports employment and settlement service programs, Ontario continues to call for the federal government to reinstate this critical funding for Ontario workers and jobseekers.

## DURHAM REGION HONORS ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS

Durham Region celebrated achievements at the inaugural Durham Greener Buildings Evening of Recognition in Whitby on November 13.

The program, launched in January in partnership with Windfall Ecology Centre, recognizes excellence in energy efficiency and sustainability within institutional and commercial buildings. This initiative aligns with Durham Region's Community Energy

Plan, which aims to develop a local green economy through clean energy solutions, said a region statement.

A highlight of the event was the presentation of 12 awards recognizing exceptional building performance, data quality, and early data submission. Among the noteworthy recipients were:

Durham Catholic District School Board

Durham District School Board  
Lakeridge Health  
Region of Durham  
The Municipality of Clarington  
The City of Oshawa

The Town of Ajax  
The Township of Brock  
The Township of Scugog  
The Township of Uxbridge  
The event emphasized the crucial role of collaboration and innovation in achieving energy reduction goals. The recognized buildings serve as examples of how institutional

and commercial sectors can contribute significantly to environmental sustainability, the statement said.

It said the Durham Greener Buildings program is dedicated to advancing energy management and promoting high standards for environmental stewardship across Ontario.

"Durham Greener Buildings empowers our building sector to take action on climate

change. It allows building owners to measure, report, and take steps towards efficiency and conservation. Congratulations to our award winners – your dedication is making a real difference in building a sustainable future for Durham Region," said John Henry, Regional Chair and CEO.

Brent Kopperson, Founder and Executive Director of Windfall Ecology Centre,

echoed this sentiment: "The Durham Greener Buildings Evening of Recognition is a call to action for a sustainable future. It celebrates progress towards a carbon-neutral community and inspires further action to address climate challenges. We are proud to support Durham Region's leadership through this program."

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