

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **CSC SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ATTENDS LANDSCAPE ONTARIO CONGRESS**

Cambridge, ON –. Cambridge Shelter Corporation's social enterprise, In Our Backyard, took full advantage of its membership in Landscape Ontario at the organization's annual Congress on January 10 and 11. Crew members Monsuru Makinde, Bryan Andrews, Kevin Sobey, Umang Patel, Rafeal Marias, and Navdeep Singh attended the Congress with program coordinator, Brenda Walsh.

Landscape Ontario Congress is Canada's largest and longest running trade show and conference for landscape professionals. With over 400 exhibitors covering more than 8 acres, Congress is a one-stop-shop for the latest equipment, tools, materials, and supplies. While at the Congress, the IOB team was able to view hands-on demonstrations of the landscape industry's newest tools and machines. As IOB enters its second year of operation, staff and crew are reviewing their current equipment inventory and researching what is needed so that the crew can work more effectively and efficiently in the coming season. Interacting with the leading manufacturers afforded the team an opportunity to compare product lines, pricing, and tool effectiveness, allowing them to make informed decisions as they prepare their needs list for 2024.

IOB program coordinator Brenda Walsh met with the facilitators of Landscape Ontario's GROW training program. Funded in part by the Government of Canada, GROW is an Employment Ontario program that supports jobseekers interested in learning the landscape and horticulture industry as well as those seeking to expand their skills. As many of the IOB crew members face unique barriers to accessing training and job coaching, the GROW program serves as an important steppingstone to their futures.

A unique feature of the Congress is the Hiring Party. Waterloo Region Landscape Ontario members were on hand to accept resumes from IOB crew members. As crew members gain experience and develop new skills these connections may help them move into permanent employment.

In Our Backyard staff and crew members acknowledge that membership in the professional organization, Landscape Ontario, has provided unique learning opportunities, networking events, and access to local landscape businesses. In Our Backyard looks forward to resuming its full scope of landscaping work in the spring.

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

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