

Full Slate of Resolutions Approved at AGM

This year's **AGM** in **Brantford, May 2-4**, produced a lively and well-rounded policy resolution session that was superbly moderated by **Ron Chapman**. The result of his efforts and the work of more than 150 delegates resulted in a record number of 30 resolutions passed. Following is a list of those resolutions that were approved. Full details of each resolution are available on the OCC website.

No.	Resolution	Status
Energy		
1.	Hydro Rates to Maintain a Level Playing Field for Businesses	Approved
2.	Electrical Industry Restructuring	Approved
Finance & Taxation		
3.	Debt Reduction Targets for Ontario (<i>late resolution approved at May 2nd Board Meeting</i>)	Approved
4.	Implementation of the Kyoto Protocol	Approved
5.	Reducing the Red Tape Burden on Business	Approved
6.	Property Tax Review Panel	Approved
7.	Provincial and Territorial Co-operation Towards Creating a National Securities Regulatory System	Approved
8.	Development Authorities & Municipal Business Corporations	Approved
9.	Picket Line Code of Conduct	Approved
10.	Ontario's Biotechnology Sector	Approved
Transportation & Infrastructure		
11.	Windsor-Detroit	Approved
12.	Mid-Peninsula Transit Corridor	Approved
13.	Trans Canada Highway: Highway of Prosperity	Approved
14.	General Aviation	Approved
15.	Attracting Private Sector Infrastructure Investment	Approved
16.	Bill C-27: Canada Airports Act	Approved
17.	Implementation of Transportation Management Associations Throughout Ontario	Approved
18.	Regional Transportation Authority (<i>late resolution</i>)	Approved
Health Policy		
19.	Hospital Financing	Approved
20.	Accountability and Efficiency	Approved
21.	Access to Health Care Services	Approved
22.	Common Drug Review	Approved
23.	Injury and Disease Prevention	Approved
24.	Innovation	Approved
Education		
25.	Double Cohort	Approved
26.	Independence of the Education Quality & Accountability Office	Approved
27.	Labour Market Development Agreement	Approved
28.	Apprenticeship	Approved
29.	Supporting Apprenticeship Training	Approved
30.	College Funding	Approved

Kids Voting Canada Program Has OCC Support

With more signs and speculation pointing to a June election in Ontario, the OCC is putting its support behind a unique program called **Kids Voting Canada**.

The program engages students from Grades 9-12 in the electoral process, and the organizers hope it will build a habit of electoral participation with our next generation of voters.

On election day students across Ontario will vote on candidates in their local ridings, coordinated by **Student Vote 2003** volunteer returning officers with materials provided by **Elections Canada**. The results of this vote will be carried by CBC as well as in community newspapers across the province.

The OCC sees this as an excellent opportunity for local Chambers to add a new dimension to their election strategy, and we'll be contacting you in the near future with some suggestions on participation. If you want more information immediately, check out the website at <http://www.kidsvotingcanada.com>

Upcoming Events

Listed below are some upcoming events that may be of interest to local Chambers and Boards:

- **Education Committee Meeting**, May 15, 2003
- **Finance & Taxation Committee Meeting**, May 22, 2003
- **Health Policy Committee Meeting**, May 29, 2003
- **Queen's Park Liaison Forum**, Kitchener-Waterloo, June 20, 2003

For more information on all committees, please contact [Atul Sharma](mailto:Atul.Sharma@occ.on.ca) at (416) 482-5222, ext. 235.

An Open Letter to OCC Members from



The following is a letter from Taylor Gunn, the Chief Election Officer for an exciting community based program called kidsvotingcanada.com

Dear Chamber Manager,

It was a pleasure to speak to many of you about the Kids Voting Canada initiative at your recent AGM in Brantford! Thank you for your support and enthusiasm – for those I was unable to meet personally I look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Organizations, communities and now Chambers across Ontario are working closely with Kids Voting Canada to build a habit of electoral and community participation among our students. After a year of dedication we are proud to announce that even before the Writ issue of the upcoming Ontario Provincial Election, more than 400 schools have registered for 'Student Vote 2003' placing over 300,000 students in a position to participate.

Our goals, however, extend beyond increasing voter turnout and an understanding of the issues we face as a province. They are also focused on showing our students the interdependence of the communities we live in; a goal we are confident that Chambers similarly hope to reinforce and celebrate.

We are looking for your support in making this the success it is meant to be. Some Chambers have already begun contacting schools in their regions to invite their participation while others are partnering with local media and their members to spearhead the initiative in their communities. Each Chamber or Board of Trade has the option of developing their own level of involvement, and the conversations we have already had with members throughout Ontario have shown us that the OCC will likely be one of our strongest partners in this special exercise.

Let us know how we can work together. As I mentioned in my brief outline of the program the Toronto Star, London Free Press and the Osprey newspaper network are very enthusiastic about cross-promotion with other community members. I believe the opportunity for the Chamber to highlight its community involvement, with a mixture of leadership and follow through, is for the taking.

I look forward to speaking with you soon in regards to developing a partnership that will drive this initiative forward with great momentum. I know the students and citizens of Ontario will gain greatly from your participation in this grand experiment; through the presentation of your members' views and involvement as a community leader. Please call us to discuss how we can help you get involved.

Sincerely,

Taylor Gunn
Chief Election Officer

416.361.9596 taylorgunn@kidsvotingcanada.com
866.488.8775

Election Survey Coming Next Week

All the signs are suggesting that we may get an election call next week. That's why the **OCC** is launching its pre-election survey next Tuesday morning. We want to find out from our members what the important election issues are to them.

We encourage you to take a few minutes to complete the survey, which is part of our ongoing **Ontario Business Survey Program**. You told us how your business was affected by SARS, you told us what you thought of Ontario's Education standards, and now we want you to tell us what you think the priorities of the next provincial government should be.

Your responses will help us more effectively lobby on your behalf, as well as identifying the issues most likely to be discussed in our forthcoming series of **OCC Leader's Forums**. The three provincial leaders have all received a request to include an informational session for OCC members on their campaign calendar, and you will be provided with the location and time in the near future. Meantime, give us your feedback, so your voice can be heard during the campaign. Look for the survey on the OCC Web site on **Tuesday, May 20, 2003**.

Upcoming Events

Listed below are some upcoming events that may be of interest to local Chambers and Boards:

- **Finance & Taxation Committee Meeting**, May 22, 2003
- **Health Policy Committee Meeting**, May 29, 2003
- **Board of Directors Meeting**, June 19, 2003
- **Queen's Park Liaison Forum**, Kitchener-Waterloo, June 20, 2003

For more information on all committees, please contact [Atul Sharma](#) at (416) 482-5222, ext. 235.

Queen's Park Liaison Forum Hits the Road

The OCC is taking the **Queen's Park Liaison Forum (QPLF)** on the road and the first stop is **Kitchener-Waterloo** on **Friday, June 20th** from 10:00 am to noon. The QPLF, which is a joint venture between the OCC and the **Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation (MEOI)**, provides an opportunity for senior government and public affairs specialists from our corporate members to meet with senior policy thinkers from the business-oriented ministries of the provincial government. The topic at this QPLF is **"Innovation and the Path to Prosperity,"** and will focus on the importance of innovations to Ontario's future economic growth. Speakers will include **Tim McTierman PhD**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Technology with the MEOI, **Greg Barratt** President of the Community Technology Association and **Atul Sharma** Vice President and Chief Economist at the OCC. For more information on this QPLF contact: iancunningham@occ.on.ca

Submit Your Nominees for Outstanding Business Achievement Awards and Book Your Tickets Now

The next big event on the OCC calendar is its annual **Ontario Business Achievement Awards (OBAA)** in the fall of this year. While it may not seem like summer, and fall seems a long way off, it's not too early to start thinking about nominees from your region. The OBAA is one of Ontario's most prestigious business awards' programs, and since its inception in 1983 it has recognized over 100 companies for their "business excellence." The winners have ranged from small, but highly profitable companies, to large multinationals that have proven to be adaptive and nimble. Start thinking about candidates from your region, and book early to attend the gala dinner and awards ceremony set for **October 16, 2003** at the **Metro Toronto Convention Centre** in Toronto. For more information on nomination procedures or to place your ticket order for this sure to be sold-out event, see OBAA on the OCC Web site or contact **Regan Clarke** at **416 482-5222 Ext. 222** or reganclarke@occ.on.ca

Skilled Trades Summit

The one day **Skilled Trades Summit 2003** takes aim at the pressing issue of a looming shortage of skilled trades people in all areas - from technologists to tool and die makers to plumbers and electricians. The summit, held at **Waterloo's RIM Park** on Tuesday, May 27th, will feature leaders from industry, education, labour and government to discuss the issue and identify measurable objectives to combat the problem. OCC President **Len Crispino** will offer welcoming remarks and other speakers include **Perrin Beatty** CEO of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters Association, **Mike Scott** from the Ontario Council of Technology Educators and **Larry Smith** from the University of Waterloo and the author of "Hire for Profitability." For more information on the **Skilled Trades Summit** contact uanht@skillscanada.com or **Ian Cunningham** at iancunningham@occ.on.ca.

Pre-Election Survey

Just a reminder to take a few minutes to complete the current survey on the rising dollar and the issues that are most important to you in the upcoming election. The election drums are beating louder over at Queen's Park, and your opinions are important in helping to shape the OCC's election priorities. You can find the survey on the OCC Web site: www.occ.on.ca

Work Sharing Available

If you have local businesses facing cutbacks in staff as a result of the impact of SARS, **Human Resources Development Canada's (HRDC)** Work Sharing program may provide a short term solution. Work Sharing is a program that enables businesses to face cutbacks and still avoid layoffs by shortening the work week and paying reduced wages accordingly. HRDC arranges for Employment Insurance eligible workers to draw benefits, to help compensate for the lower wages received. Several information sessions are scheduled in the GTA next week and you can find times and dates on these sessions, and any other information by going to the HRDC website www18.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/programs/worksharing/desc.asp, or calling toll free at **1 800 263-8364**.

Exporting to Europe

Businesses in the **Halton** area that are interested in finding out more about export markets in Europe should make a note of the **"Doing Business in the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe"** seminar that is being hosted by the **Halton Region Business Development Centre** on **June 18th** from 8.30 am to 11.30 am. The European Union (EU) is comprised of 15 countries (with 10 more joining by 2004) and with more than 450-million people accounts for more than 45 per cent of world imports. Canada's share of this market is less than one per cent. The focus of the seminar, which will be headlined by keynote speaker **John Williams** from the British Consulate General, will be a review of Canada's major trading partners, tips on accessing the Euro market through the U.K. and export success stories shared by local companies already actively involved in exporting to Europe.

The seminar will take place at the **Holiday Inn Express** at **2525 Wycroft Road in Oakville**. For more information call Halton Region at 905 825-6000, toll free 1 866-442-5866 or visit www.haltonbusiness.com.

Upcoming Events

Listed below are some upcoming events that may be of interest to local Chambers and Boards:

- **Energy Task Force Meeting**, May 28, 2003
- **Health Policy Committee Meeting**, May 29, 2003
- **Board of Directors Meeting**, June 19, 2003
- **Queen's Park Liaison Forum (QPLF)**, Kitchener-Waterloo, June 20, 2003

For more information on all committees, please contact Atul Sharma at (416) 482-5222. ext. 235.

Skilled Trades Summit Addresses Critical Issue

The recent **Skilled Trades Summit** held at Waterloo's **RIM Park** on **May 27th** was an outstanding affair with a well balanced group of participants that discussed possible solutions to Canada's critical shortage of skilled workers.

The Summit, which was held in conjunction with the annual **Skilled Trades Competition** for high school and college students, was organized by **Skills Canada** and more than 200 attendees from government (Federal and Provincial), business and education worked in roundtable groups to brainstorm solutions to three questions:

1. What action steps does business and industry need to take to address the issue?
2. What action steps does government need to take?
3. What steps does the education system need to take?

The **OCC**, which was a sponsor of the event, and other Chambers were well represented at the session, with **OCC** President and CEO **Len Crispino** providing welcoming remarks, and other Chambers including **Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Caledon** and **Brampton** participating in the discussion. Between discussion sessions participants were given an eye-opening tour of the **Skills Competition** which had more than 1,000 students competing in a wide range of skilled trades ranging from auto-body repair to floral arranging to computer programming.

In addition the audience was treated to some compelling presentations from **Perrin Beatty** President and CEO of the **Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters**, **University of Waterloo** professor **Larry Smith** and **Mike Scott** from the **Ontario Council of Technology Educators**.

Results from the discussions will be tabulated and the next steps determined, but the overwhelming message was clear – Ontario (and Canada) needs to increase its skilled workforce to remain competitive in the global economy.

Selling Business Services in the U.S.

Ontario Exports Inc., the export development agency of the Ontario government, is hosting an export breakfast seminar aimed exclusively at service-based companies interested in beginning or expanding their export sales to the United States.

The seminar, which takes place on **Thursday, June 12** at the **Crowne Plaza Hotel** in Toronto, will feature five different speakers covering a range of topics including border and immigration, taxes, market entry strategies, export financing and U.S. Government purchasing.

The cost for the session, which runs from 8:00 am to 10:30 am, is \$45 and that includes the breakfast buffet. For more information or to order tickets contact: **Trevor McPherson, Ontario Exports Inc. Tel. 416 325-4691** or trevor.mcpherson@eoi.gov.on.ca.

Rising Loonie Survey

The **OCC's** most recent survey on the impact of the rising Canadian dollar is now complete and full results will be posted on the OCC web site early next week. The preliminary results indicate that almost 36 per cent of respondents report that the rising currency is a concern, and of those respondents who said it was a concern 48 per cent indicated that they had felt the impact in terms of lost sales or contracts.

Welcome New OCC Corporate Members

- Northern Digital Inc.
- Solvay Pharma Inc.
- Tembec
- Yamed Canada Ltd.

Upcoming Events

Listed below are some upcoming events that may be of interest to local Chambers and Boards:

- **Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Meeting**, June 4, 2003
- **Education Committee Meeting**, June 5, 2003
- **Finance & Taxation Committee Meeting**, June 12, 2003
- **Energy Task Force Meeting**, June 17, 2003
- **Board of Directors Meeting**, June 19, 2003
- **Queen's Park Liaison Forum (QPLF)**, Kitchener-Waterloo, June 20, 2003
- **Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Meeting**, July 2, 2003
- **Education Committee Meeting**, July 3, 2003
- **Finance & Taxation Committee Meeting**, July 10, 2003

For more information on all committees, please contact **Atul Sharma** at (416) 482-5222, ext. 235.