

## **The super six**

Award-winning non-profit groups stand out for creative thinking, community impact

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Meet six of Hamilton's best non-profits.

The super six were recognized at an awards ceremony last night at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.

But it was a crowded field from which the winners were chosen, said Frank Passaro, grant review team chair for Golden Horseshoe/Hamilton region.

He says Hamilton is one "blessed" city with all its non-profit organizations and they should be celebrated more often.

Passaro chaired the team of volunteers who picked the winners from a list of organizations that receive funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The winning six stood out because "their creative ways of looking beyond the box has long-term impacts."

He calls the Immigrant Culture Art Association, which mentors immigrant artists, a "lifeblood" for many.

Likewise, he said the skateboard facility operated in the summer by the Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' and Girls' Club has brought needed activity to communities throughout the city.

"We're looking at the work they've done in the community, the impact going forward and the ultimate benefit that is having to community members."

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Arts and Culture

Immigrant Culture Art Association

Since: 2002

Serving: Immigrant artists and their children

What: Marketing, mentoring and finding work for artists.

Grant: Three-year grant of \$130,000 in 2005

Results: Art classes for more than 400 youths and mentoring for 100 artists over the past five years.

What's next: Helping develop Hamilton's first outdoor art market for 2008.

Impact: More than 500 people in five years.

In their words: "I took one sculptor to Curry's art supplies and asked him to purchase the tools he needed for his work ... he said, 'You must be joking.' I said 'No, I'm not joking' and he got tears in his eyes."

Yar Taraky, artistic director

Sports and Recreation

Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' and Girls' Club

Since: 1948

Serving: Children and youth across Hamilton.

What: Classes in athletics and computers, homework clubs, scholarships.

Grant: Two-year \$48,087 grant in 2005

Result: Portable skateboard facility that visits neighbourhoods all summer.

What's next: Talks under way with city about more portable facilities.

Impact: 489 children and 2,088 youths have used the skateboard facility.

In their words: "Attendance has been unbelievable, especially in the immediate area of east Hamilton." Glenn Harkness, executive director

Human and Social Services

St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton c/o Greenbyte Program

Since: 2001 (program)

Serving: Former inmates

What: Supporting men through two halfway houses with drug and behavioural programs.

Grant: Two in 2003 and 2006 totalling \$350,100

Result: Greenbyte Program that trains and certifies ex-offenders to refurbish computers that are then distributed to low-income families.

What's next: Planning a social housing project for stable lodging after leaving St. Leonard's.

Impact: 100 people found jobs and training in computer-related fields; more than 1,000 computers given to low-income families.

In their words: "It puts children who are at risk of not doing well in school on an even footing with kids who would otherwise have those benefits provided to them by their families." John Clinton, executive director

## Environment

### Hamilton Halton Watershed Stewardship Program

Since: 1994

Serving: Private landowners with forests, woodlots, meadows and watercourses on their property.

What: Educating landowners to preserve the health and natural features of their land.

Grant: Four-year \$140,000 grant in 2004

Result: More landowners reached

Impact: More than 4,000 landowners

In their words: "The water in the streams up in the headwaters eventually ends up in Lake Ontario where a lot of Ontarians get their drinking water from ... everything is interconnected -- it's just realizing that." Sheila O'Neal, program co-ordinator

### Grant Review Team Chair's Award for Exemplary Volunteerism

#### Church of the Ascension Out of the Cold Program

Since: 2000 (program)

Serving: Homeless and impoverished

What: Provides meals Saturday and Monday nights.

Grant: Several grants totalling \$33,500 over five years

Result: Supplying food and equipment to feed 100 people a night, twice a week.

Impact: More than 5,000 people

In their words: "If you had come to one of the meals and watched the people leave, you never got so many thank yous in your life." Jim Hawthorne, treasurer

## **25th Anniversary Award for Remaining a Leader in the Non-Profit Sector**

### **Bay Area Restoration Council**

Since: 1991

Serving: Residents or workers within Hamilton harbour and its watershed.

What: Organizes community tree plantings; holds school workshops on healthy marsh ecology; holds public awareness meetings.

Grants: Two in 2001 and 2003 totalling \$305,500

Result: Uniting citizens, business, in pursuing a healthy harbour.

What's next: Working toward delisting the harbour from the area of concern list by the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement by 2015.

Impact: Presentations to more than 2,500 people and more than 11,000 through displays last year.

In their words: "We're onto another grant also from Trillium which has enabled us to continue our website and to start up some new programs in the community ... "

Cindy Smith, communications manager

Total Hamiltonians affected: More than 15,677



Hamilton Spectator File Photo

Jane Donaldson-Mooij picks up garbage along the Waterfront Trail during a cleanup effort led by the Bay Area Restoration Council and the Friends of the Waterfront Trail in 2003.