



YOUTH LEADERSHIP DAY

An initiative of B.L.E.Y.P.

“The Voice of Youth across York Region”

May 30, 2006

Town of Markham Anthony Roman Centre
101 Town Centre Blvd
Markham, Ontario
L3R 9W3

Dear Barbara Nanninga

RE: Youth Leadership Day

Over the past year the media has continually portrayed an escalation in violence in Markham, York Region and the GTA.

At a recent meeting at York Regional Police 5 District headquarters, there was discussion about a number of assaults and drug transactions at public facilities including schools and the Markham Theatre, which demonstrate that we are not immune. We must proactively and aggressively address the potential risks to our citizens, whether real or perceived.

In reality crime levels have not increased dramatically, however there is certainly concern on the part of York Region residents about youth and gang violence moving into our Town.

Since last September, a group of interested and community minded youth have been hard at work to build positive perceptions of themselves and their peers. They have formed an association, which has gained widespread recognition and support from partners such as the YRP, York Region school Boards, Future Aces association, faith organizations, and social service agencies. As well, they have cultivated media attention to their positive initiatives.

In order to unite youth across the region June 24th has been selected as the date for the inaugural Youth Leadership Day, to be held at the Milliken Mills Community Centre (Outdoors). This event is expected to attract participants from cultural backgrounds throughout Markham (i.e. Asia, S.Asia, African, Caribbean). Trends indicate these youth may be most vulnerable to negative influences. By engaging in such attractions as sports, cultural exhibitions, and entertainment, all with a youth focus, young people will be given the platform to take ownership.

As media is already projecting a violent summer, it would be easy to accept the negative and do nothing. While violence is unfortunately an inevitable part of our society we must break this cycle of fear and negativity.

Consistent with Markham's demonstrated history of taking a proactive position in dealing with emerging situations the opportunity to once again rise to the challenge is before us.

In sponsoring this event, the Markham Town Council can visibly demonstrate its commitment to young people who are directing their energies toward positive relations and leadership development. As we sometimes forget less than 1% of young people are connected with violent activities. Its important that we reinforce the other 99% who work so hard to educate themselves and to create career opportunities as active members in the community.

Endorsing associations such as B.L.E.Y.P, the impetus behind the Youth Leadership Day communicates a commitment to future generations.

We are pleased to invite the Town of Markham to participate in the first ever Youth Leadership Day to be held June 24, 2006.

This inaugural event will be held at the Milliken Mills Community Centre (Outdoors) at 7522 Kennedy Rd, north of Steeles Ave.

Why a youth leadership day?

This is an opportunity to provide youth across the Region with a platform to unite their voices in support of their contributions and journey to achieving their goals.

Who are the organizers of this Event?

Black Leadership Empowering Youth Positively, (B.L.E.Y.P) is a youth association focusing on developing and promoting the next generation of future leaders. Energies are focused on endorsing the importance of securing roles in the media, politics, law- enforcement, medical, scientific, and other meaningful professions in corporate Canada.

There is a void to be filled through creating partnerships, mentoring, skill development, and communicating positive achievements.

How will this initiative succeed?

B.L.E.Y.P has formed alliances with several youth associations to deliver this message with a strong and united voice.

What will this event feature?

Dare to envision a stage alive with awe-inspiring artistes, a festival grounds wafting with the mouth-watering aromas of grilled meats, cultural appetizers so rich and flavorful, and a courtyard filled with athletic moves that create a sought after competitive edge engineered by the youth as they take the championship from the York Regional and Toronto Police in a high energy basketball game.

A variety of exhibits and career booths will further add to the sights and sounds of the Event.

Who is the audience?

Over 3,000 high school and college youth, families, community partners from a diverse background, sport celebrities and enthusiasts, media personnel, and local heroes are expected to attend.

Is your message understood through your support?

To say that you are involved when your voice is silent is to exist and never really be there. In your absence someone else gains. The fruit of your labor is in your ability to recognize opportunities and create win/win alliances.

Our partners?

B.L.E.Y.P boasts a number of partnerships across the community that through collaborative efforts generate awareness of services that are inaccessible due to location, limited promotions, and linguistic barriers.

Additional partners are needed. Individuals, groups, organizations and Corporations can all play a role in developing our youth.

We would welcome the opportunity to tell you more about B.L.E.Y.P. and to explore how you too can benefit from our initiatives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Shantelle Smith or Susie Gotha, Facilitator, at 905-471-8987

Sincere Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susie Gotha', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Susie Gotha