

Safe Harbour: *Respect for All* Program in Wainwright - An award-winning provincial diversity program.

WAINWRIGHT, ALBERTA, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 – Sixteen business locations in Wainwright and area recently became certified as Safe Harbour: *Respect for All* locations. On October 29, 2014 nineteen participants took part in two workshops to learn about how the community and its businesses can become more welcoming and inclusive through the Safe Harbour program.

Safe Harbour: *Respect for All* provides opportunities for businesses, institutions, agencies, and municipalities to create respectful, welcoming workplaces and communities. Becoming a Safe Harbour certified location increases the community profile of organizations as diversity leaders.

Interactive Safe Harbour workshops are delivered to managers and staff to explore stereotyping, bias, and marginalization and provide practical ways to address discrimination. Participants learn how to create a more inclusive workplace where employees, customers and clients of diverse backgrounds know that they will be welcomed and safe at all times.

Upon completion of the workshop, participants receive the Safe Harbour: *Respect for All* window decal, a certificate, and promotional materials to display as visible markers of their commitments to *respect for all*. Newcomers, Aboriginal people, people who are differently abled, seniors, youth, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, and other diverse groups can rely on Safe Harbour as a symbol of trust in their neighbourhoods. Local coordinators re-engage participants to support inclusive practices and offer resources.

Safe Harbour certified locations sign on to the following three key commitments:

- ✚ Equitable Treatment for All: Welcoming all clients and/or customers in a respectful manner. If a concern is expressed regarding a lack of respectful treatment, employers and staff take steps to address it.
- ✚ An Immediate Safe Place: Providing an *immediate* safe refuge for someone experiencing discrimination in or near the worksite, which may include a place to sit, a glass of water, a phone to use, and access to a list of service providers in the community.
- ✚ Prepared Employees and Worksites: Preparing all managers and staff to implement these commitments.

There are 1,000 Safe Harbour certified locations across Canada, including the newly certified locations in Wainwright and area: Alberta Health Services - Wainwright Community Health, Alberta Human Services - Alberta Works, BMO Bank of Montreal, Catholic Social Services, Dairy Queen, Diamond Rock Trucking Ltd., Grace United Church, Nalco Champion, Points West Living Wainwright, Prairie Vision Centre, Quintastics Office Supplies, Town of Wainwright, Village of Irma, Wainwright and District Council for Adult Lifelong Learning, Wainwright and District Family and Community Services, and Wainwright Association for Community Living. These locations model respect for diversity by taking a stand against discrimination and serving diverse customers and clients with an understanding of their unique needs and contributions.

The Town of Wainwright has hosted previous welcoming and inclusive communities sessions so residents can work together building a community free from discrimination, where residents feel able to participate in all aspects of the social, cultural and economic life in the Town of Wainwright and surrounding areas. Mayor Brian Bethune says “it was a good session and I am proud that the people of our community are looking for ways to be more welcoming to all”.

To find out more about the work being done in Wainwright and to help make the community a better place for all individuals, please contact Carley Herbert, Economic Development Officer from the Town of Wainwright at 780-842-3381, or Jean Vidal from Jobs, Skills, Training & Labour at 780-581-1123. To learn more about Safe Harbour in Alberta, visit <http://allegroeventsandpromotions.com/safe-harbour-in-alberta/> or www.safeharbour.ca.

A welcoming community requires the commitment from *all* sectors of society.

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