



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Hospitals of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP)  
Participates in 'Seeing is Believing' Tour  
as part of Leadership Development Program**

Toronto, ON – July 16, 2009: HOOPP's Leadership Development Program was recently augmented through the participation of 14 HOOPP volunteers in the Canadian Business for Social Responsibility's (CBSR) Seeing is Believing tour. This unique and innovative program was selected as it involves both the development and application of leadership skills in an applied learning environment.

On July 16, Victoria Hubbell, SVP, Strategy & Stakeholder Relations, HOOPP, and the HOOPP volunteers ranging from team leads to the CEO, visited Times Change Women's Employment Service, YWCA REACH and the Community MicroSkills Development Centre. Through the Seeing is Believing program, executives spent the morning learning firsthand about these organizations and the programs they offer to support women in their efforts to become economically self-sufficient through settlement, employment and the development of self-employment skills.

The business leaders from HOOPP spoke with community members who use the services of these agencies with the goal of deepening their understanding of the complex issues surrounding women's poverty. At the end of the tour, HOOPP volunteers regrouped to identify possible opportunities to support the various organizations through applied learning initiatives.

Noted Victoria Hubbell, "As HOOPP's plan membership is 84% female, the issue of women in poverty resonates with us as an organization. This tour provided a tremendous opportunity for HOOPP volunteers to speak directly with women who have benefited from the programs delivered by these three agencies. Through participation, HOOPP volunteers will have the opportunity to further develop their capacity as leaders."

One in seven (2.4 million) Canadian women live in poverty today, with half a million calling the greater Toronto area home. While Canada enjoys an international reputation for its high standard of living, women's poverty is currently at its highest rate in two decades, with women forming the majority of the country's poor.

Wendy Campbell, Director of Programs, CBSR, says Seeing is Believing is based on a simple principle: you can't solve a problem without seeing it.

"The program provides business executives with an opportunity to engage the community firsthand, better understand social issues and look at new and expanded solutions," says Campbell. "The direct interaction between business leaders and community members fostered by the Seeing is Believing program has inspired organizations to leverage their resources towards creative solutions."

-more-



- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Wendy Reid  
Director, Marketing  
416-350-4293, [wreid@hoopp.com](mailto:wreid@hoopp.com)

Robyn Hall, Communications Manager  
Canadian Business for Social Responsibility  
416.703.7435 x.232, [robyn@cbsr.ca](mailto:robyn@cbsr.ca)