

## HOST: ALTERNA SAVINGS

### INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY & ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR WOMEN

NOVEMBER 20, 2008

#### LEADERS:

**John Lahey**, President & CEO, Alterna Savings

#### DELEGATES:

**Rupert Duchesne**, President & CEO, Groupe Aeroplan Inc.

**Kimberley Ney**, Senior VP, Marketing, Communications and CSR, Alterna Savings

**Chris Poole**, Partner, Cambridge Management Planning Inc.

**Don Janes**, Director, Commercial Mortgages, Citizens Bank of Canada

**Giuseppe Ferrara**, Account Executive, Gibraltar Solutions

**Brian Torsney**, President, Play Advertising

Nearly 19% of adult women are poor- the highest rate of women's poverty in two decades. This tour helped delegates understand the challenges faced by women in obtaining satisfying employment opportunities and sought business solutions for education and training opportunities.

The tour began at **Skills for Change**, an organization that provides learning and training opportunities for immigrants and refugees so they can participate in the workplace and wider community. Delegates heard about the challenges of entering the Canadian workforce from clients participating in sector specific training programs.

The tour continued to **Times Change Women's Employment Services**, where delegates spoke with women in the *Career Planning* and *Job Search* programs. Times Change offers career and educational counselling and a comprehensive resource centre to support women in achieving economic and social equality. Participants heard about the importance of obtaining satisfying ways to earn a living and the demands of the changing labour market on women.

Lastly, delegates visited **Sistering**, a multi-service organization that offers a variety of program and support services for homeless, under-housed and low-income women in the Toronto area. Delegates spoke with participants of the *On the Path* program, designed for women who are unable to attend traditional job readiness programs, as well as women from *Inspiration Studio*- an art based program that gives women the opportunity to make crafts to supplement their income.

*Delegates pose with women accessing services at Skills for Change*



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