

The Queen's Park Guide

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Did you know?

Ontario gained 5,700 net new jobs in June.

The unemployment rate edged up to 6.5% in June from 6.3% in May, as the Ontario labour force grew by 21,300 people.

Nationally, employment increased by a strong 34,800 net new jobs. Despite the gain, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.1% as a result of more job seekers entering the labour market.

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Pathway Group welcomes Ron Ross as its newest member



Ron Ross

Pathway Group is pleased to welcome Ron Ross as its newest member.

Ron offers clients a wealth of senior level experience in government relations, public relations and communications, issues/crisis management, marketing, event planning and media relations – all focused on delivering results. His keen strategic insights have been honed from his extensive experience as a political operative in the provincial and federal realm, and his work as a senior executive in the not-for-profit sector.

His work as a senior policy, political and communications advisor to cabinet ministers in various Ontario ministries allows him to use his skill and understanding to get his clients results. He has worked extensively with the Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat, has held senior positions in the Ministry of the Attorney General, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Ministry of the Solicitor General, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

He has successfully planned and executed legislature-lobbying events across Canada. As the Associate Director of Communications for the Financial Advisors Association of Canada, his work on a government and public relations campaign earned him the *Public Affairs/Government Relations Campaign of the Year Award* and the *Best Use of Media Award* by the Canadian Public Relations Society. The mid-sized Association achieved a clear win against Canada's largest and well financed banking institutions. For his efforts, he was further honoured by being a finalist for the prestigious *Best PR Campaign of the Year Award* in 2006.

He also draws on his post secondary education which includes a Political Science Degree and a three-year Public Relations and Communications Diploma. Ron is a member of the Public Affairs Association of Canada, the International Association of Business Communicators and the Canadian Public Relations Society.

Ron will be working at Pathway Group as of September 1, 2007.

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New agency will work towards solutions on women's health issues



On August 24, 2007 Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman introduced Caroline Andrew as the first chair of Echo, Ontario's new women's health agency, which will raise awareness and work toward solutions on women's health issues.

Caroline Andrew has been with the University of Ottawa since 1971. A former Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences (1997 to 2005), she is currently a full professor at the School of Political Studies and the Director of the Centre on Governance. She is a nationally recognized authority on urban and feminist studies as well as on cultural diversity.

Echo's role will be to:

- Conduct, fund and partner on research initiatives in women's health

- Provide input to government policy, in collaboration with stakeholders, to improve the health status of women, and promote the provision of accessible, effective and equitable care for women
- Collect and distribute information on women's health through a variety of communication tools and services.
- Advise the minister on health issues affecting women.

When fully operational Echo will receive annual funding of \$7.6 million. Echo will use the work of the former Women's Health Council as a foundation for the start-up of the new agency. Echo will assume new responsibilities and bring together health system, community, research, and policy stakeholders.

"As an agency promoting women's health like no other, Echo will benefit mothers and daughters all across Ontario," Smitherman said.

New training spots for midwives and nurse practitioners



On August 22, 2007 Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced the Ontario government is investing \$24.5 million to create 80 additional training spots and to increase access to nurse practitioners and midwives.

This announcement is part of the government's HealthForceOntario health human resources strategy, a multi-year plan to give Ontario the right number and mix of health care providers, working in communities across the province. The announcement includes:

- \$2.3 million to expand enrollment in the Midwifery Education Program from 60 to 80 starting this fall with a further expansion of 10 seats the following year for a total of 90.
- \$5 million for a 50-seat expansion of the Nurse Practitioner Education Program, a 12 month full-time post baccalaureate certificate program currently offered at 10 universities throughout Ontario. Enrollment will expand from 150 to 200 with new seats opening beginning in the fall 2008.
- \$12.2 million to immediately increase access to midwifery services by funding up to 67 new graduates this year.
- \$5 million in salary and benefits to immediately support the recruitment and retention of nurse practitioners.

McGuinty government achieved second consecutive balanced budget



On August 17, 2007 Finance Minister Greg Sorbara announced the McGuinty government achieved its second consecutive balanced budget and posted a \$2.3 billion surplus for the 2006-07 fiscal year, ending March 31, 2007.

The province also released its first quarter finances for 2007-08, which shows an

improvement of \$400 million from the budget outlook.

The financial results for 2006-07 reflect higher revenues and lower expenses than projected. The main drivers of increased revenue were increased transfer payments from the federal government, a one-time gain from the sale of Teranet Inc. and higher taxation revenues. Two-thirds of the revenue increase went towards debt reduction, and the remainder went towards increased spending.

Additional funding to help children and youth with Autism

On August 17, 2007 Minister of Children and Youth Services Mary Anne Chambers announced the Ontario government is investing more than \$12 million this year to provide Intensive Behaviour Intervention treatment for 210 more children and youth with autism, bringing the total number of children receiving this care to approximately 1,400.

With the government's policy of not discharging kids from the Intensive Behaviour Intervention program on the basis of age, the

resulting increased demand is being addressed by building a continuum of service for children and youth with autism and their families and by more than tripling annual support since 2003-04 to more than \$140 million in 2007-08.

In addition, part of the \$12 million in additional funding will be used to hire more IBI therapists and provide temporary relief services to more than 3,000 Ontario families.

Ontario government uploads \$935 million in social programs from municipalities



On August 20, 2007 Premier Dalton McGuinty announced the Ontario government will be uploading the total cost of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Drug Benefits (ODB) for social assistance recipients.

The upload, identified as a top priority by municipalities in the ongoing review of services,

will begin in January. By the time it is fully implemented in 2011, the upload will save municipalities \$935 million.

The Premier made the announcement at the annual general meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

"This is another example of the province and municipalities working together to make our communities stronger," said McGuinty.

Stricter standards for the private security industry



Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister Monte Kwinter said that as of August 23, 2007 new legislation is now in effect that provides stricter

regulation of the private security industry.

The Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005, requires all private security practitioners to be licensed, including in-house security staff, such as those working for retailers and bars. In-house security staff

were exempt from licensing under the old law. These individuals will have until August 23, 2008, to obtain their licences. As well, businesses that employ in-house security staff must register with the ministry's Private Security and Investigative Services Branch by August 23, 2008.

The new licences will allow individuals to change jobs within the industry without having to reapply for a licence. The act also sets out new training requirements and regulates the type of uniforms, equipment and vehicles that can be used by private security personnel.

Upcoming Events

September 5, 2007 - The Trinity Spadina provincial Liberal association is hosting a breakfast with the Hon. George Smitherman. The breakfast will take place from 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. at Azure restaurant in Toronto. Tickets are \$250 per person.

September 6, 2007 - The Pickering Scarborough East PC Association is hosting a fundraising reception with Special Guest the Hon. Peter Van Loan, MP. The event will take place from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at the Albany Club in Toronto. Tickets are \$250 per person.

September 18, 2007 - The Hon. Tony Clement, MP is hosting a golf tournament at Windermere Golf and Country Club in Muskoka. Every team gets to golf one hole with Tony and dinner and prizes are included with registration. There will be a 1:00 p.m. shotgun start. Tickets are \$250 per player.

October 10, 2007 - Ontario General Election

For more information or to acquire tickets please contact the Pathway Group.

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