



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED

May, 2008

newsletter



## A message from the Executive Director...

How do you realize a dream? You share it with others so they know what it means, why it matters and how they can be part of the dream. That's how Next Wave Youth Centre in Strathroy began. Some years ago Youth Opportunities Unlimited and community groups gathered in the boardroom of the United Way of London & Middlesex to find a way to serve the youth of Strathroy and area. We surveyed the community to understand its needs then partnered with local businesses and organizations to create a place where youth would learn and grow under the guidance of caring professionals. This special place would be in a downtown heritage building which we would purchase and renovate. Now, thanks to all, Next Wave Youth Centre has celebrated its first anniversary. It is what we dreamed it could be – a true hub for the community.



Steve Cordes  
Executive Director

## Next Wave Youth Centre 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary

On May 12, Youth Opportunities Unlimited, community partners, youth and guests gathered to celebrate the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Next Wave Youth Centre. In only one year, the Next Wave has blossomed into a lively place in the heart of Strathroy where together youth explore, learn and grow. The collaboration, innovation, passion and commitment at the heart of Next Wave were evident during the anniversary celebrations.



Cara Finn, General Manager of CFDC Middlesex County served as mc, welcoming community partners, youth and guests to the 32 Front St. W. centre. Youth proudly presented their newly launched Mindyourmind rural anti-stigma ad campaign which features posters and cards with powerful graphics and a strong message: one out of five teenagers live with depression. Partners such as Middlesex Community Living, St. Leonard's Community Services, London District Catholic School Board and Harmony for Youth spoke of their positive experiences in sharing both the space and the vision. Youth representatives described how Next Wave has come to be a favourite safe place where they can be with old friends, meet new ones and learn while having fun. Other youth sang a song about journeys, hopes and dreams to express their affection for the Next Wave staff. Thank you to all who attended our 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary. Your support is most appreciated. *Kim Bewsky, Career Development Services Manager.*

## Community Support at Heart of Next Wave

Since opening one year ago, **Next Wave Youth Centre** has brought new job opportunities, training programs, social enterprise, alternative education and support programs to local youth. Through innovative partnerships and community support from the London and District Catholic School Board, Community Futures Development Corp and St Leonard's Society, with funding from United Way of London & Middlesex, Andersen Corporate Foundation, Libro Financial Group, Sydenham Credit Union, and with donations by McNaughton's Home Hardware and many others we have seen a dream come true. Thanks to all, we're helping youth in Strathroy and area build positive futures for themselves. This is truly something to celebrate!

## Mark Your Calendar

Join us for our **Annual General Meeting** as we celebrate **25 years of Building Positive Futures for Youth**. June 26<sup>th</sup> 3-5 pm, Civic Garden Complex, 625 Springbank Drive, London.

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