



Exploring Mental Health, Addiction & Return to Work – Our 2008 Annual Conference in Review

On September 19th, 2008, VRA Ontario held our 2008 Annual Conference in Vaughan, Ontario. This exciting event featured a wide variety of fascinating and insightful speakers, covering topics from bipolar disorder to addiction and conflict resolution.

Louise Russo – Walk Against Violence Everywhere Guest Speaker

We were honoured to have had the privilege of including Louise Russo among our speakers at this year's conference. Louise's inspirational story and powerful message moved many in attendance to tears as she spoke from the heart about the challenges she and her daughter have faced.



Louise Russo

Louise is the founder of W.A.V.E. (Walk Against Violence Everywhere), and is an advocate for individuals with special needs. An innocent victim of a violent crime which left her paralyzed from the waist down, Louise has dedicated her life to teaching young people to be respectful, responsible and to take leadership roles to make sure their schools and communities are safe.

Louise is the primary caregiver for her daughter Jenna, who suffers from a rare genetic disorder.

It was Russo's involvement with the Toronto Catholic District School Board that paved the way for all Toronto schools to become accessible for all students. She is still very involved with fighting for the rights of those with special needs and sits on the accessibility committee with the Hon. David Onley.

Upcoming Seminars

Save the Dates!

Topics and speakers are to be announced, so stay tuned.

January 21, 2009

March 27, 2009

May 29, 2009

Watch for information on participating in upcoming seminars through webcasting!

Our New Board of Directors

VRA Ontario would like to introduce our incoming Board of Directors:

President and Chair:
Evie Cowitz

Past President:
Maddy Roppoli

Kelvin Brown
Brenda Gibbs
Steve Ogden
Roselle Piccininni
Janice Ray

Volunteers Wanted

All associations are dependent on member volunteers and VRA Ontario is no exception. As a collective group of vocational rehab professionals our association belongs to all of us. It's strength and recognition within the healthcare community is the responsibility of all our members and to do this we need your help.

There is a broad range of volunteer opportunities available for members with varying experience and skills. Even if you can only give a few hours of your time we will be grateful for your help.

Please contact our VRA Ontario office by phone at **613-536-5530** or via email office@vraCanada.on.com

Ontario Speaks Speak out! Please feel free to contribute ideas and articles.