



## VRA Ontario Members

### We're raising our PROFESSIONAL bar!

### IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

#### Message from the President

August 2014

The VRA Ontario Board of Directors recognizes that all of our members work in highly respected and demanding fields. As such, your Ontario Board is focused on developing innovative services and supports to help you maintain high standards in your professional lives and providing you with improved access to services to manage your career development. As a Society, we are working to increase the recognition and professional status of our members. Our goal is to raise the bar to ensure that VRA Ontario is an engaged and responsive Society, one that welcomes input and contribution from all members. It is with this premise that the services and supports that will be forthcoming in the next few months will allow Ontario members to exceed previous levels of achievement.

Here's what we have in store for you over the upcoming months:

**FALL CONFERENCE** – To be held in the Toronto area on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The price for the conference is \$375.00. A full day of CEUs is available, including 2 credits in Ethics. Session topics include Compassion Fatigue and Medical Marijuana. In addition, we include a life-turned-around speaker – From Skid Row to CEO. All members are strongly encouraged to attend the AGM, held during noon hour on the day of the conference. At the conclusion of the conference the Famous People Players will provide an outstanding performance. Sponsors are presently being arranged and we extend to all attendees the opportunity to receive a complimentary conference photo. In addition, pictures will be taken during conference sessions, so bring your winning smiles!

**FIRST TIME OFFER** – For a 7-day window in September – from September 15<sup>th</sup> through to 11:59 pm on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the first fifty (50) members to register for the Fall Conference will have the opportunity to register for this conference at an incredible \$100 discount. We anticipate that this conference will reach capacity so don't delay your registration! Keep watching for an upcoming promotional email notification that will include a code for this incredible discount!

**BONUS DRAW** – One lucky conference attendee will be selected by draw, to win the cost of a VRA Canada membership for 2015 – open only to members registering during the Early Bird Registration from September 22<sup>nd</sup> to October 19<sup>th</sup>. Note that the Early Bird Registration provides a conference fee discount of \$50.00.

**NEW** – VRA Ontario has implemented the **Travel Reduction Incentive Program (TRIP)**. TRIP is a grant, available to members requiring financial assistance to attend VRA Ontario conferences. Effective for the 2014 Fall Conference, members may apply for the TRIP. Open to members travelling 180 kilometres or more (return from your home address), a limited number of confidential grants will be considered, with an emphasis to support those who are travelling greater distances. Assistance up to a maximum of \$200 with proof of costs will be available. Additional information and application forms will be available in September; members will be notified of further details by email.

**NEW** – VRA Ontario has also implemented the **VRA Ontario Outstanding Award** in recognition of the outstanding achievements of a member in the field of vocational rehabilitation. Candidates must be VRA Ontario members with RRP, RCSS and / or RVP designations. The award will be presented at the annual fall AGM event, commencing in 2015. Additional information will be available in September 2014. Nominations will commence as of January 2015. This will be a difficult decision for sure!

**NEW** – VRA Ontario is launching a **new, engaging website!** Features will include a Personal Profile section, in which members may track their own CEUs, include conference agendas, find peers (who opt to be public in our system), use the professional resources option and place ads (with discounted rates for members). Opportunities to post ads will also be offered to the general public on our new website. You will also be able to win ‘*Perks From The Prez*’, participate in contests and connect to frequently used social networks from our website. Phase I of this new system rolls-out in October 2014, with Phase II coming as of the fall of 2015.

**NEW** – Be an engaged member – contribute to *What VRA Ontario Members Say*. On our new website four (4) VRA Ontario members will be selected for an opportunity to express (in two sentences maximum) why you are a proud Member of VRA Ontario. Submission forms will be available next month for this competition. Each winner will have their photo and response posted on the new website for one year. For the first year of this promotion we will be selecting members who do not use business, cell or home telephone services starting with 416 or 905 area codes. We want to give our non-GTA members the honour of being the first to have the bragging rights as to why they are proud and loyal VRA Ontario Members. Submission requests will be communicated next month – so get working on your *Proud Member* responses.

We are pleased to share these innovations with our members. Keep watching for our email updates!

As a reminder, the VRA Ontario Board continues to seek additional board members. If you are a member who would like to commit your energy and time volunteering in the Society we would welcome your interest. Contact us to determine your opportunity to be a part of the team that is moving to revitalize and raise the professional bar of VRA Ontario!

Wanda Yorke,  
President, VRA Ontario  
[wanda@vraCanadaon.com](mailto:wanda@vraCanadaon.com)

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