



Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses

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Contact Person:

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Website:

www.ocab.ca

Date Organization Founded:

Founded in 1993. OCAB was incorporated in 1994 (legal name: Consumer/Survivor Business Council of Ontario).

Purpose of the Organization:

The Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses (OCAB) is committed to providing economic and leadership opportunities to the psychiatric consumer/survivor community. Through the development of small businesses, partnerships and special projects, OCAB seeks to create meaningful employment and training opportunities that meet the varying needs of individuals with mental health issues.

Projects and Initiatives of the Organization:

The Raging Spoon

The Raging Spoon Café and Catering Company, located at 761 Queen Street West in Toronto, is the oldest of OCAB's businesses. For over 10 years the "Spoon" has provided work opportunities for well over one hundred psychiatric consumer/survivors who have an interest in food service related employment. With hundreds of customers in the non-profit and for-profit sectors, the Raging Spoon continues to expand its services and stay current in the ever-evolving world of food service. Although now focused exclusively on catering, the Raging Spoon will be reopening the café area in the spring of 2008, offering wireless internet service and a variety of baked goods, sandwiches and coffee. The catering arm of the Spoon delivers throughout the central Toronto area, providing a variety of appetizers, hot and cold entrees and desserts.

For more information visit the Raging Spoon's website at www.ragingspoon.com

Out of This World Café and Espresso Bar

Originally a vocational rehabilitation program run by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Out of This World Café and Espresso Bar (OTW) was divested to OCAB in 2002 to be operated as an Alternative Business. After five years under the guidance of OCAB, OTW has expanded its service and revenue base and currently provides employment opportunities to over 40 individuals with mental health and addiction histories. OTW operates a canteen, espresso bar and coffee cart at CAMH's Queen Street site, and provides catering services to its many customers both within CAMH and the broader Toronto community.

For more information visit Out of This World Café's website at www.otwcafe.com

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Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises

Since 2001, Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises (PGTE) has been providing landscaping and streetscaping services to the Parkdale community and beyond. Currently PGTE provides streetscaping services to three business improvement associations and has secured a number of residential landscaping contracts. In 2006 PGTE expanded its services to provide indoor plant installation and maintenance and outdoor winter streetscaping. Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises now employs over 35 consumer/survivors.

For more information e-mail Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises at greenthumb@on.aibn.com, or jsnider@on.aibn.com.

Voices from the Street

Voices from the Street is a Speakers Bureau that addresses homelessness, poverty and mental health issues. Speakers undergo a 12-week training program that focuses on helping them find their own voices, to tell their own stories to maximum effect, and to build the confidence to take on leadership roles in their communities. Voices from the Street has now wrapped up its second year. Training for a new group of participants will begin in March 2008.

For more information visit www.voicesfromthestreet.ca.