

Magna Hoedown funds have opened up doors

Last month, The Optimist Club of Aurora was invited to attend the York Regional Police's Reception for their Eco-trip Program. The Club donated funds toward this program that helps "at risk" youth gain self-confidence, trust, and a better way to live their life through mentorship, skills training and support.

As it turned out, the reception was actually a graduation evening.

In attendance were the participants of this year's Eco-Trip, their parents, the mentors, and the YRP Officers who have worked on the program.

Each participant received a certificate and a letter of reference from the York Regional Police. The youth were invited to speak about their experiences. Some read prepared speeches that described how the program changed their lives.

Others took to the microphone and gave very heartfelt speeches about how they did not want to go, yet after attending, they not only learned a great deal about themselves, but now have a new respect for themselves and others.

It was very evident how much of an impact this program made in the lives of these youth. The rapport between the participants and the mentors was strong. Many took away simple but important life lessons, such as learning:

how to accept healthy teasing in the fun sense that it is given;

to trust, not only their mentors, but more importantly, each other;

that Police Officers are human beings with fears, concerns, and cares like everyone else;

not to judge people on first impressions;

to overcome fear and move forward to accomplish something that they felt was not achievable.

The highlight of the evening was the thanks and appreciation that the parents of the youths expressed to The Optimist Club of Aurora. Many told Club members how valuable the program was to their son or daughter. It was heartfelt and genuine.

The Optimist Club of Aurora would like to thank Magna for selecting the Club to be a recipient of the 2012 Hoedown funds which enabled them to support local youth and programs like this.

Optimist Club of Aurora

Aurora