



Toronto Sport Leadership Program

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BACKGROUND:

- Launched in 2006 in response to youth violence and high youth unemployment, TSLP was created to increase opportunities in sports training, employment and community leadership for youth in underserved /in-need communities.
- TSLP provides the opportunity for young people aged 16 and older to earn nationally recognized sports leadership certification at no cost in sports areas: aquatics (wading pool attendant, NLS, instructor & Aquafit), soccer, basketball, skiing, tennis, fitness, adapted & integrated (instructor), and skating.
- It also helps connect youth to well paying job opportunities as lifeguards, wading pool attendants, coaches, recreationists, ski & tennis instructors, skating marshals, Aquafit & fitness instructors and most importantly - leaders and role models back in their communities.
- TSLP benefits young people who demonstrate leadership potential, have an interest and some skills in the selected sport, could not otherwise afford the training and whose involvement will help build their engagement in school and their community.
- TSLP was created thanks to a unique community partnership between:
 - **Toronto District School Board** and the **Toronto Catholic School Board** recruit all students from 42 schools in low-income communities.
 - **City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry and Recreation** coordinates all training and interview sessions for lifeguards and recreationists;
 - **YMCA of GTA** coordinates the overall program and the employment supports;
 - **United Way Toronto** and the **Toronto Community Foundation** leverage private sector contributions to enable the program to continue
- In 2009, Canadian Tire's Jumpstart Foundation came on board to provide the skating equipment and in 2010 will fund the expansion of swimming program, ensuring that more youth can upgrade their skills and qualify for the program.
- Several supporting organizations also make TSLP possible: The Trillium Foundation, The Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance, Coaches Association of Ontario, Lifesaving Society, Ontario Soccer Association, Tennis Canada, Doug Philpott Foundation, Ontario Basketball Association & the Ryerson Rams & Tri-Mentoring Program. They provide trainers and facilitators who challenge youth to enhance and develop new skills.
- TSLP is a "win" for everyone involved. Employers like the City of Toronto build their staffing resources. Neighbourhoods benefit from the presence of more young leaders and role models. Schools are able to better retain students. Youth are better-educated and equipped with marketable skills, and better connected with opportunities for community involvement and employment.

RESULTS TO DATE:

- Over 800 youth have graduated the TSLP program since its inception in 2006
- 50% of TSLP graduates find meaningful paid employment within 6 months of graduation
- 95% of the youth successfully completed at least 1 sport certification
- 80% of the participating students indicate that they have developed an increased sense of confidence and self-worth since attending the program
- 90% of the students in the program indicated that they have a better sense of their career and academic path since attending the program
- 100% of trainers and facilitators indicated that the youth in the were as focused (if not more so) than the participants they normally work with.

