



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
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GOVERNMENT FUNDING HELPS BLACK YOUTH FIND ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE *Grants awarded to 18 projects in African-Canadian Christian Network's latest round of funding*

NEWS

The African-Canadian Christian Network (ACCN) today announced that 18 churches partnering with community organizations will receive \$623,000 in grants in the organization's latest round of funding.

In April 2006, the McGuinty government awarded the ACCN \$3 million over two years to assist Black Christian leaders foster and enhance programs that enrich the lives of young people and their families. Applicants for funding were required to submit proposals for projects that focused on ACCN's four areas of focus – Family, Education, Employment and Crime Prevention.

QUOTES

"Thanks to the Ontario government and the Toronto Community Foundation, we have funded more than 60 exciting community projects for GTA youth from Jamestown in the west to Malvern in the east," said ACCN Chair Rev. Alvin Nicholson. "The grants we are awarding today will go to six new projects and to 12 we have previously funded. We are so very proud of the outstanding work of churches and community organizations that, with our help, have touched the lives of thousands of young people inspiring them to make positive choices."

"We have a responsibility to do everything we can to help young people make good choices, and keep children, schools and communities safer," said Premier Dalton McGuinty. "By helping more communities to share their ideas, we're taking an important step toward building a stronger, more compassionate society, and a brighter future for all Ontarians."

"Our partnership with the ACCN illustrates this government's commitment to providing some of our most vulnerable young people with the opportunities they need to overcome challenges and be the best they can be," said Minister of Children and Youth Services Deb Matthews.

"We are very pleased to be working with the Province of Ontario and the leaders of the African-Canadian Christian Network on this transformational project. Since the Toronto Community Foundation convened the dialogue around community safety and the Solutions Summit in 2005, much progress has taken place. The new partnerships are particularly exciting and will form a solid foundation for the sustainability of this city-building initiative" said Rahul Bhardwaj, President and CEO of the Toronto Community Foundation.

"The most notable impact of the program this far is the renewed interest and enthusiasm for learning that is being displayed by our students – they are anxious and excited each week to attend the program." *Pilgrim Church of the First Born*

"The parents, youth and children communicate in a more responsible and respectful manner. Incidences of abuse, intimidation and altercations have decreased considerably. This is a direct result of the training in parent support, the homework program, the work program and the contribution of the Toronto Police Services." *Rock and River Congregation, King Bay Kids Project*

"As an organization, our responsiveness to the community has increased because the programs are taking youth off the streets and into meaningful activity." *Toronto New Covenant Cathedral*

QUICK FACTS

- From 2006 to 2008, ACCN has issued 4 calls for proposals and approved funding for 67 projects
- Projects funded by ACCN range from \$67,000 to \$5,500
- Mobile Spot promotes a healthy youth community in Jane Finch. The Project After School program provided one young man the opportunity to gain a TD Canada Trust \$60,000 scholarship for post secondary studies
- Basketball for Life – B4L is a mentoring and sports program partnering with the Toronto Police Services and reaching more than 600 GTA youth.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about ACCN and how you can volunteer by calling Cheryl Lewis, Executive Director, African-Canadian Christian Network at 416-744-3084 or by visiting www.accntoronto.com.