

Horwath promotes youth employment in recent visit to Brampton

By Nick Fernandes

Ontario New Democratic Party leader Andrea Horwath paid a visit to Brampton recently to promote measures put forth for the new Provincial budget.

This was part of a tour of Ontario employment services to contextualize the problems that will be tackled by the new youth job programs.

Horwath was joined by Bramalea-Gore-Malton MPP Jasjeet Singh in a tour of Job Skills, a community based employment and training agency that works with residents of the area to help them develop basic skills and find employment. Horwath and Singh had an illuminating talk with the Job Skills's Director of Employment Services John Mitteregger about the challenges facing youth trying to find jobs.

Singh in particular was interested in the way Job Skills has been interacting with the community's unemployed youth, voicing concerns that the problem also involves job security that may not be provided by part-time jobs and temp agencies. Job Skills itself does not direct its customers towards temporary work, but unreliable employment remains a problem for many.

Horwath said youth unemployment is one of the many issues that will be tackled by the new provincial budget, due to programs put forward by the NDP in their support of the new initiatives. The major one is a program where, in return for employing youth between 16 and 24, employers will be subsidized to cover some of the investment by companies in training and pay rates above minimum wage, both of which are requirements for a company to be accepted for the program.

According to Horwath, the biggest problem facing youth workers is the fact that they will not be hired without experience, but they cannot get experience if they aren't hired. The new initiative seeks to give employers incentive to hire young people.



John Mitteregger, Director and Employment Services and Programs of Job Skills, with Jasjeet Singh, Bramalea-Gore-Malton MPP, and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath.