

People urged to volunteer for 2015 Pan Am Games

By Bill Rea

There are some great volunteering opportunities associated with the upcoming Pan Am Games.

Olympic and Pan Am rower, and Volunteer Ambassador for the Games, Sarah Chaudbery was promoting the chances available recently. She spoke at the Town of Caledon's 2014 Volunteer and Citizen Achievement Awards ceremony.

The Orangeville native commented on her experiences at both the 2008 Olympics, in which she was part of the crew in an eight, and the 2011 Pan Am Games, where she was part of a Bronze-winning pair. She said that in both occasions, the work of the volunteers made major impressions on her.

Recalling the experience at the Beijing Olympics, Chaudbery said "there were literally rows and rows of volunteers."

She added one of her biggest memories was the opening ceremonies, and how volunteers led the way and helped manage things. The athletes themselves were placed in holding areas, waiting for their turn to march into the stadium. Volunteers were on hand, passing out water, and whatever else was needed.

Chaudbery also stressed it was obvious the volunteers were happy to be there.

The Pan Am games of 2011 in Guadalajara, she said, were like the Olympics, except the atmosphere was more intimate.

Chaudbery said she often tells people the coming Games are going to be big for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), with some 7,500 athletes who will be there. She added that's more than were at the recent Winter Olympics in Sochi.

She added 18 of the sports at the Games will be Olympic qualifiers.

Chaudbery encouraged people to think about volunteering. "There are so many great things about being a volunteer," she declared, adding it will be a chance to be part of something that will be a major part of people's lives.

"It's going to be such an awesome time," she said. "The scale of the games is just going to be incredible."



Olympic and Pan Am athlete Sarah Chaudbery urges people to volunteer for the 2015 Games.