

A Message from Our CEO

Happy New Year to all! I hope you enjoyed a joyful holiday season.

Not unlike other years, 2009 was filled with the activities of a busy, dynamic and energetic agency. All of our various programs at NSS and NTEC continued to operate at peak capacity and efficiency throughout the year, with many rewarding moments experienced by all involved.

Inside the agency we have been busy with a number of initiatives, as an enhanced climate of accountability within our sector has spurred much activity in various areas of risk management. We have been busy ensuring that a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan and a separate Pandemic Plan are in place, and have taken steps internally to ensure that any outside influence, flu pandemic or otherwise, will have as limited an impact as possible on those we serve.

Perhaps the most exciting change at NSS and NTEC this past year was the grand opening of NTEC EcoGardens, our full service retail greenhouse. With a selection of over 400 annuals, perennials and shrubs, the participants in our greenhouse program enjoyed a variety of jobs around the facility. Located at NTEC's head office in Port Robinson, NTEC EcoGardens is also unique in that we have one of the largest selections of Native Species in the area. This business has started to flourish in no small part due to the dedication and commitment of our new partner, Chris DiRaddo of Sassafras Farms. We will be opening on May 1 this year, and hope to see you for all of your garden needs.

On the corporate front, we have continued to emphasize the value of good corporate citizenship,

evidenced by things such as holiday baking for Meals on Wheels, growing fresh vegetables for the local food bank, and adopting a family through Project S.H.A.R.E.

for the holidays. We have also continued to take steps to increase our environmental efficiency by doing things such as upgrading lighting fixtures.

Our team of dedicated employees will always remain the greatest asset to these organizations. There are 165 employees at NSS and 21 at NTEC that come to work every day to make a difference in the lives of the people we support. Their readiness to reach beyond the ordinary and do the extraordinary every day continues to inspire me.

I have every confidence that NSS and NTEC will continue to serve our communities in many meaningful ways. We will weather the economic realities of our day, persist in our attempts to achieve service excellence, and remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission of *"Supporting the abilities and contributions of persons with special needs through our professional, caring and inspired team."*

To the families and friends of our agencies, I welcome your input and feedback as we move forward in 2010. Please feel free to contact me directly at 905-384-3137 or alewis@ntec-nss.com.

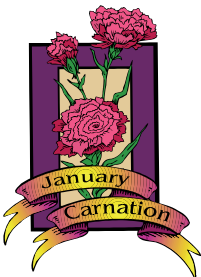


Andrew Lewis
Chief Executive Officer



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Thank you to all of our families and friends who renewed their memberships or became new members of Niagara Support Services for 2009, as well as for your kind and generous donations. We take pride in knowing that our members are committed to supporting our agency's work.

NSS & NTEC Participant Awards

The NTEC Participant Awards were held at the Annual Christmas Party on Tuesday December 22 at Arpad Park Banquet Hall. The party started off with the presentation of 2009 Achievement Awards (see below for details). Following the awards, everyone enjoyed a traditional turkey lunch and then danced the day away!



Congratulations to the 2009 Achievement Award Winners!

Bills	Faisan Basit (Most Improved) & Neil Polich (Personal Achievement)
Custodial	Laurie Beam (Personal Achievement)
Food Services	Allison Surek (Personal Achievement)
Grounds Maintenance	Curtis Beckett (Personal Achievement) & Jeff Wall (Most Improved)
Greenhouse	Kim Holmes (Personal Achievement) & Marc Bouchard (Most Improved)
Landscape	Ken Trebley (Most Improved)
Light Assembly	Sharon Dettering (Personal Achievement)
Waste Management	Donald Raby (Personal Achievement)
CEVS	Tristan Avila (Self-Initiative) & June Cote (3rd Hand Crew—Self-Initiative)

Planting at Mel Swart Park

Sassafras Farms and several NTEC EcoGardens participants lent a helping hand to the Niagara Restoration Council on December 2. They worked hard to get a few more trees in the ground before a full winter frost.

The **Niagara Restoration Council** is concerned about the Niagara Region's environmental health. They work towards environmental naturalization and long-term sustainability by participating in various restoration, community education, and public awareness projects specifically focused on environmental topics. Their mandate is: **To protect, maintain and actively restore the ecosystems of Niagara.**

NTEC participants and Niagara Restoration Council volunteers worked hard together to plant native tree species in Mel Swart Park, along the shores of Lake Gibson.

Great job everyone!



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2009 NTEC Service Awards

The 2009 NTEC Service Awards were presented at the Annual Christmas Lunch on December 22.

Congratulations and thank you once again to all of our award recipients.

Arpad Park Banquet Hall

NTEC Community Service Award

This year we recognized the Arpad Park Banquet Hall, also referred to as the Hungarian Cultural Hall. Since 1999, the Arpad Hall has been providing NTEC and NSS participants with a festive holiday atmosphere for our annual Christmas party. This includes not only the fabulous décor of the building with Christmas trees and plenty of lights, but a delicious turkey dinner complete with all the trimmings.

Maggie Szoke and all her friendly staff, or should we say her special elves, make this day a very special one for all of the participants. In fact, Maggie and her staff get so involved they have been known to enjoy a dance or two with us!

NTEC very much appreciates the warm welcome Arpad provides and we look forward to continuing our relationship with Maggie and Arpad for many holiday seasons to come.

Plant's Choice

NTEC Community Service Award

Plant's Choice is a Niagara-based producer of horticultural grade soil blends and mulches, overseen by proprietor Mike DiRaddo. NTEC is pleased to award them with a Community Service Award.

Mike kindly provided NTEC a helping hand this spring. Plant's Choice generously created a soil and mulch storage area by enclosing the space with large concrete blocks that serve as retaining walls to keep the various blends separate. This allowed NTEC EcoGardens to maintain a large volume in stock at all times. Plant's Choice also offered NTEC a contract that kept our participants busy bagging and sealing mulch and soil for retail sale. Finally, Mike donated enough mulch to surface the new walking trail from the nursery area of the Greenhouse to the meadow and forest edge areas of NTEC's property.

Thank you once again to Mike DiRaddo and Plant's Choice.

Antipastos di Roma

NTEC Partner in Service Award

The Partner in Service Award is extended to those that work in partnership with us to deliver a service, event or program. This year, we thank and recognize Annette Hounslow, supervisor, and Dominic DiSerfino, owner of Antipastos di Roma for providing an opportunity for a person we support to work in his own community.

Annette and the staff at Antipastos have been very supportive of Adam and have encouraged him to be successful in his position. They recognized his strengths and potential from the time he joined their establishment almost two years ago when he became part of the Antipastos family.

This partnership is greatly valued by our agency, and we look forward to working with Antipastos in the years to come.

Sassafras Farms

NTEC Partner in Service Award

Sassafras Farms provides consultation services, native species seed, and plant requirements for ecological restorations, conservation and reclamation projects. We are pleased to present proprietor Chris DiRaddo with an NTEC Partner in Service Award.

Chris was integral to the launch of NTEC EcoGardens this past spring. As the programming and retail components were developed, Chris generously provided much expertise on the garden centre business. Sassafras Farms also partnered in all marketing and public relations efforts to ensure that the community would know about the exciting work being done at NTEC.

Finally, Sassafras Farms donated more than 1000 native plant plugs for the walking trail at our Port Robinson property. This generous donation will last well into the future as these native plants thrive in our meadow and forest edge areas in the years to come.

Chris's unrivaled expertise on Niagara's native plants, his positive attitude, and dedication to the people we support is undeniable. NTEC is truly fortunate to have a partner like Chris DiRaddo of Sassafras Farms.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 HAPPY NEW YEAR OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 	4	5 SPORTS 4 FUN 7:00-8:00 p.m. Westlane Secondary 5960 Pitton Road 	6 	7	8	9
10	11 DARTS NIGHT 7:00-8:00 p.m. 4037 Longhurst Ave 	12 SPORTS 4 FUN 7:00-8:00 p.m. Westlane Secondary 5960 Pitton Road 	13	14 NIGHT OUT PROGRAM 6:30-8:30 p.m. St. John's Church 3428 Portage Road	15 	16
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31						

TUNE IN TO FIND OUT!

If bad winter weather leaves you wondering if NSS or NTEC day programs are operating, please tune in to:

105.7 FM EZ Rock or 610 AM CKTB

We will make every effort to notify the radio stations before 7:00 a.m. if programs will be closed for the day.

