

MIKE BRADLEY – MAYOR OF SARNIA



**2010
Sarnia, ON**

The City of Sarnia's motto is *People Serving People* and Mayor Mike Bradley believes that this statement should include people who have a disability. Mayor Bradley has long been a long-time supporter of hiring people with a disability and a vocal advocate with his "Mayor's Challenge" – an

opportunity for public and

private corporations to step up and hire from the talented but under-utilized pool of employees with a disability. Mayor Bradley has been recognized for his contributions with the Champions League Award by the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN).

Mayor Bradley is serving in his 9th term as Mayor of Sarnia and a major part of his campaign platform includes a commitment to fight for accessibility for people who have a disability. He has advocated for City of Sarnia staff to hire people with a disability in permanent positions and promoted the hiring of students who have a disability for summer jobs.

A Force for Change.

Mayor Bradley issued the Mayor's Challenge with the hope that he might "start a prairie fire" across Ontario when it comes to including people who have a disability as part of the workforce. The city has a long history of providing employment opportunities. At least 60 people with intellectual disabilities, including 13 last year, have been placed in meaningful jobs with the City of Sarnia since the program began.

"The mayor's challenge was created to inspire mayors across the province to do the right thing and lead and promote the hiring of people who have a disability in their communities," Bradley says.

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"The Sarnia experience has shown that there is tremendous value to the employee, the workforce and the community. Everyone wins."

Since issuing the challenge, he has spent frequent evenings volunteering his time providing service providers from across Ontario with advice and support for the challenge. He routinely contacts mayors to help 'close the deal.'

Working with ODEN's co-chair Bob Vansickle and Community Living Sarnia Lambton, a survey was issued that challenges 32 municipalities to help build inclusive workplaces as Sarnia has done. The survey gathered information on the current state of inclusive hiring practices.

"It's a simple philosophy in the community – no one wins unless everybody does.

Both the city and the employees win from this. You're giving people a chance to fulfil their potential. Secondly, it's a great benefit to the workforce."

Mayor Mike Bradley

"Mayor Mike Bradley has done a phenomenal job of advocating for people to take their rightful place in the community.

He truly believes that hiring people who have a disability is not only the right thing to do, it's a smart thing for businesses to do. His challenge to other Mayor's across the province to hire people is a great example of innovation and leadership."

Keith Powell, Executive Director at Community Living Ontario

As an advocate for an inclusionary workforce Mayor Bradley has regularly presented at numerous meetings and events, passionately advocating to employers to hire people with a disability, including: the Community Living Mayors' Breakfast; the Ability First Conference; Chamber of Commerce events; and government, business and service provider sponsored activities. He created "The Mayor's Boat Cruise" an annual event to thank the county's inclusive employers.

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Recognizing Excellence

- Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal
- First Annual Kiwanis of the Seaway President's Award (2006)
- The Paul Harris Fellowship (2009)
- First recipient of the "James (Jim) Mackenzie Award"
- Recipient of the Harry Buist Asbestos Awareness Award (2011)
- Links to Life Award (2011)
- Hero Award, Community Living Sarnia Lambton
- Champions League Award (2010)
- Community Living Ontario's Citizenship Award (2011)
- Community Spirit & Vision Award" from The Work Place Group for work on the Employee Disability Challenge (2011)
- Corporate Social Responsibility Award by the Canadian HR Reporter and the Human Resources Professionals Association (2012)
- The Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award (2014)

The Ontario Disability Network (ODEN) is a professional body of employment service providers united to increase employment opportunities for people who have a disability. The Champions League award recognizes employers who've made great progress in hiring people who have a disability, promoting the movement and making a commitment to continue it in the future.