



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EMERGING LEADERS SET THEIR CITY-BUILDING AGENDA FOR TORONTO 2010 AT INAUGURAL STUDIO EVENT

December 15, 2009 – Toronto – The Emerging Leaders Network (ELN), an initiative of the Toronto City Summit Alliance (the Alliance), hosted the city's up-and-coming leaders for their inaugural ELNstudio event at the MaRS Discovery District today. The day-long ELNstudio saw a new generation of civic-minded leaders present strategic projects focused on shaping Toronto's future.

Working groups of ELN members presented five city-building initiatives:

1. Attracting the next generation of leaders and innovators who have gone abroad back to Toronto (<http://elnonline.ca/our-work/toronto-homecoming/report/>)
2. Animating John Street: Creating an arts and cultural spine and creative hub in downtown Toronto
3. Creating a Living Library of Torontonians from diverse backgrounds to build cross-cultural networks
4. Exploring municipal voting reform to increase the effectiveness and diversity of Toronto and other municipal councils (<http://www.betterballots.to/>)
5. Enhancing awareness and dispelling myths about poverty through outreach and engagement with senior leaders

Courtney Pratt, Interim Chair of the Alliance, welcomed the group with heartfelt words on the recent passing of Alliance founder David Pecaut and a strong call to action: "Use today, and the days and weeks to come, to collaborate, debate, share and learn. Think about what really is our collective vision for Toronto. Then act. We owe it to David and to ourselves."

David Peterson, Chair of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Bid and Alliance Steering Committee Member delivered a motivational keynote address, 'Making It Through the Finish Line.' Mr. Peterson spoke about the challenges and excitement of developing a winning bid, and the inspiration he drew from the diverse team of people who represented Toronto in the bid process. He challenged the ELN members to seize the opportunity to set the agenda for Toronto in 2010.

Networking was a key element of the day, which merged the insights and advice of noted city leaders – from Mayor Miller’s opening video address to conversations with notable leaders including John Tory, Glen Murray, Dr. John Evans, Alliance Interim Chair Courtney Pratt, Susan Pigott, Tim Jones and Ilse Treunicht – with the enthusiasm of young passionate contributors.

A special highlight was a moving interview with 90 year-old Canadian hockey legend, Herb Carnegie, who spoke about the racism he experienced as a young hockey player and urged the group to continue breaking down barriers and working for change.

In a plenary discussion led by Julia Deans, CEO of the Alliance, the gathering of over 150 emerging leaders identified five new areas for action that will help set the agenda for the Alliance’s 2011 Summit:

1. Address the need for a greater focus on the Toronto region’s economic strengths that drive employment and prosperity
2. Develop a strategy around holistic community health and well-being that inspires the way we build and plan neighbourhoods and services
3. Foster innovation through supporting and celebrating thoughtful risk-taking
4. Coordinate land-use planning and transportation demand management with transportation investment
5. Inspire a greater understanding of social determinants of health to advance the prosperity of our city

The ELN’s ambitious 2010 agenda reflects the momentum of a thriving group, explains ELN Co-chair Mitzie Hunter, CAO of Toronto Community Housing: “Today’s studio event was truly unique. The energy and passion in the room was palpable. Alliance founder David Pecaut has passed the torch to the next generation of leaders. I am inspired by their commitment to the city, and look forward to working with them to further this agenda.”

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About the Toronto City Summit Alliance

The Toronto City Summit Alliance is a not-for-profit, non-partisan coalition of leaders from the non-profit, business, labour, education, and government sectors. The Alliance was formed to address challenges to the future of Toronto such as expanding knowledge-based industry, poor economic integration of immigrants, decaying infrastructure, and affordable housing. At the present time, twelve projects are underway or completed. To read more about the Alliance visit: www.torontoalliance.ca.

About ELN

The Emerging Leaders Network (ELN) is a group of over 200 engaged civic leaders who in their own spheres are becoming known as "city-builders": people who mobilize action, laying the social groundwork for the city of tomorrow. ELN members support the work of the Toronto City Summit Alliance and, as a result of the myriad resources available through the ELN network, are pursuing city-building projects of their own. For more information, visit www.elnonline.ca

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