



A fair shake

In some ways it would be easier to be the editor of one of those fashion or lifestyle magazines. That way, when the September issue rolled around, I could just write my editor's note on fluffy topics like back-to-school fashion or how the leaves are changing colour, instead of our real theme—access to the profession. Access, an unfluffy topic if there ever was one, is right up there with the most controversial issues that PEO deals with.

That controversy can be summed up with one word: fairness. Of course, PEO has always believed in giving every applicant a fair shake by ensuring all of its licensing and registration procedures are as transparent and accessible as possible (p. 16). PEO doesn't stop there though. It works with immigrant advocacy groups and job counselling centres to further ease IEGs into the work force. The process seems to be work-

ing. In a June press release, PEO's CEO and Registrar Kim Allen, P.Eng., was quoted as saying, "Approximately one-third of Ontario's 68,000 licensed engineers were educated outside Canada, a testament to PEO's continuous efforts to facilitate the licensing of internationally trained professionals, while maintaining high standards to protect the public." But, no matter how you try to make the process of getting licensed fair for all, there will always be critics who, for various reasons, think the system unfair. It's just the nature of the beast.

We certainly can't hope to cover all aspects of such a highly charged and complex subject in just one issue. So, we've focused on some interesting developments on the topic of access, for example, the recent introduction of federal and provincial legislation. In "Stepping up to meet the test" (p. 52), we take a look at the fed-

eral government's announcement in June to create an agency to assess and recognize the credentials of new immigrants, and *The Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006*, legislation introduced around the same time by the McGuinty government. The *Fair Access* act, which applies to engineering and 33 other regulated professions, is designed to get internationally trained professionals working sooner and to overcome any potential delays in credential assessment.

We'll also bring readers up to speed on the progress of PEO's Equity and Diversity Committee (p. 56), which was formed in 2004 to integrate the values of equity and diversity into the association's general policy and business operations, and to find practical ways to increase diversity in the profession. The committee has produced the *Towards Fairness* report, now being used as the foundation of an entire equity and diversity policy for PEO that is expected to result in more women, internationally trained, aboriginal and other under-represented groups entering the profession.

This issue marks the debut of a new column, *GLP Journal* (p. 29), authored by David Smith, PEO's media specialist. With all of the activities happening this fall with PEO's newly expanded and ever-growing Government Liaison Program (GLP), including the campaign college (a one-day political process primer), President Quinn's whistle-stop tour of the province, and the second Engineering for Ontarians Day, it was time to have one area in *Engineering Dimensions* readers could turn to to find news of these events and learn about opportunities to put their own hats into the ring for future activities.

There will undoubtedly be more than enough for David to cover over the next few months and beyond as the program really revs up.

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