

HOW TO HOST A SUCCESSFUL TAKE YOUR MPP TO WORK DAY

By Howard Brown and Blake Keidan

The 2017 changes to Ontario political fundraising laws have impacted PEO's opportunities to meet with MPPs. New legislation banned MPPs from attending their own fundraisers as well as receiving corporate, association or union donations.

We discussed in our March column ("A new approach to engagement," *Engineering Dimensions*, March/April 2017, p. 32) how PEO activities such as the Government Liaison Program (GLP) academies and congresses or licence presentation ceremonies are now even more fundamental to PEO's successful relationships with MPPs.

Let's look at the Take Your MPP to Work Days. Since 2013, PEO has hosted almost two dozen MPPs at these events (see sidebar, p. 40).

Sophie Kiwala, MPP (Kingston and the Islands), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of tourism, culture and sport, participated in a Take Your MPP to Work Day on March 13, 2015. Two weeks later, she stood up in the legislature and said the following about her experience:

"Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge our province's world-class engineers. Recently, I was asked by Professional

Engineers Ontario to take part in their Take Your MPP to Work program. The good work done by our diligent engineers largely takes place behind the scenes, but one major aspect of their work—safety—affects us all every day. I commend PEO for their leadership in developing standards that prioritize the safety of Ontarians and, furthermore, I would like to recognize them for encouraging female participation in engineering."

Indira Naidoo-Harris, MPP (Halton), then associate finance minister, attended the first-ever joint Take Your MPP to Work Day hosted by PEO's Oakville and Mississauga chapters on July 20, 2016. Afterwards, she put her comments very succinctly: "This is the best event PEO does!"

Since the theme of this issue of *Engineering Dimensions* is practice guidelines, we thought we would provide PEO members with a short guideline on how to host a Take Your MPP to Work Day.



Jeff Yurek, MPP (Elgin-Middlesex-London), PC health critic (fourth from left), attended the London Chapter's third Take Your MPP to Work Day on August 23, 2016. Participating were (left to right) PEO London Chapter Past Chair Oscar Avila, P.Eng.; London Chapter GLP Chair Tomiwa Olukiyesi, P.Eng.; London Chapter Chair Imtiaz Shah, P.Eng.; Government Liaison Committee (GLC) Chair Darla Campbell, P.Eng.; Ontario Society of Professional Engineers' Policy Analyst Patrick Sackville; and London Chapter members Julian Novick, P.Eng., Remona Johnson, P.Eng., Luke Seewald P.Eng., Kevin Spicer, P.Eng., and Matt Miedema, P.Eng.

PEO TAKE YOUR MPP TO WORK DAY GUIDELINE 2017

STAGE 1: WHERE AND WHEN

Select a host company:

- First you must pick an engineering company or other organization that employs professional engineers in your MPP's constituency and contact them about hosting.
- To demonstrate the work done by engineers, the visit can consist of a presentation, facility tour, meet-and-greet, lunch, etc.

You can host the event whenever the schedule permits, however, Fridays are constituent days and MPPs are more likely to be available for events in their constituency.

STAGE 2: WHO

Identify which MPP you would like to invite. Most PEO chapters border on several ridings. You can find out your electoral district by visiting the Elections Ontario website (www.elections.on.ca) or using their app (<https://www3.elections.on.ca/internetapp/fyed.aspx>).

STAGE 3: CONFIRM KEY MESSAGES

There are three key messages that need to be expressed:

1. PEO has a legislative mandate under the *Professional Engineers Act* to regulate the practice of professional engineering in the public interest;
2. The self-regulating engineering profession in Ontario—comprising over 85,000 licence and certificate holders—has been successfully serving and protecting the public for 95 years; and
3. PEO has unique knowledge and expertise, and it is in the best interest of government to consult with PEO before considering new policy directions that may have the potential to impact the regulation of the practice of professional engineering.

STAGE 4: PLAN EVENT AGENDA

Although it is called a day, most visits are two hours!

These events are intended to bring together MPPs and professional engineers so the MPPs can learn more about engineers and the important work they do in order that the public interest may be served and protected, and bring awareness of the role of PEO.

If your chapter decides to host a Take Your MPP to Work Day there are three main goals to keep in mind:

1. Increase MPPs' understanding of the regulatory role of PEO;
2. Develop relationships between MPPs and local engineers and PEO chapters; and
3. Help foster a better understanding of engineering work among MPPs.

While you want to get as much information across to the MPP, you don't want to overwhelm them:

- Tours should be around 30 minutes and should focus on high concepts, and the value that has for the public;
- PowerPoint presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes and should have minimal text on screen; and
- Share real-life stories and anecdotes to make the whole experience more engaging.

STAGE 5: HOST EVENT

- Have alternative activities planned in case a tour activity is no longer available;
- Have a rain date planned in case the MPP has to reschedule;
- Take lots of photos;
- Take notes on the event, attendees, MPP's comments/questions, etc.; and
- Coordinate a thank-you gift from PEO.

STAGE 6: FOLLOW UP

Send a follow-up email to the MPP and their staff:

- Be appreciative of the meeting;
- Summarize what you discussed to demonstrate you listened;
- Include any documents you discussed or mentioned; and
- Clarify next steps/future meetings.

If your chapter is interested in hosting a Take Your MPP to Work Day in 2017, contact Jeannette Chau, PEO manager of government liaison programs, at jchau@peo.on.ca. [e](#)

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MPPs GO TO WORK

Curious about who has participated in PEO's Take Your MPP to Work Day? Below is the full list of participants since the program began in 2013.

2013

Cindy Forster, MPP (Welland), then NDP municipal affairs and housing critic, visited Niagara College with PEO's Niagara Chapter.

Kevin Flynn, MPP (Oakville), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of transportation, visited Siemens Canada with the Oakville Chapter.

2014

Mike Colle, MPP (Eglinton-Lawrence), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of transportation, visited Toronto Rehabilitation Institute with the West Toronto Chapter.

Bob Bailey, MPP (Sarnia-Lambton), then PC natural resources critic, visited Shell Canada's refinery facility in Sarnia with the Lambton Chapter.

2015

Teresa Armstrong, MPP (London-Fanshawe), then NDP citizenship, immigration and international trade and seniors' affairs critic, visited the Upper Thames Valley Conservation Authority with the London Chapter.

Sophie Kiwala, MPP (Kingston and the Islands), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of tourism, culture and sport, visited Bombardier on March 13 with the Kingston Chapter.

Arthur Potts, MPP (Beaches-East York), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of agriculture, food and rural affairs, visited a City of Toronto water treatment plant with the East Toronto Chapter.

Indira Naidoo-Harris, MPP (Halton), then parliamentary assistant to the minister of health and long-term care, visited Siemens Canada with the Oakville Chapter.

Yvan Baker, MPP (Etobicoke Centre), then parliamentary assistant to the president of the Treasury Board, visited KINETRICS with the Etobicoke Chapter. Baker also visited Acuren Group with the chapter.

France Gélinas, MPP (Nickel Belt), then NDP aboriginal affairs, francophone affairs, health and long-term care critic, visited SNOLAB with the Sudbury Chapter.

2016

Peggy Sattler, MPP (London West), then NDP women's issues, training, colleges, universities, research and innovation critic, and **Teresa Armstrong** visited 3M with the London Chapter.

Lisa Gretzky, MPP (Windsor West), then NDP education critic, visited Stantec Consulting with the Windsor Chapter.

Labour Minister **Kevin Flynn, MPP (Oakville)**, **Indira Naidoo-Harris** and **Amrit Mangat, MPP (Mississauga-Brampton South)**, then parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for women's issues and to the minister responsible for accessibility, visited Credit Valley Conservation Authority with the Oakville and Mississauga chapters.



Lisa Thompson, MPP (Huron-Bruce), PC international trade, indigenous relations and reconciliation critic (centre), participated in a Take Your MPP to Work Day hosted by PEO Georgian Bay Chapter on February 6. With her in the photo are (left to right) Price Schonstrom, General Manager Rance Tupling, P.Eng., President Rich Grubb, P.Eng., PEO Georgian Bay Chapter GLP Chair Arjan Arenja, P.Eng., and chapter GLP subcommittee volunteer Glenn Sutton, P.Eng.

Gila Martow, MPP (Thornhill), PC francophone affairs, anti-racism secretariat and GTA issues critic, visited the Bill Fisch Forest Stewardship and Education Centre in Whitchurch-Stouffville with the York and Willowdale-Thornhill chapters.

Jeff Yurek, MPP (Elgin-Middlesex-London), PC health critic, visited Presstran Industries with the London Chapter.

Bill Walker, MPP (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound), PC critic for long-term care, visited Tenneco's Owen Sound Operation with the Georgian Bay Chapter.

2017

John Fraser, MPP (Ottawa South), parliamentary assistant to the minister of health and long-term care, visited the Chaudière Falls Expansion Site with the Ottawa Chapter.

Lisa Thompson, MPP (Huron-Bruce), PC international trade, indigenous relations and reconciliation critic, visited Price Schonstrom Incorporated with the Georgian Bay Chapter.

Soo Wong, MPP (Scarborough-Agincourt), parliamentary assistant to the minister of community safety and correctional services, visited the Bell Canada office at Scarborough Town Centre with the Scarborough Chapter.