

Trustee pay to increase from \$5,000 to \$13,159 per year

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New provincial regulations make it possible for boards to dramatically increase the annual stipend for subsequent boards, and to award back pay.

Each trustee will receive \$8,153 in back pay for the period September 1, 2005 to September 1, 2006. As well, each trustee will get an additional \$1,882 tacked on to their monthly pay, spread out from September through November 2006, as part of the entire 15-month retroactive period.

The board also approved, by an 11-0 vote, to increase regular trustee pay to \$13,159 per year from the current \$5,000 annual flat rate across the province. The new pay scale is in effect from December 1, 2006 to the end of

November 2010.

Board vice-chairs and chairs will make an extra \$2,500 and \$5,000 respectively annually beyond the trustee base amount. Factoring in a student enrolment amount, which will be recalculated every year, the Halton board chair will make \$20,475 and the vice-chair \$16,830.

Board Superintendent of Finance Steve Parfeniuk said previously that the \$88,683 in trustee retroactive pay has to be absorbed by the board. He said he expects the Ministry of Education will cover the difference in trustee pay at the new amount.

Trustees' annual pay has been \$5,000 since the Conservative government of Mike Harris changed the pay

scale in 1997 to a flat-rate system for the 72 school boards in the province. Previously, trustees set their own pay. In 1996, Halton trustees received \$12,252 annually while the board chair got \$18,372.

At the special meeting, trustees also amended its policy concerning student trustees. Student trustees who go on to attend college or university are eligible for a \$2,500 honorarium for each year they serve on the board. Student trustee terms are for one year but they can be reappointed to another term.

Education Director Wayne Joudrie said after the meeting that the money to pay the honorarium to student trustees will be funded by the Province.

Shopping centre construction to resume

The construction of a new shopping centre will soon be getting underway on a property that has sat vacant for months at Thompson Road and Main Street.

Plans for the development at the southwest corner of the intersection were delayed for a while after nearby business owner Link-Line appealed it to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), citing concern for the

site's design.

But the OMB recently gave the centre the go-ahead, making way for a large Loblaws store and East Side Mario's restaurant, among other retail uses.

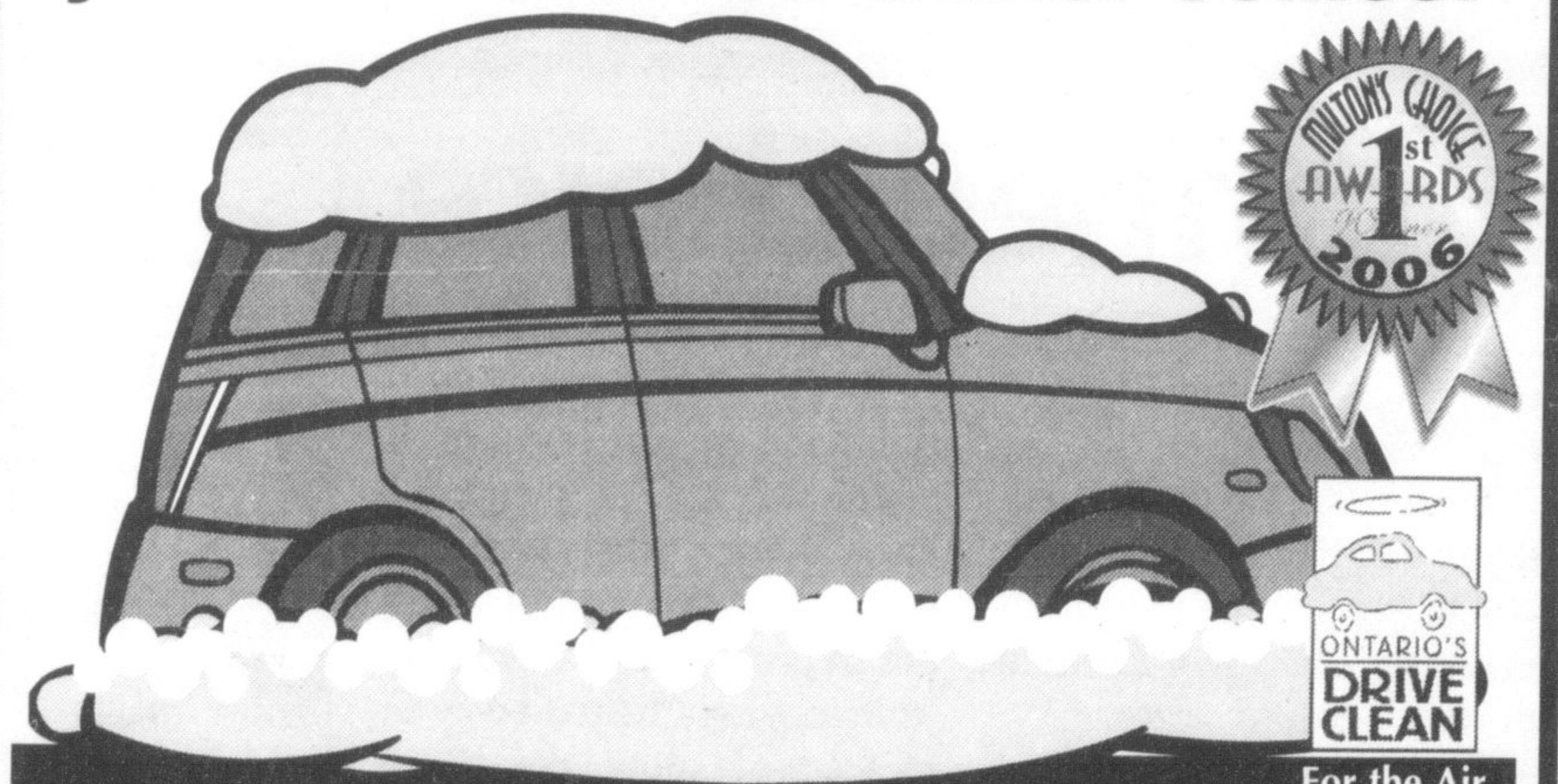
"They're basically just wrapping up their site plan right now, which is required before they can get their building permit," Town Director of Planning and Development Mel Iovio explained.

He added that preliminary work on the site, such as plumbing installation, is currently being completed. Construction could start within the next few weeks.

The shopping centre is a joint venture between Trinity Development Group Inc. and Loblaws Companies Ltd., with RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust involved on the financing side of things.

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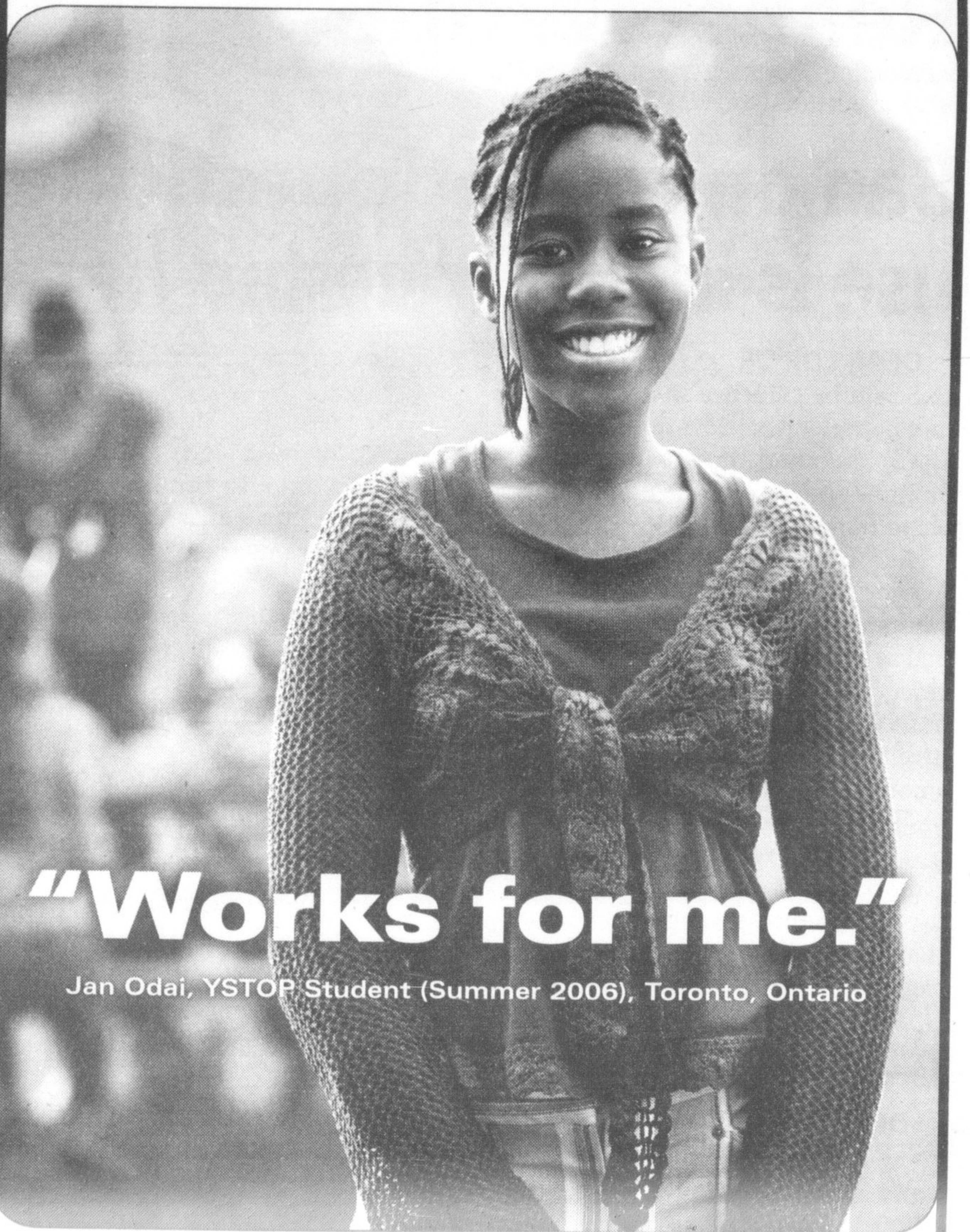
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