

# York Region cops off to help NYC colleagues

BY ROGER VARLEY  
Staff Writer

Six York Regional Police officers and three mental health professionals leave for New York City today to help officers there who have been traumatized by events stemming from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"The longer and more enormous the event, the longer it takes before the EMS workers are ready for help," Det. Brad McKay said Thursday, explaining why the team is going to New York more than three months after the World Trade Center collapsed.

"They have been so consumed

by doing their job."

McKay said his team is responding to a call for help from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

"They (New York police) have their own team but because of the enormity of the event, everyone is pitching in," he said.

McKay and his colleagues are members of the York Region critical incident stress management team, a volunteer group formed in 1996 to assist police, firefighters, EMS and hospital staff who encounter traumatic incidents while working.

The team's duties in New York will consist of debriefing groups of police officers and spending time

with workers in and around Ground Zero.

The team will be in New York until Friday. Heading the volunteers with McKay will be Dr. Barbara Anshuetz, a Newmarket psychologist.

The other mental health professionals are Dr. Mary-Beth Bourne, a South Lake Regional Health Care emergency room physician, and Joddie McLeaming, a Victim Witness court worker from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The other police officers on the team are Sgt. Deiter Boeheim, Det. Bruce West, Const. Neil Orr, Const. Gary Phillips and Det.-Const. Shannon Anderson.

"We have training and experience," said McKay.

"Some are certified trauma responders. As peers of the New York police, we will listen to them and provide education and coping skills."

Funding for the venture is provided by the York police services board and the force itself.

McKay said the six police officers will be going to New York as on-duty officers but the two doctors will be closing their practices for the week and McLeaming will be using her vacation time for the trip.

While in New York, the group will be laying a wreath on behalf of the citizens of York Region.

## Education at risk, say students

Rising costs and the possibility of widespread deregulation of tuition fees could mean the end of post-secondary education for many high school students, provincial politicians were told during a recent forum at Markham's Middlefield Collegiate.

"What the average student doesn't realize is that once we get into post-secondary, we'll not only be faced with the increasing tuition, but we'll be living on our own and will have to earn on our own," said Prahar Shah, Executive director of Student Action York (SAY).

Shah noted over the past decade, the average tuition for an arts and science student has increased 241 per cent, from \$1,639 to \$3,951 per year. Over the same period, debt upon graduation has jumped from \$8,675 to \$20,496.

"And yet we don't see student income increasing by a similar proportion. Twenty years ago you had to work about 200 hours over four years to pay for your tuition. Now, you have to work over 660 hours — that's unrealistic."

Shah's comments were made to about 70 OAC students, along with Liberal MPPs Marie Bountrogianni and Gerard Kennedy, plus the NDP's Rosario Marchese. Bryce Rudyk represented the Ontario Undergraduate Students Alliance (OUSA).

"Students from lower income families will be shut out of universities as it increasingly becomes an invitation for heavy debt," said Rudyk. The forum was organized by SAY to ensure students are informed about relevant issues. SAY represents the interests of full-time York Region high school students.

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