

## 2007 Northern Physical Activity Roundtable Keeps Northerners Moving

On Tuesday, March 20, 87 physical activity leaders participated in the 2007 Northern Physical Activity Roundtable at the Marlboro Inn in Prince Albert.

Highlights of the morning portion of the roundtable included an update on Saskatchewan *in motion* strategies for 2006-2008; a “walk” through the Northern Physical Activity Action Plan and its initiatives to date and up to December 2007, as well as feedback from participants for next year. Keynote presenter, Dr. James Irvine (Medical Health Officer for the 3 northern health authorities) in his session, When “Just Do It” is not enough: the latest on physical activity and health, provided updated research and statistics reminding us of the importance of physical activity and its value to health and disease prevention. The second keynote was Jason Loutitt (Marathon and Mountain Runner), “Chased by a Bear – becoming a fitness messenger” challenged us to find our inspiration, embrace our culture, and inspire others through physical activity. The morning closed with exceptional physical activity success stories from three northern communities, Creighton, Wollaston Lake and Air Ronge, demonstrating the great initiatives and partnerships in our northern communities.

Lunch hour included time for viewing the “Walk of Fame” poster presentations provided, gathering information at the resource table, and an overview of the Building Communities Program, a \$2 million dollar infrastructure program for recreation (including sport, culture and physical activity) facilities for Northern Saskatchewan as well as the provincial program (larger projects).

The afternoon included an informative panel presentation with the following topics: Traditional Physical Activity and Health Prevention; Nutrition and the “Drop the Pop” initiative; Quality Daily Physical Education; Sport Development; Workplace initiatives at Areva McClean Lake Mine, and Active Transportation and Physical Environments. The panel was followed by some time for area or regional discussion groups focused on building on the successes and addressing barriers to physical activity in our northern communities. Participants were then asked to set their own personal action plans which will be mailed back to them as a reminder and continued encouragement near the end of April.

Celebrating our successes, the roundtable closed with a recognition program. Seven northern physical activity champions or initiatives were recognized for their notable efforts to increase physical activity in their communities.

Here are some responses from the 2007 Northern Physical Activity Roundtable participants in answering “What was most beneficial for you?”

“The positive energy in the room as support”

“The presenters their stories and experiences are so motivational”

The role models (Jason, Julie)

“Networking with the different sectors”

“Contacts and information”

“ ... new and interesting ideas to try back home”