



# Hamilton CarShare

203-290 King St. E.  
Kitchener, ON N2G 2L3  
tel: 905-543-4411  
fax: 519-579-2195  
info@hamiltoncarshare.ca  
www.hamiltoncarshare.ca

For Immediate Release

## Hamilton CarShare reaching out to newcomer community

March 23, 2011

HAMILTON – Hamilton CarShare, the city's non-profit carsharing co-operative, is piloting a new innovative outreach project that is designed to show members of Hamilton's newcomer community how carsharing can be an affordable and green way to get around.

"Our membership was not reflecting the cultural and economic diversity of the region" said Valerie Cousins, a long-time CarShare volunteer. "We decided to do something about it."

Hamilton CarShare began its project by improving the intercultural knowledge of volunteers and staff through Cross-Cultural Marketing training sessions. The sessions are being facilitated by CultureShift, a local company specializing in developing intercultural competence in community leaders. One session has been held so far and two others are scheduled for March 24 and April 7. Volunteers will then put their training into action.

This project is not just another multicultural initiative, and it's a realization of an opportunity and a thirst for fresh ideas that drew Hamilton CarShare into this project. Research has shown green behavior is lacking in newcomers when compared to people born and raised here, and the initiative has caught the attention of the academic world as well as local environmental organizations. In a region where 4,200 newcomers settle every year and where close to one in four are born somewhere else, Hamilton CarShare decided to learn how to better position its CarShare service in the newcomer market.

"It is rare for us to be contacted by immigrants or new Canadians about carsharing," said Simon Geoghegan, another CarShare volunteer. "We realized we must get out of our comfort zone, and think beyond regular multicultural festivals if we hope to reach out to newcomers to our city."

Through its training sessions, Hamilton CarShare will strive to increase the diversity of its members.

"We realized that we must shift our world view to that of the person sitting next to us," said Syam Chandra, Director. "We need to market our service from the perspective of the potential member, and the newcomers' perspective is often not that of the dominant culture."

Hamilton CarShare has been operating in Hamilton since Sept. 2009, and provides access to its three vehicles on a self-serve, pay-per use basis. Reservations for CarShare vehicles can be made for as little as 30 minutes, or as long as needed, and gas and maintenance costs are included in driving rates. Overall, driving is reduced, helping members to improve their personal and financial health, while mitigating climate change and increasing neighbourhood vibrancy. More information can be found on the co-op's website, [www.hamiltoncarshare.ca](http://www.hamiltoncarshare.ca)

-30-

For more information contact:

Jason Hammond, President  
905-543-4411  
jason@grandrivercarshare.ca

Syam Chandra, Director  
905-524-5209  
syam@grandrivercarshare.ca