

MEDIA RELEASE

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**OPHA launches “Sheela Basrur Scholarship”
for Public Health students**

Toronto, August 17, 2007 – The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) is proud to announce the launch of a new award for public health students. The “Sheela Basrur Scholarship” of \$1,000 will be awarded to an OPHA member who is enrolled in an education program related to Public Health.

“We’re really excited about this scholarship,” said Dr. Garry Aslanyan, President of OPHA. “It allows us to accomplish two equally important goals: supporting the education and development of current and future public health professionals, and honouring one of the great public health heroes of our time.”

Dr. Sheela Basrur recently stepped down from her position of Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario due to illness. Prior to her provincial role, Dr. Basrur steadily and expertly steered Toronto through SARS and many other public health issues as the city’s Medical Officer of Health.

When informed of the honour, Dr. Basrur stated: “I am surprised and absolutely delighted to receive news of this wonderful award in my name! My sincere thanks for this go to you and the members of the Membership Committee and OPHA Board for setting up this wonderful initiative. Reading news of it brought tears to my eyes, as the nomination criteria all involve matters that are closest to my heart.”

Information about the award and the nomination process is available at

<http://www.opha.on.ca/activities/awards/student.html>.

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