FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CCT and Durham Region Expand Access to DEI Learning Opportunities

Six new self-paced modules developed by Durham Region are now available to tourism professionals through the Central Counties Tourism Learning Lab.

Courtice, ON (October 14, 2026) – Central Counties Tourism (CCT) and the Regional Municipality of Durham are expanding access to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) learning opportunities by making six of Durham Region's self-paced learning modules available to tourism professionals, businesses and organizations through the CCT Learning Lab.

The new resources include a four-module DEI Foundations Series, along with modules focused on Anti-Black Racism and Understanding Gender and Sexual Orientation. Originally developed as part of Durham Region's own learning and development resources, the modules are now being made available to the broader tourism community through CCT's Learning Lab.

The DEI Foundations Series introduces four core concepts — bias, systemic injustice, privilege and colonialism — and examines how they can show up at personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural levels. The modules use Canadian examples and are designed to build a common understanding of these concepts and their relevance in the workplace.

The Anti-Black Racism module explores the history of racism and anti-Black racism in Canada, systemic racism, bias and privilege. Through real-world scenarios and data, learners examine how anti-Black racism can appear in everyday situations and its impact on Black Canadians, including in hiring and career progression.

Understanding Gender and Sexual Orientation introduces terminology related to sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, while exploring some of the barriers experienced by 2SLGBTQ+ people in Canada. The module also explores relevant human rights protections and practical actions individuals and organizations can take to support 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion in the workplace.

Together, the six modules are designed to be concise and accessible. Individual modules take approximately 14 to 20 minutes to complete, while the full DEI Foundations Series takes approximately 70 minutes.

"*Tourism businesses are continually working to create welcoming experiences for their visitors, and that starts with the people and workplaces behind those experiences*," said Chuck Thibeault, Executive Director, Central Counties Tourism. "*Expanding the Learning Lab with these resources gives our industry another practical way to build knowledge, consider approaches within their own organizations and create more inclusive experiences for both visitors and employees*."

"*At the Region of Durham, we are committed to working across our region and beyond to ensure diversity is embraced and each one of us is valued and included. Partnering to share our educational resources through Central Counties Tourism's Learning Lab provides an opportunity for tourism professionals, businesses and organizations within CCT's network to build skills that foster a sense of belonging, helping to create a more welcoming community for all visitors. Setting aside the time to learn and grow can drive lasting and meaningful community change."* – Sandra Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development, Regional Municipality of Durham

The Learning Lab is part of CCT's broader efforts to support tourism professionals, businesses and organizations with resources, information and opportunities that strengthen the region's tourism industry.

The new DEI learning opportunities are now available through the CCT Learning Lab. To explore the new modules and access the CCT Learning Lab, visit learninglab.centralcounties.ca.

About Central Counties Tourism
Central Counties Tourism (CCT) was established as a regional tourism organization in 2010 under the framework developed by the then-named Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Its mandate is to help stakeholders build their capacity which, in turn, grows visitation and vibrant communities throughout the York, Durham, and Headwaters regions. CCT is funded by the Ontario Government and managed as a not-for-profit organization by a voluntary tourism industry board. CCT's mission is to develop, support and promote tourism within the region.

About the Regional Municipality of Durham
Located on the eastern side of the GTHA, Durham is a region with momentum. Offering a competitive advantage like no other, Durham is a community where talented, smart, diverse and ambitious people, known for their innovation, creativity, skills and education, bring access to world markets, insights, invention and traditions. It's also a destination worth discovering, with urban excitement, country charm and plenty to explore across the region. Visit durham.ca to learn more about this vibrant and growing community.

Media Contact:
Central Counties Tourism
Chuck Thibeault
media@centralcounties.ca
centralcounties.ca