

## **A good citizen**

*Federal government employee helps visually-impaired friend build new family ties*

*By Loukia Mertikas Zigoumis*

**Sept. 7, 2006 – Ottawa, ON –** Jean Boulay began volunteering for Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa-Carleton in 2003 and has not looked back.



"Volunteering with Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa-Carleton was my first real foray into the world of volunteerism," said Mr. Boulay, a design analyst with the Canada Revenue Agency in Ottawa.

*"Everyone should experience getting to know someone with a disability, if only to get a better understanding of what they go through, but more importantly, to learn that they are no different than the rest of us," says Jean Boulay, a design analyst with the Canada Revenue Agency in Ottawa.*

Citizen Advocacy is an organization dedicated to helping people with disabilities participate fully in their communities.

Mr. Boulay was paired with Joe, an Aboriginal man who has been blind since birth and had not been with his family since he was a child. Mr. Boulay helped Joe achieve some of his personal goals, including once more visiting with his family.

In January 2006, Joe was reunited with his two brothers, sister, sister-in-law and niece. Another reunion was planned for the summer.

Mr. Boulay's family has also gotten to know Joe, and he is fast becoming part of their lives, too.

"That is what is most rewarding—that Joe now has two families instead of none!"

Mr. Boulay calls Joe an "incredible person" and feels honoured to be able to help him.

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Mr. Boulay is one example of Government of Canada employees making a difference in their communities. Along with their regular volunteering, thousands of public servants participate in the annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC), the largest workplace charitable project in Canada. In 2005, federal public servants contributed more than \$29.5 million to GCWCC in 113 communities nation-wide. GCWCC 2006 kicks off on September 7 and will run until November 22.

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