Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management (519 and 905 Areas)

Group Discussion at the Peel Community Dialogue

(March 27, 2008)

Interest from Overseas

"I read your information [about the Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management project] with great interest. Our Diversify! publication has proven to be a very good resource for organisations to use as a tool in understanding Cultural Diversity in Volunteering in Ireland."

That's how a recent e-mail began from Sarah Williams, Volunteer Centre Manager of Volunteering Ireland. Her organization has done a lot of research and work in the last few years around the topic of volunteerism and social inclusion. Sarah was eager to hear more about our project and let us know of resources they've developed.

Their Diversify! publication promotes volunteering as a positive tool for social change and integration and assists in facilitating the process of volunteering for both organizations and volunteers. The resource will help anyone who works with volunteers to face the challenges that a more diverse volunteer force can bring to an organization. Diversify! outlines the benefits and barriers to cultural diversity in volunteering and gives practical advice for increasing the diversity of volunteers.

The Diversify! publication:

- provides profiles of the countries where many of the foreign nationals currently living in Ireland are from

- explores the meaning of volunteering in different cultures

- promotes the value of cultural diversity and volunteering

- provides practical information and strategies to overcome possible barriers to volunteer involvement

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Website

The Project's website is now live! What you'll find in this website:

- a description of the project as well as information about the project team and partners

- summary proceedings of community and regional dialogues to let you know what people said about the issues and needs for recruiting and supporting a more culturally diverse volunteer base

- a searchable inventory of existing tools, resources and strategies to support your organization's capacity to recruit and support a culturally diverse base of volunteers (read more about the inventory in this Newsletter – see next page)

- statistical profiles and maps of the immigrant and visible minority populations in selected 905 and 519 regions

Check it all out at www.culturaldiversityandvolunteers.ca.

Inventory Update

The inventory is a central feature of the Project and the Project's website. It is a searchable database of resources for developing the capacity of organizations to recruit and support a diverse volunteer base.

The Inventory will contain:

- general cultural diversity resources

- specific resources about looking at the volunteer management cycle through the lens of cultural diversity

- region-specific information about:

  – Cultural festivals and events
  – Cultural and faith-based institutions
  – Cultural media
  – Cultural experts and community organizations, etc.

Starting this month, we will begin to input the approximately 150 resources we've already collected. These resources focus on applying cultural diversity to volunteer management practices. Then we'll move into the second wave of inputting resources – the ones participants identified during the eight Community Dialogues during Phase 1 of the Project.

Please continue to send Louise (info@luchuk.com) any resources to be added to the Inventory.

Interest from Overseas *cont'd from page 1*

To download the free Diversify! publication, visit:

http://www.volunteeringireland.com/page.php?id=68 and scroll down the page until you find reference to "Diversify! - Volunteering Ireland VOLT Network Resource." *

Volunteering Ireland has also produced fact sheets on Volunteering in Ireland which are available in 12 languages (http://www.volunteeringireland.ie/page.php?id=24). *

* Please Note: You have to register once to download either resource.

Project Update

In June and July, the local partners will be meeting with the project team to plan the Regional Forums (one in the 519 area and one in the 905 area) scheduled for Fall 2008. The objectives of these forums are:

1. to share the learnings from the first Phase of the Project with representatives of the volunteer management and cultural diversity fields in the respective regions;

2. to confirm our understanding of major themes and issues emerging from the research to date;

3. to explore strategies and models for the integration of the fields of volunteer management and cultural diversity in ways that balance the value and benefits of each; and

4. to review proposed actions coming out of the community dialogues and identify additional actions that would advance cultural diversity in volunteer management at the local and regional levels.

In other words, we will collectively look at what we learned and determine the implications for action at the individual community level (e.g., actions for London or for Durham) and at the regional level (i.e., collective action for the 519 area as a whole).

Next issue

We won't be producing a Newsletter over the summer, watch for the next issue in September.