

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



Group Discussion at
the Guelph
Community Dialogue

(March 3, 2008)

*April 2008
In this issue...*

- *Study: A New Canadian's First Decade of Volunteering*
- *Update: the Final Two Community Dialogues*
- *National Volunteer Week*

A New Canadian's First Decade of Volunteering: Examining Ways to Involve New Canadians in Community Organizations

London, ON faced (and continues to face) a situation not uncommon to the other regions in our Project. That is, as the shortage of volunteers continues to grow, so too does the level of immigration to the city by New Canadians.

As a result, Pillar Nonprofit Network surveyed organizations in London to see how they have incorporated New Canadians into their volunteer base. At the same time, they surveyed New Canadians to find out what they need from organizations. From this information, the Pillar study presents strategies for recruiting new Canadian volunteers (meaning immigrants to Canada within the last ten years).

Some of the suggestions include:

- Start New Canadian volunteers off slowly to assess their readiness and commitment levels
- Provide instructions in writing that they can take home and study
- Help them with their goals – if their goal is to find a job then share job leads with them, offer to be a reference, write letters of recommendation, etc.

Suggestions cont'd on page 3...

A Project of:
The Social Planning Council of Peel
in collaboration with the Social
Planning Network of Ontario

Funded by:





Cathy Taylor, E.D. of the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington presenting demographic information at the Guelph Community Dialogue,

(March 3, 2008)



The Final Two Community Dialogues

We held the final two Community Dialogues on March 3rd in Guelph (hosted by the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington County) and March 27th (hosted by The Regional Diversity Roundtable in Peel Region). There were 20 and 50 participants respectively bringing the total number of Community Dialogue participants to approximately 250 from the following regions:

519 Area – Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, London, Guelph

905 Area – Durham, Halton, York, Peel

The intent of the Community Dialogues was to work with local partners to bring together knowledgeable and experienced professional and volunteer community leaders to identify:

- issues and needs related to the recruitment and support of a more diverse volunteer base
- existing resources and/or work being done on diversity issues in each of the communities
- what additional tools, resources and strategies would be helpful to support the capacity of organizations to recruit and support volunteers from diverse cultural groups

Another strategic outcome of the Community Dialogues was the identification of partnerships and relationships that can be later tapped into for the implementation of strategies and development of resource materials.

With the completion of the eight Community Dialogues, the Project moves into Phase 2. The learning from Phase 1 will now be analyzed and presented at two regional forums (one for the 519 and one for the 905 Areas) to be held in Fall 2008.

Happy National Volunteer Week (Apr 27–May 3)

Volunteers – from compassion to action.

That's the theme of the 2008 National Volunteer Week. To help you say 'thank you' to volunteers, Volunteer Canada has developed a wealth of resources and products – all available at www.volunteer.ca/nvw.

If it is posters, postcards, volunteer recognition materials or free downloads you are looking for, or if you simply need some tips in event planning or promoting NVW locally through media – it is all there through this one-stop-shop website.

Project Correspondence can be sent to:

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Coming this month!

A New Canadians' First Decade of Volunteering: suggestions *cont'd from page 1*

- Have them volunteer for opportunities that use their existing skills and teach them new skills
- Recruit paid staff that are New Canadians
- Show respect for their culture and religion and make them feel welcomed rather than tolerated
- Provide support, be patient and honest
- Reduce financial barriers by covering training, meals, childcare and/or transportation costs
- Provide more information about volunteer opportunities, have volunteers share their experiences with others and share the benefits of volunteering

Read the full report to find out more about why New Canadians do (and do not) volunteer, retention techniques and ways to accommodate New Canadian volunteers.

<http://www.pillarnonprofit.ca/documents/FinalReportNewCanadians.pdf>

Also from the Pillar Nonprofit Network website... *Volunteering for New Canadians* is a brochure that not only explains the role of Pillar Nonprofit Network but also outlines:

- What volunteering is
- How to get involved
- The benefits of volunteering (for the volunteer)
- Benefits the volunteer provides an organization
- Examples of volunteer activities
- A description of how nonprofits can help New Canadians volunteer
- Quotations/testimonials from new Canadian volunteers

The brochure can be downloaded in English, Arabic, Spanish and Mandarin.

http://www.pillarnonprofit.ca/resources_and_links/pillar_nonprofit_network_publications/

Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management is an Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) funded project. The Social Planning Council of Peel is coordinating this project in selected communities in the 519 and 905 areas.

Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management is a three-year initiative developing the organizational and community capacity of local partners in the 519 and 905 areas to engage and support a more culturally diverse volunteer base.