



## **The Citizen**

Durham Region's Diversity Focused Newsletter  
Issue 22, Spring 2015

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## Defining Canada:

### Finding home

What does it mean to you to be Canadian? What do you think defines Canada? For many people who were born in Canada, these may not be questions they often think about. For those of us who have made an explicit decision to live in Canada and to become a Canadian, we've got the answers!

Canada is hockey, maple syrup and Niagara Falls. It is [poutine](#) and [perogies](#) and [pad thai](#). It is Margaret Atwood, David Suzuki, and Celine Dion. Canada is the place you can wear [toques](#) and [flip flops](#) all in one day.

Canada is warmth and welcoming faces - even when the temperatures drop far below zero! Canada is accepting of difference. Canadians are proud that we are one of the first countries in the world to grant same-sex couples equal marriage rights. Canada is safe. Canadian cities are some of the safest in the world. Canada is open to dialogue and free speech; you can disagree with government policies and it's ok for you to say so. Canada is a democracy where voting matters and active participation in the electoral process is encouraged. Canada is a place of great natural beauty, one visit to Algonquin Park, the Great Lakes or the Rockies will convince you of that.

Canada is not without its problems. We struggle and debate major issues, and we don't always agree on proposed solutions, and so we debate some more.

Canada is a [kaleidoscope](#) of diversity, in our landscape, histories, people, food and customs, and because of that we are the chosen home of millions. Visit the [Toronto Star website](#) ([www.thestar.com/news/immigration/gta\\_immigration\\_history.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/immigration/gta_immigration_history.html)) for an interesting interactive map detailing waves of immigration to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). What does Canada mean to you?





## Healthy you – Healthy Durham:

### Mental health is for everyone

Good mental health is important for everyone as it helps us cope with life's stresses and reach our goals. Mental health is about how we think, feel and act. When our mental health is good it helps us to get the most out of life. We all have highs and lows in our mental health. A low period does not mean you have a mental illness. It's normal to have feelings like anger, sadness or anxiety when facing challenges.

Although related, mental health is not the same as mental illness. A mental illness is when a person is diagnosed with a problem that alters their thinking, mood and/or behaviour (e.g. depression and anxiety disorder).

One in five people will have a mental illness in their lifetime. While four out of five won't, this doesn't mean they are doing well mentally. Whether or not a person has a mental illness, it's important for everyone to take care of their mental health.

Durham Region Health Department would like to let residents know about a new "Mental Health is for Everyone" resource that promotes mental health in adults. This new resource offers adults practical tips on things they can do right now to improve their mental health. We all can benefit when we learn the facts.

To learn more, call Durham Health Connection Line at 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729, or visit the [Durham Region website](http://www.durham.ca/Mentalhealth) (www.durham.ca/Mentalhealth).

## Mental Health is for Everyone



Promoting Mental Health In Adults



## New Parent, New to Durham:

### Help is close by

Pregnancy and the birth of a child may be one of the happiest times in a woman's life. Yet, as many as 20 percent of women (one in five) will develop feelings of depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy, or in the first year after giving birth, that leave them feeling unable to cope. These feelings are known as Perinatal Mood Disorders (PMD). New dads may have some of these feelings and need support too.

Although anyone can experience these feelings, women who are new to Canada, those who do not have much support and those who have experienced difficult life events may be more at risk. Symptoms of PMD include, often feeling:

- sad
- worried, anxious
- frustrated, angry
- hopeless

When you see your doctor or midwife during pregnancy and after you have the baby, be sure to talk to them about how you are feeling and coping. Help is available. It does get better.

- For more information call Durham Health Connection Line or visit the [Region of Durham website](http://www.durham.ca/PPMD) (www.durham.ca/PPMD).
- The Health Department runs a free weekly Perinatal Mood Disorders Peer Support Group.
- Call Durham Health Connection Line for information at 905-666-6241 or 1800-841-2729.
- To talk to someone anytime, night or day, call the Crisis Line at 1-800-742-1890.





## Creating Caring Communities: Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness

In Canada, Ontario and Durham, being health and growing community understanding about health is a priority. Epilepsy Durham Region invites you to join us as we rally to support the one in 100 in our community living with epilepsy. Every year on March 26, people around the world celebrate Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness, wearing purple to show their support for those with epilepsy and raising awareness about this disease that is so often misunderstood.

Motivated by her own struggles with epilepsy, nine-year-old Cassidy Megan of Halifax created the idea of Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness. Her goal is to ensure that no person feels alone or fearful of their condition. This crusade has empowered citizens worldwide to join together to create a society where everyone understands epilepsy and where attitudes toward the disease are based on fact, not fiction.

Epilepsy Durham Region encourages our community members to get involved in this international movement by volunteering, fundraising, creating your own awareness event, or simply wearing purple to show your support.

Wear Purple on Thursday, March 26, and together we can work to create a safe, inclusive and compassionate environment where not another moment is lost to a seizure.

How will you become involved? For more information, see the [Epilepsy Durham Region website](http://www.epilepsydurham.com) (www.epilepsydurham.com).





## Police warn newcomers of telephone fraud:

Investigators would like to warn the public about telephone [fraud](#) activity that targets new Canadians.

In some cases, citizens have reported being called by someone from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The person calling tells the potential victim that they owe a certain amount of money in back taxes and if payment is not made, they will be arrested. They are instructed to attend a local store and purchase a prepaid credit card in the amount owing and then call them back with the credit card information.

The [scam](#) has been successful with victims who are new to Canada and unfamiliar with normal police practices.

No [reputable](#) company or organization will advise you to make payments with pre-paid credit cards. If you receive such a call, hang up and report the call to police.

For more information about the CRA, visit the [CRA website](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca) (www.cra-arc.gc.ca). For more information on types of fraud and how to protect yourself, visit the [Safety Page on the DRPS website](http://tinyurl.com/pz42bag) (http://tinyurl.com/pz42bag). Anyone wishing to report a fraud is asked to contact Durham Regional Police at 1-888-579-1520.





## **Making Schools Welcoming: Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)**

The Settlement Workers in Schools Program places settlement staff from the Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) in schools across the Durham District School Board and Durham Catholic District School Board. The program provides support, information and service referrals to newcomer children, youth and their families across the community.

In 2014, the SWIS program served more than 2000 students and families across the region, assisting them as they settle and integrate into the community. SWIS has a particular focus on the school environment, helping students and their families connect with teachers, school administrators and other parents. The program also works with schools as they strive to engage and support an increasingly diverse student population.

Of particular note are the SWIS summer programs: Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) for high school students and Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN) for families of elementary students. In 2014, the NOW program trained nearly 30 secondary school students as peer leaders who are now supporting their newcomer classmates in schools across Durham. The WIN program focuses on newcomer parents in elementary schools, providing day-long workshops to help orient and support families as they transition into the Canadian school system. For more information about SWIS programs, visit the [CDCD website](http://www.cdcd.org/programs/settlementservices/swis/) (www.cdcd.org/programs/settlementservices/swis/).



## **SWIS Durham**

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## **Durham Continuing Education, LINC and ESL: Students Annual Writing Contest 2015**

Ever tried to learn a new language? If you have, you know that it is not easy to navigate new grammar, vocabulary, expressions, and pronunciation. Throw in confidence (or the lack of it) and you have an almost impossible feat of cognitive ability. This is especially true when it comes to writing in another language.

Newcomers in our region face the challenge of writing in their second or third language daily. At Durham Continuing Education's LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) and ESL (English as a Second Language) Program, many of our newcomers are supported daily by trained, experienced, TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) certified teachers to improve their English.

As part of the learning activities, this year, we invited our students to participate in a [Valentine's Day](#) writing contest preparing level-appropriate writing activities for each class. Our students worked hard and eventually entered amazing, inspiring pieces of writing into the contest.

The team of judges had a very difficult task selecting the first prize winners and we are pleased to share them.

### **Winner for Level 4 - A love story written by Sumaia:**

"There was a 16 year old girl. She met a young man at the beach and they fell in love. After a year of love, the girl left him. The young man had lost hope and his heart was broken. The man loved her for many years. He hoped that the girl would come back to him, but that love remained without hope."

### **Winner for Level 3 - A letter written by Lan Chen:**

"Dear Friend,

Thanks for you to read my letter. I had thought about everything I left you in 2014. I hope that everything is the best and wonderful.

This is my first time in Canada winter. I feel everything is fresh, fresh air, fresh fruit, beautiful snowflakes, cute squirrels and so on. My hometown, Changqing, is in the south of China. In the winter, the temperature usually is from zero to ten, there's never have snow. I feel Canada's winter is very cold. Especially there's have some heavy wind. I feel cold better, I feel my face will become freeze. I also feel very happy, because I can play toboggan, play skiing, play snowball and make snowmen with my family. I wish you come to Canada.



There are many nice people. When I am in trouble, they'll help me. Don't worry about me. Everything is the best. I hope you have a good time every day."

**Winner for Level 5 – A love story written by Hala Mostafa – Title: “That’s Love”**

“One wonderful day, a handsome young man felt his heart beat for the first time when he saw a beautiful girl. He said, “What a beautiful girl. She has a charming smile.” He enjoyed talking with her. He loved her so much and it was a mutual feeling. She also loved him.

After a short time, they got married and they lived a happy life. She used to hear him saying, “I married the most beautiful girl.” But the happiness didn't last too long. She got infected by a serious skin disease which would turn her into an ugly and hideous person. She said to herself, “Oh my God, I don't fear the disease. I don't fear even death but I fear that my love will be gone if my husband find out.”

While she was in this situation, her husband was carried by some people and they told her, “We afraid that your husband got in an accident and unfortunately he lost his sight.” Her husband held her hand and said, “My love, I don't want you to leave me. I love you. Maybe I can't see your beautiful face, but my heart remember it and will keep it.” She hung to him and replied quickly, “I'll never change my feeling toward you.”

Since that day, she heard the most marvelous words of love which she did hear before. She's forgotten her disease. She's forgotten everything except her taking care of him. Both of them were dedicated to the pleasure of the other.

After a while, the disease spread in all of her body and final she died. After she was buried, he stayed at her grave and cried so much. Some of the present said, “What a poor man. Who will take care of him?” But then they saw him walking away with no help. They asked him, “Can you see?” He replied with a sad smile, “I've never been blind.”





## **You are as equal as anyone....:**

...and all of us are so glad you chose Durham!

Used with permission. This speech was written and presented by Haroon Siddiqui at a citizenship ceremony at the Ontario Science Centre, November, 2012.

Today, we welcome you as fellow-citizens. Today, you are as equal as anyone in this room, including the citizenship judge who just swore you in as a Canadian. You are as equal as anyone who immigrated to Canada 10 or 20 or 50 years ago. You are as equal as anyone born in this blessed land. Canada has no [hierarchy](#) of citizens. We are all equal before the law.

That, however, does not mean that everyone will treat you as equal. Some of us, both the Canada-born and foreign-born, have developed a bad habit of telling new Canadians how to behave, what you can or cannot do, in order to become a real Canadian. Ignore such [busy-bodies](#). Don't let them [hector](#) you. You are as equal as they.

Canada is as close to [nirvana](#) as it gets. But, being a modest people, Canadians assert this negatively -- that we are the least racist nation in the world.

Still, that does not mean that we are free of racists and [bigots](#).

You might face discrimination at work. Some [yahoos](#) on the street may call you names. Ignore the [boors](#) but, if they persist, report them to police. Think instead of the overwhelming majority of Canadians who have welcomed you, with open arms.

In dealing with the state, know that officials must and most likely will treat you with the dignity and respect that each citizen deserves. But should a TTC driver or an official at City Hall or at Service Ontario or at the passport office or another federal agency mistreat you, report them to their supervisor. Let no one violate your dignity. That's Canada's solemn compact with you.

Respect our aboriginal peoples -- they are the ones who let immigrants into their land, and into their inclusive circle. Know also that in 1867, they came together with the English and the French under a legal framework. That's why today's bilingual ceremony.

Respect that Canada is a Christian-majority nation. But know that it is not a Christian country. Canada has no official religion. All faiths are equal. Canada has no official culture, either. So be free to practice your faith, if you so choose, and live your culture as fully as you like – within the rule of law.

The rule of law is what binds all Canadians together, new and old, the foreign-born and the Canadian-born. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is our common holy parchment.

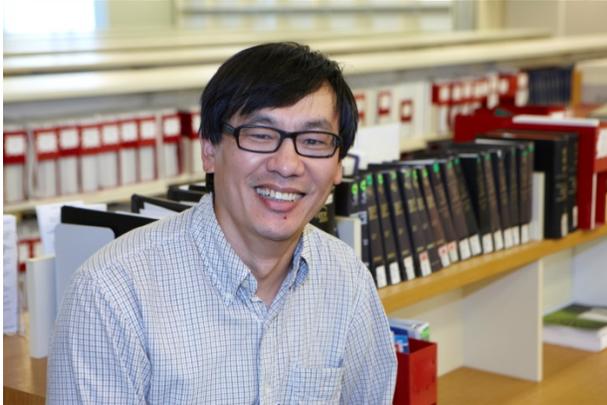


Obey the law and have faith in the law to redress wrongs. This is your primary duty to Canada. In return, Canada will offer you and your children peace and harmony, good government, public goodwill and plenty of opportunities to maximize your potential.

Canada wants you to succeed. The more you succeed, the more successful Canada becomes.

Vive le Canada!









## Happy Birthday to the Canadian flag!

“ ‘The flag is the symbol of the nation’s unity, for it, beyond any doubt, represents all the citizens of Canada without distinction of race, language, belief or opinion,’ declared the Speaker of the Senate at the Inauguration of the new flag in 1965.

Our red and white maple leaf flag was first raised over Parliament Hill 50 years ago on February 15, 1965. This is a significant and special milestone as Canadians prepare for the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017.

The 50th anniversary of our National Flag in 2015 will allow Canadians to reflect on our flag and what it represents — a strong, proud and free country. Our national flag speaks to what we have accomplished together, to the historical moments that have served to define us, and to the promising future of this great country.”

Taken from the Government of Canada 150 website. For more information on the history of the flag, visit the [Government of Canada 150 website](http://canada150.gc.ca/eng/1384875326868/1384875357599) (<http://canada150.gc.ca/eng/1384875326868/1384875357599>)





## Calling all Entrepreneurs and Investors:

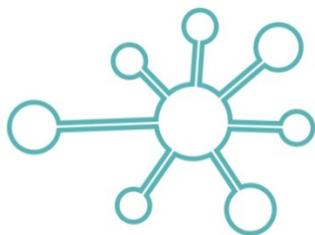
### The Durham Innovation and Technology Portal is launched

The Regional Municipality of Durham, Planning and Economic Development Department, in collaboration with Spark Centre, has launched the [Durham Innovation and Technology Portal](http://ditp.ca) (<http://ditp.ca>). This integrated online resource is designed to promote Durham Region's digital technology sector, with a focus on attracting international investors.

In 2013, the digital technology sector was identified as an emerging sector—one that required a dedicated focus to help it grow and expand. As such, an online presence was developed to help specifically target this sector. This portal will support local technology companies and also act as an investment attraction tool—encouraging economic growth throughout the region.

The portal provides up-to-date information about: the latest investment opportunities from local companies seeking partnerships, investors or venture capital funding; existing companies; strengths in post-secondary training; research and development; available incentives; local support networks; and local industry-related support events.

The portal project was made possible by a joint-funding initiative from the Region of Durham and Invest Canada-Community Initiatives (ICCI), which provides financial support to communities for their foreign direct investment programs and resources. This funding enables Durham Region to promote its diverse employment base and attract, retain and expand direct investments from foreign markets.



DURHAM  
INNOVATION &  
TECHNOLOGY PORTAL



## **Growing Strong Communities:**

### **Ontario Trillium Foundation**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is the largest granting foundation in Canada, and things are changing! If you are an organization or group that wants to grow, keep reading! This may be an opportunity for you.

This spring, OTF will launch a new investment strategy - the first major changes to our granting approach in 15 years! These changes come as a result of extensive consultation with our stakeholders and external experts. Our new investment strategy is grounded in an evidence-based approach to investments in the non-profit sector and supported by the framework of the [Canadian Index of Wellbeing](https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-indexwellbeing/) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-indexwellbeing/>).

As we move forward with our new approach to granting, we have identified six key areas that represent the types of changes that we hope to see in Ontario communities as a result of our investments. These are: Green People, Active People, Prosperous People, Promising Young People, Connected People and Inspired People. These Action Areas are “what” we fund. We have also changed “how” we fund, by developing four new investment streams. These streams will focus on funding specific types of grants, with a different application process and different timelines for each. Our new investment streams are seed (for new ideas), grow (to scale up ideas that work), capital (improving community spaces) and collective impact.

We look forward to sharing more information about our new investment strategy with the non-profit sector over the coming months. More information can be found on the [Ontario Trillium Foundation website](http://www.otf.ca) ([www.otf.ca](http://www.otf.ca)).



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## **Inclusive Communities – Informed Communities:**

### **Anti-homophobia training**

In an effort to advance LGBTQ rights and security, PFLAG (Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays) Durham Region has worked towards providing resources and information to individuals throughout the region. PFLAG Durham Region, like each of the other 70 plus Chapters, is a non-profit, volunteer-run, charitable organization that educates, supports, and provides resources and information to the local community about issues dealing with [sexual orientation](#), [gender identity](#), and [gender expression](#). This organization strives to promote inclusion throughout Canada and to establish a safe and accepting learning environment for members of the LGBTQ community, along with family, friends, and allies alike.

PFLAG Durham Region has been active in the implementation of anti-homophobia educational and training programs across the region. We offer 45 minute to full day workshops and presentations, tailored to the needs of the organization. To date, we have worked with colleges, municipal governments, social service agencies, private workplaces, and several other venues. PFLAG Durham has been especially active in local schools, working with supportive school staff promoting equality among students and providing valuable information and resources. PFLAG Durham Region, in partnership with the Durham District School Board, has provided forums directed towards promoting engagement among LGBTQ families. The evening series, entitled LGBTQ Families Engaged, was developed as a way in which affirming and positive spaces for LGBTQ voices could be created. For more information, [email PFLAG Durham](mailto:Inquiries@pflagdurhamregion.com) (Inquiries@pflagdurhamregion.com), visit the [PFLAG Durham website](http://www.pflagdurhamregion.com) (www.pflagdurhamregion.com), or call 905-231-0533 / 1-888-530-6777 ext. 533.





## Durham CAS:

All families are welcome

Durham Children's Aid Society (CAS) invites you to an Open House on June 2. Everyone is welcome to join the staff and board members to learn more about the services provided, and to attend the public launch of the Society's Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP) Journey.

Over the last two years Durham CAS has been working internally to implement AOP, which impacts every aspect of the Society's work. This includes the Society as a workplace as well as a service provider within our community. The Society is examining all practices and re-evaluating service delivery from an anti-oppressive lens to ensure that our outcomes for all children, youth and families are equitable. The Society's Anti-Oppressive Practice Directional Statement is: **"We are committed to anti-oppressive practice (AOP) in which we challenge the impacts of power and privilege, eliminate barriers and are inclusive of the broad range of diversity within our community."**

When: Tuesday, June 2, 6 to 8 p.m.

Where: Durham CAS, 1320 Airport Blvd., Oshawa

Who: Everyone is welcome

Durham CAS is mandated by the Ontario government to provide a range of child protection services to children under the age of 16 and their families who live in Durham Region. CAS works in collaboration with organizations throughout Ontario to provide services to help families and keep children safe. For more information, [email Andrea Maenza](mailto:andrea.maenza@durhamcas.ca) at [andrea.maenza@durhamcas.ca](mailto:andrea.maenza@durhamcas.ca).





## Learn About Your Community:

### Durham Farm Connections Free Open House

Some new residents are surprised to learn Durham Region has a large agricultural sector. There's so much to discover about life north of Highway 7!

Residents are invited to attend the Durham Farm Connections open house, an interactive way to learn about agriculture in Durham Region. Join us on Wednesday, April 8 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Luther Vipond Arena (67 Winchester Rd. E., Brooklin). Learn about local food and farming. See live animal exhibits, meet Durham Region farmers, and see demonstrations including cow milking, sheep shearing and cheese making. Enter a free draw for a Durham Farm Fresh basket or kids can create a picture of "Farming in Durham" to enter a free draw for farm toys. This is an event for the whole family. Donations of non-perishable foods for the local food bank are appreciated.

Durham Farm Connections is a volunteer-run organization offering innovative agricultural education. It provides agricultural education opportunities for the farm and non-farm communities in Durham Region to ensure the viability of the agriculture sector.

The Durham Farm Connections program, now in its tenth year, is an agriculture education program that meets Ontario curriculum requirements and has been awarded with an Ontario Premier's Award for Agri-food Innovation Excellence. For more information, visit the [Durham Farm Connections website](http://www.durhamfarmconnections.ca) (www.durhamfarmconnections.ca), [connect with Durham Farm Connections by email](mailto:info@durhamfarmconnections.ca) (info@durhamfarmconnections.ca) or call 905-655-8380 for more information.





## **Welcome Centre Immigrant Services:**

### **Building confidence through information and education**

Making a decision to live in another country can be life changing. For many, it means learning a new language and adapting to a new environment with different social customs, laws and workplace/school standards. It often means uprooting family, children, and moving away from family support and friends.

Having access to support services is critical to successful settlement and integration. Newcomers who can effectively navigate the Canadian system can become productive citizens faster than they would without essential supports in place.

Welcome Centre Immigrant Services, located in Ajax and Pickering, work collaboratively with community organizations to provide services and resources that are based on core immigrant needs as well as complementary activities that educate, inform and build confidence.

In Dec. 2014, the Durham Welcome Centres, in collaboration with several partners, held the first of a series of events related to Workers' Rights and Responsibilities. The well attended event provided a safe environment for individuals to discuss concerns related to Canadian Employment Standards, Health and Safety and Inclusion. The second part of this series will be held later this spring.

On March 28, Settlement Workers in the Schools (SWIS) will deliver a Healthy Relationships Forum. This joint project will promote healthy and respectful forms of communication in the interest of preventing oppression and violence in home and social environments. The forum will take place at the Ajax Welcome Centre from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For more information, visit the [Welcome Centres website](http://www.welcomecentres.ca/durham) (www.welcomecentres.ca/durham). It's up to all of us to create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive community. Please join us!





## The Library:

### Something for everyone, including accessibility tools

Access - that's really what public libraries are all about - access to information, ideas and inspiration, as well as spaces and community.

We realize that some people require a bit of extra assistance to ensure that access. Libraries have tools that can help, including:

- An accessible public computer station with ZoomText magnification and JAWS screen reader software.
- A magnifying aid designed for people with low vision to enlarge newspapers, magazines, forms, etc.
- Descriptive video DVDs where a narrator describes what is happening on screen.
- DAISY readers and DAISY discs, which are available to borrow.
- Closed captioning on most DVDs.
- Large print books, audiobooks and e-audiobooks.
- Children's books with text in English and Braille.
- Walkers and wheelchairs for use in the library.
- Visiting library service for those unable to visit us.
- Membership in the Centre for Equitable Library Access for Canadians with print disabilities.
- Information about the library programs, resources and services is available in alternate and accessible formats.

Finally, don't forget that your most valuable tool, of course, is our staff. Don't hesitate to ask if you need help accessing our services, collections or programs. For links to all eight Durham library systems, visit the [Durham Immigration Portal's webpage on library programs in Durham](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca) (www.durhamimmigration.ca >Learning > LibraryPrograms).





## **Glossary**

### **Bigots/Boors/Yahoos:**

People who believe and act on negative stereotypes of others

### **Busy-bodies:**

People who are eager to tell others how to act in a certain manner

### **Compact:**

A sincere and solid agreement

### **Crusade:**

A quest or a trip for a very specific purpose

### **Flip flops:**

Summer sandals, typically plastic with between-the-toe posts (named for the sound they make when you walk in them!)

### **Fraud:**

An intentional act to criminally deceive or trick someone, usually for financial gain

### **Gender expression:**

All of the external characteristics and behaviours that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine\*

### **Gender identity:**

A person's innate, deeply felt psychological identification as a man, woman or some other gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth\*

### **Hector:**

To lecture or sternly speak to someone repeatedly



## Hierarchy:

A ranking of positions or things where the position or thing at the top is seen to be best

## Kaleidoscope:

A child's toy full of many different colours and shapes that shift to make beautiful patterns

## Nirvana:

A perfect place or state of being

## Pad Thai:

Thai noodle dish

## Perogies:

Eastern European delicacy (dumplings) often served with onions and sour cream

## Poutine:

French-Canadian delicacy of french fries, cheese curds and gravy – yes, gravy!

## Reputable:

Is honest, can be trusted

## Scam:

Slang term for a fraud or criminal activity meant to deceive or trick someone – usually for money

## Sexual orientation:

An individual's physical and/or emotional attraction to the same and/or opposite gender\*

## Toques:

A winter woollen hat



## Valentine's Day:

A day to celebrate romantic love – falls on February 14

\*Definitions taken from the [Human Rights Campaign website](http://www.hrc.org) (www.hrc.org)



## **Success Story:**

### **Emmy Iheme – Police Officer and community volunteer**

Emmy Iheme was a student in Europe when he made great friends with a group of Canadians. In time, these friendships grew to a point where friends felt like family and he decided to move to Canada. In 1985, he arrived in Toronto where he was met with kindness and generosity by his Canadian friends. Emmy continued his education at the University of Toronto. In 1989, he moved to Durham, a place he'd visited and liked as he found the people friendly and welcoming. He also liked the open space and the community participation.

The hardest part of moving to Canada was understanding the very many Canadian cultures and traditions like ice-skating, snow shoeing, hockey and baseball. He notes, "I figured that in order to enjoy the winter it was imperative that I learned how to ice skate and so I joined a learn-to- skate program at Queens Quay".

In recounting those early days in Canada, Emmy notes that he was "quickly introduced to many amazing multicultural events, things that I thought I could only experience by traveling to the country of their origins, things like Chinese food and culture, different African foods and culture and those from the West Indies along with many other cultures. I was amazed with the diversity and acceptance I found in Canada".

After settling in Durham, Emmy got involved in community work and then decided to apply to the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS). He was fortunate to gain employment as a police officer and over the past 23 years has been a member of Durham Regional Police. He has enjoyed his career and most importantly enjoyed helping and serving the residents of Durham.

Volunteering has played a very big role in Emmy's settlement journey in Canada and it continues today. He credits his volunteering at an afterschool program for children for helping him with his English and with learning about new seasonal traditions like Halloween. Being able to practice English in a non-judgemental space with the children and to learn new things as they learned new things was a big help to learning about life in Canada.

Today, Emmy is a Sergeant and the Executive Officer to Chief of Police at DRPS, President of the Rotary Club of Oshawa and coached soccer with the Oshawa Kicks Soccer Club and the NASC Oshawa. He is also an anti-doping Officer with the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports and has volunteered at two winter Olympic Games in Torino 2006 and Vancouver 2010 and will be volunteering at the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games 2015 as an Anti-doping manager. Emmy's advice to newcomers to Durham, "my advice for any new resident is to get involved in your community, become a volunteer. Becoming a volunteer is the best way to get to know your new community



and gain knowledge that is priceless and you also make some friends. You will soon realize that you too can help shape our community”.





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