



Two-way integration: learning from others and sharing your story



Each of us lives our own uniquely complex lives. We have our own family traditions, likes, dislikes, knowledge and experiences. We are all shaped by where we were born, who we belong to, what was happening in the world when we were born and how we have

interacted with those around us as we have grown, learned and experienced life. Sharing our food, values, traditions, passions, hobbies, and skills with others in our families and communities helps to build a rich **tapestry** of experience and knowledge we all benefit from.

The Durham Diversity and Immigration Community Plan prioritizes promoting and celebrating the two-way integration of diverse populations. What does that really mean in practise? It means mutual sharing and mutual learning that results in a richer **worldview** and a more vibrant and welcoming community for all. It means **each of us** growing in understanding and acceptance of difference and diversity.

A good way to start exploring the diverse events, celebrations and learning opportunities happening in Durham, is by talking to your neighbours, visiting the Durham Immigration Portal events page, visiting your local library as well as checking out the calendar on the Tourism Durham website. In the next few months alone, you could be visiting a **sugar bush**, celebrating **Holi** at the local **Mandir**, teaching the newly arrived Syrian kids in your neighbourhood to play baseball and planning a trip to the annual **PowWow** on Scugog Island.

Sharing and learning can go far beyond cultural traditions. Put yourself in someone else's shoes, look at what's familiar around you with someone else's eyes, think about why we do things the way we do them, explore alternate ways and opinions. It might be challenging or **disconcerting** but it will also be **enriching**.

Words in **red** throughout the newsletter are defined in the glossary on page 11.

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Bridging the language gap: We can all learn something if we try

The population of Durham Region is growing and nearly 65 per cent of the population growth in Durham in the last five years has been as a result of immigration. This growth increases the likelihood that businesses, not-for-profit organizations and service providers in Durham will have clients and customers who speak little to no

English. Another consideration is our aging population and larger numbers of people who may have a hearing disability. As a business owner or service provider, how do you communicate and provide service to that person? As a customer whose English may be limited, how do you go about your activities of daily living? How do you communicate with businesses and service providers?



We know that bridging language and cultural barriers helps organizations to build loyalty in their customer and client base. A fantastic way to address the language barrier is through providing interpretation services by phone or video. Imagine being able to access an interpreter with a simple phone call or touch of a button! Many businesses and organizations have begun to offer this service to their clients. It is a wonderful way to ensure that everybody is able to access the same services and extends a hand of welcome to newcomers. There are a variety of companies that can help your organization bridge the language gap.

For more information, visit www.language.com.

Save money and water: Be Water Smart video series



In Durham Region, there is no need for bottled water as the municipal tap water is fresh, clean and safe to drink. In addition to drinking, water is used for many common household activities, such as showering, cooking, cleaning and watering your lawn. Cutting down on the amount of water used for these activities, can help you save money. Saving water also helps the Region delay the building of new **infrastructure**, and ensures fresh, clean water is available.

A great new video series providing tips for saving water in and around your home is now available on the Region's website at www.durham.ca/waterefficiency.

The series includes 11 videos with water saving tips for all areas of the home. The video series covers lawn care and saving water in the bathroom, kitchen and laundry room, with tips on how to keep your lawn healthy with less water, use the rain as a water source, and save water while doing household chores. The videos also explain how to detect costly toilet leaks.

For more information on water **conservation**, or to view the videos, visit www.durham.ca/waterefficiency.

Supporting healthy communities: Healthy routines - together is better!

For many families who immigrate to Canada, the transition period can be exciting but at times stressful. Being healthy together as a family can help newcomers cope with the change. Durham Health Department has some tips to help families create healthy routines. Spending time together while building healthy eating habits and physical activity into every day can help children to grow and prepare them to learn. Here are a few tips:



Eat healthy foods

- Cook and eat meals together as a family.
- Continue to prepare the traditional meals your family enjoys.

Be active

- Walk to and from the places you need to go, like school, the library or the park.
- Plan a family activity in place of screen time (TV, computer, electronics, phones).

Get enough sleep

- Create a healthy sleep routine by having the same bed and wake-up time and try to keep sleep uninterrupted.
- Use the time before bed to do a calming activity like reading, talking together or singing.

Creating healthy routines involves the whole family. Remember you are your child's best teacher! To find more tips, visit www.durham.ca > Health > Healthy Weights > Tips for parents and caregivers.

Healthy communities: Cancer screening and you



We all know that finding cancer early can mean more effective treatment and yet newcomers to Canada have lower rates of cancer screening. Raising awareness of this free service is important to share with all newcomers to Durham.

Regular screening for cancer should be an important part of everyone's plan to stay healthy. Durham Region Health Department offers information and resources on how to prevent and screen for colon, breast and cervical cancer.

Why is cancer screening important?

- There are often no early warning symptoms of cancer.
- Most people who develop cancer have no family history of the disease.
- Cancer is the most common cause of death in Durham Region.
- Forty to forty-five per cent of men and women in Canada will develop cancer during their lifetime.
- Your risk of developing cancer increases with age. The greatest risk is for those 50 years and over.

For more information, visit www.durham.ca > Health > Cancer Screening & Prevention.



Supporting creative voices: Durham newcomers drum with Tanya

One hundred adult English language learners who study at Durham Continuing Education recently participated in two, one-hour sessions of drumming. Tanya Porter, founder of Rhythmic Re-framing and The Inner Space, (www.theinnerspace.ca) presented each student with their own drum and introduced drumming and music as just another, fun type of communication. In the world of barriers, borders, and divisions, rhythm and music provide a path to unity. In one of the musical activities, students were asked to begin the activity by drumming to a personal rhythm, or their "drumming voice." As each student entered their "voice", we heard the tune change, grow, reshape and evolve until, only a few seconds later, it all come together and turned into a beautiful, synchronized drumbeat. One had to think that much like in our classes, our schools, our communities, and our country, in music people come together bringing in their many differences and slowly work together to create something amazing, something all of us could call our own.



Learning a new language in a new country with new people is not easy, especially for those learners whose recent past left a lot to be healed. Tanya showed us how something as simple as a small **djembe drum** can help that healing process and even bring on some fun. How much the students enjoyed this session is best illustrated by the words of one of our learners in Oshawa, who said: "Teacher, we need music lesson one hour-every week!" Sounds to me like an excellent idea!

A great thank you also goes to Wendy Elton from Shaw Percussion (www.shawpercussion.com) who not only provided the drums for this great event, but also assisted in facilitating the sessions.

Building community: Life in Canada

"We must now establish the basic principles, the basic values and beliefs which hold us together as Canadians so that beyond our regional loyalties, there is a way of life and a system of values which make us proud of the country that has given us such freedom and such immeasurable joy." P. E. Trudeau, April 17, 1982

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms can act as a touchstone when we are feeling insecure or unsure about the world around us. It reminds us of what is great and good about Canada. It can act as the glue that keeps Canada together. I keep it on my wall at work as a reminder of who and what I am accountable to. If I were allowed to have a favourite section of the Charter it would be 15.(1) Equality Rights - which says, "...without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability." Canadian citizens have an obligation to know these rights and honour them. In Durham Region, 97 per cent of residents are citizens. It appears our residents have taken this responsibility seriously. Is there more work to do? Absolutely, we are never finished becoming better people, better citizens and by extension, an even better country.



Building inclusive communities: #AjaxforAll

As the most multicultural municipality in Durham Region, with nearly half of the population comprised of visible minorities, the Town of Ajax sees its diversity as one of its greatest strengths. On January 30, Ajax Council and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) launched #AjaxForAll at the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Mandir, a public awareness campaign to encourage residents to “see beyond” as a stand against racism, stereotypes and assumptions. The initiative builds on OCASI’s successful “Toronto for All” campaign that addresses racism, **xenophobia** and **Islamophobia**. Ajax is the first municipality outside of Toronto to partner with OCASI on this initiative.

The campaign was developed through a community consultation approach which included seeking feedback on campaign concepts from attendees of the Town’s first diversity conference held in October 2016, as well as from community leaders from ethno-cultural community groups and organizations. The campaign features eight ambassadors representing various cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, including Indigenous, Indo-Guyanese, Pakistani, Jamaican, Muslim and Ukrainian. What makes the #AjaxforAll campaign even more unique and connected to the community, is that the ambassadors featured in the campaign materials are residents or community leaders in Ajax. The posters contain a close up portrait highlighting three personal facts about the ambassador as a way for people to get to know them beyond appearances.

The Town has launched an online conversation at facebook.com/myajax, to encourage residents to participate in an open conversation about racism, discrimination and bias. Residents can share their “beyond” on social media using the hashtag #AjaxForAll.

The campaign has garnered local, national and international attention. Many local community organization leaders are interested in being part of future phases, which will be developed with Phase 2 of the Town’s Diversity and Community Engagement Plan.

Learn more and get involved at www.ajaxforall.ca.



Reconciliation and learning: Canada's Aboriginal peoples and you



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Did you know that you are party to a treaty with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada? Many people assume that treaties are only about First Nations peoples in Canada, but in fact, these treaties are about the relationship between the first peoples of Canada and everyone else who calls Canada home. We each

have rights and responsibilities in this relationship and learning about Aboriginal peoples is one responsibility we each have as we strive towards reconciliation.

The federal Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action specifically notes the need for newcomers to Canada to be provided with information that reflects "... a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools" (http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf). This is a history of resilience and hope in the face of great hardship and cruelty. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (<http://nctr.ca/map.php>) is an excellent resource for learning and contributing to Canada's journey of healing and reconciliation.

Volunteers support newcomer students: Two-way integration at its best!



SWIS Durham

Each year, Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) recruits candidates to be trained as Peer Leaders for its Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) program which helps prepare newcomer youth for their first days and weeks in school by introducing and explaining school routines. On average, upwards of 80 applicants apply for the opportunity to give back to their community. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to volunteer and assist SWIS during program delivery throughout the year.

During the year, Peer Leaders and volunteers gave back to the community by sharing valuable information and experiences while helping newcomer students to make friends as they make the adjustment to Canadian school life. Many of our volunteers continue to support the SWIS program as peer mentors for newcomer students, frequently providing more than 200 hours of assistance in various activities organized by SWIS to promote inclusion and integration of newcomers in their new school and community.

Over the years I have been absolutely impressed by the leadership skills and compassion that volunteers show for their peers while helping them to make friends and gain confidence in their sometimes challenging new communities. Students highlighted what is working well and the challenges they are still facing. It is refreshing to observe volunteers and newcomer students making arrangements to work more closely to overcome challenges. For more information, visit www.cdcd.org/swis.



A celebration of cultures: Dynamic, vibrant and fun!

Every day at Welcome Centre Immigrant Services in Ajax and Pickering, it is a privilege to experience the ongoing activities and special events that facilitate mutual sharing, learning, and exploration of diverse cultures and each other's heritage. A special cultural celebration took place at the Ajax Welcome Centre during English as a Second Language (ESL) Week. Newcomer students enrolled in the Durham Catholic District School Board's English Language classes shared traditional music, fashion, **artifacts** and foods from their various countries. Performances using a Syrian ethnic drum and traditional Chinese musical instruments brought an atmosphere of excitement with everyone dancing along to the rhythms of the music. Many students were dressed in dynamic and vibrant traditional wear that showcased an explosion of color and grandeur. A creative multi-coloured display of Kolam sand art was available for everyone to enjoy.



ESL Week at the Welcome Centres aims to raise awareness about the importance of English language learning opportunities for newcomers and honours the commitment and daily efforts of ESL teachers and professionals.

Welcome Centre Immigrant Services provides a welcoming, positive, culturally and linguistically sensitive environment where we work together to create a culture of inclusion with our community. For more information, visit www.welcomecentre.ca.

English language learning: Your first step towards integration

Learning a new language is difficult but all newcomers will tell you that it is THE key to integrating into life in Canada. Being able to speak to your neighbours, your children's teachers, and to chat with co-workers builds feelings of belonging and self-sufficiency. It's not easy and it does take time but the effort is worth it!



**ARCHBISHOP
ANTHONY MEAGHER**

Catholic Continuing Education Centre



Durham Region offers English language classes for adult immigrants who do not speak English as a first language. In Durham Region the Durham District School Board and Durham Catholic District School Board offer part-time, full-time, evening or Saturday classes to improve your English. Classes are offered in Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax and Pickering. Most classes have continuous enrollment—so you can begin any time!

Visit the English Adults page on the Immigration Portal (www.durhamimmigration.ca) for full details of where classes are held and who to contact for more information.



Volunteering with English Conversation Circles: Learning about each other leads to respect and friendship

English Conversation Circles (ECC) provide an opportunity for newcomers to meet others in their community to practise English, learn about community resources and to make new friends. While the benefits to the newcomer are obvious, we asked a couple of the ECC volunteers what they got out of the experience. This is what they shared:



"What's so great about participating in the weekly English Conversation Circle at the Ajax Library? No, its not just the coffee and cookies. As a volunteer I get to meet interesting people, learn about their experiences, and contribute to my community. The Conversation Circle is not a class, but instead, it's a forum that provides an opportunity for people, many of them recent immigrants, to improve their language skills by practising English in a social setting. The other volunteers are friendly, welcoming, and enthusiastic. Together, we come prepared with activities designed to prompt the participants to speak up and gain confidence. Several of the volunteers are immigrants to Canada too, and they demonstrate that people do improve their English with practice.

As a recent graduate of Centennial College Teaching English as a Second Language program, I am interested in gaining experience working with newcomers to Canada and helping them to feel good about themselves and their ability to communicate. Above all, it's fun. The 90 minutes seems to pass in the blink of an eye and the participants seem to genuinely appreciate the assistance they get. Maybe you would like to help out at the Conversation Circle? I'll save a cup of coffee for you." Glenn

"I have been volunteering with the Ajax English Conversation Circle (ECC) since January 2014 and I truly enjoy it. I have the opportunity to meet persons from various parts of the world; to taste a variety of foods and hear first-hand the experiences of our clients. Sometimes when we hear certain things on the news but when we hear it directly from our clients, it puts a different perspective on the issue.

Our clients are at various stages in their conversation skills and it is certainly heart-warming when you see the progress they are making and the confidence they are gaining while speaking. Over time, the shy and quiet person gives way to a talkative and funny student. I have seen so many clients/students passing through our Conversation Circle. As they learn English, learn to drive and get jobs they are finding their way in a new country with so many opportunities." Gillian

If you're interested in volunteering with English Conversation Circles in your community, please email the Community Connections team at communityconnect@cdcd.org.

Diversity scholarships: Celebrating young champions of diversity



Leadership in Equity, Diversity and Social Justice Award

Do you know a graduating high school student who has made their school or community more accepting, inclusive and diverse? If so, check out the Town of Whitby Ethno-cultural and Diversity Advisory Committee's Leadership in Equity, Diversity and Social Justice Award. The Committee is currently seeking applications for up to three \$500 scholarships that will be provided to graduating Whitby high school students who are planning to attend post-secondary schools in September 2017 or January 2018. Applications

are due May 26, 2017. For more information, visit www.whitby.ca/en/townhall/ethnoculturalanddiversityadvisorycommittee.asp.



Diversity Scholarship

Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) is recognizing outstanding students in Durham Region who have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, human equity and inclusive practices in their community.

Scholarships are being awarded in the amount of \$1,500 to two students who are entering their first year of post-secondary education and are enrolled in an academic program that is related to a career in policing. For more information, visit

http://www.drps.ca/internet_explorer/whatsnew/whatsnew_view.asp?Related_With=Whats_New&Scope=&Scope_ID=&ID=32396.

For information about other awards and bursaries available to Durham high school students, visit <http://ddsb.ca/Students/AwardsAndBursaries/Pages/default.aspx>.

#BestPlayingTogether: Play, learn, respect – two way integration

#BestPlayingTogether is a brand new program that aims to increase opportunities for newcomer children and youth to participate in physical activity and realize the benefits of doing so. The program also helps Boys & Girls Club Durham reach newcomer youth and deliver quality sport and recreation activities to them. #BestPlayingTogether will run during March Break in White Oaks in Whitby, as well as during the summer. There is no cost to newcomer kids to participate.



Boys & Girls Club
of Durham

The #BestPlayingTogether! Initiative is funded by the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport and is offered in partnership with Ontario Boys and Girls Clubs, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) and Toronto Sports Council.

Boys and Girls Club of Durham regularly hosts local newcomer open houses to welcome newcomer children, youth and families and alert them to the opportunity to participate in their programs. For more information, contact the Boys and Girls Club Durham at www.bgcdurham.com.



Supporting community: Low-income tax clinics

There are many free tax clinics being run across Durham Region to assist low-income residents in completing a tax return. All are part of the Canada Revenue Agency's Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVIT). All require that you make an appointment. It is important to remember that to qualify for the child tax credit and for HST rebates and many other subsidy programs, individuals MUST file a tax return. Below are some details on where tax clinics are being run this tax season:

Welcome Centre Ajax: By appointment only from February 22 to April 28. Some Saturday and evening appointments are available. For more information, or to book an appointment, please ask at the reception desk or call 1-877-761-1155.



Welcome Centre Pickering: By appointment only from February 22 to April 28. For more information, or to book an appointment, please call 905-420-3607.

Ajax Public Library: Tax clinics will be held in April. Pre-registration is required. Sessions can be held in both English and French. Please visit the library website for details: <http://ajaxlibrary.ca>.

Clarington Public Library (CPL): The tax clinic will be held on Saturday, April 8 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration information will be available on the CPL website (www.clarington-library.on.ca) and in the Library Guide in March.

Oshawa Public Library: Registration, either in-person or by calling 905-579-6111, is available as of February 21. Tax clinics are offered at two branches, the Jess Hann Branch (199 Wentworth Street East) and the McLaughlin Branch (65 Bagot Street), and they run from March 1 to the end of April.

Pickering Public Library: The tax clinic will be held on Saturday, April 1 by appointment only. Registration opens on March 7, and can be done by calling 905-831-6265 or in-person.

Uxbridge Public Library: Tax clinics will be held in late March in collaboration with North House. Please call 705-432-8654 x237 to make an appointment.

Whitby Public Library: Two full-day tax clinics will be held at the Central Library, one on Saturday, March 11 and the other on Saturday, March 25. To register, please call 905-668-6531 x2020 or email askreference@whitbylibrary.ca.

NEED A HAND WITH YOUR TAXES?

The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) has you covered!



2,442 community organizations



15,032 volunteers



prepared 749,963 tax returns in 2016

Community learning: How-to in 10!

Are you looking for an opportunity to learn new skills? Are you short on time? The award-winning How-to in 10 Festival and Road Show is here to help! Come and satisfy your curiosity, stimulate your senses, and discover a new talent and skill (or 20!) in 10 minutes or less.

The How-To in 10 Festival began in 2013 with the Pickering Public Library. In 2014, the concept was adopted by other Durham Libraries to become a travelling festival. In 2014, Durham Region libraries were thrilled to receive the Durham Art of Transition Creative Award, celebrating creativity and culture in the Region.

So, what exactly is the How-to in 10 Festival and Roadshow? Visit any of the five libraries hosting the festival this year to meet and learn from experts—artists, cultural groups, organizations, and businesses—in your very own community. Skills can be learned in 10 minutes or less, and each location will host different groups. Come out to one or all of the festivals to learn as many skills as you can! Last year our participants learned how to fly a drone, make gluten-free donuts, build a better business card, maximize storage space, get physically fit, and so much more!

The five Durham libraries that are bringing the How-to in 10 Festival to their communities this spring are listed below. The libraries in Durham Region are known for their excellent collections and services that help residents learn, connect, explore and create. The How-to in 10 Festival is a new twist on fun and learning at the library!

No need to register, just drop in!

Oshawa Public Library | April 22
 Clarington Public Library | April 29
 Whitby Public Library | May 6

Uxbridge Public Library | May 13
 Pickering Public Library | May 27
www.HowToIn10.com | #How2Ten

HOW-TO
IN 10
 MINS

Glossary

Artifacts – objects with cultural significance

Conservation – to save something for later use

Disconcerting – troubling or confusing, something that makes you stop and think a bit more

Djembe drum – a hand drum from West Africa

Enriching – added value, something that gives more

Holi – a Hindu spring festival, often referred to as the festival of colours

Infrastructure – the physical built environment in a community, like roads, pipes, buildings

Islamophobia – discriminating against someone because they are or are perceived to be Muslim

Mandir – a Hindu temple/place of worship

Pow Wow – a community celebration hosted by First Nation or Aboriginal peoples, open to all

Reconciliation – a process of learning, forgiveness and coming together in mutual respect and friendship

Sugar bush – the area within a forest where maple syrup is made each spring

Tapestry – a woven piece of cloth bringing different threads together to create a picture

Worldview – the way in which someone interprets their environment

Xenophobia – a dislike of people from other cultures



Success story: Community builder

Esther Forde is a well-known face in Durham. Community organizer, community developer and founder of the hugely successful Black History Month community event, Esther is an integral part of the Durham community.

Esther emigrated with her family in the 1960s from Jamaica. The family settled in downtown Toronto close to Honest Ed's ("the original dollar store" Esther notes with a laugh). Married with two young children, the Fordes moved to Pickering where they found themselves happily at home in a new and growing community.

Ten years ago, Esther officially opened Cultural Expressions Art Gallery in Pickering Village. The gallery is committed to promoting Canadian and ethnic art from both local and international artists.

In 2007, inspired by her work in the gallery, Esther founded Cultural Expressions Art Gallery Inc. Black History Month celebration in Ajax. The event quickly outgrew its first location and this year celebrated its 10th anniversary to a packed auditorium at J. Clarke Richardson High School. The event brings the community together to celebrate the contributions of Black Canadians to Durham through dance, spoken word, music, and through the stories of local citizens who are doing great things. "I've been in Canada forever, this is my home, but as a visible minority I am still asked where I come from. This is true for visible minorities across Canada, no matter how many generations back your family tree stretches. For this reason, the theme of Black History Month was "claim it"; claim the contribution you and your family have made to the history of Canada and this community; claim your place in Durham".

Esther's work in the community includes becoming one of the #AjaxforAll Ambassadors. In her own words, "I see diversity as the future; the cornerstone of society. We have become more diverse, and we need to celebrate it. I think it is a great thing to learn from each other, celebrate our commonalities, embrace our differences and realize that we are more alike than different".

As a long-time community champion of diversity in Durham, Esther's advice to newcomers is to treat people as individuals, to not make assumptions based on appearances and, in the odd event that you are treated badly, in the words of Michelle Obama, "when they go low, you go high".



We look forward to hearing your stories and feedback. If you would like to subscribe or contribute to The Citizen, please contact us:

Email: diversitynewsletter@durham.ca | **Portal:** www.durhamimmigration.ca



Follow us on the Region of Durham Facebook page and on Twitter at #DurhamImmigration



Back issues: Visit www.durhamimmigration.ca for back issues of The Citizen by clicking on the Creating Community tab, and then clicking on the Diversity Newsletter heading.

You can also sign up for the newsletter online. Please feel free to forward The Citizen to others.