



DURHAM REGION'S  
DIVERSITY FOCUSED NEWSLETTER  
Issue 25, 2015

**LOCAL DIVERSITY  
AND IMMIGRATION**  
*Partnership Council*

## Celebrating the global locally: at home in a welcoming community

In 1946, Canadian John Humphrey became director of the United Nations Division on Human Rights, and Eleanor Roosevelt, former First Lady of the United States, was named the US representative to the UN's Commission on Human Rights. For two years, they collaborated in the creation of one of the modern world's great documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted on 10 December 1948<sup>1</sup>.



As the global community grapples with unprecedented numbers of refugees, at the local level across Canada, in communities large and small, individuals are doing their bit to create communities that welcome refugees. It is in the heart of each of these local initiatives that we see true compassion and commitment to building welcoming communities.

**“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.” – Eleanor Roosevelt**

We pause globally to reflect, celebrate and give thanks in December. We are grateful for guiding documents like the UDHR and for leaders like these.

1. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-universal-declaration-of-human-rights-feature/>

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

### In this issue ...

Celebrating the global locally: at home in a welcoming community	1
Building community: DRPS	2
Settling in Canada: Volunteering	2
Settling into your new community	3
Creating learning communities	3
Celebrating diverse traditions: Tamil Heritage Month	4
Building cultural communities: Congress of Black Women	4
Celebrating culture and diversity: Speak Up!	5
From one refugee to another: What you need to know about Canada	6
Celebrating diverse traditions: Hot Roots	8
Building welcoming communities: Supporting Canadian migrant workers	8
Improve your English	9
Settling in Canada: Tools	9
Creating healthy communities: December is a month of celebrations	10
Settling in Durham: Preparing for emergencies	10
World Religion Day	11
Glossary	11
Success story	12

## Building community: Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Diversity Advisory Committee

The DRPS Diversity Advisory Committee was established in 2003 with its primary role to provide relevant and timely advice to the Durham Regional Police Service on issues relating to diversity. The secondary role of the Diversity Advisory Committee is to act as a **catalyst** for change and perform the role of an informed resource on diversity and inclusion.

In early 2016, the Diversity Advisory Committee will be expanding its membership. The DRPS is actively seeking applications from residents who feel they could broadly represent a diverse aspect of our various communities. If a resident would like to apply to serve as a member of the committee they will be required to submit a 2 page letter outlining their interest, a brief biography and an overview that specifies how they feel they would **augment** this committee. The letter of interest must be accompanied by a resume that is no longer than 6 pages in length.

Application packages will be accepted until Jan. 22, 2016 and can be sent via email to [dac@drps.ca](mailto:dac@drps.ca) or submitted by mail to: Durham Regional Police Service – Diversity Advisory Committee, 605 Rossland Rd. E. P.O. Box 911, Whitby, Ontario, L1N 0B8. All applications can be sent to the attention of the Committee Secretary - Chantal Clemens.



## Settling in Canada: Volunteering to gain Canadian work experience and engage with your community



The Town of Ajax was at the centre of excitement this summer as it hosted baseball and softball events for the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games, which ran July 10 to 26. The Town welcomed approximately 125,000 visitors, 448 athletes and 24 teams at the President's Choice Ajax Pan Am Ballpark.

There were many moments of celebration. History was made on our fields as this was the first time women's baseball was played in a multi-sport games, and Team Canada achieved three gold medals and one silver on home soil!

Community excitement was at a high with a full **roster** of special events. Highlights included: Pan and Parapan Am Torch Relays; Pan Am Ajax Launch/Official Opening Ceremony; musical & cultural performances; Ajax Pride House; and Pan Am Ajax Official Closing Ceremony. More than 20,000 residents and visitors attended special events during the Games.

Ajax Pride House, hosted at the Ajax Welcome Centre, provided a safe space for the LGBTQ community, newcomers, and allies to participate in Games excitement. Ajax was the only Host Municipality outside of Toronto to host such an initiative.

However, none of this would have been possible without the help and dedication of volunteers! The Town recruited approximately 300 Ajax Pan Am-Bassador volunteers who worked 1,400 shifts and contributed 7,200 hours to deliver the Games in Ajax!

## Settling into your new community: Making personal connections

If you're new to a community, it is easy to feel isolated and alone. Getting out and meeting new people is important but sometimes that can be difficult to do, especially if you are a newcomer.

One of the most difficult things about starting over in a new country can be making new friends but friendships are important for everyone, whether you are a newcomer or a life-long resident of Canada! Socializing and developing relationships with others helps us to feel happier, connected and is good for our self-esteem.

Getting involved in the community or joining a group helps us to connect with others. It can combat depression and reduce stress. Getting started, however, can be challenging. One great place to begin looking for groups to get involved with is the Durham Immigration Portal.

Find and connect with a group of people with similar interests through the Ethnocultural Listing ([www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca) > [Creating Community](#) > [Ethnocultural Listing](#)).

Learn about what is happening in your local area through the Community Events page ([www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca) > [About](#) > [Events](#)). Why not check out an English or French language circle or attend a cultural celebration at a mosque or church? Try a new sport or hobby. Getting started is the hardest part but the Portal provides a great **jumping-off point!**



## Creating learning communities: Programs in multiple languages across Durham

Maintaining connections to your home language and culture is important and Canada is a country that prides itself on supporting and celebrating multiple cultures and identities.

If you are looking for home language instruction, contact your local school board for information on free Saturday morning classes for school-age children. Currently, classes are run through the [Durham Catholic District School Board](#) in the following languages: English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese - Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Tamil, Dari, and Persian. The [Durham District School Board](#) runs classes in the following languages: Greek, Korean, Mandarin, Serbian, Spanish, and Ukranian.

If you're looking for less structured activities with children, many libraries offer children's storytimes in French, Spanish and Tamil, as well as English. Check out your local library website for more information. The Durham Immigration Portal has links to these websites as well as general information on library resources in different languages. Remember that libraries also offer multi-lingual collections and your local library can bring in materials from other libraries for you. Visit [www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca) > [Learning](#) > [Library Programs](#).



## Celebrating diverse traditions: Tamil Heritage Month

Tamils began arriving in Canada in the 1960s. Tamil Canadians became the fastest growing community in Metropolitan Toronto. Canada's Tamil population is now estimated to be approximately 300,000. Today's Tamil Canadian community is flourishing with tens of thousands of entrepreneurs, professionals, and post-secondary students alongside active and engaged community organizations and a thriving arts and culture scene.

Tamil Heritage Month was initiated in January 2010 with the aim of celebrating the history of Canada's Tamil community and its contribution to the social, cultural, political and economic strength of Canada. January was chosen because Thai Pongal (Tamil Harvest Festival) and Tamil New Year, two festivities close to the hearts of all Tamils, are celebrated. It serves as a month for Tamils to celebrate their culture, traditions, history, literature and festivities, providing both Tamil youth and the mainstream community an opportunity to learn about and preserve the rich heritage of Tamils.



Various celebrations and educational events will take place in January to commemorate Tamil Heritage Month throughout Durham Region by Tamil organizations and educational institutions. This year the Durham District School Board, along with Academic and Fine Arts of Durham, will conduct numerous competitions open to all students to participate in promoting diversity and education.

For more information on Tamil Heritage Month, visit <http://tamilsociety.ca>.

## Building cultural communities: Congress of Black Women, Whitby/Oshawa



The Congress of Black Women of Canada is a national, non-profit organization which is dedicated to improving the lives of Black Women and their families in their local communities, as well as nationally.

The Congress, which was started by the late Kay Livingstone in 1973, has chapters in Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario.

On March 17, 2007, the Oshawa/Whitby Chapter of the Congress was formed.

The Congress, seeks through programs of education and service, to motivate Black Women to participate in and contribute to the life of the communities in which they live. Throughout the year we have guest speakers at our monthly meetings presenting on issues relating to our mandate. We also provide ongoing support to empower and enrich the lives of our women, as well as Community Outreach/Liaison.

The CBWC Mandate is: human rights, housing, health, child development, education, pensions, racism, and sexism

For further information please contact us: 1-866-986-CBWC (2292) ext. 205, [cbwoshawawhitby@gmail.com](mailto:cbwoshawawhitby@gmail.com), or visit [www.cbwoshawawhitby.com](http://www.cbwoshawawhitby.com).

Membership - All Black women from 16 years of age. We are currently seeking new members -

Chapter meetings are held the first Saturday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Colonial Retirement Residence, 101 Manning Rd., Whitby.

## Celebrating culture and diversity: Speak Up! Speak Out! Our Voices Matter..

Save the date (Feb. 20) to join Durham Region's largest, community-based Black History celebration. Building on eight years of growth and success, we continue to explore the rich and **expansive** contributions of Canadians of African-descent, as they have shaped and reshaped the Region's social, cultural, intellectual, and political landscape.

### Cultural Expressions

#### 9th Annual Black History Celebration

Saturday, February 20th, 2016 – 5.00 to 8.00 p.m.

J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate

1355 Harwood Ave N, Ajax, ON L1T 4G8

Join us to experience traditional and modern cultural expressions, including music, dance, performances, cultural food, a not-to-be-missed exhibition of art and history, and the awarding of this year's prestigious Madiba award. Our inspirational program, speakers, and community displays will disseminate knowledge and spark meaningful dialogue, as we encourage everyone in this diverse and inclusive Region to Speak Up! Speak Out! Because Our Voices Matter..

This is a free, public event presented by Cultural Expressions Art Gallery (a not-for-profit corporation) in conjunction with the Town of Ajax, Congress of Black Women of Canada, Canadian Jamaican Club (Durham), Durham Black Educators' Network, Durham District School Board, and more than 40 local businesses and organizations.

For more information, contact Esther Forde, Founder & Chair, Cultural Expressions Black History Month Celebration at 905-427-2412 or follow us on facebook @Cultural Expressions Art Gallery Inc. or Twitter "#ReachBHC".



**Dunbarton Caribbean Dance Company**



**Sean Mauricette (a.k.a. Subliminal)**



**Toronto Children's Concert Choir**



## From one refugee to another:

Welcome to Canada. After waiting a very long time, perhaps in Lebanon or Turkey or Jordan, you have made it to a country where you will begin living with dignity once again. Welcome to Canada – I feel like saying it again, because it's going to be **surreal**.

Many Canadians across the country have taken to streets in communities big and small to call on our federal government to bring you to safety in Canada.

Sixteen years ago, Canadians urged the federal government to airlift Kosovar refugees from overcrowded refugee camps in Macedonia and Albania to communities across this country, during a time when ethnic cleansing turned 80 per cent of Kosovo's population into refugees. My parents and I landed in St. John's on a foggy, cold October afternoon. I still have the plane ticket. I remember fearing the Customs official, checking my Red Cross travel documents. Instead of denying us entry, he smiled and said, "Welcome to Canada."

We were greeted by some of the friendliest people we had met, whose hugs and warm Tim Hortons coffee made us feel better. Within hours of arriving in Canada, these kind strangers showed me what is at the core of their national values: to give those who need a hand up and to expect only respect in return.

That, my new neighbour, is the society you are about to join, and one that I am proud to call my own.

Some Canadians may wonder why you would want to leave your region of the world to go so far away from home. They don't realize that being in a refugee camp is to be in a **perpetual** state of **limbo** – you can't find meaningful work, pursue your education, or build a future.

All you want is stability and an opportunity to start living again. Six months after coming to Canada, I was volunteering for six different organizations, working in two jobs, and still serving as my mother's personal interpreter while she studied English. Since escaping the war, I have had so much life in me that not taking advantage of my freedom and opportunities to advance in society would have been a loss to my community.

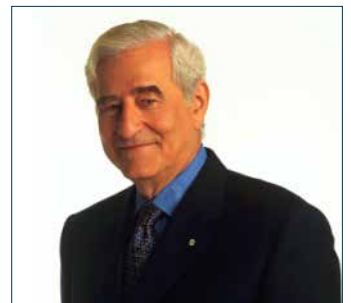
Once you come to Canada, you can begin thinking about the kind of future you want to build. As my parents and I settled in a rental apartment when we arrived, we could not have dreamt of the future we would build here of creating a home in the place we only knew by the people we met at its airport on our arrival day, and of having the freedom to travel, study and work in Canada and beyond. By supporting me during my studies and my personal development, this country invested in me as it did for those born here – perhaps receiving that support without distinction was the most pleasant gift of coming to Canada.



**Remzi Cej**  
Kosovo – 2000  
Chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission



**The Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean**  
Haiti - 1968  
27th Governor General of Canada



**Joe Schlesinger**  
Czechoslovakia – 1938  
Evacuated in the "kindertransport" organized by Sir Nicholas Winton. Television journalist and author

## What you need to know about Canada

While most Canadians are happy you're coming here, your refugee status is making some people distrustful of your identity. Some Canadians may think you are bringing violence with you, and don't see that you are here exactly because you want to escape conflict. Much of that comes from some Canadians' inability to relate to your experience – some read the news and worry about 25,000 strangers coming to their country. They don't know that since Sept. 11, 2001, the United States took in over 740,000 refugees, and yet of those, no one was even accused of domestic terrorism.

My dear new neighbour, loss defines so much of your recent past: Everything you and your family worked hard to build is gone. Your family members may have been killed, may now be in detention, perhaps, being tortured in overcrowded prisons, or worse yet, they may be missing – believe me, I understand what not knowing is like, and let me assure you, you will not be alone.

My mother began and ended each day by saying my brother's name while he was missing for nearly six years. But fellow Canadians helped us look for him and ultimately helped us convince the federal government to bring him to Canada.

Perhaps the most important lesson I need to share with you: Be yourself in every sense of the word – whether you are Muslim, Christian, spiritual or an atheist; straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered; whether your beliefs are conservative or liberal. Canada is a place that thrives on diversity – and has learned hard lessons about **suppressing** our differences. Be yourself – and add to Canada's greatness.

Opportunities are before you, and there are many community causes waiting for your help. As people help you, you must reach out to others too. As I discovered, not only will you meet other community members, but you will do something Canadians consider a defining characteristic of our identity – helping one another, building a better future.

Welcome to your new home. I'll be waiting with a **double-double** in hand.

Written by Remzi Cej. Remzi came to Canada in 2000 as a teenager, after fleeing Kosovo with his family. He is a **Rhodes scholar** and chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission.

"From one refugee to another: What you need to know about Canada" originally appeared in The Globe and Mail on Thursday, Nov. 19, 2015

**If you're interested in learning more about privately sponsoring a refugee, what's happening in Durham Region, or you just want to know a bit more about the current refugee crisis, visit [www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca) > Creating Community > Sponsor Refugees.**



**The Right Honourable  
Adrienne Clarkson**  
Hong Kong - 1941  
26th Governor General of  
Canada



**K'naan (Keinan Abdi  
Warsame)**  
Somalia -1991  
Poet, rapper, singer,  
songwriter. Wrote "Wavin'  
Flag" – Promo anthem for the  
2010 FIFA World Cup



**Kim Thuy**  
Vietnam – 1978 (boat person)  
Author – winner of the  
Governor General's  
Award for French language  
fiction



## Celebrating diverse traditions: Hot Roots 2016



Your cultural heritage is determined by several factors such as your first language, your country of origin, religious belief and the food that nourished you as a child.

These days, in our rapidly changing world, culinary roots are facing an unusual challenge. Families struggle to manage the demands of multi-tasking and multiple jobs, while trying to preserve family life. As a result, there is little time for traditional cooking. Instead, high fat/fast-food takes centre stage. Some families, who live within walking distance of fast-food outlets, also lack local access to fresh food. A "food desert" is an urban area with little or no affordable or good-quality fresh food. As a result, children everywhere are increasingly addicted to the fast-food high-fat menus. Not only is our global palette being "dumbed-down" in a medically dangerous way, but children everywhere are losing their food roots.

Oshawa's HotRoots Soups Festival asks restaurants to use root vegetables to make Afro-Caribbean-inspired soups for one week during Black History Month.



The all-veg soups are available during the lunch hour at several downtown restaurants, and also at special soup stations set-up at City Hall and other office buildings. Oshawa's BIA has supported this event, sponsored by DurhamVeg, from its beginning in 2013. HotRoots will run from Feb. 22 to Feb. 26. For more details, see <http://hotroots.oshawa.weebly.com>.

## Building welcoming communities: Supporting Canadian migrant workers

In 2015, migrant agricultural workers from Mexico and the Caribbean engaged in various activities in Durham Region. More than 100 agricultural workers took part in social events, including three health fairs, and social events at the Durham Caribbean Festival and baseball at the Pan Am Games.

During the offseason (December to April) there will be a frontline migrant worker training session in Durham Region open to service providers who serve people working in caregiver and agricultural programs. Agricultural workers have asked that service providers visit them on the farms to get to know them better and to become familiar with their day-to-day lives. Ongoing outreach and surveillance will assist efforts in connecting migrant worker communities.



The Durham Region Migrant Worker Network has offered information and support to migrant agricultural workers since 2013 in areas of local healthcare and social services. They are informed by the workers on social and educational requests, and are continually advised of opportunities to improve future programming. The network is made up of volunteers and service providers from cultural, health, and faith communities in Durham Region.



## Improve Your English Language Skills



### FREE English classes

- All levels and specialty English classes
- Learn using computers
- Practice your conversation skills
- Learn about Canadian culture

### Focus on:

- English for life
- English for work
- English for education
- Part or Full-time classes available
- Day or evening classes available
- TESL Certified professional instructors



### Specialty classes:

- Prepare for your Citizenship test
- Study for the TOEFL/IELTS test
- Practice conversation & writing skills
- Advance your English language skills using technology
- Prepare for higher education
- Earn an English Language Training Certificate
- English classes available in Oshawa and Pickering

### Visitors to Canada welcome

### Please call for more information

 	<b>Durham Continuing Education</b> 905-440-4489 (Oshawa) 905-831-3118 (Pickering) <a href="http://www.dce.ca">www.dce.ca</a>	
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## Settling in Canada: Tools to help you improve your English language skills

Never be afraid to communicate in the language you are learning!

There are many tools available to help you practice speaking. Some of these tools are HelloTalk ([www.hellotalk.com](http://www.hellotalk.com)), Italki ([www.italki.com](http://www.italki.com)), Busuu ([www.busuu.com/enc](http://www.busuu.com/enc)) and many, many more.

Most of these tools are free to try but may require a subscription and payment for additional use. Please read and make sure you understand before you click or agree to anything!

HelloTalk is a free **smartphone app** that will allow you to make free calls or send text messages to language-learning partners from all over the world. You will be able to talk to native speakers of over 100 languages. This app allows you to

never be afraid to communicate in the language you are learning! speak and it will capture voice as text as well as help you practice proper pronunciation.

Italki is a website that helps learners communicate with teachers online for language lessons, or practice speaking with others, or get free help by offering to help someone else learn your native language.

Busuu organizes vocabulary in sections such as Cooking in the Kitchen, Positive Feelings, or The Job Interview. This makes it easier to find common words and phrases you need.

All information found in this article was retrieved from the following websites:

[www.hellotalk.com](http://www.hellotalk.com), [www.italki.com](http://www.italki.com) and [www.busuu.com/enc](http://www.busuu.com/enc).



## Creating healthy communities: December is a month of celebrations!

Whatever you are celebrating this time of year give your loved ones the gift of good oral health. With festivities starting it's a time for celebration and joy, not cavities or a toothache. You may be busy but it is not a time to neglect your daily routines around your oral health. Here are some tips to keep your smile healthy over the holidays:

1. Brush two times a day for two minutes (morning and bedtime), brush more often after eating sugary foods and drinks during your celebrations
2. Floss daily to clean between your teeth
3. Chew a piece of sugarless gum or drink water if you are unable to brush or floss right away
4. Try to avoid holiday stress, it can cause you to clench your teeth, causing jaw pain, headaches and chipped teeth
5. During holiday get-togethers choose healthy foods and drinks to keep your smile festive



6. If you have any dental issues see a dentist as soon as possible to avoid further problems over the holiday break

To obtain more information related to oral health, visit [durham.ca/oralhealth](http://durham.ca/oralhealth).

## Settling in Durham: Preparing for emergencies

Ontario can sometimes experience extreme weather. Flooding, heatwaves or ice storms can be the cause of local emergencies in your community. The power may go out in your home. Trees may block roads. Do you know what to do in an emergency? Are you ready? Personal emergency preparedness is made easy with a new brochure featuring valuable tips on how to best prepare yourself for an emergency situation.

The new, user-friendly publication will give you an awareness and understanding about your roles and responsibilities regarding emergency preparedness; what role the Region plays in the event of an emergency; and where you can find information.

Emergencies can occur quickly and without warning, at any time of day and in any season. The "Are You Ready?" brochure explains the four key steps to personal emergency preparedness:

1. Know Your Risks
2. Have a Plan
3. Make a **Kit**
4. Stay in Touch



There is also important information for those who live, work, or attend school within 10 kilometres of the Pickering or Darlington Nuclear Generating stations. To receive a free copy of the "Are You Ready?" brochure, please call the Durham Emergency Management Office (DEMO) at 905-430-2792, visit [www.durham.ca/demo](http://www.durham.ca/demo), email [demo@durham.ca](mailto:demo@durham.ca), or visit the Region of Durham Headquarters at 605 Rossland Rd. E. in Whitby.

"I am excited to be here, well organized, good to see all faiths together under one umbrella. At the heart of discussions at the tables was peace and harmony" - Firuz.

"World Religion Day is a wonderful opportunity to see the great cultural spirit that is alive and well in Durham Region" - Steve Yamada.

"It gives me great pleasure to be at this event to celebrate the oneness and unity of Mankind and their beliefs" - Pt. Youdehtir La II

**The Durham Multi Faith World Religion Day Committee in collaboration with The City of Oshawa & Durham District School Board Presents**

# World Religion Day

**A Community Celebration of Unity in Diversity**


Featuring Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Baha'i Faith, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Native Spirituality, Unitarianism and Jainism

**ADMISSION IS FREE**

**Date:** Sunday, January 17, 2016  
**Time:** Doors open at 12:15 p. m to 4:15 p.m.  
**Location:** Northview Community Centre  
 150 Beatrice St E, Oshawa, ON L1G 7T6

**FOCUS:**  
 "Faith, Understanding and Embracing Diversity"

There will be culturally diverse light music, spiritual classical dance & lots of light refreshments.  
 Please join us for a relaxing, interactive and invigorating afternoon.



Our sincere appreciation to all our Community Partners for their past and continued support.  
 For more information, email [wrd.durham@gmail.com](mailto:wrd.durham@gmail.com) or visit [www.wrdd.org](http://www.wrdd.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/World-Religion-Day-Durham-1476605142565269/>

## Glossary

**A double-double** - this is a very Canadian slang expression that refers to the type of coffee most popular at Tim Hortons coffee shops – a medium coffee with two teaspoons of sugar and two servings of cream

**Augment** – to add to something

**Catalyst** – something that starts something else, makes something happen

**Elusive** – hard to find

**Expansive** – growing, getting larger

**Grapples with** – learn to deal with, usually something new or difficult

**Jumping-off point** – a place to start

**Kit** – a package of useful things

**Limbo** – not here, not there, a period or place of confusion and uncertainty

**Perpetual** – always there, in motion, being or doing

**Professional bodies** – usually career or job-specific organizations that set the rules for who can work in that profession, career or job in terms of education and experience

**Rhodes scholar** – a very prestigious designation given to a person who receives an academic scholarship to attend Oxford University in England, Oxford is one of the best universities in the world

**Roster** – a list

**Smartphone app** – short form for an application or program that runs on an iPhone or other hand-held device

**Suppressing** – keeping something hidden, inside

**Surreal** – not real, other-worldly, confusing at the same time as it is familiar

**Unprecedented** – not seen, heard of or experienced before



## Success story: Jasmine Wang

Jasmine Wang arrived from China in 2002. She and her family enjoyed their lives in China, a country with a long history, but they were curious about Canada and what living in a relatively new country would be like. They also felt that Canada had more opportunities for the family and came to Canada looking for a better life.

Language has proven to be the biggest challenge in immigrating and settling in Canada. A second challenge was gaining Canadian work experience. Jasmine was able to overcome both challenges, however, by taking advantage of local resources and programs.

For the first few years the family was in Canada, Jasmine stayed at home with their two young children. Local libraries provided interesting programs for the children, were a great source of local information for Jasmine, and provided an opportunity to meet other people in the community.

Once Jasmine was ready to return to work, she enquired about upgrading her English language skills at the Durham District School Board (DDSB). She enrolled in the Learning English for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program and also used the programs and services offered by the Welcome Centre for Immigrant Services. She found both extremely useful. As her English improved, Jasmine graduated to the Enhanced Language Training (ELT) program which not only provides advanced English-language training but also provides job placements. The job placement aspect of the program helps newcomers to Canada gain that **elusive** Canadian experience to



assist them in their job hunts. For Jasmine, she did such a great job on her placement that they offered her a permanent position.

Jasmine's advice to people who are thinking about coming to Canada, upgrade your English before you arrive! As well, research your professional credentials and get in touch with the **professional bodies** in Canada that oversee your profession. They will be able to help you through the process of having your academic and professional credentials assessed. And finally, don't give up!

Jasmine's family is settled in Durham and looking forward to many more years of living and contributing to their local community. She feels very lucky.

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](mailto:diversitynewsletter@durham.ca) | **Portal:** [www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://www.durhamimmigration.ca)



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



**Back issues:** Visit [www.durhamimmigration.ca](http://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.