Hello to the CultureLink Community,

We are now entering our winter months and if this is your first year in Canada you will get to know the beautiful season of winter. You will get to partake in many seasonal activities that are unique to the Canadian culture; such as snow sledding, snow shoeing, ice skating, and many more. CultureLink proudly showcases many program successes that welcome newcomers into the Canadian community and culture. Please enjoy the latest edition of our newsletter and share it with your friends.

#### Warm Season Greetings,

The CultureLink Settlement and Community Services Staff Team

# CultureLink Opens Up New IT Security Bridge Training Program



Are you new to Toronto or do you know a newcomer with IT / coding experience or training? If so, you may want to talk to them about CultureLink's new IT Security Bridge Training Program.

The increasing automatization and networking of information online has made us more vulnerable to cyber-attacks than ever before. According to U.S. News & World Report, cybersecurity is 7th on a list of the 100 best jobs in 2017, up from 8th only two years before.

Why is cybersecurity in such great demand? The number and power of cybercriminal threats such as phishing, malware, ransomware and application vulnerabilities, a larger IT footprint caused by the growing internet of things, multiple platforms, innovations such as facial recognition and increased reliance on technology, has significantly escalated the need for cyberprofessionals to remediate and defend against those threats in the years ahead.

CultureLink has teamed with The Knowledge Academy to provide CISSP training to newcomers with some background in IT. In addition, students will have the opportunity to meet with potential Canadian employers and IT security professionals on a monthly basis, receive additional training in such areas as resume writing, interview skills, soft skills and networking, as well as hearing from professionals in the area. Students will also be able to connect to other staff within the organization regarding their overall settlement needs.

We'll be opening up registration in February. Call Terry Baker at 416.588-6288, x217 to find out more.

Learn More

### SWIS presentation at OISE



Culturelink's Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) is known for its quality provision of Information and orientation to new immigrant families in the school system. However, as part of the program's advocacy and community orientations, Lucy Zhuang found herself presenting her settlement experience to a group of 31 new teachers at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Lucy highlighted that the presence of Settlement programs in selected schools has been beneficial to thousand of immigrant families who

rely on the supports and guidance provided by SWIS; from basic Language acquisition such as ESL or LINC to help with Immigration, Housing, Health, Finance and more, SWIS connects the dots for newcomer community is the school system.

## Learn More





The aim of this collaboration was to provide a space for Syrian Newcomer Youth and Families to come together, share their experiences and struggles, build ties with the broader Canadian community, and have access to a series of facilitators and supports that can assist them navigate their Settlement journey in a new country.

Under the title: "You Belong in Canada", different workshops highlighting Diversity & Community Engagement, Socializing & Building your Network, Positive Thinking & Self Promotion and Healthy & Active Lifestyle have been conducted. In addition, participants were introduced to Culturelink Settlement and Community Services; programs and services provided by CL to newcomers including the Syrian newcomers.

"It was a great opportunity to invite my colleagues at CL to talk about their programs geared towards the Syrian Refugees" said Ebraheem Kanaan who specializes in providing

School Settlement Services to Syrian families in Toronto. Ebrahim thanked YMCA for their collaboration. "We look forward to more of these mutual initiatives so to assist and provide further services to Syrians" added Ebraheem.

## Learn More

# **Refugee Limbo**



For a number of years the Immigration and Refugee Board which is tasked with determining who is or is not a bona-fide refugee has had a backlog of refugee cases. Recently, that number seems to hover at about 40,000. Among the refugees that are waiting for their hearing are people who arrived since 2013.

We know that according to the Immigration Law that was in place before December 2012, there is another group of about 5,000 cases that have to be dealt with; A separate unit of adjudicators, who have knowledge of the old law, are expected to be processing them.

However, what we have learned at last November's meeting in Niagara Falls, is that the IRB will no longer give priority in scheduling to the most recently arrived; According to the existing legislation the newly arriving asylum seekers have to be given a date for their refugee hearing at arrival. The previous conservative Minister of Immigration, the Honorable Jason Kenny has suggested that the refugee need to be processed as soon as possible and the legislation states that they have to have a hearing within one or two months of their arrival.

### <u>Learn More</u>









CultureLink reception@culturelink.ca

