

Greetings CultureLink Community,

Summer is upon us and there are many exciting activities to get involved in. June saw school drawing to a close and some wonderful mentoring events. We start this issue by showcasing a wonderful volunteer and touch upon Bike to School Month, Mabelle After School Club and include Refugee Board policy information. We welcome the ideas of our participants and volunteers so if you would like to get (more) involved, drop by or ask to meet with one of our knowledgeable settlement program workers.

Volunteerism - Working in Community

Testimonial from Participant and Volunteer Rose Dlamini



I moved to Canada in 2012. Relocating to a new country and looking for a job is not easy. Soon after I arrived I learned about Canadian work life, job search techniques and networking and how vital volunteering was to integration. I realized that changing careers was an option, so I pursued and obtained my degree in Liberal Arts and a certificate in Refugee and Migration Studies. Currently, I am volunteering with CultureLink, where I provide reception support. CultureLink offers innovative programs for newcomers—programs so fantastic that when my daughter Siviwe, arrived in Canada, I encouraged her to get involved. In May, we took part in the New Canadian Welcome Program at Souleppper with live performances by young local artists. The great partnership team of CultureLink and Souleppper staff really understand newcomers' needs. I am grateful that I registered my daughter. She received a lot of important support, information and settlement resources and she enjoys hers program with the awesome CultureLink staff.

June was Bike to School Month in Toronto by Kristin Schwartz



June is Bike Month in Toronto. CultureLink's Bike to School Project celebrated another season of growth. Over 400 schools registered for Bike to School Week, up from 301 in 2016. From April to June, our trained Cycling Educators provided programs to 70 elementary and secondary schools. Most inspiring was a press conference hosted by students and teachers from several partner schools, in support of bike lanes on Bloor Street. The event was widely covered in the media and helped ensure that the voices of youth will be heard, in favour of a healthier and more sustainable city!

credit: Cycle Toronto

Photo

Serious Days for Refugees by Paul St. Clair

In a recent decision, the Supreme Court determined criminals should not wait more than 30 months for their day in court. There are just as serious delays in the processing of refugee claims as some have been waiting over six years for a hearing to determine if they can remain in Canada. Living in limbo forces refugees to put off plans for starting a



business or pursuing further education toward their career goals. Many refugees cannot reunite with their wives and children and arrive in a fragile mental state. These delays often lead to further re-traumatization. The goal of the 2012 immigration legislation was to speed up processing time but it has had the opposite effect. The Refugee Board (RB) had been cancelling hearings without enough time to complete security reviews or, due to lack of funds, without enough adjudicators to hear the old cases of which there are about 5000. There are about 30,000 newer cases still waiting for a hearing for five or less years. The RB has finally announced that in September they would re-open these old 'legacy' cases. Let's hope that this will not remove resources needed for processing newly arriving refugees, otherwise, the backlog of these newer cases will continue to grow.

Upcoming Events - Get Involved!

CCMP is looking forward to working with our partners on future speed mentoring events including AECOM on July 13th. Please email or phone Tanya to register at tbaltrushevich@culturelink.ca or 416-588-6288, x 210.

Family Settlement Orientation & Clothing Drive @ St. Jamestown Library. Info: 647 296-0948
 Post Secondary Conversations - July 20th, 4 - 6 pm @ CultureLink office. Info: 647 296-0951

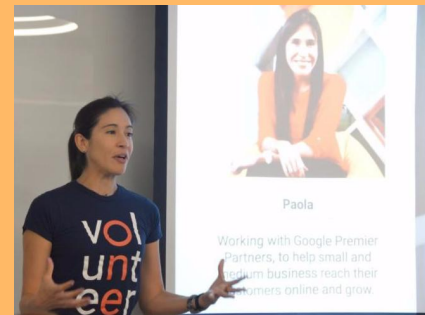
Recap of Recent Events



Soulpepper-CultureLink New Canadian Welcome Program
 Over 50 newcomers and families participated in this celebratory Welcome Event.



Maybelle After School Program
 The Mabelle After-School Program came to end June 21st with a trek over to Micheal Power Park for fun in the sun



Google Networking Event
 June 29th, 17 lucky CultureLink participants had the opportunity to network with 11 Google staff who shared job search advice.

Soulpepper Leadership Theatre with Youth Link by Ronald Rojas



The SWIS team loves innovative partnerships and what an excellent one we have through Soulpepper's Youth Link Program. Youth are supported by professional actors to explore through drama and thrive on the art of expression and communication. A motivated group of newcomer youth, together with their settlement worker Mr. Rojas, participated in a series of workshops, thanks to the St. Mary's school administration and the generous facilitation and

snacks provided by Soulpepper. Thursdays after school, the school library became a space of creation and expression, and where newcomer youth had a blast. All the participants commented that the actor facilitators were 'the best' including lead artist Jennifer Villaverde supported by Augusto Bitter and Alexis Gontan. Thanks SWIS Management for arranging this partnership, Mr. Rojas for engaging the youth and to the great Soulpepper staff!

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CultureLink
reception@culturelink.ca

