

Greetings!

Here's wishing everyone a wonderful holiday season. As you may know, CultureLink is working tirelessly for the arrival of Syrian refugees. Take a moment with your afternoon coffee or tea and learn about what's happening at CultureLink. And please, forward this newsletter to your contacts as you feel appropriate.

## CultureLink Welcoming Syrian Refugees

We are about to receive 10,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015, and another 15,000 by February 29, 2016. Some will be government sponsored, while many will be privately sponsored by motivated groups of citizens who are committed to welcoming Syrian families.

This influx of Syrian refugees is, in many ways, similar to the arrival of the Vietnamese Boat People in early 80s when the entire nation got involved in their reception and settlement. As part of that effort, both the Federal and Provincial government played leadership roles, and a 1986 study by Employment and Immigration Canada recommended that newcomers be settled more quickly and supported by settlement services. Also, Ontario Consultation on Reception Houses in 1987 recommended similar programs for newcomers. As a result of these recommendations the Metro Toronto HOST program was established in October of 1988 by a steering committee comprising of settlement service-providing organizations in Toronto. Four years later, and precisely in October of 1992, this HOST program was incorporated to become CultureLink Settlement Services of Metropolitan Toronto. Therefore, CultureLink understands the needs of refugees relatively well.

[Learn More](#)

## A Night to Remember!

With the SWIS and Seniors Program at the Canadian Tenors Performance

The world renowned Canadian band Tenor performed at the Air Canada Centre in front of a sold out crowd on November 24, 2015. Among the audience who watched with awe as they performed are newcomers students from the Multicultural Clubs at Bishop Morroco/ St. Mary's Secondary Catholic School, members of CultureLink Seniors' groups and other newcomer families from various programs of CultureLink Settlement and Community Services (CultureLink). [Learn](#)

[More](#)



## CultureLink Staff Christmas Party!

CultureLink celebrated its annual Christmas party on Friday Dec. 4th. The party was held at a restaurant called the host which had amazing Indian cuisine. Staff Erika planned fun activities:



Christmas Baking Challenge and The Ugly Sweater Competition.

We also enjoyed a humorous game of paper plates led by staff Asal and Zarina. A special thank you to Claudia and Ibrahim for arranging the venue, to all the staff that attended and to all staff that participated in the various activities.

## When Newcomers Give Back....



On November 19th former students of Central Toronto Academy came back with their very special stories of success to address the whole school. Among them were recipients of prestigious awards and scholarships for their extra-curricular and community work while they were students at the school. Zuberi Atard who founded Student Action Network to assist newcomer students to have volunteer

experience and Isaac Hassen who was a NOW program volunteer and completed high school within one year after arrival to Canada. [Learn More](#)

## CultureLink's Bike to School Project - Building on Success!

This month, CultureLink received the wonderful news that our trailblazing Bike to School Project will be funded for the next three years by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Toronto District School Board. The Foundation will be investing \$750,000 in our cycling education and engagement program; the TDSB is also making a significant contribution. With this support we look forward to greatly expanding our fleet of bicycles to better serve students in Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke and Downtown. [Learn More](#)



## Upcoming Events - Get Involved!

- January 2, 2016 - Souleppper CultureLink New Canadian Welcome Program. [Learn More](#)
- January 7, 2016 - March 10th 2016. "Discover Canada" Citizenship Education Mentoring Circle. [Learn More](#)

## NextGen Resume - A New Approach to Youth Employment

This month, CultureLink's Newcomer Youth Centre, SWIS and CCMP joined forces to deliver an innovative approach to tackling youth unemployment. Through a series of in-class workshops - and eventually online courses - this initiative teaches young people ages 18-25 how to leverage new-media when developing their resumes. Funded by the City of Toronto, the NextGen Resume workshop series teach youth who have little or no work experience or education how to create a multi-dimensional online presence that is advantageous to their employment and career development. Through the use of videos, info-graphics and career mentors, youth in the program learned how to leverage their

lived experience when connecting with employers. [Learn More](#)

## Wishing everyone a Happy Holiday and a Wonderful New Year!



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