

Greetings!

Happy New Year 2017!

A fresh new year is once again upon us. 2016 has ended. It was a tumultuous year; we were shocked and saddened with all the events and suffering happening across the globe.

Nevertheless, we also witnessed resilience and compassion. New Year 2017 is a brand new year to start strong and thankful for the blessings of the past year. We wish genuine peace across the earth! Many blessings to you and your loved ones.

Settlement Workers in Schools - Teachers at Western Technical School Learning about Roma Culture

This past year the number of Roma youth in attendance at Western Technical School (WTS) has risen to almost 30 youth. In response to requests from the administrators at this school, SWIS arranged for a school staff PD session. Staff expressed a need to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by newcomer Roma youth at WTS. Arranged by Assad Mahmood of SWIS and facilitated by CultureLink's Paul St. Clair, the session touched upon the Roma history of movement in Europe as well as their immigration to Canada. Learning about the Roma cultural norms and traditions assisted the teachers gain a better understanding about the long history of the Roma that has led to the current challenges of youth school attendance and low family trust in government systems including the school board.. [Learn more...](#)



Citizenship Initiative Group, Jamaican Canadian Association and CultureLink working together

I received an invitation to attend a presentation by the Citizenship Initiative Group that was hosted by Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) on December 1, 2016. As I finished my work day I thought of the unpleasant weather and a long journey by TTC, so I took another look at the invitation. It was too important not to go. I ventured there by subway, and two buses. A long ride made more pleasant by the wait for the bus with a friendly woman, her husband and two lovely children. They were on their way to the same meeting. As we joked and laughed about the cold I found out that they arrived 3 years ago from Jamaica and that the mother was coming all the way from her work in Scarborough, to travel to JCA in Etobicoke.

[Learn more...](#)

Hit Restart for Engineers

"Hit Re-Start," a pilot program run for newcomer engineers by the community connection mentorship program (CCMP) and led by Eman El Atawy and Shakira Quraishi

has the end goal of getting these professionals job ready. Our mentees comprise of exceptional foreign trained engineers who were eager to join the program in order to get the training, information and support they need for an effective job search. What makes this program unique is its holistic nature. We have brought together people and organizations to address all aspects of the job search from resume preparation to identifying potential job openings. In addition, one-on-one meetings between mentors and mentees allow for a very personalized approach. It is a comfortable atmosphere for mentees to have their specific questions answered, and for mentors to be able to provide tailored information and feedback. This is something that we could not do without our extraordinary volunteers.

[Read more...](#)

A New Program to Support Syrian Refugees

The Community Connections and Mentorship Program (CCMP) team has provided client-centred programming for the Syrians since they came to Canada in 2015. However, the first year of government support for Syrian GARS is coming to an end and they are anxious about the next step in their journey.

[Read more...](#)

Recap of Recent events



Sankofa "Minute to Win It" Game Night!

The Sankofa Youth Drop-In kicked off December with some friendly competition. Teams worked together to complete a series of mini challenges in 60 seconds or less.

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A student placement experience at CultureLink!

As a soon to be graduate from Working Skills Centre, part of my curriculum was to do my student placement at an organization or company of my choice.

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ESL Week Luncheon!

Maria Guiao and her excellent work at St. Joseph's College Catholic School in helping organize a celebration for a great ESL Week Luncheon. Entitled "One World Living Together", their ESL week also featured a wonderful multicultural show.

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