

# WELCOME AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

# Land Acknowledgement

- At ISANS, we acknowledge that we are on unceded, traditional Mi'kmaq territory, and we are grateful for the Peace and Friendship treaties.
- As we work to settle newcomers to Nova Scotia, we honour and respect the Indigenous people of this land.
- We are actively working toward reconciliation – recognizing the harm caused through colonialism – as well as building relationships with indigenous peoples.

# Creating Welcoming Communities

- The arrival of new Nova Scotians affords us the opportunity to explore, in more detail, the possibilities of establishing communities that are inclusive, diverse, and welcoming.



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# Welcome Ambassador Program: How it Came to Be

- Funded by NSOI
- 2016 Syrian “surge”
- Short period of time
- Community preparedness
- Creating an environment

# Who can Participate in Welcome Ambassador?

- Private sponsors
- Volunteers
- Businesses
- Social services
- Individuals
- Anyone!



# Welcome Ambassador Program: The Process

- 1) Application
- 2) Acceptance of commitments (time, values, action)
- 3) Complete Modules using Adult Education principals (applied, experiential, and hands-on)
- 4) Complete the Action Project
- 5) Certificate
- 6) Evaluation

\* Currently, we have approximately 175 former Welcome Ambassadors

# Welcome Ambassador Program: What it Looks Like

- 4 modules over 4 weeks (4 x 3hrs = 12hours). Time for reflection.
- Manual with 4 modules
- Module 1: Community Building & Understanding the Situation of Refugees
- Module 2: Cultural Humility & Understanding New Nova Scotians (first-voice guest speaker)
- Module 3: Power & Privilege
- Module 4: Communication & Action Plans

# 2016 Independent Evaluation: Overall Assessment

**Dalhousie University professors who conducted the evaluation concluded the following:**

- 1) The program accomplished more than the original objectives.
- 2) Facilitation and hands-on exercises were important for the success of the program.
- 3) The program created leadership for a more open and tolerant community.



# 2016 Independent Evaluation: Recommendations

**In terms of further development, they recommended the following:**

- 1) The program should be repeated and made available to more community leaders.
- 2) The program can be expanded to look at more diverse groups of refugees and newcomers.
- 3) Adjust the amount and focus of information to tailor for diverse audiences.
- 4) ISANS should pursue opportunities to follow up and share information among alumni of the program.
- 5) ISANS should be encouraged to develop the program nationally and for other cities and towns.

# Pandemic Squared

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# We're Growing our Program!

- Newly developed workshops, either stand-alone or in conjunction with our Welcoming Communities program.
  - Power and Privilege
  - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) 101
  - Micro-Aggressions
  - Unconscious and Implicit Bias
  - The Newcomer Experience
  - (Intergenerational) Trauma (still in development)
- More tailored EDI/anti-racism workshops to help professional development, with particular emphasis on newcomers.
- These training sessions can be offered either online or in-person, depending on the size of the group, and (COVID) comfort-level of the participants.

# Key Pieces for the Welcome Ambassador Program

- Needs a very skilled Facilitator
- Relevant rural/remote areas
- Relevant urban centres of all sizes
- Template – replicable
- Adaptable
- Activities – practice
- Applicable
- Action

# Examples of Welcome Ambassador Action

- Coffee and chats
- Hosted discussion groups (books, videos)
- Conversations
- Workshops
- Lunch and learns/Brown-bag lunch series
- Tutors
- Volunteers
- Joining of private sponsorships
- Art and conversation groups

# Becoming Change Agents

- Now that you know, what are you going to do about it?
- Speaks to accountability and responsibility to build a better, safer community through conversations and engagement

**B***change***THE**

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**Thank you!**