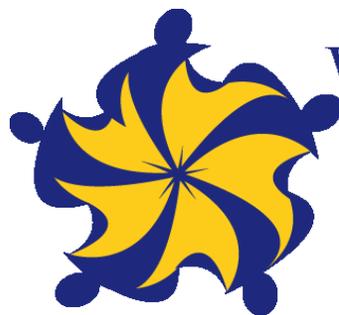


2011
July



WELCOMING
COMMUNITIES
INITIATIVE

bulletin

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Welcoming Communities Annual Conference Postponed

We will be postponing our annual conference originally scheduled for November 2011 to early February, 2012. This will allow us to hold the conference in conjunction with a CIC Ontario conference on LIP assessment strategies, thereby maximizing the use of limited travel funds. The 2012 conference will now be a joint effort between CIC Ontario Region and the WCI. More information will be available shortly. We will continue with our original plans to hold a Governing Council meeting and domain leaders meeting on November 17, 2011. Please note that any applications that have already been submitted for WCI conference travel support will be applied towards the 2012 conference.

Under Renovation: A Totally New Website for the WCI

In early February 2011, the Welcoming Communities Initiative enlisted OAK Computing to develop a new website. The existing site (welcomingcommunities.ca) has served its purpose, securing an initial web presence and providing basic information. It did not, however, afford much of a platform for the WCI's strategic communication plans. These plans call for the WCI to elevate its profile through important investments in the website, transforming it into a dynamic venue for learning, instruction and knowledge exchange. The plans also call for a significant shift in content and presentation favouring the use of audio and video material.

OAK has done a marvellous job, working closely and creatively with the WCI, to turn ideas into web functions. We are currently anticipating that the new site will be launched in early September, though it may take longer to load in all the material that is being generated. Some of the features that will figure prominently on the site are a Best Practices Corner that pulls together the WCI's extensive inventory of work in this field, with plans for video interviews with practitioners. The "Corner" will also house a searchable observatory containing articles on tools and measures for combating racism and discrimination; and it will feature a databank of community tools and resources compiled from various sources. In addition, the website will offer a sophisticated Find an Expert function that will be fully searchable in terms of such factors as experience, interest, achievements and specialization. It is expected that this will constitute a hugely valuable resource for communities, municipalities, governments and the WCI itself when searching for experts and partners. A host of other features will also be found on the new site and ambitious plans exist for further enhancements once the initial round of changes have been consolidated.

New WCI Events Calendar

One of the features that will appear on the new WCI website is an Events Calendar. We invite you to send us information for any upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Workshops on subjects that would interest WCI members. Please email wci@uwo.ca to request a form detailing the information we require. We will begin posting events on the website in early September 2011. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration Partnership

Guelph and Wellington County are diversifying. Recent activities highlight the importance of this change by focusing attention on the integration and inclusion of newcomers. A particularly productive development has been the partnership between the University of Guelph's Office of Intercultural Affairs and the Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration Partnership. Below, some of the key developments are listed.

The Office of Intercultural Affairs (OIA) has sought to capitalize on recent changes in immigration policy allowing international students to apply for permanent residency after graduation without having to leave the country. The OIA provides these students with transition and settlement programming with a view to encouraging their retention. As part of this effort, on September 27th, 2011, OIA, in partnership with the Guelph-Wellington LIP, has arranged "Cultural Networking Day", a new initiative aimed at bringing Guelph's ethno-cultural groups and immigrant service providers to the University. This will encourage international students to connect with local cultural associations, helping them to settle while, at the same time, reinvigorating the associations by injecting youthful voices into their programs and outreach services.

The OIA has also partnered with Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington to offer workshops such as "Living in Harmony with Diversity". These challenge students to understand and co-exist with the many diverse groups that are represented on campus.

As well as supporting these initiatives, the Guelph-Wellington LIP - consisting of some fifty community partners drawn from local agencies, businesses, community groups, and immigrants, all working collaboratively - has engaged in a range of activities to support immigrant inclusion. Especially noteworthy is a LIP project to develop mentorship, bridging, job shadowing and 'practice firm' programs. These efforts will be supported by promotional measures to identify success stories and by a campaign to market the bottom-line benefits of immigrant hiring to organizations and employers. An effort will be made to address gaps in English Language Training and Cultural Interpreter services.

To be sustainable, new programs and initiatives must obtain the buy-in of local businesses and Canadian-born residents, as well as newcomers. For this reason, the Guelph-Wellington LIP is currently developing an engagement strategy aimed at raising awareness and boosting local collaboration.

Recent and Upcoming Conference Presentations

Andrew, C. (2011, June). *Notes for a Celebration – The North Etobicoke LIP, the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) and a Better Ontario*. Presentation at the North Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership Launch, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Bellefontaine, T. (2011, May). *An Open Window? The Evaluation of Place-based Approaches*. Canadian Evaluation Society Conference, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Gushuliak, R., & Esses, V.M. (2011, June). *Local Immigration Partnerships*. Workshops presented at the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies Conference, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Kraglund-Gauthier, W. L. (2011, May). *Conducting Educational Research Online: Navigating Ethical Boundaries and Technological Challenges*. Canadian Educational Researchers' Association Annual Conference, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

Parsons, J., Wideman, G., Swan, T., Wilkes, C., & Meaney, P. (2011, February). *Lone Mothers: Linking Research and Activism*. Presented at the International Conference, Mothering and Motherhood in the 21st Century: Research and Activism, Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (MIRCI) and Centre for Research in Anthropology, Portugal (CRIA), Public University Institute of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal.

Rees, T. (2011, June). *The Future for Newcomers in Hamilton*. Joint Annual General Meeting of: Community Information Hamilton, Social Planning & Research Council of Hamilton, and Volunteer Hamilton, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Taylor, M., Quigley, B. A., Kajganich, G., & Kraglund-Gauthier, W. L. (2011, June 10). *A Triangle of Solitudes: Evolution of Canadian Literacy Research Since The Mid-1980s*. Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) & Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) Joint Conference, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Taylor, S. (2011, July). Organizer of Colloquium Session: *Mission Possible: Creating Multilingual Spaces in K-12 Classrooms*. 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in Latin America (BILINGLATAM IV), Oaxaca, Mexico.

Taylor, S., & Despagne, C. (2011, June). *Beyond Official Language Learning: Unveiling Student Plurilingualism*. 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in Latin America (BILINGLATAM IV), Oaxaca, Mexico.

Taylor, S., Daniel, M.C., & Schwarzer, D. (2011, July). *Teaching and Learning with Mainstream Teachers of Multilingual Children: Our Journey into 'Third Space.'* 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in Latin America (BILINGLATAM IV), Oaxaca, Mexico.

Wilkinson, Lori. (2011, September). *An Examination of Identity and Experiences of Discrimination among Newcomer Youth Living in Mid-Sized Canadian Cities*. To be presented at the Association of Canadian Studies and the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association Joint Annual Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

If you have any recent or upcoming presentations that you would like to have included in future issues of the WCI E-bulletin, please email the information to wci@uwo.ca. For the next issue you may submit any presentations between May 1st and October 31st 2011.

Spotlight on Student Research

This month's spotlight on student research is on PhD Candidate, Julianna Beaudoin, at The University of Western Ontario in London. Julianna is in the anthropology department and a member of the Collaborative Graduate Program in Migration and Ethnic Relations. She can be reached at julianna.beaudoin@uwo.ca

Julianna's current project examines how Romani refugee claimants experience and navigate the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) system. This research is occurring at a critical moment as the IRB is poised to implement a new decision-making process in December 2011. Julianna will be interviewing Romani refugee claimants, Canadian-born Roma, and people involved in the IRB system in order to more fully understand how the upcoming changes will affect and be affected by refugee claimants.

Although Roma have lived in Canada for over a century, most Canadians have only heard of the recent "waves" of Romani refugees coming from the Czech Republic and Hungary over the past decade or so. Canadian-Romani communities are large and diverse, yet are often portrayed as "fraudulent queue-jumpers", despite facing widespread persecution and discrimination in Europe.

Part of Julianna's work focuses on deconstructing the concept of "authenticity" and who is and is not considered to be a legitimate refugee – she is especially interested in the relations that exist between public attitudes and the ways in which racial/ethnic "Gypsy" stereotypes are portrayed and reproduced in various forms. This builds on Julianna's Master's research that partially focused on individual and collective identity processes, and analyzed media and policy discourses that often negatively represent Roma in Canada, and her BA research that examined discrimination faced by Roma in Finland.

Julianna is also helping the Roma Community Centre in Toronto establish a library with the recent RBC Student Community Service Project Grant she received through the Student Success Centre at The University of Western Ontario. There is currently a lack of research on Roma in Canada, as well as a lack of funding available to help create and implement programs specifically for the Roma community in Toronto.

Thank You

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