

Pathways to Prosperity. Research may help city attract more immigrants

Western University is heading up a national research effort aimed at making cities like London more attractive to immigrants.

Called Pathways to Prosperity, the \$2.5-million project includes more than 100 partners ranging from Citizenship and Immigration Canada offices to cultural organizations.

The work will focus on figuring out what small- and medium-sized communities in five regions — Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and British Columbia — are doing to successfully draw newcomers and offer immigrant services.

Results of the study could help shape the landscape for the future of where immigrants settle, pushing more new Canadians into smaller urban centres instead of traditional hot spots like Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto, leaders said.

"Having buy-in from the whole country is really important because then you can start sharing ideas ... and optimizing practices," said Victoria Esses, a psychology professor and director of Western University's Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations. "It's not just looking at what other people are doing, it's analyzing to show what's working."

The seven-year project stems from the success of a Western-led Welcoming Communities initiative launched two years ago in Ontario.

That project was similar to the national effort, only on a smaller scale. It connected university researchers with community groups working in immigration-related fields in 20 cities, including London, Kitchener, Waterloo, and Hamilton.

London has made great strides in the past decade toward becoming more aware about the importance of attracting immigrants and help-



Victoria Esses
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ing them once they get here, Esses said.

Some of the work done locally through the Welcoming Communities effort has been small steps for big gain — like putting brochures about London at Pearson International Airport and creating a directory of local services for immigrants.

Much of the progress has come through an attitude adjustment led by the city and groups involved in the London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership, Esses said.

"London (used to have) a very strong reputation of being a sort of closed community in a way," Esses said. "We've started to make ourselves into a more welcoming community."

"We're more diverse, but we're also better able to handle that diversity."

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Immigration stats

- From 2007 to 2011, the London area attracted 12,469 new immigrants.
- That's the fifth-highest total in Ontario with Toronto, Ottawa-Gatineau, Hamilton and Kitchener leading the pack, respectively.

Copyright infringement. RCMP seize pirated DVDs from Asian Food Mart

An anonymous tip led members of the London RCMP detachment to seize more than 1,000 pirated DVDs from space rented at the Asian Food Mart.

The DVDs were being openly displayed for sale at the rented space, and the vendor was found in possession of nearly 1,200 movies. Included in the DVDs seized by police were recently released movies, movies still in theatres, and even some that hadn't

been released yet

The titles included: Men in Black 3, The Dictator, The Hunger Games and 21 Jump Street, among many others.

RCMP said the investigation is ongoing and charges are pending.

Anyone with information regarding the sale or manufacturing or distribution of pirated DVD movies is asked to contact the RCMP at 1-800-387-0020, or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-265-4444.

AM980/AM980.A



From left, Chris McCallum, 18, Ryan Foot, 17, and Derek Desmarais, 18, all members of the Wired Birds, jam Wednesday in a hallway at Montcalm Secondary School (1350 Highbury Ave.). The school is hosting a Western University-led project aimed at making music classes appealing to more students.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

New class: Start a rock 'n' roll band, get school credit

Education. New project aims to make music classes more appealing, creative



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When it comes to music, different strokes suit different folks.

That's the driving principle behind a new breed of music class being offered at London's Montcalm Secondary School.

Instead of forcing teens into a rigid curriculum designed for orchestral or choral performance, the class encourages students to get creative and learn music in pretty much any form that suits their fancy.

Drummer Derek Desmarais, 18 — one of about

Quoted

"It's definitely a motivation to come to school."

Derek Desmarais, Grade 12 student, on playing the drums for his band Wired Birds in class

40 students participating — is a big fan of the new regime.

He's teamed up with two classmates to form the Wired Birds — a rock band that gets to practise its music weekly in place of a traditional music lesson.

The Montcalm program is a pilot project being led by music educators from Western University.

Called Musical Futures Canada, the project borrows from the success of a United Kingdom initiative that, since 2003, has transformed how music is taught to thousands of students.

The Musical Futures motto is "Teaching the way they learn" — and that, in a

nutshell, says it all.

"Traditional music programs have been bands, chorale and orchestral programs. And there still is certainly a place in the musical world for that," said Carol Beynon, associate vice-provost at Western's school of graduate and postdoctoral studies.

"This isn't to take the place of other music programs that are working well. This is to offer a place for kids who haven't been able to engage with (that kind of) music."

At Montcalm, that's meant giving kids class credit for forming everything from pop-singing groups to heavy-metal bands.

On the web

- To learn more about the Musical Futures Canada project, visit musicalfuturescanada.org.

Students from Our Lady Immaculate in Strathroy also are participating in the pilot. Leaders expect the effort to expand in the next school year.

Enthusiasm is running high, Beynon said.

"When we told the students we were going to start after spring break, some of the kids said, 'Why do we have to have holidays?'" Beynon said.

"Why can't we do it now?"

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