

North West Scarborough Local Immigration Partnership

Voice of Newcomers

New Year and Future for NWS LIP

Happy New Year to all! January has been a very monumental and pivotal time for the NWS LIP. We have been extremely busy finalizing our strategy plan, consulting and presenting findings to community members and partnership council, devising the implementation plan for the next phase of the project, and negotiating with CIC on the future of the NWS LIP. With that said, there have also been many significant events that have taken place in the last month that will both enrich and greatly hinder our partners and newcomers. In this issue we will reflect on the past, analyze the present and prepare for the future of the NWS LIP.

Continues to page 2 ..

Upcoming Events:

**Partnership Council Meeting -
March 8th , 2011 @ CICS 2330 Midland
Ave.**

- * Partners will be introduced to the next phase (Implementation) of the NWS LIP project

Management Committee Meeting - TBA

- * Will be formed to facilitate implementation phase

Inside this issue:

New Year and Future of NWS LIP	1
Collaborative Work	2
Budget Cut Conference	
3rd Community Summit	
3rd Community Summit (cont'd.)	3
Partnership Council Meeting	4

Continued from page 1 ...

Collaborative Work

To start, we are pleased to announce that we have been successful in initiating a conversation for collaborative work among our partners. East Metro Youth Services (EMYS) and Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA) have initiated talks to possibly work in partnership for a Youth Opportunities Program (YOP). This initiative is to engage Ontario's immigrant/newcomer youth in their local communities and ultimately into Canadian society. The LIP helped to put out a call for interested parties and was able to reconnect EMYS with ACSA staff as they have worked collaboratively in the past. Congratulations to EMYS and ACSA!

If any of our partner agencies have any type of collaborative or partnering initiatives, we encourage sharing them with the LIP so we can assist you in making such valuable connections. In the future the LIP would like to facilitate more of these types of arrangements among our partners and become an agent for progressive and innovative partnering to improve services for all newcomers.

Budget Cut Conference

On another note, we are all aware of the recent budget cuts of up to \$53M, also featured in last December's newsletter. These government implemented cuts are scheduled to take effect March 31st and will have a lasting impression on many newcomer service providers and most importantly newcomers themselves. With the press conference held January 27th at **Toronto City Hall Council Chambers**, gave great insight to what has and will inevitably happen to many newcomer and immigrant stakeholders.

According to Liberal MP Gerard Kennedy, approximately 1,000 staffers may lose their jobs, affecting

78,000 people from 33 organizations that are slated to lose all or partial funding across the country. Of the 33 agencies, 28 are located in the GTA. Not to mention that new immigrants arriving to the GTA has increased by 23%, also stated by Kennedy.

As March fast approaches, the LIP hopes to stay abreast of any pertinent information regarding the affects of the budget cuts and will continue to support, and encourage our partners to support initiatives to possibly fend off these cutbacks.



Parkdale-High Park MP Gerard Kennedy with Kripa Sekhar, centre, director of the South Asian Women's Centre and clients from the Tibetan community, during a press conference discussing the federal government's cuts (some as much as 90-plus per cent) to immigration services agencies. Photo from: *Toronto Life*, Staff / ERIN HATFIELD, Jan. 27, 2011.

3rd Community Summit

Also this past month the NWS LIP held a highly successful 3rd Community Summit. On the evening of January 11th, 2011, Scarborough Hospital (General Campus), graciously lent its facilities to the LIP to host this extraordinary event.

Continues to page 3 ..

Continued from page 2...

We are pleased to announce that the Community Summit was attended by over 70 participants, of which 7 were partner agencies. This amazing turn out was our best to date and led for a very engaging, informative and insightful evening.

The summit was facilitated by Danny Nashman of the *Potential Group*, co-facilitated by the NWS LIP Project Manager, Mani Mahadeva, Lucy Ren (Chinese translator) and Sri Thangarajah (Tamil translator). The purpose of the summit was to review and get feedback on the implementation plan (key activities) for the six priority strategies identified by the community members at the 2nd Community Summit and to review the next phase of the NWS LIP project.



Newcomer participants and Lucy Ren (Translator) at the NWS LIP Community Summit held January 11th, 2011 at the Scarborough Hospital (General Campus)

The key strategies from the 2nd Community Summit reviewed were:

- 1: Provide pre-arrival settlement services and information for newcomers before they migrate to Canada.
- 2: Provide more “one stop shopping” for newcomer services. (Newcomer service centers provide multiple services out of one location)

- 3: Increase access to professional volunteer opportunities, training and employment support for newcomers in North West Scarborough.

- 4: Increase access to language training programs and provide settlement services in multiple languages

- 5: Improve access to health services (physical and mental health)

- 6: Improve services for housing and other basic needs

The Community Summit participants ranked the activities for each key strategy and the top 5 were as follows:

Strategy #2 Activity: Begin collaborative planning among newcomer service providers in North West Scarborough to enable one stop shopping

Strategy #2 Activity: Identify resource and capacity building requirements and mobilize funding and resources to help create one stop service centres

Strategy #4 Activity: Increase availability of language training in the work place

Strategy #6 Activity: Educate newcomers on their role in promoting community safety

Strategy #4 Activity: Streamline language classes and be flexible with eligibility criteria to provide opportunity to all immigrants to improve (official) language skills

Participants were greatly appreciative of the translators on hand, excited to have Partnership Council implement key activities in the near future, and hoped that the LIP would have more opportunities for newcomers to become more engaged and have a say in the settlement process.

Continues to page 4...

Continued from page 3...

Partnership Council Meeting

On January 18th, 2011 the NWS LIP held its sixth Partnership Council meeting at the Afghan Association of Ontario. This meeting was again facilitated by Danny Nashman of the *Potential Group* and co-facilitated by the NWS LIP Project Manager, Mani Mahadeva. The purpose of the meeting was to review the Implementation plan, share the future plan, and generate more energy and commitment from partners for the next phase of the project.

The strategies were once again reviewed and a few participants mentioned the need for all partners to thoroughly review the strategies to be put forward to CIC.

It is critical to the LIP that we have strong strategies that reflect the scope of work of all members and make strong and sound recommendations. We request that all members continually review all corresponded documents and give your honest, constructive feedback, as received in the Partnership Council meeting.

Partners in attendance also reviewed the Implementation plan. The following were some of the findings:

Strategy # 1- 5:

On a whole we need to start with the most feasible: Work with existing welcome packages and web sites, integrate into one web site for NWS, and create a feedback loop – showing to newcomers and getting feedback

Strategy # 6 – 10:

#9 Activity 1 & 2 – Remove social isolation; Community led social gatherings – community events / walks – getting to know the community they live in – will decrease isolation

Strategy # 11 - 14:

11 – The first step could be creating a forum for service providers or networking to share information

and make important connections – open to all service providers

Strategy # 15 - 18:

18 Need for interpreters! – to get started – children have to interpret for them – being put in a bad position – **pool of interpreters** – use web site now that translates (short term programs to prep interpreters – need certified interpreters – how to train them) – helpful available resource - AT&T language line

Strategy # 19 - 22:

#19, Activity 4 – Facilitate training of capacity building of workers on mental health and health – improve accessibility to community education on healthy lifestyle

To conclude, the time line for the finalizing of the Implementation plan has been revised, as a result of many raised concerns of the wording and details of the strategies. Participants were asked to critically review the strategies and implementation plan and submit feedback via email by January 31, 2011 to the project management team.



NWS LIP Project Manager Mani Mahadeva and Partnership Council members at the January 18th 2011, 6th Partnership Council meeting, held at the Afghan Association of Ontario offices in Toronto.

To contribute items to be included in the next issue of *Voice of Newcomers* please contact:

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****please note submissions will be due the last week of each month for the following months issue****

Don't forget to visit our website and blog @: www.nwslip.com, www.nwslip.com/blog

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Partnership Council Members

Clusters

Funding Support

Other Related Links

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Administration

The Structure
Work Plan

Meeting Minutes

Partnership Council Meetings
Team Meetings

Terms of Reference

Deliverables

Meeting Schedule

Past Events

Newsletter

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Administration

What is Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)?

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) will provide a collaborative framework for, and facilitate the development and implementation of, sustainable local and regional solutions for successful integration of immigrants to Ontario. LIPs seek to help communities put immigration on their overall planning agenda in order for communities to benefit from the successful social and economic integration of new immigrants.

What is the North West Scarborough LIP Catchment Area?

North West Scarborough Area which is bordered by Steeles Ave. to the north, Markham Rd. to the east, Highway 401 to the south, and Victoria Park Ave. to the west.

What are the Objectives?

Objectives of the LIP in North West Scarborough area are:

- To improve access to and coordination of immigrant integration services (Education, Language training, Employment, settlement and labour market integration)
- To improve labour market outcomes for immigrants. This may include initiatives such as engagement of local employers, mentorship initiatives, coordination of local employment services and non-paid internships
- To strengthened local awareness and capacity to successfully integrate immigrants

Who Will Implement LIP Project in North West Scarborough?

Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA) has been serving the North Scarborough community since 1976 and was chosen by its peers to lead the Local LIP implementation in collaboration with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI).

ACSA will implement North West Scarborough LIP by establishing a Partnership Council, a Steering Committee, Cluster Committees and Project management team.

What is Partnership Council?

Partnership Council is a group of relevant stakeholders that come together regularly to develop a coordinated, comprehensive and strategic approach to immigration and integration that fits the needs of the neighbourhood it represents. The partnership council includes participation from a wide range of stakeholders including the City of Toronto, community organizations, settlement agencies, language training providers, local associations and employers.

The Partnership Council will be responsible for the oversight and guidance to develop a comprehensive local settlement strategy and implementation work plan.

Partnership Council Members

Clusters

Funding Support

Other Related Links

Contact Us

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

ACSA

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants