

Business Name

# Steeles/L'Amoreaux Local Immigration Partnership

## What works best for Newcomers ?

### S/L'Am LIP Partnership Planning Session - March 2010

The Steeles/L'Amoreaux Local Immigration Partnership Council gathered once again on March 30, 2010 to consolidate the findings from the interviews conducted during February and March 2010.

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Hear success stories told by the stakeholders
- Uncover common themes about what is working best for newcomers today and what wishes people have for a better newcomer experience
- Identify topics we want to explore more deeply at the summit with community leaders and other stakeholders

As part of the second step of the planning process, Partnership Council members met at Agincourt Library on March 30, 2010. (See Page 2)



### Upcoming Events:

- **Community Summit** - April 06, 2010 from 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm at Chinese Cultural Center, 3853, Sheppard Ave East.
- **Partnership Planning Meeting** - April 16, 2010 from 9.00 am to 12.00 pm at Highbrook Adult Learning Centre, 38 Highbrook Drive, Scarborough
- **Cluster Meetings:**
  - Cluster 01: 26th April 2010 from 9.30 am to 12.00 pm
  - Cluster 02: 27th April 2010 from 2.30 pm to 5.00 pm
  - Cluster 03: 28th April 2010 from 9.30 am to 12.00 pm
  - Cluster 04: 29th April 2010 from 9.30 am to 12.00 pm

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## S/L'Am LIP Partnership Planning Session - March 2010

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The objectives of this planning session was to focus on specific topics and identify major themes. Danny and Joanna of The Potential Group facilitated the workshop.

Participants who have interviewed different stakeholders shared many success stories of newcomers. Those stories also highlighted obstacles faced by some newcomers. Some stories were about community helping newcomers and being their first point of contact.

### What is working best for newcomers?

Interviewees stated that the following work best for them:

- Access to language classes
- When there is a multi-service provider within their community
- Many services are Welcoming- building relationships, informal connections
- Some employment programs are helpful - Placement
- Childcare programs—happy to see children are well cared for

Participants highlighted the following wishes as an ideal environment for the best newcomer experience to Canada.

### Wishes for Best Newcomer Experience:

- **Make the Immigration Process- Easier, Faster** (Shorten Wait Times for Reunions)
- **Integrate Settlement Services** - Services available in one place tailored to the need of the newcomer
- **Ensure newcomers are involved in defining services** - ex. Resume writing not useful to all
- **Support the community to help one another**
- **Improve Access to Information** - provide the right information at the right time
- **Ensure services are available at point of need** - some mobile services
- **Assessing credentials** - improve the system - building awareness
- **Agencies** - share information to improve service - this is important
- **Employment** - better connections with businesses
- **Access to Education** (post secondary) - making it more accessible
- **Affordable Housing**

## Community Conversation

Project management team and partner organizations have interviewed newcomers and different stakeholders. Type of stakeholders interviewed are:

- Newcomers - Homeless/ refugees/ PR holders
- Residents
- Youth
- Community leaders
- Faith-based groups
- Service clubs / Recreation centers
- Housing providers
- Libraries
- Other government sectors
- Interpretation services
- Private businesses - Local employers
- Media—Local newspapers
- Educators
- Day Care centres
- Banks

## Community Conversation

(cont'd. from pg. 2)

There were 97 interviews conducted by our partners and project animators. These interviews helped identify the potential resources available within the community and willingness of community groups involved in providing newcomer services.

## Newcomer Stories

### Devi was Welcomed by her Community

### Samina Wins the Race

Names used in the following stories are fictional to protect the identity of the parties involved\*

*Devi came to Canada from Sri Lanka 5 years ago as a refugee. She risked her life to come here looking for a better life. Coming with very few clothes and little money, she was welcomed by her community and was connected with the local church.*

*The church provided her with clothing, food and utensils, and to get her familiar with the city the local residents would take her out, since she had no family here. Open to receive help and proactively getting to know the community members, Devi was able to receive so much more support. She also received financial support from a social assistance program helping her to get settled, and enrolled in English classes provided by Toronto District School Board to improve her proficiency in English.*

*Now Devi feels that she is part of the community where she lives and gives back by helping other newcomers.*

*Samina migrated to Canada in early 2007 as a skilled immigrant. She had a masters degree in social science from Bangladesh and had 14 years working experience.*

*She did job market research in Toronto before and after her arrival. Within her first month in Canada she contacted some service providers for help. She attended a 3 week job search training program from one of them. She continued to apply for jobs, but unfortunately did not get any responses from employers.*

*Then she contacted career counsellor and with her advise, she completed a one year diploma program in community development in 2008 to upgrade her qualifications. She started again applying for the relevant job positions, and in the mean time started working at a fast food restaurant which was very hard for her. She became very weary of her situation and was losing hope of ever finding a professional job in Canada.*

*Summer 2009, one of her friends introduced her to an agency located in Scarborough. She found the organization was very welcoming and skilled in extending support to internationally trained professionals by connecting them with relevant employers and job postings.*

*She gained confidence and believed this time would be successful, which happened quicker than she expected. She received a call for a job interview and secured that position. Now she is happy to be working in her professional field.*

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