

# Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management (519 and 905 Areas)



Regional Forum in 519 area held November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in Kitchener.

**November/  
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## Profile: Building Caring Communities: The Contributions of Immigrant Volunteers

The Inventory found on the Project's website ([www.culturaldiversityandvolunteers.ca](http://www.culturaldiversityandvolunteers.ca)) contains resources to help organizations with their own efforts to advance cultural diversity in their volunteer management practices. One of these resources is "Building Caring Communities: The Contributions of Immigrant Volunteers" written in 2006 by Community Volunteer Connections in Richmond, BC:

The 2004 Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating (CSGVP)...shows a shift...with the most recent immigrants to Canada volunteering more than ever before, matching the rate of immigrants who have been in Canada the longest. The shift in immigrant volunteering suggests that new attitudes about volunteering may be emerging that create an opportunity for mainstream agencies to reach out to a broader pool of potential volunteers, to match the broader pool of potential service recipients in our communities.

This project...used Appreciative Inquiry to investigate successful experiences of pairs of immigrant volunteers and volunteer coordinators. Appreciative Inquiry, the model used in this project, seeks to use the power of success to inspire positive change in systems as well as in individuals. The Appreciative Inquiry research model is based on the idea that we learn best from success. As opposed to needs assessments, which seek out gaps in service, or research that focuses on barriers to progress and then recommends solutions, Appreciative Inquiry seeks out examples

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A Project of:  
The Social Planning Council of Peel  
in collaboration with the Social  
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## MCI: Strategic Partnership Initiatives

The Ontario government is funding several initiatives to strengthen volunteerism in the province. This includes efforts to increase newcomer participation in the volunteer tradition. Over 60 voluntary organizations are involved in delivering the strategic partnership initiatives below:

1. Newcomer youth volunteerism — The [Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre](#) works with youth on new outreach strategies for engaging young volunteers from diverse communities.
2. [Risk management and insurance for volunteer organizations](#) — Imagine Canada, the Insurance Bureau of Canada, The Insurance Broker's Association of Ontario, Ryerson University's Faculty of Business and Ontario government ministries partner to help non-profit organizations improve risk management and find affordable coverage.
3. [Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario](#) — collaboration among volunteer organizations and non-profits to jointly create a provincial coordinating mechanism that brings citizens, volunteers, organizations, businesses and government together to strengthen voluntarism and build a stronger Ontario. Led by Parks and Recreation Ontario.
4. Strengthening governance in small community agencies — [Altruvest Charitable Services](#) (Mississauga) leads a project to help multicultural and other small community groups with better training for their volunteer boards.
5. Promoting newcomer volunteerism in Ontario — helping small to mid-sized volunteer organizations promote volunteerism to diverse communities, and engage newcomers as volunteers. Led by the [Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington](#) on behalf of the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (OVCN), partners include: Community Foundations of Ontario, United Way of Windsor & Essex, as well as volunteer centres, multicultural centres and councils.
6. Promoting diversity on voluntary sector boards — helped the voluntary sector recruit, train and match candidates from diverse backgrounds to volunteer for leadership positions in agencies, boards, commissions and non-profit organizations. Led by the [Maytree Foundation](#) in partnership with Altruvest Charitable Services, United Ways of Greater Toronto, Peel and York Region, and Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Resources: [Board Mentoring Handbook](#), [Diversity in Governance: Toolkit for Inclusion on Nonprofit Boards](#).

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where barriers have already been overcome and gaps have already been filled in order to document the work that went into creating success and to inspire thinking about how local success can be built on and exported to the larger system.

Ten volunteers emigrating from nine countries and nine volunteer coordinators participated in two focus groups. We explored the following questions:

- How do new immigrants become volunteers in mainstream agencies?
- What do new immigrants and their volunteer coordinators think has been successful in the volunteer placement?
- What challenges needed to be overcome (if any) in making the volunteer placement successful, and how were these challenges overcome?
- How do we create a voluntary sector where successful volunteer placements in mainstream agencies for new Canadians and new immigrants are the norm?

To find out more, visit:

<http://www.volunteerconnections.net/buildingCaringCommunities.pdf>

## MCI Strategic Partnerships continued from page 2

7. [Promoting volunteerism as an expression of citizenship among newcomers](#) — The Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) led a partnership to create resources and tools to help settlement agencies increase awareness of the importance of volunteering and increase newcomer participation.
8. Seniors mentoring newcomers — Renaissance 50Plus created opportunities for new and near retirees to volunteer with newcomers and shared their learnings with community organizations across Ontario. Catholic Immigration Centre Ottawa led this partnership initiative.
9. Our Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management project in the 905 and 519 area codes.

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**Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management is an Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) funded project. The Social Planning Council of Peel is coordinating this project in selected communities in the 519 and 905 areas.**

**Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management is a three-year initiative developing the organizational and community capacity of local partners in the 519 and 905 areas to engage and support a more culturally diverse volunteer base.**