

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



Minister Chan addressing participants at the Inter-Regional Final Forum (June 12, 2009)

**Summer 2009  
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## Final Inter-Regional Forum

On June 12<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn Oakville Centre, 70+ participants came together from eight communities for an Inter-Regional Forum, the culminating event in the Advancing Cultural Diversity in Volunteer Management (519 and 905 Areas) Project.

The day started with greetings and a presentation from the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), the Honourable Michael Chan, followed by a question and answer period with the Minister. (The full address from the Minister as well as a transcript of the question and answer period is available as part of the Final Inter-Regional Forum report on the [Project website](#).)

To provide context to the remainder of the day, Louise Chatterton Luchuk presented a conceptual framework to understand the work to be done in advancing cultural diversity in volunteer management. The conceptual framework was based on the information gleaned from the eight Community Dialogues (held during Phase 1 of the Project) as well as a review of the literature and the input from members of the Reference Group and Project team plus feedback from participants at the two Regional Forums (Phase 2 of the Project). While a conceptual framework is a theoretical tool, Louise explained how the ideal model can be adapted and used in practical terms. (More information about the conceptual framework is available on the [Project website](#).)

The remainder of the morning was dedicated to Conversation Cafes, informal half-hour conversations about successful diversity and volunteerism projects with handouts of sample resources and tools:

**Diverse Community Outreach Councils (Chinese Advisory Council & South Asian Advisory Council):** An outreach and engagement strategy aimed at increasing the involvement of diverse communities.

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A Project of:  
The **Social Planning Council of Peel**  
in collaboration with the Social  
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## Final Forum cont'd

- **Guelph Inclusiveness Alliance:** A network of service providers with a mission to make Guelph and Wellington County more welcoming to new Canadians.
- **Engaging Diverse Neighbourhoods – Learnings from the 2008 Kitchener Festival of Neighbourhoods** on engaging diverse communities in neighbourhood activities.
- **Step Up To Leadership:** An intensive course delivered to newcomers and immigrants giving them the skills to volunteer on boards and committees.
- **Board Diversity Training:** A toolkit for assessing and meeting Board needs for diversity training.
- **The Development of Durham Region's Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council.**
- **Diversity Breakfast Series:** Strategies and Tools to assist agencies in addressing and embracing the needs of diverse communities.
- **"Going with the Flow"** - How to Utilize Newcomer Volunteers in programs.

During the lunch break, there was more opportunity to gather tools and resources as other MCI funded projects set up table displays with information and resources from their projects.

The focus of the afternoon was on the change dynamics for advancing diversity in volunteerism. Facilitator Mike Balkwill challenged the group to consider how change will happen and then Forum participants were asked to discuss in breakout groups by community how they might like to continue to collaborate on this work in their communities. The following was reported out of the group discussions:

### Peel

- United Way of Peel, Volunteer Mississauga Brampton Caledon (a volunteer centre), and the Peel Regional Diversity Roundtable will be the lead partners in carrying on the work
- Reconvene in September; invite previous participants; invite and integrate new participants
- Refer to action items generated at Peel Community Dialogue
- Pursue funding for community based work, for administrative support to continue the conversation and taking it out to the community

### London

- Pillar Nonprofit Network and the London Association of Volunteer Administrators (LAVA) will be the lead partners
- Do research and find ways to help local agencies understand the gaps
- Find ways to move diversity up the agenda so it's more important to more people
- When new initiatives arise, ensure we have the involvement of all necessary partners

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## Final Forum cont'd

### **Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge**

- Develop a learning network
- Reconvene in July
- Use framework offered today – develop stories, messages
- Invite new participants

### **Durham and York**

- Continue the dialogue around how our communities are becoming more diverse
- Help organizations see where their services overlap, prevent duplication, and build partnerships around diversity management
- Continue to share ideas between the two communities

### **Halton**

- Halton Network of Nonprofits should take the lead
- Convene a committee; invite leaders, executive directors, and people actually working in the community
- Goal is systemic change within organizations – knowing what the different cultural groups are and how we can come together; ensure mission, vision, and values embrace diversity

### **Guelph**

- Guelph Inclusiveness Alliance symposium takes place this fall with a theme of “Diversity and Prosperity” – perhaps have volunteer managers participate
- Building a business case for decision makers
- Create a networking opportunity for volunteer managers
- Transition the volunteer centre's focus from the needs of agencies to the needs of individuals

## Inventory

One of the deliverables of the Project is the Inventory – a searchable database of resources for developing the capacity of organizations to recruit and support a diverse volunteer base. The Inventory contains general cultural diversity resources as well as specific resources about looking at the volunteer management cycle through the lens of cultural diversity. In addition, the Inventory contains region-specific information for the 519 and 905 areas about cultural organizations, events and festivals, immigrant-serving organizations, cultural media, faith communities and relevant websites. To access the inventory database, visit [www.culturaldiversityandvolunteers.ca/](http://www.culturaldiversityandvolunteers.ca/) and click on “Inventory.”

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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.**