

FEATURED STORY

Ring of Fire Descends on Toronto

By Melissa Turner



Ring of Fire participants marching into Nathan Phillip's Square.

If you were downtown on Sunday, August 9th you may have seen a remarkable site. Ring of Fire, a 300-person procession, danced from Queen's Park down University Avenue to City Hall. Designed by Trinidadian artist Marlon Griffith and curated by Emelie Chhangur from the Art Gallery of York University, this groundbreaking large-scale participatory art project was staged during Parapan Am Games and was a coming together of many of Toronto's diverse groups, including the individuals we work with at Community Living Toronto.

This extraordinary procession included spoken word poetry from youth in Toronto's priority neighbourhoods, inter-ability dancers,

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American Sign Language interpretation, Capoeira, drumming and costumes adapted to mobility devices. The event strived to create an inclusive space for many Torontonians.

The procession was inspired by the Anishinaabe Seven Grandfather Teachings: Wisdom, Courage, Respect, Honesty, Truth, Humility and Love. The individuals we work with were able to learn about the teachings and choose to join the one that most suited them. With their teaching decided, individuals were then fitted for costumes that Marlon customized to mobility devices and the needs of each participant.

Masks, designed by Griffith and crafted by participants, were also available for individuals who wanted to participate without the full costume. Accessibility was a priority for Griffith, who consistently ensured everyone who wanted to participate in the procession was able to.

While all of the participants in each teaching were individuals, each was connected through

colour, pattern, symbol or myth, through the artist's vision. What a great way to bring together Torontonians and to raise critical awareness around accessibility. To see more photos of the procession, visit: <http://on.fb.me/1PGY8UM>



Diane and Tiffany show off their masks before the procession.

CENTRAL REGION

A PanAmazing Experience for Volunteers

By Matt Poirier

The Pan Am/Parapan Am Games brought feelings of indifference and anxiety to many Torontonians this summer, but for some individuals at Community Living Toronto, it meant an amazing opportunity to get involved and volunteer to help showcase the city they call home. A group of individuals, supported by their own volunteers, signed up to help out at the games, which took place from July 10th to the 26th.

Erica Machtinger spent two weeks volunteering at the York University Athletics Stadium where the track and field events were held, and she

was stationed there again for the Parapan Am Games field events.

Melanie Wong, with volunteer support Dina Magbitang, was thrilled to learn that she had been selected to carry the flags of the winning athletes' home countries into the medal ceremonies for both the Gymnastics and Indoor Volleyball events. Melanie was overwhelmed by this amazing experience and said, "My favourite memory of my volunteer experience was watching the athletes working hard to get the medal. Their family was really proud of them on the podium and each of them got a Pachi mascot doll with their medal."

Dina echoed Melanie's sentiments, "It was an once-in-a-lifetime experience. It was fun and it was something very different from what I normally do. I also enjoyed spending time with Melanie and getting to know her better. I loved getting to see what happens behind the scenes at a large televised event like this."

This group of Pan Am volunteers was a part of a Youth Engagement Initiative to get youth more involved in their communities and their city, and what better way to do that than with a world class event such as the Pan Am Games? The Parapan Am Games wrapped up on August 15th, and with that, a PanAmazing experience for volunteers representing Community Living Toronto.



Melanie Wong shows her volunteer certificate and Pachi doll.

Upcoming Central Events

Central Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 13th, 2015

6:00 – 8:00 PM, 20 Spadina Road, Room 2B

RSVP to Matt at matthew.poirier@cltoronto.ca

ETOBICOKE REGION

Journey of the Future Etobicoke ETS

By Sylvie Labrosse and Karen Cheng

On June 18th, more than 100 people came together to learn about an exciting renovation project taking place at the Etobicoke ETS.

They took part in site tours, learned about the design ideas and visited with participants and staff to hear the vision for what will become a beautiful space that is warm, welcoming, fun and respectful of everyone's needs.

Over a lovely meal, Garry Pruden, Community Living Toronto's Chief Executive Officer gave an overview of the history of the ETS and the changing needs of individuals with an

intellectual disability. He also spoke of the 3-year fundraising campaign and thanked the Etobicoke Regional Council's for its wonderful commitment of \$10,000.

He then followed with an exciting announcement – an incredible gift of \$150,000 by The Harry E. Foster Foundation.

What an amazing start to our campaign! We are well on our way to reaching our \$350,000 goal.

The support of our community is important to the success of this project. Whether you are able to make a gift, help make a connection or would like to provide feedback we would love to hear from you. Contact Brad Saunders, Regional Executive Director, Etobicoke/York Region at 647.729-0466 or Sylvie Labrosse, Manager, Fundraising at 647-729.1180. Information on the project can also be found <http://bit.ly/1Jx92uR>.

Participants on June 18, 2015



Another Whirlwind Adventure

By Melissa Birt

Our Detroit trip to see the Tigers was another whirlwind adventure. Everyone was thrilled to meet up with Michael Ward and his crew of wonderful colleagues. Michael is a long-time volunteer and friend of Community Living Toronto. With the help of area businesses, Michael has treated people supported by our Association to Pistons, Red Wings and Tigers games for a number of years now, also providing complimentary meals and accommodations. Shopping vouchers are often included for all in addition to the free event tickets. Other treats have included Medals 4 Mettle from Joe Burns; new Detroit Tigers T-Shirts from Bob and Deb Labadie; a wonderful breakfast provided by Baymont Inn and Suites; Target shopping and much more. It was 36 hours of jam packed fun for all!

While we were at UNO's pizzeria, a film crew from the local TV station was interviewing Michael and others about their support of Community Living Toronto, and we were able to express our appreciation on TV. Thanks again to Michael and everyone for another wonderful weekend! (In case you're wondering, Tigers won 6-0!)



Joe, Dalton, Steven, Michael, Jose, David, Mike, and Robert

Upcoming Etobicoke/York Events

Council Meeting

September 8th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
295 The West Mall, Suite 204, in Boardroom.

Wine and Cheese Fundraiser

September 17th, 4pm-8pm
Creative Village Studio
4895 Dundas Street West
RSVP \$20 ticket: Minyan Cheng, 647-729-0445
or minyan.cheng@cltoronto.ca

Friendship Club

September 23rd, 6pm-8pm
295 The West Mall in board room
Registration: Laura Lee Edmiston,
647-729-0440 or ledmiston@cltoronto.ca

NORTH YORK REGION

Summer Cooking Classes Hit Home for Chefs in the Making

By Wendy Dyke

Once again, North York offered summer cooking classes at the Victoria Park Hub and North York's Adult Development program (NY ADP) during the month of July. The classes at the Hub consisted of two classes a week for three weeks while the session at NY ADP was one full week at the end of July. Each day participants prepared lunch during the morning hours, ate what they prepared, and cleaned up. The afternoons were spent reviewing the recipes used, talking about healthy eating choices, and safety in the kitchen. Participants also had opportunities to search websites for recipes for things they didn't get a chance to make during the class but wanted to work on at home.

The classes were run with instructor Florine Wolfe at the helm and assisted by a number of young enthusiastic volunteers. Meal preparation is done with a lot of hands on learning. Each participant was given a portion of food supplies to put together for their own meal. For example, when making their own pizza, each participant was given a flat bread to use for a crust, and then given pizza sauce to spread over it. The participants also chopped up all their own choice of vegetables and grated their own cheese to top off their pizzas.

Individuals in the class were also provided with a binder that included handouts with tips on healthy eating, a copy of Canada's Food Guide, and information about safety in the kitchen. The binder also provided them with a place to keep their recipes.

Some of the participants had this to say about their experience:

'I hope to do this class again'

'Thanks for everything and I hope you will do this again'

'Thank you for everything that you've taught us in the cooking classes'

Meanwhile, Volunteer David had this to say about the cooking classes, "For me, the cooking classes were a great chance to share what I know about cooking. I enjoyed seeing people work together to make great meals, and I believe that learning how to cook is a great skill to acquire for people who want to live independently. I would recommend volunteering to others because I found it to be rewarding to see the participants learn and enjoy themselves."



Volunteer David shows off meat & cheese plates put together by program participants

Upcoming North York Events

North York Council Meeting

Tuesday October 6, 2015, 1 pm to 3 pm
North York Regional Office
1122 Finch Avenue West, Unit 18
Please RSVP attendance to: Wendy Dyke
647-729-3627 or wdyke@cltoronto.ca

Ancaster Parent's Group

For Parents of Individuals with ASD
Meet every other Thursday
9:30 am to 11:00 am
Ancaster Community Centre
41 Ancaster Road, North York
Starts: Thursday September 17, 2015
For information about this group & to register,
please contact Rachele Zilli at 647-729-3534

SCARBOROUGH REGION

2015 Summer Literacy!

By Shannon McCormack

Do we have fun in the summer literacy program? Fun doesn't even begin to describe it! The summer literacy students are immersed in an exciting, inclusive educational environment. Here, the desire to learn is contagious and students have the opportunity to embark daily on new learning adventures.

Outings in the Community

We have visited various places in the community - including parks, the library, movie theatre, bowling alley, restaurants and the local fire station. Through these trips, the students have learned more about the colourful community in which they live. These outings allow for key life skills such as riding the TTC, using money in everyday situations, reading street signs and navigating our way through the city, to be strengthened. One of our goals is to encourage all the individuals in this program to feel comfortable and a part of their community while maintaining their independence and contributing to society.

At the Scarborough Centre Library, the students had an orientation about the library and how to locate and check out various reading materials and media.



The trip to our local fire station was a hit. We toured the inside of the fire station and became acquainted with the routines of the firefighters. We learned about fire safety and steps we can take in case of an emergency. The students even got the chance to sit in the fire truck and turn on the hose!



Adventures in the Classroom

Each week, Summer Literacy has a different theme, such as *Talent Show and Abilities*, *Food and Travel*, *Pan Am Games*, and *Movies*. We plan lessons related to our themes and make them relatable to the students and their everyday lives. For example, students filled out a talent show application and signed up for what they wanted to perform. We have been focusing on knowing our emergency information and practice by filling out different forms such as employment and passport applications. There is also a strong focus on math in our program. We have been working on various day to day situations in which we would use our math skills and concepts. The emphasis this year has been on Canadian currency. We focused on identifying coins and bills, knowing their value, counting money and making correct change. Students had the opportunity to use their skills in the community in three local restaurants. During our annual bake sale fundraiser, students rotated on cash practicing their skills.

The Summer Literacy Program is sponsored by the Scarborough Region Council and was a great success!

Upcoming Scarborough Events

Council Meeting

Monday, October 5, 2015 6:15pm
1712 Ellesmere Road in Boardroom
All Welcome!

Bingo at Lawson

Friday, September, 18, 2015
1712 Ellesmere Road, 7-8:30pm
\$5 for a snack and prizes

Winter Literacy

Saturday Morning, 9 am-noon
1710 Ellesmere Road Program
Starts October 17, 2015

Registration is \$20 plus \$5 each week

For more information on all of these events and to register contact Felicity Zanatta at 647-729-1635 or fzanatta@cltoronto.ca

NEWS

A Successful Mentoring Night with CultureLink!

By Melissa Turner

On June 26th, Community Living Toronto hosted a onetime mentoring event with CultureLink. Staff from the Compass Mentoring Program and the Diversity Team worked with CultureLink to make the evening a success.

Twenty-six newcomers visited our head office to chat with eleven staff about their roles. Mentors were from a variety of positions within our agency providing newcomers the opportunity to learn about many different careers. Mentees were able to hear about the different ways mentors joined Community Living Toronto and their journey to their current position. After the event, one mentee noted, "These kinds of programs are inspiring for immigrants."

Feedback from both mentors and mentees noted that they enjoyed the evening and would like to participate in another event in the future. While mentors found it personally rewarding, they also recognized the larger benefit, "This is so important for our agency, sector, city and country." said one.

We would like to recognize the following staff as mentors and thank them for their time and stories: *Arturo Chau, Cate Whiteley, James Holzbauer, Janis Edwards, Joshua Kolic, Layla Ibrahim, Mahal Hudson Patricia Araya, Petra Asfaw, Susan Lowe, and Wendy Dyke.*



Participants of Mentoring Night

CHOICES
that can
Change
Lives Fund

Small grants create big opportunities to help individuals and families pursue dreams and goals

Now accepting applications two times per year!

Fall deadline: September 30, 2015

For info and application forms visit:

www.choiceschangelives.ca

Or contact your regional Membership Coordinator

The Board of Directors of Community Living Toronto cordially invite you to attend the:

67th Annual General Meeting

Thursday, September 24, 2015
5:30 pm Registration; 6:30 pm Meeting & Reception

Courtyard by Marriott Hotel
475 Yonge Street

Please RSVP by September 14 to Liliana Ruiz, 647-729-1169 or liliana.ruiz@cltoronto.ca



Family Link

FamilyLink fall programming:



Fall Mindfulness for Parents and Caregivers

Bring mindfulness techniques into your life, 6 week session, Central Toronto location.

Digital Storytelling Group

An informal workshop for family members and caregivers. Learn to create your own story in the form of a short 1-5 minute video. This is a 5 week session, space is limited.

To pre-register for either session please contact Yulia at yprudova@cltoronto.ca

For more information on FamilyLink activities, follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/349546215163652/>

FamilyLink Etobicoke

Come join us and see how Spinclusion can make a difference at your school!

Special guest: Mia McGowan, Education Outreach and Spinclusion Coordinator

Spinclusion is a fun interactive game that encourages children and youth to celebrate differences and include everyone.

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

7:00 PM—8:30 PM

Etobicoke Regional Office

295 the West Mall, Suite 204

RSVP to Karla Galvez-Del Rio at 647.729.1162

or karla.galvez-delrio@cltoronto.ca

www.communitylivingtoronto.ca



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