



North Bay & District
Multicultural Centre
Immigrant Settlement Services

NEWSLETTER

From Don Curry, Executive Director

Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 1 of the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre Newsletter.

We have been extremely busy since our official opening February 22. We haven't equalled our shoulder-to-shoulder capacity that we had for the opening, but we've had some good crowds for our weekly English conversation circles, North Bay Newcomer Network committee meetings and other events. New clients are coming in every day and repeat clients are also a daily occurrence. Where are they from? Every corner of the world.

ISAP settlement counsellor Deirdre Pinto, Host program volunteer and event facilitator Oweeny De Silva and program coordinator Ann Welsh are all serving clients with a wide range of settlement needs. The number of volunteers is on the rise and matches between North Bay residents and newcomers are ongoing.

This issue will highlight some of our activities in our first few months of operation, to give you a flavour of what we've been doing and where we're going. Because we're playing catch-up this issue is longer than what you will see in the future. We threw in lots of pictures so you can scroll through quickly!

Contract signing

Of course we had Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) and Host contracts with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to sign before start-up. The initial contract had Ann Welsh and me as employees, with part-time bookkeeper Tara Gillies. Since then additional funding has been put in place to include Oweeny De Silva and Deirdre Pinto, and increase Tara's workload to half-time, with the title office manager/bookkeeper.

Official opening

We were thrilled with the community support and media attention for our official opening February 22. We thank everyone for coming. It was great to see Mayor Vic Fedeli, Coun. Sarah Campbell, Dave Linkie, Marla Tremblay and Catharina Nordbeck from the City of North Bay, MP Anthony Rota, North Bay General Hospital CEO Mark Hurst, our North Bay Newcomer Network partners and many immigrants.



Citizenship and Immigration Canada Operations Manager Cliff Fast, Board Chair Susan Church and Executive Director Don Curry sign the contracts that launched the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre.

International Food Festival

Oweeny De Silva teamed up with Nipissing University to help organize and expand their International Food Festival event in February, which was a huge success. Get there early next February if you want to enjoy the international cuisine!



North Bay Newcomer Network members Melanie McVeety, ESL teacher for the Near North District School Board, and Sarah Campbell, North Bay City Councillor, at the International Food Festival at Nipissing University.

International Women's Week

Ann Welsh and Oweeny De Silva were key organizers of International Women's Week at Nipissing University this year, due to its theme highlighting immigrant women.



Oweeny De Silva and Ann Welsh of the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre receive flowers in appreciation for their work in organizing International Women's Week with Nipissing University.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Board chair Susan Church and I were thrilled to host the 20th anniversary Evening of Applause event for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This is a partnership involving all four school boards, Canadore College, Nipissing University and Nipissing Secondary School. We were especially pleased to honour our colleague and



Gary Gould, a member of our board, was inducted to the Nipissing District Human Rights Hall of Fame March 19, 2008. With him are former employee Debby Clark and daughter Hannah, who was honoured as a Student Who Makes a Difference.

mentor Gary Gould as this year's inductee to the Human Rights Hall of Fame. Photos of hall of fame members are displayed outside the library at Canadore College and Nipissing University.

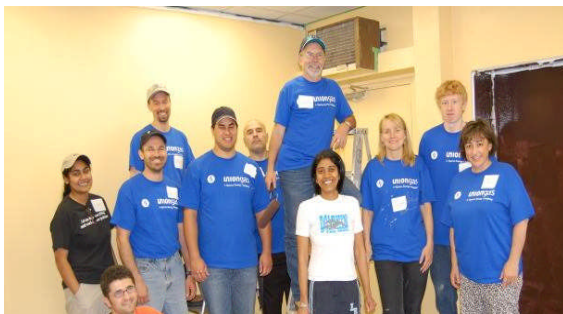
Volunteer Fair

We had a booth at the volunteer fair at Memorial Gardens and Mayor Vic stopped by for a photo with our staff and volunteer Jing Zhang.

When our offices needed a new paint job the folks at Union Gas came to our rescue. They supplied \$1,500 in materials and free labour to help us renovate the front portion of our offices at 374 Fraser Street. Thanks Union Gas!



North Bay Mayor Vic Fedeli toured the Volunteer Fair at Memorial Gardens May 1, as part of National Volunteer Week. The Volunteer Centre of Blue Sky Region organized the event. Above, he poses at the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre booth with staff members Oweeny De Silva, left, Deirdre Pinto, right, and volunteer Jing Zhang. They were there recruiting volunteers for the centre.



Union Gas volunteers and multicultural centre staff and a volunteer take a moment's break to show off the new yellow walls at the multicultural centre May 31, 2008.

Cultures of North Bay

Oweeny De Silva and a group of immigrant volunteers organized the Cultures of North Bay event May 10 at Ecole Secondaire publique Odysée, attended by 200 people. Deputy Mayor Peter Chirico was there and told Oweeny it has to become an annual event!



The African continent was well represented at the Cultures of North Bay event May 10. Members of the North Bay District Multicultural Centre staff joined them for this photo.

Canada Day

Ann Welsh and Oweeny De Silva are active with Nipissing University and the City of North Bay organizing a multicultural component to this year's Canada Day celebration at the waterfront. Come down and enjoy the fun July 1 at the Kiwanis Bandshell from 12:30 to 3:30.

Employers' Breakfast

We had 73 people attend the North Bay Newcomer Network employers' breakfast

on immigration issues June 5 at the Best Western. Thanks to Andrea Stoppa of LTAB for the idea and funding, Patti Carr at the Chamber of Commerce, Ann Welsh of our staff, Catharina Nordbeck of the city and others for putting this event together. It was a great first step in getting the word to employers that in three short years 100% of labour market growth in Canada will be through immigration. We are already at 70%.

Housing Forum

North Bay Newcomer Network partner Bill White and his staff at DNSSAB did a great job in organizing the housing forum at Nipissing University June 17. Ann Welsh and I were two of 100 people attending this significant event. So far we have found housing for our clients through our own contacts, but the housing shortage in the city is a desperate need to be addressed.

North Bay Newcomer Network

Marla Tremblay's baby has grown and now boasts two co-chairs, Marla and me, and four committees. LeeAnne Maillé of Yes! Employment Services chairs the employment committee; Darlene Jamieson of Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Bay and District the welcoming community committee; Ann Welsh the settlement services committee; and Karen Strang of Nipissing University chairs the immigrant attraction committee. Watch out for future developments from these dynamic leaders and their very able committees.

Website

Finally, if you want to stay on top of what's going on between newsletters, check our website at www.nbdmc.ca Thanks to Tara Gillies for the design and maintenance. We update it regularly.

We'll talk to you again in a few months. If you would like your name removed from our mailing list please email me at doncurry@nbdmc.ca