



North Bay & District
Multicultural Centre
Immigrant Settlement Services

NEWSLETTER

From Don Curry, Executive Director

Clients represent the world

New clients continue to access our services at the centre. We now have clients from 23 countries: Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Congo, England, Germany, Grenada, Guyana, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Trinidad & Tobago, Ukraine and the U.S.

Free services provided include assistance in obtaining health cards, Social Insurance Numbers, drivers' licenses, housing, family doctors, registering in school or daycare, referral to English as a Second Language classes, community and cultural orientation, job search assistance, immigration applications, citizenship applications and tests, translation and interpretation services, self-help resources such as computers and Internet access, and much more.

To date we have 11 Host matches, matching a volunteer with a newcomer to share Canadian experiences, practise English and act as a friend. To the end of August we had 30 permanent resident clients visiting us 339 times, and an equal number of temporary foreign workers, international students and Canadian citizens seeking our assistance.

New settlement counsellor

We welcomed Taslima Ahmed to our staff in August. Taslima replaces Deirdre Pinto as a settlement counsellor under the Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program. Deirdre decided to move to Ottawa. Taslima earned a Master of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh and graduated from the Social Service Worker program at Canadore College. She speaks English, Bengali, Urdu and Hindi and is able to read and write Arabic. Taslima can be reached at taslimaahmed@nbdmc.ca

Canada Day

Our staff members were busy organizing the multicultural entertainment at the waterfront on Canada Day and the international soccer game that followed at Amelia Park. We thank MP Anthony Rota for kicking off the event for us, and our emcee J.P. Fournier of Ecole publique secondaire Odyssee, who provided great entertainment and lots of enthusiasm.

We thank all the people who volunteered to entertain the hundreds of people at the waterfront that day, and our co-organizers at Nipissing University and all those who turned out to enjoy a great soccer game.



MP Anthony Rota opened the Canada Day multicultural showcase at the Kiwanis bandshell on North Bay's Waterfront. He left his Canada Day cake-serving duties with MPP Monique Smith and North Bay Mayor Vic Fedeli to wish a happy Canada Day to everyone gathered for the entertainment.

Funding extended

Shawn Gingras from Citizenship and Immigration Canada visited us August 11, with contract amendments to sign. Board Chair Susan Church and I signed the amended agreements for the Immigration and Settlement and Adaptation Program and the Host Program. We now have contribution agreements for both programs through March 2010.

Local Immigration Partnership approved

We were successful in our application for a Local Immigration Partnership. This project will enable us to direct staff resources to the North Bay Newcomer Network and work with the City of North Bay and all our partners in making North Bay an attractive option for immigrants. We expect to be advertising for an LIP staff person soon.



North Bay Newcomer Network executive members met at North Bay City Hall in August. NNN is a consortium of nonprofit agencies and government working toward getting newcomers settled, assisting them with their job searches and creating a welcoming community. From left are Karen Strang, Nipissing University; Darlene Jamieson and Amelia Morden, Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Bay & District; Marla Tremblay, Mayor's Office of Economic Development; LeeAnne Maillé, Yes! Employment Services; Ann Welsh and Don Curry, North Bay & District Multicultural Centre.

Board of Directors

Our board of directors decided not to expand its numbers from its current five at its June meeting, pending a full discussion of its future role and expertise requirements. That discussion was held at the

September meeting and the board decided if and when it does decide to expand, or fill a vacancy, it will seek specific expertise, rather than organizational representation.

Getting the word out

We have been busy getting the word out about our free services for immigrants. Presentations to the Rotary Club of Nipissing, Retired Teachers of Ontario, Catholic Women's League, and the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board staff were done over the past few months. We also partnered with Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Bay and District to host an information booth at Northgate Square September 13 and 27.

The Nipissing Parry Sound Catholic District School Board distributed flyers on our services to all elementary school students and the Near North District School Board distributed them to principals in its schools. We thank both school boards for helping us publicize our services.

Nugget articles

The Nugget is starting a new community news page and I will be contributing articles on immigration. Watch for them soon.

Newcomers' Picnic

Approximately 120 people attended our Newcomers' Picnic at the North Bay waterfront September 20. International students from Canadore College and Nipissing University comprised the majority of participants. Everyone enjoyed the day and the opportunity to chat with newcomers from countries around the world.



Part of the crowd at the Newcomers' Picnic.

We met with Near North District School Board Superintendent of Schools and Program Kelly Brown August 26 and as a result of that meeting the board decided to offer English as a Second Language classes as a night school credit course, in addition to its day classes.

Unfortunately with the quick turn-around we couldn't get a sufficient number of students registered in time, but we will try again in the winter semester. We will continue to register students for the daytime ESL classes and get them in touch with teacher Melanie McVeety at Chippewa Secondary School.

Bell Canada

Our friends at Bell Canada want to show newcomers attending our weekly English Conversation Circles what a Canadian Thanksgiving is all about. The regular October 8 conversation circle will be held at the Bell Canada building, where everyone will be served a traditional turkey dinner, compliments of Bell. They are all looking forward to that event.

Conversation Circles run at our office every Wednesday evening from 6 to 7:30. They provide a great opportunity for newcomers to practise their English, meet new people and learn about Canada. Anyone interested in participating can contact Oweeny De Silva of our Host program at oweenydesilva@nbdmc.ca or phone her at 495-8931.



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