

Newsletter Contributors:

Rosy Janze
Linette Smith
Jody Johnson

“Act as if what you
do makes
a difference. It
does.”

William James
American
Philosopher

What is the NSWAC?

The North Shore Welcoming Action Committee or NSWAC is an important community capacity building initiative, whose mission is “to support the inclusion of immigrants and refugees” on the North Shore.

In recognition of increasing immigration and cultural diversity, Twenty five key community stakeholders have convened and developed a strategic plan to enhance the welcoming and inclusive nature of the communities of the North Shore. The membership of the committee represent a wide variety of community agencies including education, parks, recreation and culture, the library, the municipalities, volunteerism, and multi-purpose agencies.

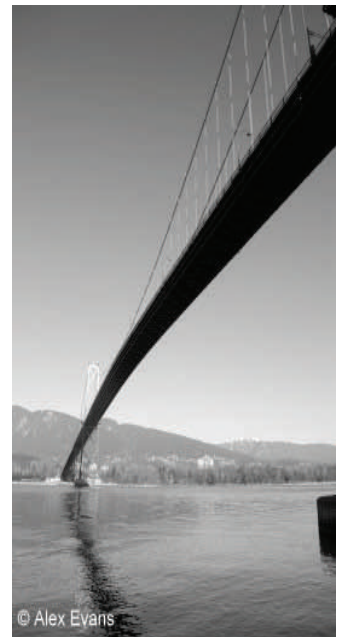
The NSWAC was established in April 2007, with funding from the United Way of the Lower Mainland and project leadership from the North Shore Multicultural Society. Since its inception in 2007 the NSWAC has devel-

oped a strategic plan, and taken on numerous community events and projects to further its mission of welcoming and inclusivity.

The NSWAC's six key purposes:

1. To increase awareness of diversity and multicultural issues;
2. To ensure service provision is relevant and meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees on the North Shore;
3. To support collaboration and coordination of service provision;
4. To increase awareness of existing information and services;
5. To increase cultural competency within the community; and
6. To increase engagement of the whole community.

Follow the events and activities of the North Shore Welcoming Action Committee in this and subsequent newsletters, or visit the NSWAC web-site at www.northshorewac.ca



This Newsletter

The development and distribution of this first NSWAC newsletter has been timed to celebrate Multicultural Week and the Day for the Elimination of Racism—March 21st. (see back page story)

Multicultural Week is usually celebrated the 3rd week of

February but due to the Olympics, the North Shore will mark and celebrate Multiculturalism Week from March 21st to 27th.

The newsletter will be distributed quarterly and will showcase news, events, programs and resources related to multiculturalism, cultural diversity and the

development of communities that are welcoming and inclusive.

The next newsletter will be ready for distribution at the end of June. If you have a story or an announcement you would like included in the next edition, please contact Jody Johnson at jody.johnson@shaw.ca

Our Welcoming Communities

In February, 35 new immigrants to the North Shore gathered to engage in a community forum and share their settlement experiences. Attendees



offered a long list of welcoming experiences including the helpfulness of the officials that first greeted them, the friendly

information provided by transit drivers, the landlord that left a welcome note, the neighbour that crossed the street to welcome them, and the strangers on the street who, unsolicited, offered directions.

In addition, the overwhelming majority of the forum participants (all but three attendees) reported feeling a sense of being welcomed and included in their community.

All participants agreed that they had a role and responsibility in developing welcoming and inclusive communities and suggested a number of ways to engage in this process and a keen willingness to be involved.

Participants also told of experiences that were less than welcoming and discussed some of barriers stopping them from getting more involved.

All of this information and more will be taken forward and shared with North Shore community stakeholders and will inform the development of programs, services and

resources to support the development of more welcoming and inclusive communities.

Our Welcoming Communities is an exciting project coordinated by the North Shore Welcoming Action Committee and managed by the North Shore Multicultural Society. It is a WICWP Knowledge Development and Exchange Project and involves a series of community engagement activities including individual consultations, focus groups, a survey and two forums.

For more information, contact Jody Johnson

Project Coordinator

jody.johnson@shaw.ca

"In a world darkened by ethnic conflicts that tear nations apart, Canada stands as a model of how people of different cultures can live and work together in peace, prosperity and mutual respect."

Bill Clinton, Former US President

"Labels are for cans, not people."

Anthony Rapp

Multiculturalism Week

Multiculturalism Week is usually celebrated during the 3rd week of February each year. With the Olympics recently wrapped up and the Paralympics now in full swing, we will celebrate Multicultural Week a little later this year,

from March 21st to 27th.

The goal of multiculturalism week is to build communities where all individuals have the opportunity to participate fully in social, economic, and political life.

It is about ensuring equal treatment and respect for all people, while welcoming and valuing diversity.

Consider celebrating multiculturalism this week by organizing an event—or by passing along this newsletter.

Focus Groups—Let Your Voice Be Heard

The NSWAC is hosting two community focus groups and is looking for interested community members.

Please pass this information on to your friends, colleagues, family and acquaintances—anyone wishing to have a voice and share their thoughts on multiculturalism and the devel-

opment of communities that are welcoming and inclusive.

Friday March 26th
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Monday, March 29th
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

For more info and to register, please contact Maral Fadaeian at 604.988.2931 ext.269 or maralf@nsms.ca

The Focus Groups will be held at the offices of the North Shore Multicultural Society.

Health and Wellness Project for Newcomers

The Health and Wellness Project for Newcomers has been a wonderful addition to the Recreation Commissions long-standing commitment to making their services more accessible to newcomers.

Starting in 2004, the Recreation Commission was the first agency on the North Shore to partner with NSMS in an organizational change project geared toward opening doors for newcomers to participate in their programs and services. Since then, the Recreation Commission has worked to let new immigrants know about recreational and volunteer opportunities and encourage them to participate.

The Recreation Commission also participates actively in the work of the North Shore Welcoming Action Committee.

This new program has taken the Recreation Commission's commitment to including newcomers in their programs and services to a new level. It is successfully introducing many new immigrant families and individuals to recreational opportunities, and invites and encourages others to participate.

Videos and recreation guides in multiple languages, in addition to volunteer hosts who speak Farsi, Korean, Mandarin, and

Cantonese, have made it easier for newcomers to get involved in recreational activities. Not only has the project supported the formation of new friendships and social networks, it has also provided new immigrant volunteers the opportunity to take leadership roles.

To view the translated videos, visit: www.northvanrec.com

For more information, contact:
Linette Smith, Access Services
Coordinator
North Vancouver Recreation Commission
smithl@northvanrec.com

The Host Program

Jeff Goldie, above left, and Ali Rahimi, right, have been matched in the Host Program since October 2009.

Jeff, a retired federal government employee, joined the Host Program because he strongly believes in the importance of welcoming newcomers to our community. Through his experience as a volunteer, he's come to recognize and more fully understand the challenges newcomers face when living in Canada.

His match, Ali, immigrated to Canada in April 2008. Since this time, he has been actively pursuing English lessons and getting

involved in the community.

With Jeff's help, Ali became a member of the Silver Harbour Community Centre and has been playing pool every day with other seniors. This experience has been beneficial to Ali in many ways, including improving his confidence to socialize with others, speaking English with a variety of people, and playing a sport he enjoys. Jeff admires Ali's ability to take risks and to try new things, as well as his stories of working as a mechanical engineer in Iran.



Anyone who would like to volunteer as a Host, and assist new immigrants to connect with social networks and recreational activities on the North Shore can contact Susan Aitchison at 604 988 2931, ex. 263, or susana@nsms.ca.

What is discrimination at work?

What is discrimination?

"Discrimination in employment means treating people differently because of characteristics that are not related to their merit or the requirements of the job. These characteristics include race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction and social origin.

Discrimination at work is a violation of a human right that results in a waste of human talents, with detrimental effects on productivity and economic growth, and generates

socio-economic inequalities that undermine social cohesion and solidarity. It acts as a brake on the reduction of poverty."

When is different treatment not discriminatory?

"Different treatment and rewards based on different levels of productivity are not discriminatory. Some workers and some occupations are more productive than others, reflecting different skills, qualifications and abilities. This leads to different returns at work –

and it is fair and efficient.

Different treatment based on individual merit, such as talents, knowledge and skill, is not discriminatory. Different treatment to meet the special needs of some individuals – and make sure that they have equal opportunities – is not discriminatory. This is often known as affirmative action."

http://www.ilo.org/wow/Articles/lang--en/WCMS_082633

North Shore Welcoming Action Committee

Phone: 778 808 6252

E-mail: jody.johnson@shaw.ca

Motto

The North Shore – you belong here!

Vision

The North Shore is a welcoming community where everyone has a sense of belonging.

Mission

To support the inclusion of immigrants and refugees.



The Day for the Elimination of Racism—March 21

On March 21, 1960, a group of 5,000 to 7,000 peaceful demonstrators congregated at a police station in the township of Sharpeville, South Africa. They came together to protest the Apartheid pass-book laws.

Sixty-seven black demonstrators were killed and 186 wounded by armed white South African police.

The “pass laws” in South Africa were designed to segregate the population and limit the movement of the non-white populace. The pass laws were a key feature of the Apartheid system.

Pass laws in South Africa were first introduced in about 1760. Black South Africans had to carry pass books at all times to prove they were authorized to live or move in “white” South Africa. The pass laws also stated that Black South Africans could not hold a higher position in a company than the lowest white employee.

In 1966, six years after the Sharpeville Massacre, in response to the outrage expressed by the international community, the United Nations declared March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.



The Sharpeville Massacre

The pass laws system was repealed in South Africa in 1986.

Canada was one of the first countries to support this UN initiative, and in 1989 the first Canadian March 21 Campaign took place. The campaign was initiated to heighten awareness of racism and to demonstrate the commitment of the Government of Canada to foster respect, equality and diversity.

Every year, numerous activities take place to raise awareness of racism. A key element of the campaign is the “**Racism, Stop It!**” National Video Competition.

To learn more about Canada’s campaign and to view the videos, go to:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/march21/>