

Yearbook 2011- Giving Back



Creating a strong culture of community engagement through capacity building, progressive learning, and innovative training

CCL&D Board President's Message

Martin Luther King, Jr., the celebrated American Civil Rights activist, asked: "Life's most persistent and urgent question: What are you doing for others?"

The theme of this year's graduation, "giving back" addresses that question and I can think of no more fitting way to characterize the work of the Toronto Centre for Community Learning & Development (CCL&D).



Consider CCL&D's mission statement – "Creating a strong culture of community engagement through capacity-building, progressive learning and innovative training" and you will immediately see the importance of giving back in our work and organizational culture.

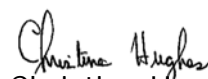
Tonight, we recognize the accomplishments of the graduates of the Academic Skills Upgrading – LBS program and the Immigrant Women Integration Program. As we celebrate your successes and the skills that you have developed at CCL&D, we know that there will be much "giving back" as you move on to the next chapter in your life.

In addition to personal accomplishments, CCL&D as an organization has much to celebrate in the way it "gave back" over the past year. A few examples to note include:

- ✓ Empowering people through the creation of their digital stories,
- ✓ Being an active player in Regent Park and introducing new learning opportunities to community residents through partnerships at the Regent Park Centre of Learning,
- ✓ Hosting the first community dialogue – "Creating a Healthy Community" and bringing together a broad cross-section of Regent Park residents for an informative and engaging evening,
- ✓ Continuing to make documents accessible to the general public through Clear Language and Design's work with public and private sector organizations, and
- ✓ Gaining recognition for the Youth Empowering Parents initiative as one of the weekly "Hot" items in the Globe and Mail.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to extend congratulations to all who are being honoured this evening. I also offer my sincere thanks to the dedicated team of CCL&D staff and volunteers for their continued commitment to the organization.

In closing, I would like to note a quote from the British politician and statesman, Winston Churchill, which is posted on my fridge as a daily reminder of the importance of giving back: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."


Christine Hughes

Worth Repeating:

Of Reflective Learning... Growth... and Giving Back

I always dread this time of the year, because, in a manner of speaking, it is a time for reflecting. And while gathering my thoughts for this year's message, certain questions kept popping up. And believe it or not, they are the same questions I asked myself this time last year, with a couple of additions: Am I feeling too overwhelmed to write this year's message? Are the questions really worth repeating? So, here we go again!

As an organization, did we do right by all the participants in our programs? Did LBS students make meaningful progress in their efforts to upgrade their academic skills? Did the newcomer women in the IWIP program really enhance their capacity and skills? And do they now feel more equipped to be effective leaders and supporters of meaningful change in their communities? Did we increase employability skills, and the chances of finding rewarding and fulfilling work for those who are seeking employment?

And our staff and volunteers, board members - do they still share that sense of purpose? Do they continue to feel rewarded, simply by knowing that we are bringing about changes in the lives of people, and their situations? Do they recognize that the personal transformations that take place daily, right before their eyes, are sometimes the beginnings of new journeys for many of our program participants and their families?



Are we really giving back to the communities and neighbourhoods that we serve?

In a survey of individuals that participated in the IWIP program over the period 2002 to 2009, 33 % rated the program as **very good** regarding the extent to which it *helped them develop skills that they can use in work, community, school, and personal situations*; while 67% gave the program a rating of **excellent**. Thirteen percent of graduates who completed the survey said that the training they received did a **good** job: **"preparing me to play a role in helping to build community capacity and improve conditions for families, children and youth"**; 20% felt the training did a **very good** job, and 60% felt it did an **excellent** job.


It comes as no surprise, therefore, that ninety-seven percent of those surveyed said they would **definitely** recommend IWIP training to friends and colleagues, and 7% said **probably**. However, what is even more astounding, is that 100% gave two thumbs up, and said that *they have been involved in change efforts in their communities* as a result of the IWIP program – they are giving back! The same is true for our LBS program. In terms of overall satisfaction – 93% of students, who completed the satisfaction survey, indicated that they had made good progress in reaching *the goals set for them in the LBS Program*. 96% also found the learning activities to be useful in working toward their goals.

Overall, 96.4% indicated that they were satisfied with the LBS Program at CCL&D, and the same percentage said that they would tell other people to come to CCL&D to take part in our LBS Program.

Indeed, the reach and impact of our efforts have grown immeasurably over the past few years. In the past year, we embraced the Youth Empowering Program (YEP), and already the youth and parents involved in this unique initiative are leaving their mark all over Regent Park. Youth are coming forward to demonstrate that they are not only service users, but that they also have the capacity to *give back*, and play meaningful roles right in their community!

So it is comforting to know that the passion, commitment, drive and compassion we bring to our work, is growing from strength to strength! How else can we account for the overwhelming sentiments of satisfaction expressed by current and past program participants?

Still, I would still like to know, is it better to ask the right question, or to know the correct answer?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alfred Jean-Baptiste', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alfred Jean-Baptiste
Executive Director

To all CCL&D Trainees and Students

Following Your Dreams

In many First Nations communities across Turtle Island we have the symbol of the Dream Catcher. As the Cree tell it, a spider was quietly spinning his web in his own space. It was beside the sleeping space of Kookum, the grandmother. Each day, Kookum watched the spider at work, quietly spinning away. One day as she was watching him, her grandson came in. "Kookum-iiya", he shouted, glancing at the spider. He stomped over to the spider, picked up a shoe and went to hit it. "No-keeqwa", the old lady whispered, "don't hurt him". "Kookum, why do you protect the spider?" asked the little boy. The old lady smiled, but didn't answer. When the boy left, the spider went to the old woman and thanked her for saving his life. He said to her, "For many days you have watched me spin and weave my web. You have admired my work. In return, for saving my life, I will give you a gift." He smiled his special spider smile and moved away, spinning as he went. Soon the moon glistened on the magical silvery web moving gently in the window. "See how I spin?" he said. See and learn, for each web will snare bad dreams. Only good dreams will go through the small hole. This is my gift to you. Use it so that only good dreams will be remembered. The bad dreams will become hopelessly entangled in the web."



Each of you have been weaving dreams since you started attending CCL&D; you have captured positive experiences, beautiful memories; and inspiring learning moments. Now take those silver threads and continue to strengthen your dreams; create them; live them.

Nia:weh for a memorable year that inspires me to strive higher in the community engagement work that I do.

Caroline Outten
Program Development Coordinator

Learning and Giving

I first started working for CCL&D in January 2009 as a service-learning student from the University of Toronto. When I graduated from university, I thought that the “learning” part of my life was over and I would join “the real world”. However, it didn’t take long for me to realize that no matter what stage you’re at in your life, learning never stops, as I found myself learning something new every day from the people I work with and from the students at CCL&D. I have also been fortunate enough to meet many residents, community workers and partners who have spent their lives giving back to their communities, though many say that what they get in return is so much more.



I would like to congratulate all of the trainees and graduates for their accomplishments and progress over the past year, even though learning and giving back does not stop here.

In particular, I would like to send my heart-felt compliments to our IWIP graduates. My parents immigrated to Canada from Hong Kong when I was 3 years old, so that my brother and I could have a brighter future. I know that being an immigrant is difficult, but the sacrifices you have made and the “giving” that you have done is extremely admirable. Your children may be too young to understand it now, but I know that one day they will thank you for what you have given them, the way I thank my parents for what they have given me. On behalf of my generation and the generation that will follow, *thank you*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Chan'.

Alison Chan

Planning and Development Coordinator

To Give Back

I am very thankful to CCL&D for giving me the opportunity to be part of this great team. In this year, I have learned a lot. I have felt involved in all the creative activities for helping Regent Park to be a stronger community.

I am completely grateful because CCL&D has given me the chance to work with different communities and cultures, which has enriched my knowledge of the socioeconomic conditions and cultural diversity in the 13 priority regions that exist in Toronto. Now, I have a social commitment with immigrants and mostly women immigrants. I will continue contributing in this work and carry on my participation with community field work.

Forever, thank you.

Olga S. Florean Cruz
Community Engagement Worker
Training Support & Digit Media



Sense of Belonging

CC&LD has given me so much. They've given me the opportunity to experience new things, to have a job and to go out in the world and make a difference. They trained me to become a Community Engagement Worker, but from that I've gained so much more. Having an opportunity to work in the same organization that trained me means so much to me. Giving back is one way of empowering myself. By working, I facilitate learning circles, and we share our experiences that matter to us. I thank Alfred for teaching me how to facilitate learning circles, and I thank Caroline for teaching me how to deliver workshops.



I found the answer to my questions; I felt like I belonged. I also developed the same for my neighbourhood. Now everything has changed for me. My way of thinking and my perception of things and people have changed. The most important thing for me is using my new-found skills to help my community and educate people. There is a lack of community engagement in my neighbourhood. We need to explore new ideas and bring new resources that matter to all of us. Giving back in any way I can is important to me.

Sureya Ibahim
Community Engagement Worker

Masi's Testimonial

I believe that the IWIP program has influenced my personal and professional life dramatically. Because of the IWIP program, I have a greater understanding of community and community leadership. I also feel more confident dealing with day to day responsibilities and interacting with my community members.

I don't know how I should thank all the CCL&D staff members who have guided me to have a better life in Canada.



Masoumeh Sheikh
Office & Operations Assistant

Community Leadership

I am Naznin. In Canada, I have been living here almost six years with my husband and two sons. Back home in Bangladesh, I have accomplished my Master's Degree in Geography at the University of Dhaka. I was involved in my family business, and also worked in a co-operative society.

I participated in the course on Civic Engagement and Community Development organized by Toronto Centre of Community Learning and Development (CCL&D) last year, 2010. I'm proud that I had this opportunity to attend this program, since it has really changed my life positively. This program helped strengthen my knowledge on governance, non-profit organizations, human rights, access and equity, and also some facilitation skills, which are very important for as a community engagement worker. I did many of surveys on community index of wellbeing, which gave me the opportunities to connect with my community people, and learned more about the resources, needs, issues, and priorities of the community. Now I have more interactions with the organizations and residents in my community. During the survey, I attended many community based events and activities. I conducted interviews with different people groups, including women, seniors, men, and youth. I gathered information from them to create a community profile, which was talking about community resources and needs. I believe this course has directed my future and gave me a chance to be a community leader.



Naznin Sultana
Community Engagement Worker

CCL&D TRAINEE AND LBS STUDENT 2011 ESSAYS

The participants of The Immigrant Women Integration Program (IWIP) and the Literacy & Basic Skills Academic Upgrading students have written the following essays on the topic of giving back: how one can positively contribute to their communities and/or what it means to give back. The essays are accompanied by a photo of each participant.

Immigrant Women Integration Program Participants

Giving Back

The favour of a drop of water has been rewarded with the gratitude of a fountain of water. This is a very popular idiom in China. It says that no matter how much or how little you get from others in favours, you should give back all you have. I was brought up with this philosophy, but have I really practiced it? I have no idea.

When I arrived in Canada, the first advice I was given was to do volunteer work in order to gain Canadian experience and to create a professional network. I doubted what and where I could volunteer for, because of the language barrier, and also because of the understanding of giving back. I thought there is no reason to do something for free.

I stayed in my small place seeking security and comfort, but at the same time I was receiving a lot of help from friends, community agencies and teachers. They helped me with almost everything, whatever I needed. So I started asking myself what I could do for them.

One day I joined IWIP training, my understanding of giving back has been changed totally. I would never forget the period when we went to the different community centers for our community well-being survey. I met a lot of people who are community directors, workers and local residents. I am surprised by the way of people contributing to their community and being part of their community. Also by delivering Digital story workshops, I felt the local residents' senses of belonging to their community, because they know about giving back.



Indeed, no matter what sort of life circumstance you may be in, there is always a way for you to give back to society in one way or another. This doesn't mean that you need to donate hundreds of dollars to an organization or spend hours cleaning up parks. There are ways for people to be charitable no matter how much free time or money they have.

Now I am doing my internship placement in two organizations, and am applying a couple of volunteer jobs also. I believe that my life will be different by giving back to this country.

Kathryn Lin

Regent Park & Me

Life changed for me the day I moved to Regent Park. Being a mother for the first time and moving to Regent Park happened at the same time in my life. By the stories I have heard about Regent Park I knew it wasn't the best place to move in with my child. My friends did not want to visit my home. Regent park revitalization was the only positive story covered by media. Being a resident gave me the opportunity to know that the negative stories in the neighbourhood were not completely true. In fact, it was quite the opposite as I always saw lots of people with their families in the neighbourhood. There were always kids playing outside my home. It did not look like one of the most violent neighbourhood in Toronto. Even though there were some problems in the neighbourhood related to drugs, residents did not care about the drug dealers who hang around the neighbourhood nor were the drug dealers worried about the residents. It was an odd co-existence. I became a perfect Regent Park resident very fast and learned to live with the situation. I was not happy, but I had no clue what can be done to solve the problems in the neighbourhood. I was happy to have an affordable home and not to complain about anything else.



I started to volunteer in my community. It gave me a chance to learn and understand the community better. Poverty and lack of education is a reality for a lot of residents here. Soon it became clear to me that I want to work in the neighbourhood and help the community members. There are also good things in Regent Park other than the poverty, drug dealers. It is also a very diverse community in every way. But the bond inside the community is very strong. Lots of community agencies are working here, and they play a very significant role in the people's lives. I was very inspired by their activity in the community and also by the people I worked with along the way in those agencies. That is why I decided to become a social worker and help the people who are in need.

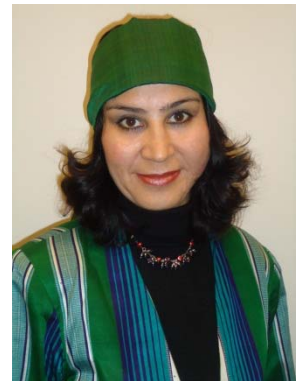
After living in Regent Park for 5 years I love Regent Park. I think it will take a lot of hard work of a lot of people to keep the community strong as it goes through the changes. Providing people with job and a healthy lifestyle is very important. Lots of businesses and agencies are moving to Regent Park. The residents should get the priority to get the jobs and the business in their own community. Half of the working-age residents are women. It's important that they get trained and get the motivation if they want to work and gain economic independence in their lives. Regent park revitalization is a historic project. I feel very excited that I get to be a part of the history as I see it getting built everyday through my window. I feel the change every day when I go out of my apartment. I truly hope and pray that revitalization will bring all the positive changes to Regent Park keeping the same sense of belonging that already exist here among the residents.

Uttara Chowdhury

Open Your Arms to the Community

Whether we live in the crowded bustle of an inner city or in a quieter, less populated rural area, we are part of the community in which we are living. Social participation refers to people's involvement and interaction with others.

In my opinion, as a social worker, community means swimming in deep water which can be enjoyable; processing learning experiences and gaining the trust and respect of the community. Such beautiful sounds social change engenders; and such pride you can feel being part of that change. Life can be amazing. Becoming immersed in the activities of the community you can experience the same enjoyment you feel by swimming in deep water.



In fact, you are building trust among the community members and using your skills to make positive contributions. By identifying the problems in a community and at the same time recognizing its resources; listening to the other voices; and jointly reaching solutions; you can become a catalyst and resolve many issues in your neighbourhood.

This course has given me a greater vision and connected me to a new life in Canada. As a newcomer I was stuck in a self-imposed prison with no one to show me how to free myself; with no one to show me how to begin to achieve my goals. The course, Leadership and Community Development, helped me to build a new career; gave me the knowledge to stand up on my feet; and encouraged me to be "part of change" in my neighborhood.

Now everything is familiar to me, neighbors, community centers, schools, grass root organizations, children, even places; trees, flowers and green grass. This important element and sense of belonging gives me happiness, joy and peace. I feel that I have more power to serve my community, as the tangible sentiment of empathy pulls me into local activities.

A voice is singing in my ears, which influences all parts of my body that is why I say, "open your arms to your community and build social relationships, invite networking opportunities".

Jamila Ghairat

Today Gave Me Something Good That I Can Give Tomorrow

I moved to Canada right after I graduated from Cairo University with a B.A in Law. Moving to a new country and figuring out the next stage of my life was very stressful; I felt totally discouraged, after I got my BA evaluated and was told that I would have to study an additional four years to practice law in Canada.



Like many well educated immigrants, I struggled for several years between different unfulfilling jobs to make ends meet. At the same time, I was volunteering in my community, but without feeling a sense of belonging to the community. The vision behind my contribution in the community wasn't quite clear for me. All I knew at that time was the one sentence I had been told when I first moved to Canada: volunteering is always good.

I had the feeling that I wasn't doing what I was meant to do. Something was missing; I couldn't see myself working as a cashier even though I'm enthusiastic person and excited about helping and working with people. I wanted to improve and enhance my skills, knowledge and education. While I was having this debate with myself, my friend who's a community worker suggested that I apply for IWIP training program because she thought I would do well in advocacy for community members.

The IWIP course is remarkable. I learned about the following: community needs, how to write a proposal, successful conflict resolution, design, how to deliver workshops, digital storytelling, non-profit organizations, broad vision of community, self-awareness, access & equity, how to organize events or activities in the community and communication skills. Overall the positive effect of the IWIP course has been huge in my professional and personal life. Additionally, I would to say that the instructors were a great inspiration. For example the CCL&D Executive Director Alfred told us: don't make your opinion based on stereotyping. The Deputy Executive Director Maria told us: believe in yourself you can do the best. Caroline told us: make the impossible possible; no barriers can stop you from moving forward to your goal.

Now is the time to experiment with giving back opportunities through volunteering in the community and providing initiatives to encourage more women for their success. I will specially focus on women who need help to come out of their isolation and build a pathway to success in leading their community. I will also advocate in the community and look for any new potential. I feel today gave me something good that I can give tomorrow.

Rihab Abbas

Giving Back Because We Care

As a member of a community and the wider world giving back to one's community and trying to make the world a better place is a moral duty of all. I believe that everyone should work to make their community a better place. People in caring, sharing, helping and serving community can live a better life and they have the strong sense of belonging to their community. People give back in many ways. Some donate money to charities, some give their precious time to the needy in their neighborhood and some even leave their comfortable lives to work for people in another part of the world. Non-profit organizations, governmental organizations or other volunteer groups do great work to help communities in various ways. Giving back to the community that I live in or that I care about makes me satisfied, happy and delighted. Toronto Centre for Community Learning and Development helps me to empower myself with different skills and knowledge on how to engage in community activities and help to make a positive difference in people's lives because I think everyone can help make a difference.



It is not only the responsibility of the certain group or person to work for the community and it is also not necessary to be rich to be able to make a difference. It is great if we can contribute in a community financially but time and enthusiasm are also equally important. In my case community service has been my career. I used to work as a motivator in Nepal and used to travel with different development projects for villages. Being able to help non-profit or governmental organizations do their work would be awesome. As a new immigrant in Canada pursuing my career has been very difficult for me but I started with volunteering. It would be great if I could pursue a social service career where I could help or give back to the community that I live in and enjoy my job because that is what I love to do and also what I do the best.

Talking to people with problems, assisting them to solve their dilemmas, facilitating for information and advocating for their rights can make a huge difference in many lives. Interacting with people in this way can help us forget our own troubles or at least share our experiences and make our own problems seem smaller. Giving what one can is not only good for the recipients but also helpful for the one who gives. Giving back to the community that we live in and to the people who share the community with can in various ways make us feel good about ourselves. Senior people who volunteer are happier because they get to interact with others. They might also be healthier because they get to exercise rather than staying idle and bored in their homes. I think people who give back to their communities have the ability to look at the world in a different way, and a habit to look at the bigger picture rather than only thinking about their own lives.

There are many who along with living their lives also want to make a positive impact in the society but not everyone has the opportunity to do so. People do not always know where to start from. Organizations like CCL&D acts like a bridge between the community and those who want to give back to their community. Immigrant Women Integration Program has helped me strengthen my knowledge on governance, non-profit organizations, human rights, access and equity. I have also started conducting workshops, participating in different activities held in my neighborhood and volunteering when I can. Survey on community index of wellbeing has given an opportunity to connect with my community and learn more about the resources, needs, issues and priorities of the community. I have equipped myself with different tools and techniques for community engagement and leadership development skills which I can use to give back to my caring and sharing community as a valuable member.

Helping those people who are in need and working to make a positive changes have always been an important task for me and I believe that everyone like me have an ability to make a difference in the world. My efforts might not be enough and I might not be fully successful but I will get a strong sense of satisfaction for trying to support and giving back because I love it, I can do it and I care about it.

Ida Sharma Dhungana

Yes, I Belong Here

Leaving a settled good life back home and starting all over again in a new country was not easy. But I had always been looking at all the opportunities that this life would unfold. I knew that my life would take many twists and turns, but I should never lose faith in myself. Being accepted as a trainee of Immigrant Women Integration Program at CCL&D was like embarking on a brand new phase of life that I had no idea about.



It was amazing how quickly we, the ten ladies of the program, became friends. It was exciting getting to know them and their cultures. The facilitators enlightened us with all new concepts and strengthening the old ones. Each of us enjoyed every bit of it! We participated, interacted, shared and laughed. During Digital story making and screening we cried, feeling deeply for a fellow trainee's emotions. The bonding was that strong. I had no idea about digital story making before starting the course. The facilitators introduced me to a completely new technology to express my thoughts and helped me to rediscover my creative side. After community screening of digital stories, I came to know how strong the messages were that we conveyed through those five minutes movies. I came to understand the importance of using this art as a perfect tool of communication to reach the audience the most effective way.

From preparing questionnaire for the survey to writing and presenting the Needs Assessment Report was an incredible learning experience for me. The word "community" had no other meaning to me other than as it is stated in the dictionary. That meaning took a broader shape while I was conducting the survey. During the survey I looked at the community that I live in from different perspectives. It opened my eyes about the social issues need to be changed for the wellbeing of a community. Interaction with people and having knowledge of their needs gave me a sense of belonging. Now I know how to reach and listen to the people. I also know how to contribute my time and energy to advocate for a cause and to implement it.

Learning about facilitation skills was another important aspect of IWIP program. Planning, developing and presenting workshop was an extraordinary experience for me. I enjoyed doing research on topics and spent hours tirelessly. The most "dreaded" thing (to me) - the computer, turned out to be my newly found friend. I have impressed my daughters with my new skill. Presenting a group workshop on "Human Rights" not only taught me about human rights but also about teamwork skills. Our teamwork and understanding among ourselves made the workshop successful. I have acquired a deeper sense of access and equity and can proudly say that I know about Ontario Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and Ontario Human Rights Code. I know where to go and how to claim and enforce my rights as a resident of Canada. I can compare and analyze how the Human Rights System works in different countries especially in my country, Bangladesh. Now I feel confident about my abilities to inform and educate people about their rights and to fight for it.

Our class at CCL&D was a replica of a community where, we, the students from different countries, cultures, religions and background got together. Our interaction with one another taught us to understand each other, to value opinions expressed by others and at the same time to be respectful, non-judgemental and empathetic. These are all the skills that I needed to work in a community and to be a valued member of a team with positive attitude.

The knowledge and skills that I have gained from being a trainee at CCL&D cannot be measured. It has empowered me in so many ways that I am proud of myself. I can facilitate, advocate and contribute my knowledge to lead a group to achieve the very best.

In Bengali, my mother tongue, we use the word “protidaan” which is synonymous to “giving back”. Since my childhood I had been inspired to do so and I believe in it. I was supposed to return the joy of getting by giving it back and I am here to do that.

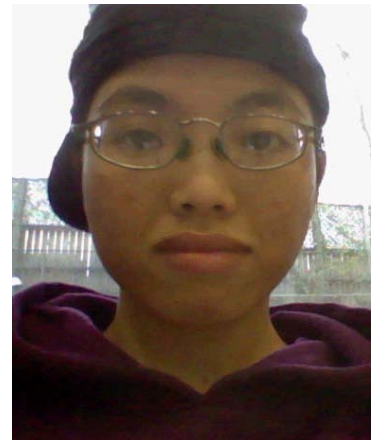
Yasmin Ara Zaman

Level 2/3 Academic Upgrading Students

Heart Train

Imagine a world with people of every race, religion, culture, color, age, and gender walking hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder supporting each other; arms, hands reaching out to embrace those trembling in the darkness. Imagine a world filled with warm, caring, and sharing hearts, a land without hatred, and a world with people who believe in the joy of giving back. Wouldn't that make a wonderful world- a wonderland of heaven for everyone who lives on earth?

There are a variety of ways to give back to your community. They include working, donating, and volunteering, or simply by saying hello and smiling to another person on the street, reminding them somebody cares for them. Moreover, show respect when you are on the subway: offer your seat to the handicapped, the elderly and pregnant women. If someone is crying out for help, be the saviour of that person- you can be the one! Giving back makes sense; don't even question why, just act with your heart.



I remember one of my favourite quotes from Mother Teresa, “If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.” Personally, I believe in the *Pay It Forward* system. It is not complicated, basically you help one person or more if possible, and then hopefully that person will forward the help to the next person. Eventually, one person will transform into a group of people. Sometimes, people need to be shown an alternative direction in life to restart their journey.

Holidays are an especially good time to spread love and charity toward those who are less fortunate, broken, and unloved. Even though, I think giving back in any way possible should be part of one's daily life, holidays are often the most desperate time of the year for people without adequate family support or a circle of friends. For example, at Christmas, you can donate unwanted clothing and toys for kids; they would be cherished by many families, children and the homeless. Donating money to charity is very important too. And what about volunteering at the hospitals, food banks, shelters, libraries, out on the street, etc.?

Keep in mind, giving back shouldn't be coming from pity, a duty, or a chore. Giving back should feel like the pleasure of loving. Imagine, people connecting, uniting, building, and helping each other. I believe this is the future, the future plan of our people united as one.

CJ Fung

Giving Back

Giving back is something we were taught throughout history. All religions speak about virtues of giving back: "must give back a percentage of your income". I grew up in a different religious communities, also I lived as an adult in a multicultural community with different religions. As a child growing up, I saw my parents giving back all the time. Its common sense that if you give something from your heart you feel will good about it.

Furthermore, in the Bible Jesus speaks about "giving back 10% of your income" 2Corinthians 9.7 "each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give not reluctantly or under compulsion for God a cheerful giver". In contrast in Judaism "giving charity 1] fundamental of Judaism traditional Jews give at least 10% of their income to charity give to the poor is an obligation in Judaism and confers a blessing on the giver calling it a "Mitzvah" or good deed.



On the contrary, in Islam it is means "Zakat", a purification and growth. Each Muslim calculates his or her Zakat individually. For most purposes this involves the payment each year of 2.5% of one's capital. However a pious person may give as much as he or she pleases. Charity is a necessity for every Muslim "If a person has nothing, he should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earning in charity, if he is not able to work, he should help poor and needy person, if he cannot do even that, he should urge others to do good, if he lacks that also, he should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity. Yet this giving back relates to more other religion in life.

In addition, as a child I remember one of my parents significant good deeds were giving back. My parents potential are to help community, neighbours, orphans and poor as much as they can. My parents are not wealthy; however, they have enough money to help needy people. Sometime if they can't help financial they would help in any ways they can. The idea of giving back was something my parents ingrained in me as child.

Moreover when we become mature adult some of us achieve our goal in life and some of us are not. On the country I didn't achieve my goal in life yet and I didn't have a lot of money, but I'm stable to give back to in any ways I can. For instance my first giving back is to my parent and as Muslim I have to give back (zakat). I do voluntary in my community, give homeless when they ask for spare, if I have enough money to give to family or friends how in need, I'm happy to help.

In conclusion, the notion of giving back is crucial for everyone to have a fulfilling spiritual daily life. Giving back is not something we should ever feel forced to do. It takes time to develop an attitude of giving, but as you do, you'll find that being a cheerful giver will give you a life that is full of joy.

Aynabe Ahmed

Giving Back To My Community

As a child, I always thought it was optional to give back to your community. When I was 16, I started to notice the difference. My parents used to tell me it's like an urge a person has. So I planned to educate teens in my community after graduation, and to do volunteer work, helping the poor and disabled. After I accomplished my dream, I realized how important it is to give back. It can create a big difference when capable people help others in their community. This is why I planned to educate my community first.



My plan after high school is to study Social Work. With a degree in that area, I hope to impact my community in various ways. First, with the knowledge I obtain from my high school and secondary studies, I hope to counsel youths who are on the verge of going astray. In today's society, there are so many negative factors that influence young people. I want to help them understand the importance of setting goals and striving to become productive citizens. I also want to give them a sense of hope, and teach them that with perseverance, they too can become great role models for other youths.

As a Social Worker, I will naturally become engaged in the lives of people, who are socially, mentally and economically disadvantaged. I hope to use my education in combination with my determination to help those who are less blessed. With a post-secondary diploma, I will be able to provide community services. I hope that the knowledge I gain from my educational experiences in college will transform me into a more considerate person seeking to make a difference in someone's life.

As a human, I believe that everyone should be aware of their surroundings. This means to be sociable. Most people don't know how to ask, and many people are in need of help still in these modern days. It could be anything you are willing to help with, but the most important thing is to participate, be part of the solution: help someone out of the slum. Helping when someone really needs it is the best gift you will ever give. That's among the reasons why it's very important to give back.

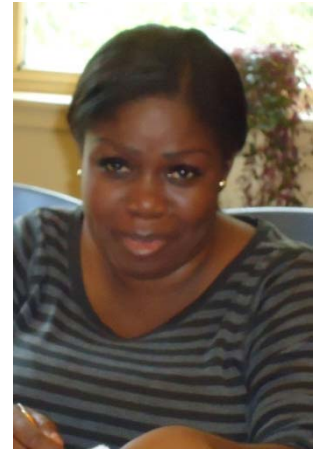
All we need to do is to believe that there can be change, and we are the people who are going to make that happen. It was just a dream as a kid, but believing in my dream turned it into reality, the ability to help. We all belong to our community, which is a fraction of a country. The expectation from any good citizen is we all stand against the difficulties and develop our country.

Jahey Sillah

Making a Difference

Giving back is the act of giving freely. Many people want to give back in a way that is meaningful to them personally. One way of giving back would be volunteering. Volunteer is someone who offers himself or herself for a service willingly and without pay. There are so many places to volunteer such as hospitals, libraries, schools, shelters, food banks, Non-profit organizations, animal shelters etc.

Another thing about volunteering is that, it gives a sense of purpose to all involved. Not only can a person help their community but they can also help themselves. For instance volunteering at a nursing home not only helps the volunteer with psychological and emotional needs, but has added benefits for the residents of the home. Volunteers can help with hair styling, games or just visit. These activities are beneficial for the residents of the home who might otherwise only rarely have visitors. In conclusion by making even one person happier and less lonely, a volunteer contributes to the emotional and physical health of the recipients and at the same time makes him or she feel good about having given back.



Temitope Odubanjo.

Literacy for Girls

My thought of giving back comes from the heart. It is personal. I got chance to go to school in Canada. In Canada every person has an opportunity to get an education, but in Guinea that is not the case. By helping through education is the only way to fight poverty and inequality between man and woman. For that reason I would like to build a school for girls and women in Guinea, where girls have very little scope to study. I believe that by providing education for girls and women I will be able to help them to improve their self-esteem, knowledge and independence. This is my dream of giving back: literacy for girls.

Fatoumata Bah Barry

Provide Care

Some people may disagree with the concept of giving back but from our experience we observe without giving back life becomes meaningless. For our existence in the world, we received a lot from our parents, community and nature. Giving back means provide a view by caring.

In my evaluation, the first stage of giving back is our parents. Now, we are mature, strong but our parents are not the same when we were juvenile. Our parents were caring about us and provided shelter, food and education. Now it is our turn to take care of them.

The second phase is our community. Community is not the place where you grow up. It is the place when you exist now. For me it is Canada. How can I give back to Canada, while I brought up in Ukraine? It is easy, same as your original country by caring for old people, teaching juvenile and working for our own neighbourhood.

Finally, I can share how we can give back to the nature. You need to have respect for the animals; it means not to treat them badly. Teach your own children how important it is for us to keep the environment safe. In your family start to practice recycling.

Giving back is not easy unless you start thinking about it. That means you are in a stage of giving back to your parents, community and nature.

Galina



Helping Hand

There are many ways to give back. Giving back can be in the form of monetary gift or volunteering in your community or in a third world nation.

Celebrity Apprentice is a show on television produced by Donald Trump. Two teams made up of celebrities, (i.e. entrepreneurs, actors, singers, runaway models, etc...) compete against each other. The teams (usually women against men) will be challenged with the completion of a project and the team leader of the winning team will be rewarded with a certain amount of money for his preferred charity. Mr. Trump will generously donate this money. These people give their time and energy to the show and open-handedly give to diverse charitable organizations like hospitals, shelters, institutions and research.



An individual can give back in many different ways; for example spending time with the elderly in hospital, volunteering in a kitchen at a shelter, helping to collect and distribute food and clothes. Also, all over the world corporations, associations, foundations are helping by giving back to individuals and families through charitable donations.

You don't need to be wealthy to give back; however, it might help, but no matter what everybody should and must give back.

Lucie

Level 4/5 LBS Academic Upgrading Students

Satisfying

Giving back is an unselfish feeling and a satisfying moment; you can see how it has changed the persons who are involved. I can see it as a time well spent, as you take your time teaching what you know freely. It is a joy for both you and the persons who are involved. When you see them smile, you will know that you have done a good job. In the end everyone goes away happy.

It all started back when I was about 9-10 years old. As soon as I finished my school work, I would help out other students who were slow or didn't understand the work fully. I did it for those who were next to me, not by moving about the class room. I never showed them the answer, but how to get it another way.

After completing my schooling, I started working as a parts sales rep. During working hours, I taught myself how to find items in the parts books quickly. Then I teach the other parts persons what I know and how to get the item quickly. The customers were happy because they were getting services faster. I felt satisfied knowing that the other parts persons had learned it so easily. Whenever a new machine arrived in the building, I was the first to figure it out; then I passed on the information to the others. I moved to other parts stores, sharing my knowledge with all the workers in these stores. When I look back at it now a smile always fills me inside.

Teaching parts was just the beginning of one way of giving back to those who are willing to learn. Another way was, when I joined the Adult Education program (AEP) in my country St. Vincent and the Grenadines There, I helped teach subjects to adults and young persons who had dropped out of school. The students were happy, knowing that they were catching up with what they had missed by not being in school. Every afternoon the students were there ready to take in all that I had to offer.



Drama and dance came later as I moved about throughout the community. More and more young persons in dance groups and schools requested my assistance to help with their groups. I did it willingly and freely. Whenever the dance festival came around, there was a high standard in dance from all the groups that I helped.

Everyone that I helped had a part of me one way or the other. For example, helping out with cake sales, taking a group of students on a moon night walk, picnicking at a river, where I did the cooking, sports day with teens, visiting a historical sight with a visiting group from another country, and giving a talk to troubled youths. All of these people have a part of me wherever they are. Some times when I walked on the street, someone comes up to me asking if I remember them. They began to explain where and when we met and how I did this, and how it had changed their life. We shared a laughter about the fun times and funny times.

As I look back at all the things I had done and the many lives that I touch throughout the years, seeing how happy they are as the information is passed to them, a happy feeling comes over me. I will never stop sharing my knowledge with anyone who needs it. I believe that giving one's time freely and willingly to those who seek it is a gift to those who receive it. My work can be seen by the ones that I touch and help change them in some way. One day, they themselves will pass on what they have learned to others who want it.

By Gideon

Giving To Change

When I enrolled at CCL&D, it was something different for me because of not being in school for a very long time. The staff here has made me feel okay about being in school.

Here we have people from different parts of the world. Most of them are pleasant to talk to because you can learn from them and they learn from you too.

After being here for three years, it has been great. The things that I have learned here will help me out in the future. The teachers and other students have given me the will to keep on going.

When I leave and head to college to work on getting my grade twelve, I would like to come back to see everybody who has helped me along the way. I would tell them that it was worth all the time and effort.

This is the way that I could give back to CCL&D. I could help enforce positive thoughts so that the students have a chance to make it, too. If you think positively, good things can happen to you. And that would make a big difference in the way that you view the world and yourself.

By Ernie Mclean



Giving back and what it means to me

Giving back to my community has always been a way of life for me.

To start with, I grew up in a very isolated world. It was just my mother and me; however, most of the time it was just me. At a young age I noticed that helping people made me happy; for example, when I was 9 years old, I forced my mother to help me feed homeless men in a shelter.

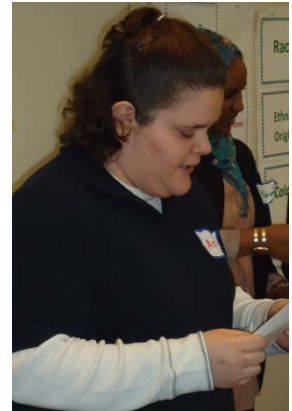
Next, I asked to volunteer at a youth drop-in center where I was currently using their service. At that time, I was 22 years of age and homeless, but just wanted to help because they helped me.

I also volunteered to help a woman with her pet shop for two years, for free, even though every weekend I had to convince her I didn't need money, even though I secretly did.

I currently spend three to four days a week after school helping out at a women's mental health center. This volunteer position means the world to me, not only because I can help out, but also because I feel like I am making a difference, and making a difference is all I really want in life. I also feel cared for and trusted.

Giving back will always be a part of my life in some way. It's who I am. I've have been through a lot of challenges in my life, and continue to deal with those challenges each and every day ; however, I've also been inspired by many people who helped me understand my barriers, helped me work through them, and guided me in a better path. And some continue to, to this very day. Those people in my past had an impact in my life that **will** never be forgotten, and **will** remain in my heart forever, and those in my present are making every day upbeat, and are making my future feel like "the sky is the limit."

Ana Acosta



Giving to Children

Giving back to your community may vary in different ways. As a mother, I am giving back to my community by taking care of my children, giving them a solid foundation by being a good role model to them. I have to start from scratch, before they even go to school. They have to get a good basic education and a strong beginning before they start school.

When children are strong and independent, it is very good for society. It is not enough for them just to have outside education, "school education," but children need to learn many things from home and family before they start school.



As a mother, I am the base of their lives. I will do everything possible to provide the basic knowledge for their future.

It is most important to my community that my family has a good foundation in life. Through this solid foundation, they will gain the confidence that they need to be able to explore life and the world in general, and become good adults.

As a mother who is committed to giving back to the community where I belong, I will do my best to build good, strong and independent adults for their future community. My children are my small community.

Veneranda Kagaba.

I am Blessed

In my strong opinion, everyone should do something to give back to their community. Giving back results in strong family unity, community awareness opportunities, ability to overcome obstacles, healthy and positive environments.

I have been so blessed in my life. I am so lucky, especially, to be in a community. It's such an amazing place to be. I volunteer at my church's food bank at least once a week. At Christmas time, I give small gifts to the children at the church and do some community work. I encourage my children to get involved with voluntary work by giving back to their community. Although they are very young, they can give back by donating used toys, books, and clothes. It's also important to learn the idea of community service and get involved at a young age. I know they are still young, but always there is something to do, no matter what. Whether people are young or old, wealthy or poor, there are always ways to give back.



As a child, I was inspired by my parents, who have always given back to their communities. Community service takes me out of myself and lets me see different parts of myself. I realize now how important giving back is to me.

The possibilities are endless, so next time you want to make a difference in someone else's life, volunteer. You never know whose heart you may touch.

Rhile Halue

Benefits of Giving Back

Have you ever heard, it is better to give than to receive? Does giving back benefit anyone? Acts done for others help them and usually produce greater rewards for the person who does the act.

I know of a program which feeds hundreds of people. With the only staff being a volunteer coordinator and a cook, this program requires a lot of help. Volunteers come for different reasons. Needy people benefit from the acts of these volunteers. Also, despite some occasional frustration, most volunteers receive an inner joy, which motivates them to return. As An added benefit, most volunteers take a little food home.



Another giving back event, with benefits, is a walk-a-thon for charity. Putting together such an event takes cooperation. Whenever people are forced to cooperate, growth happens. Walk-a-thons can create a sense of community, or give a feel of commonality. Did I mention that much needed money gets raised?

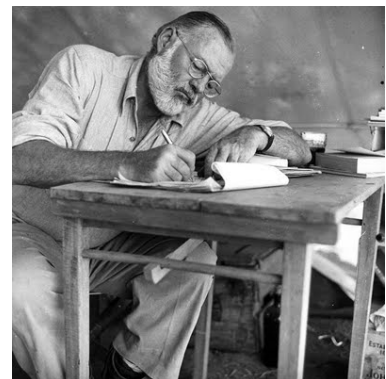
So, is it better to give than to receive? Doing for others benefits needy people, as well as yourself. At any given moment a person may have a need; meeting that need helps them, and benefits you.

Doug McMasters

The CCL&D 2010 Writing Contest

Hoi Kwan Fung (C.J.) received first place and Jahey Sallah received second place from level 2-3 LBS entries.

Gideon Buntyn received first place and four students tied for second place from level 4-5 LBS entries. These students include Ernie McLean, Rhile Halue, Anna Acosta, and Doug McMasters.



The winners from IWIP are Ida Dhungana for first place. Yasmin Zaman and Kathryn Lyn tied for second place.

The compositions are judged by individuals who are not in direct contact with the writers.

Congratulations and thank you to our judges Christine Hughes, Eusis Dougan-McKenzie and Kathleen S. Keefe.

Tutors: Some of CCL&D's Invaluable Assets



Winter Celebration: December 15, 2011

Our 2010 winter celebration was enjoyed by all the family members of CCL&D. It provided the opportunity for everyone to share their unique traditions and style of dress. The celebration was full of emotion and activities, including music, poetry, traditional dance and funny games.

There was an amazing spirit of collaboration, and the possibility to share feelings and friendship were strengthened and created bonds for life.

Attendees enjoyed an unforgettable time. I am proud to belong to this wonderful multicultural family.

Thank you everyone for helping to make it happen and for sharing this joyful time with me. I will keep these memories forever.

Olga S. Florean



First Aid/CPR for Academic Upgrading Classes: March 8, 2011



Opening
Day
Regent
Park
Centre of
Learning

May 2010

IWIP-Led Human Rights Workshop for LBS Learners: March 21, 2011



Since 2009 as part of the IWIP Leadership Development Course the women have been provided with training on the fundamental principles of Human Rights both on an International level and regional level. This knowledge then becomes the focus of their group facilitation training during their Workshop Design & Delivery Course with Trainer Caroline Outten. The goal is for the women to design a full day workshop for participants in our Academic Upgrading Program, which is both informative as well as highly interactive, a day where participants learn about their rights. The women provide a concrete overview of the history of Human Rights, International Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, while exploring issues of discrimination. Participants learn through videos; pictorial gallery walks and discussions; case studies and role play. Every year the workshop is held in conjunction with the International Day for the Elimination of Discrimination which is March 21st.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.
-Martin Luther King

A Year of Giving Back

Summer has arrived again. As the school year winds down, we look forward to celebrating the achievements of all CCL&D students over the past year. As well, we should celebrate the many ways in which all the students gave back, to each other and to the CCL&D community.

Although you may not recognize it, you each have given back through your efforts to advance toward your goals. You gave back to each other, through encouragement, friendliness, and, sometimes, even good-natured teasing. You gave back to me, through your questions, class participation, and progress in your learning.



We met some challenges in our first full year at the Hub: dependence on a space heater in the winter and a fan in the warmer months, construction dust and noise when the windows were opened. But on the whole, the Hub was a good place to be. You gave back to life at the Hub through your care for the environment there, and your concern for making it a place of pride.

All in all, a very good year! Congratulations to those students who are moving on to new endeavours. You've worked hard to achieve your goals. Congratulations to those, too, who are planning to return in the fall. You've also worked hard, and will be ready to meet the challenges the new school year will bring. Thanks to all of you for all your efforts.

Have a wonderful, and safe, summer!

Eleanor McKechnie
Instructor LBS 4/5

Philosophy of a Good Teacher

I was an Associate Professor of English in the Faculty of Education in a Public University of Bangladesh and had been teaching for more than thirteen years. I worked in University of Manitoba and also in Brock University. I have vast experience in the field of Research and also I worked as a Consultant in the Ministry of Education to develop the National Teacher Education curriculum of Bangladesh. I have a strong passion for teaching. As an instructor at CCL&D, I have taught in Youth Empowering Parents (YEP) and Literacy and Basic Skill (LBS) programs. It fulfills me to see the smiling faces of my students. I believe in the philosophy of Narendra Kuppam:



"A Good teacher is one, who teaches with love.

A Good teacher is one, who Corrects Students and make them Grow, Instead of

shouting and making them slow.

A Good teacher is one, who makes Things to Flow.

A Good teacher is one, who gets things done as and when.

A Good teacher is one, who never treats a student as Foe.

A Good teacher is one, who Teachings must help in long Run.

A Good teacher is one, who says always it can be done.

A Good teacher is one, who should never make students Run, Instead have Great Fun.

A Good teacher is one, who must be always Bright and Teach Students Right.

A Good teacher is one, who is always a best Friend."

Irene Parvin
Instructor LBS 2-3

Giving Back

My students gave back to me when I saw them engaged with their studies.

My students gave back to me as I watched them progress.

My students gave back to each other with humour, kindness and emotional support.

My students gave back to CCL&D by demonstrating their commitment to the LBS Academic upgrading program.

My students gave back to themselves through hard work and determination.

With their newly found knowledge, confidence and skills, my students will more effectively give back to their families and communities.

Well done. Have a great summer.

Lisa Garnet
Math and Computer Instructor



Digital Storytelling

It was another exciting year for digital storytelling at CCL&D. The final project before summer involved over one hundred students from Regent Park and St. Jamestown and Parkdale schools as part of the LUMINATO arts festival. The theme of Luminato was 1001 nights, and children drew on the theme to explore the kinds of experiences we have at night, and the kinds of stories we hear at night. The kids ghost stories, and once upon a time stories, shared stories from our families and our friends. They shared about as serious as war and as funny as getting chased by a cow. The grand finale was screening the digital stories at the TIFF Bell Lightbox downtown!

At the new hub residents of Regent Park told about their experiences of the revitalization, and what it was like to move into their new apartments. Participants in IWIP, LBS level 4/5 and the Civic Engagement leadership group all reflected on their lives, and what brought them to where they are today. They shared their experiences with war, addictions, depression, looking for work, and parenting in a new country and how they found hope, created new opportunities for themselves, and continued to dream. Storytelling brought us closer together at CCLD, gave us the opportunity to honour our whole selves, to articulate what needs we have, and share what we are doing to create strong, vibrant communities.

Jennifer LaFontaine



Staff Alumnae...Wishing them all the best in their future endeavours



Leo MacInnis

Manager,
LBS, Academic Upgrading



Mario Navarro

Deputy
Executive
Director

&

Ma Rong

Training
Support &
Operations
Coordinator



Jennifer La Fontaine

Manager
Digital
Storytelling



Emmanuelle Pantin

Coordinator of
Digital
Storytelling



Susan Osburn

Math
And
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Divisions and Partnerships

