

Community Matters



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016





Photo credit: Paul Dickie

Welcome to 2016 and the beginning of what promises to be an exciting new year here at the Community Foundation of Ottawa. Taking stock of the many initiatives we were involved with at the end of 2015, this issue explores Ottawa’s role as a welcoming city, and the part we all play in making newcomers feel like vital, fully-integrated members of our community.

That spirit of hope and hospitality is very much alive in the subject of this winter’s **Community Giving** profile. Once a “displaced person” herself, Doris Smith arrived in Canada in 1947 after fleeing Estonia and escaping occupied Northern Europe. She’s gone on to enjoy a rich, fulfilling life and career, and has been using her Community Foundation fund to support the Ottawa arts scene for over 20 years. It was the plight of Syrian refugees, however, that made her dig even deeper recently, using her fund to make a special donation to our Refugees from Syria Fund.

In this issue’s **Community Pulse** section, we take a closer look at Ottawa’s welcoming nature and the sense of belonging that we have been able to foster amongst new immigrants and refugees. On our **Community Impact** page, you’ll learn more about the results of the second annual New Leaf Community Challenge.

This issue’s **Community Chest** then unlocks key information about our role in the ongoing United for Refugees campaign, along with results of the 2015 Collaborative Grantmaking Pilot project. Finally, we invite you to learn a little more about the life’s work of Margaret Bloodworth, Community Foundation Board member and Grants Committee Chair extraordinaire, in our **Community Profile**.

We hope you enjoy this New Year’s edition of our semi-annual newsletter, and that it helps provide some insight into the work being conducted by the Foundation and our many partners and community champions. We invite you to visit our website, as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages, where you can stay informed and share your own stories and experiences to help us illustrate the many ways that **Community Matters**.

Join the conversation:  



For good...forever Le bien...toujours

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VISION

Ottawa fulfills its potential as an environmentally balanced, socially just, culturally vibrant and economically resilient city.

MISSION

The Community Foundation of Ottawa works with the community as a trusted partner to fulfill impact philanthropy and bring about positive, systemic and sustainable change in our city and beyond.

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Cover images courtesy of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership’s **2015 WOW Ambassadors Project** that celebrates the stories and faces of a welcoming city.



Community Giving

“The Community Foundation seemed like a good fit with my needs when the time came for me to begin making charitable donations of my own.”

When Doris Smith learned that the Community Foundation of Ottawa had established a special fund to support refugees from Syria, she leapt at the chance to make a generous donation in support of the cause. This was on top of her ongoing support of local arts initiatives through the field-of-interest fund she’s had with the Foundation for more than 20 years, and was the result of how closely she can relate to the plight of refugees seeking asylum from war-torn countries.

Doris knows exactly how it feels to run for your life...to lose your home...to head into the unknown. And, finally, to be welcomed with kindness and safe refuge by strangers in another land. Doris arrived in Canada as a “displaced person” in 1947 after escaping the Soviet occupation of Northern Europe during World War II. She had left her homeland of Estonia behind three years earlier, carrying only a few belongings and very little in the way of English language skills along with her.

After a series of harrowing adventures across Eastern Europe, Doris finally arrived in Canada at the age of 22, settling in Montreal and working as a housemaid, caregiver and mother’s helper in the homes of several families. It was here that Doris embarked on a brand new journey that led her to earn a Master of Arts degree at McGill University and begin a whole new life. “What struck me most when I arrived in Canada was the kindness of the people,” says Doris. “I could not have succeeded without the years of material and moral support I received from both the institutions and so many generous people I encountered along the way.”

After getting married and moving to Ottawa to raise a family, Doris found her way to start giving back to the community she now called home, as both a volunteer, as well as a budding philanthropist. In fact, it was her early volunteer experience as President of the Friends of the National Gallery that introduced Doris to the world of fundraising, and ultimate-

ly, to the Community Foundation of Ottawa. “By 1993 I had become a professional fundraiser and was aware of developments in fundraising campaigns, as well as sources of funds in and around Ottawa. The Community Foundation seemed like a good fit with my needs when the time came for me to begin making charitable donations of my own.”

Despite her own knowledge and passion for the arts, Doris appreciates the freedom of being able to rely on the Foundation’s expertise in knowing how best to use her funds to support the most worthy projects at any given time. “I chose to establish a field-of-interest fund because, while my interest in a particular field was quite strong, I trusted the CFO to be much more knowledgeable about current needs and opportunities in the community than I could ever be. I can be sure that the recipients of the annual grants have been carefully chosen and deserve the support they receive from the Foundation.”

It was also the Community Foundation she turned to when she wanted to respond to the desperate plight of the refugees trying to escape Syria. “The Foundation was the first group in Ottawa I was aware of that offered an opportunity to help the new arrivals,” she said. “They will need warm clothes, shelter, an allowance, language training and a place where they can meet with fellow refugees



regularly and in comfort. They need to be made to feel welcome.”

“Refugees are a huge asset to Ottawa. As they become integrated into society, they add new talent, variety and drive to the population. On the one hand, I hope that a diplomatic solution can be found for the horrible situation in Syria, and soon. On the other, I almost hope enough of them stay here to enrich the mix of peoples who make up modern Canada.”

For those of us at the Community Foundation, we feel particularly grateful and all the richer for the presence and generosity of Doris Smith, proud Canadian citizen and caring community champion.



Community Pulse

ISSUE

Welcoming and Belonging

As the nation’s capital, Ottawa prides itself on its beautiful landscape, welcoming nature and high degree of livability. As the city now prepares to receive a fresh wave of new refugees from Syria, it seems like a timely opportunity to take stock of whether we really live up to that reality or not.

Ottawa is both an undeniably rich and generous city, boasting the highest proportion of households amongst major Canadian cities to earn over \$100,000 annually, and more than half the local population giving their time as volunteers, at a higher rate than both the national and provincial averages.

Our community also has a proud history of opening its arms to new immigrants and refugees from around the world. 1979 marked a particularly shining moment in Ottawa’s past as local residents sponsored the influx of 4,000 Southeast Asian refugees under the leadership of then-Mayor Marion Dewar.

Yet, Ottawa has also been ranked as the lowest among all metropolitan areas of Ontario in the area of community belonging – and that number has been on the decline, dropping from 65% in 2009 to 59.8% in 2011.



So, as we all ready ourselves to embrace the next wave of international refugees into our midst, perhaps we can work together to learn from both our past achievements as a welcoming city, as well as our shortcomings in ensuring newcomers are made to feel like they truly belong.

STATISTICS:

The percentage of people reporting a strong **sense of belonging** in Ottawa **decreased from 65% in 2009 to 59.8% in 2011**, well below provincial and national averages of 67.5% and 65.4% respectively. (2014 Ottawa Community Wellbeing Report)

Voter turnout for municipal elections has been steadily tumbling in Ottawa, **with only 39.7%** residents voting in the 2014 election. That’s down from **44% in 2010 and 54% in 2006.** (City of Ottawa)

A 2015 STATISTICS CANADA STUDY **REVEALS THAT THE # OF IMMIGRANTS CITING OTTAWA AS THEIR CANADIAN DESTINATION DROPPED TO 2.4% IN 2012 FROM 3.4% IN 2000, AND THAT THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS SETTLING IN OTTAWA DECREASED, EVEN AS CANADA WELCOMED MORE NEWCOMERS OVERALL.** (Statistics Canada)

In 2006, nearly 69 languages, in addition to **English + French**, were reported as mother tongues among the local immigrant population. (Social Planning Council of Ottawa)

The largest proportion of Ottawa’s current immigrant population is from **Asia and the Middle East (43%)**, followed by **Europe (28%)**. (Statistics Canada)



SUPPORT

The following is a sampling of projects that were funded in 2015 to support the community in building a more welcoming city where newcomers are made to feel they belong.

● SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF OTTAWA: INTEGRATING LEADERSHIP - LEADING INTEGRATION

Providing leadership development through recreational and pre-employment activities, this project is serving 150 young people and their parents from Middle Eastern and Somalian communities, both of which are facing significant social and economic exclusion in Ottawa. Under-served and hard to reach, the youth of these communities often live in neighbourhoods with high poverty, youth crime and poor economic opportunities. Support for this leadership and integration project will facilitate weekly recreational activities, a March Break leadership camp, a six-week summer program and employment mentoring.

● OTTAWA CHINESE COMMUNITY CENTRE: IN-TAC MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Mentorship Program supports internationally educated professionals in IT and Accounting/Finance to secure employment by using strategic job search techniques with the help of a mentor. It also offers experienced human resources professionals, among others, the opportunity to enhance their mentoring skills and increase their effectiveness in diverse workplace situations through training and personalized field work with talented professionals. Delivered three times a year, the program consists of five weekly in-class meetings, followed by up to four months of on-on-one support.

● BAYSHORE PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN AND OVEN GROUP: THE FIRE BUILDERS - BUILDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of its transition into taking on a more active leadership role in the community, the Bayshore Park Community Garden and Oven Group (BPCGO) will begin organizing monthly multicultural potlucks and a multicultural fair in order to increase awareness and foster diverse participation in a variety of garden and oven activities. Serving 7,000 Bayshore area residents, the Fire Builders project will strengthen connections to the BPCGO, and encourage community ownership and development of future initiatives.

● HELPING WITH FURNITURE (HWF): HELPING WITH BIKES

A complementary offering to the regular services provided by HWF to numerous new immigrants and people in need in Ottawa, this project provides free, refurbished bicycles to families who have also received HWF furniture. Improving access to affordable, environmentally-friendly transportation, this project also diverts waste from going to the landfill and removes potential barriers to employment, helping families enjoy a fun and healthy activity together in their community.



Community Impact

This past December, the Community Foundation presented a special grant of \$125,000 to support a group dedicated to “Transforming the Food System in West Carleton”. A collaboration between the West Carleton Healthy Food Coalition, EnviroCentre and the Ottawa Good Food Box, the selected project will take an innovative approach to improving food security in Ottawa’s largest municipal ward of West Carleton, a rural area that currently has very limited access to healthy, affordable food.

The West Carleton food system project was one of the top three proposals presented to a jury of community leaders and food experts at the second annual **New Leaf Community Challenge** at the Lansdowne Park Horticulture Building in December. The other two projects included a youth-operated meal preparation and delivery service for seniors and disabled persons called FoodWorks, presented by Operation Come Home and Causeway Work Centre, and a hub for more efficient purchasing and distribution of food to the School Breakfast Program and other organizations, presented by Just Food and the Ottawa Network for Education.



“All of the projects presented at the 2015 Challenge were highly creative, compelling and, most importantly, designed to make a measurable difference in our community over the long-term,” said Marco Pagani, President & CEO of the Community Foundation of Ottawa. “While I know it was a difficult decision, I am confident that the **Transforming the Food System in West Carleton** project will contribute to systemic, sustainable progress on food security in the Ottawa region.”

The Community Foundation of Ottawa launched its first New Leaf Community Challenge in 2014 as an innovative way to identify and support new approaches to tackling pressing local issues. With food security identified as the initial area to address with the program, the first \$125,000 grant went to Ottawa’s Poverty and Hunger Working Group to fund its

groundbreaking **MarketMobile** initiative. Building on the success of Ottawa’s pop-up Good Food Markets, MarketMobile brings fresh, at-cost food directly into targeted low-income communities.

This second year of funding in support of a more food-secure Ottawa reflects the Foundation’s commitment to fostering systemic, sustainable progress on key issues affecting the city’s quality of life, and its intention to mobilize key community resources in support of that goal. “With this second New Leaf grant, the Community Foundation has now invested a quarter-million dollars into tackling issues around food security in our city through this program alone,” says Marco. “By so doing, we’re signaling our serious commitment to working with the community to find real and lasting solutions to this critical problem in our city.”



For more information about the **New Leaf Community Challenge** and the **Transforming the Food System in West Carleton** project visit www.cfo-fco.ca/new-leaf-community-challenge.



Community Chest



COMMUNITY NEWS

Together with the City of Ottawa, United Way Ottawa and Refugee 613, the Community Foundation was instrumental in launching the **United for Refugees** initiative this past October, the monumental fundraising effort behind a local, collaborative humanitarian effort to mobilize for the sponsorship and settlement of refugees from Syria.

While United Way Ottawa has been conducting the broad, public fundraising campaign and Refugee 613 provides links and resources for residents interested in sponsorship, volunteering and advocacy, the Community Foundation has been providing support through the best resource at our disposal: our generous network of caring donors and community champions.

We're especially pleased to have had the opportunity to work directly with a few select donors to provide immediate support to such programs as the University of Ottawa's Refugee Hub, a pro-bono law service for people wishing to sponsor new refugees in their quest to come to Canada, as well as early funding to Refugee 613 for the much-needed hiring of a full-time coordinator to oversee its wide array of vital functions and refugee services.

For more information about how you can support this initiative in 2016, please visit our website at www.cfo-fco.ca.

In our last issue we told you about the 2015 launch of a new **Collaborative Grantmaking Pilot** project by the Ottawa Grantmakers' Forum, in partnership with the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres. Through the pilot, funders pooled \$40,000 to support community priorities focused on youth. Upon completion of the project, partners conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the collaborative process, which included a survey of key stakeholders involved.

Key findings indicated that all the community organizations who responded were "satisfied" (75%) or "very satisfied" (25%) with the pilot process and partnership, indicating they felt that the streamlined grant process resulted in increased efficiencies and demonstrated the funders' commitment to easing the burden on agencies to access funding, and 80% of funders agreed they have increased their effectiveness and ability to work collaboratively.

Comments from all involved in the pilot indicated it's an innovative model that could be replicated on a broader scale, and is a good foundation to build on for future initiatives. The long-term vision of the pilot is to change the way funders conduct more of their grantmaking in order to have even greater impact in the community.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

All of us at the Community Foundation extend heartfelt congratulations to our Community Engagement Associate, **Tais McNeill**, on his holiday wedding to Katie McDougall, celebrated at their family home in Chelsea, Quebec. Recently promoted from his position as Program Assistant, Tais has been with the Foundation for close to two years, where he continues to provide key administrative and grantee support to the Community Grants Program, as well as managing the event logistics for the New Leaf Community Challenge and sitting on the United for Refugees Community-Based Allocations Committee.

A highly active and engaged member of his community from an early age, Tais graduated with honours from McGill's International Development Studies program in 2011. Since then, his entrepreneurial spirit has led him to co-found a non-profit organization that develops mentoring programs for children and youth. His background also includes two years with Causeway Work Centre, where he assisted in launching and operating the RightBike social enterprise that provides a supportive employment experience to clients with barriers to employment.



Community Profile



MARGARET BLOODWORTH

“The world will always be a better place if we can all make it a priority to work together and giveback.”

Recognized as one of the “finest public servants of her generation”, Margaret Bloodworth has demonstrated her singular brand of commitment to the Community Foundation of Ottawa for the last three years. Not only is she a particularly dedicated and active member of the Board of Governors, but she has also been Chair of the Grants Committee since 2014. In both of these roles, what she brings to the table is a formidable amount of leadership experience and a keen desire to learn and contribute all she can to the community in which she lives.

This focus on local matters is something of a departure for the former lawyer and senior bureaucrat who devoted the better part of a 35-year career to managing some of Canada’s most sensitive national and international government files. In 2008, Margaret retired from her most recent position as Associate Secretary to the Cabinet and National Security Advisor with the federal government. Prior to that, she was Deputy Minister of Public Safety, Deputy Minister of National Defence and Deputy Minister of Transport. A member of the Order of Canada, Margaret has also been recognized with the Public Service of Canada Outstanding Achievement Award

and the Vanier Medal of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada.

“Once I retired from the federal government, I felt it was high time I started to get to know my immediate community a little better,” says Margaret, “and the Foundation has certainly provided me with many opportunities to receive a comprehensive education in that department.” As Chair of the Grants Committee, Margaret is directly involved in the decision-making process for the Foundation’s Community Grants Program, which requires the reading, evaluation and discussion of dozens of grant applications received following each of the bi-annual application deadlines.

“What I particularly appreciate about the Foundation is its different approach to trying to find long-term solutions to our city’s problems,” says Margaret. “It’s especially rewarding to be part of an organization so focused on working towards a goal to improve our community overall, while actively engaging the entire community in the process. It’s very encouraging to see the amount of work people are putting in to solve some of the major issues in our community.”

The Community Foundation is not the only non-profit work Margaret has become involved with over the years. In fact, she’s almost made a second career out of volunteering in the diverse areas that have always captivated her interest, from women’s issues, to students and academia, to international affairs. Currently Chair of the boards of both the Council of Canadian Academies and Cornerstone Housing for Women, Margaret is also Vice-Chair and Chair of the Governance Committee of the Canada Foundation for Innovation. She is also a Senior Fellow at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa.

“I’ve always understood the importance and value of giving back to the community through voluntary service,” says Margaret. “Not only was I raised, through both my family and church, with a keen sense of responsibility, but I recognize how extraordinarily fortunate we are to live the way we do in this country. Canada is one of the richest nations in the world, and building a better community – both locally and globally – is a strong national tradition amongst Canadians. The world will always be a better place if we can all make it a priority to work together and give back.”