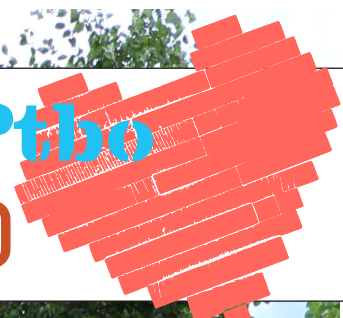




NEW
CANADIANS
CENTRE
PETERBOROUGH

Our Love Letter to Ptbo

Gratitude Report 2020



“I was inside our house, sewing masks for frontline healthcare workers. My husband wanted to do something positive during the lockdown. He wanted to do something for our family. He decided he would use his hands to build a beautiful garden and grow food to feed our children. We are grateful to be living here in Peterborough. We want to use this time to do something good.
– Suhair Jajouk, newcomer from Syria who has been in Canada for 1 year”

Pictured are Suhair Jajouk, her husband Ahmad Hajtaleb and their four children from left to right: Lin, Mierna, Nieven and Mohamed

Because of You, Newcomers are Connected and Supported During this Difficult Time

Dear Friends of the New Canadians Centre,

We miss you.

We hope you and your loved ones are taking good care.

I'm writing this note from my office at the NCC overlooking King Edward Park. From my window I can see our Girls Group gathering in a circle, social distance style. They are learning how to name and share their feelings.

Earlier today, the NCC's Women's Group met in the park and participated in a yoga class.

Inside the NCC office, I can hear Settlement and Employment staff working with clients on the phone, via ZOOM, and safely in person.

These are just some of the inventive and creative ways the NCC has responded to meeting our clients' needs during this challenging time.

We can do this Because of You!

In this Love Letter to You, you'll find some of the many ways your support has allowed us to respond to COVID-19

and ensure newcomers are getting the services and programs that help keep them connected and help them to belong.

From all of us at the NCC, thank you!

Andy Cragg,
Executive Director



Andy Cragg (back row, centre) is the Executive Director of Team NCC

With Your Help, Young Girls are taking a Leadership Role in their Growth and Success

Members of the NCC Girls Group are using their imagination to develop a potion to cure the Coronavirus. As they act out the story online, they add lockets of hair and leaves from a tree they were familiar with when they lived in Syria – the Quina – to make the antidote for this deadly disease. As they share the story with other members of the Group, they pause for dramatic effect, which quickly turns into laughter.

Abeer Al-Salihi, one of NCC's Settlement Workers in Schools, facilitates the Girls Group once a month together with Liz McFadden, a counsellor at Peterborough Youth Services (PYS).

Trust is a key factor in the group's success, according to Abeer. "We play games that are fun and the girls enjoy. We laugh together as a group and this helps to build trust, so that the girls can express themselves freely, without judgment. This allows them to open up and communicate how they are feeling." If the girls are facing challenges they have the opportunity to meet with Liz for one on one counselling. **See the full story at www.nccpeterborough.ca/girlsgroup**



The NCC Girls Group recently participated in a session on compassionate communication lead by Caitlin Jacobs (centre) of the John Howard Society.

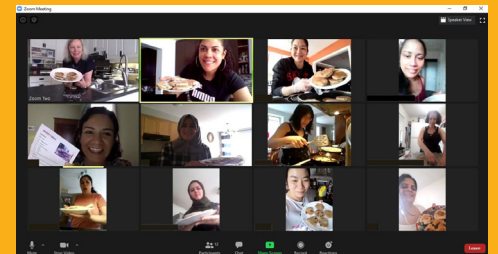
Your Support Helps Newcomer Women Stay Connected and Engaged in Meaningful Activities

"When the Women's Group could no longer meet in person because of COVID-19, their biggest fear was being isolated from the friends they had made at the New Canadians Centre," says Anne Elliott, Community Connections Worker. Anne has been running the Women's Group for 11 years. "We knew how important it was for the Group to maintain those connections that had become

so valuable to them. We wanted to stay in contact during this challenging time. We moved quickly and got the program up and running. We started doing the activities they would have done in person, online."

With the help of volunteer facilitators, Tarkeia Elnaihom and Fabiola Carrasco, Anne delivered packages and supplies to the various homes of Women's Group attendees. "We bought supplies to make crafts and ingredients to bake. I even pulled out a tried and true recipe for Welsh cakes. Something I used to make when I was a student," laughs

Anne. "The women were so excited and grateful for the chance to do and think about something other than the pandemic."



The Women's Group enjoyed making a tried and true recipe for Welsh Cakes. All of the activities like baking together, have moved online.

Newcomer Women Show Community Support in time of Need

When the request came from frontline health workers at Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC) for caps and headbands, newcomer women were ready. "Our Newcomer Sewing Crew were ready with their sewing skills to contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community," says Reem Ali, NCC Workplace Integration Liaison. "Strong partners like Madderhouse and Watson and Lou helped make that possible."

When Madderhouse and Watson and Lou started receiving requests from the public for masks for purchase, Reem says it was an opportunity for the Newcomer Sewing Crew to fill this emerging gap. "Seeing this as a natural evolution to our previous project and a continuation of our existing partnership, we teamed up with them once again to produce a unique line of face masks that are now available online for sale."

Recently, Madderhouse and the Newcomer Sewing Crew came together to produce masks for Fleming College. "We are thrilled to work with Madderhouse Textile Studios and the New Canadians Centre to provide important work for the Newcomer Sewing Crew, a collaborative project that in turn will help keep our Fleming community safe," says Fleming College president Maureen Adamson. *See the full story at www.nccpeterborough.ca/sewingcrew*



The Newcomer Sewing Crew have been creating masks for the general public, and most recently, Fleming College.

Grateful to RBC Foundation for Continuing to Support Newcomer Youth

"A few weeks into the pandemic, we knew our newcomer youth needed extra support in the area of digital literacy," says Lubna Sadek, Youth Group Facilitator. "We responded by creating videos that helped them access online learning platforms, as well as job searches and postings." Videos were posted on Instagram and the NCC website for easy access.

Because of You, Thelma Dillon Supports Seniors in her Community

Thelma Dillon remembers when she instructed a Zumba Class outside. "We had gone into lockdown," says Thelma. "It was cold and raining. And then it started to snow."

A long time Zumba instructor at the Palisade Garden Retirement Community in Cobourg, Thelma wanted to do something to lift seniors' spirits so she taught the Zumba class outside in the courtyard beneath their balconies.

Originally from the Philippines, Thelma is a regular participant in the Multicultural Canada Day Festival in both Peterborough and Cobourg. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, Thelma organized and performed a social distance style event this year in Northumberland.

When she first arrived in Canada, Thelma says the New Canadians Centre played a major role in supporting her and helping her to form community connections. "The NCC is a wonderful organization. They reach out to newcomers and provide the necessary support in their desire to belong."

Both Thelma and her partner Terry were awarded with the New Canadians Centre's Volunteer of the Year award in 2018.



Thelma Dillon (front) stays connected to seniors in her community by instructing Zumba class outside

We're so grateful to the RBC Foundation for their support and making newcomer youth a priority at a time when they need it most.



NCC's Newcomer Youth Group receives added support to help them learn online and gain employment

Volunteer Karen Adams Continues to Share her Experience & Knowledge with ESL Students During this Challenging Time



Sabah Alhamwi (left) and Karen Adams stay connected via the telephone. This photo was taken prior to COVID-19 restrictions.

Before COVID-19 restrictions went into effect, Karen Adams spent many afternoons volunteering her time at the New Canadians Centre. In addition to being a dedicated tutor, Karen shares her experience and knowledge facilitating workshops for beginner English as a Second Language (ESL) volunteers. "I get so much joy from helping newcomers develop their language skills," says Karen, a retired kindergarten teacher.

While she hasn't been able to come to the NCC to tutor her students, Karen has stayed in contact with some of them, including Sabah Alhamwi.

"We speak on the phone," says Karen. "Even with the language barrier we are able share our experiences of going out to get groceries, and what's it like being out in public during this pandemic. It's unfamiliar territory for both of us. And we're able to talk and share what it's like to get through this challenging time, together."

Messages of Welcome and Kindness for Migrant Farm Workers

Thanks to a group of dedicated NCC volunteers, over 30 handwritten cards and letters were delivered to migrant farm workers in Peterborough County and the City of Kawartha Lakes this summer.

While in quarantine, the workers were presented with drawings and letters that included messages of gratitude, letting them know their contribution to growing and harvesting food is invaluable. In addition to the personalized notes, a small care package of food staples and information about the New Canadians Centre services were delivered to 15 workers at McLean's Berry Farm and 3 workers at Lunar Rhythm Gardens. Farmers Erin McLean and Jess Foote were deeply appreciative of the support for their workers who they regard as part of their extended family.

Our thanks to Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development for working with the NCC to let the workers know that as a community we welcome and appreciate them.



Welcoming messages were delivered to migrant farm workers letting them know how much they are appreciated

Because of You, Fabiola is Pursuing Her Dreams

A lot has happened to Fabiola Contreras Carrasco in one year. She secured her first job in Canada at Madderhouse Textile Studios and she was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the New Canadians Centre. "With the support of the NCC, I am stepping way out of my comfort zone," laughs Fabiola. A volunteer facilitator for the NCC's Women's Group, Fabiola dreams of one day owning her own business. "The training I've received through the NCC and the

experience of working at Madderhouse has given me the desire to achieve such a goal."

During the summer months Fabiola worked part-time at Madderhouse Textile Studios doing screen printing and prepping for her fellow sewists in the Newcomer Sewing Crew. "I have been given so many opportunities through my involvement at the NCC. I'm so grateful for the encouragement and support to pursue my dreams."



Fabiola is building the confidence and the connections to pursue her goal of owning her own business.

Because of You, the New Canadians Centre has been inspiring, encouraging and helping newcomers feel like they belong for more than 40 years.



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For more information on how you can help, contact Carol Lawless, Fund Development Coordinator
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