



CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

June-July 2015



Connections

The CCVT Bi-Monthly Newsletter



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News from the CCVT

The CCVT Connections Newsletter, which is published bi-monthly, is intended to inform and engage the Center's volunteers in important events, news and meetings, and in doing so, to acknowledge the vital role they play in fulfilling the CCVT's mandate.

The past months have been very busy with World Refugee Day, June 26, 2015 International Day in Support of Victims of torture and our Annual Picnic. These events just showed the importance of community engagement in the eradication of torture and rehabilitation process of survivors of torture. Special thanks to all volunteers who helped in planning and attending the events. We would also like to thank the following community businesses contribution to the success of these events, BAYTANA Bakery, University of Toronto Multi- Faith Centre and Maple Lodge meat.

I am also glad to announce that we had 15 new volunteers with various skills and talents that completed their screening process and 60% participated in a minimum of two activities in the past two months.

CCVT is also happy to announce that our very popular course: Torture, Trauma, Psychosocial impact and Mental Health: Meeting the needs of War and Torture Survivors will be open for registration as of August 2015.

In response to your feedback from surveys and focus group discussions we have 2 upcoming training opportunities for our spotlight event: Befriending Training on August 17, 2015 6:00pm-8:00pm and Interpretation Workshop on September 23, 2015 6:00pm-8:00pm. These trainings are very important as they will support you with tools and information as a Befriender or Interpreter. This will be also an opportunity to get peer support and network with other volunteers. More training, peer support and networking opportunities will be coming up very soon! If you also have workshop ideas please let me know.

In the coming months, I will be contacting most of you to share your volunteer learnings experience with the public and new volunteers. You will also see further in the newsletter that we have started a CCVT YOU TUBE video channel where you can engage in public education by sharing your volunteer experience and raising awareness with the public.

So send me your video alone or with another volunteer to post on our website!

Our First Light Fundraising event is on November 13, 2015, at 21 Old Mill Toronto and you are all welcome to attend.

Tickets are \$125 per person with \$60 charitable tax receipt. You can buy or donate using Paypal on our website.

I will also be glad to reserve a ticket for you and friend.

Overall, thank you all for your ongoing commitment and time.

Warm Regards,

Mbalu Lumor

Community Engagement, Manager

CCVT Mandate

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) aids survivors in overcoming the lasting effects of torture and war. In partnership with the community the centre supports survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society, works for their protection and integrity and raises awareness of the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families. The CCVT gives hope after horror.

Editorial Committee contributors:

Aylin Manduric, Aisling O'Doherty, Sophie Kassel, Mbalu Lumor

World Refugee Day Walk 2015



Quote of a volunteer who participated at World Refugee Day walk

"I felt very privileged to be able to take part in CCVT's neighborhood walk in recognition of World Refugee Day. I had the opportunity to experience the vibrancy and life of a neighborhood that I wouldn't otherwise have the chance to properly experience. It was an emotional experience, as we chanted and sang our way down the street in a celebration of life and community while also sharing and learning from each other's at times heartbreaking experiences. The opportunity to meet so many people from all over the world, as well as to learn about the large support network woven throughout the community, was fantastic. I can't wait to do it again next year."

Volunteer: Matt Currie, CCVT Volunteer



World Refugee Day Walk

On Thursday June 18, CCVT hosted a walk to celebrate World Refugee Day. We were joined by members of several other Toronto-based organizations that provide services for refugees, including Oasis, Sojourn House and Regent Park Community Health Centre, as well as by MP Christia Freeland. Throughout the walk, the group stopped at significant places for refugees in Toronto. At each stop, the significance of the stop was explained and a number of refugees told stories touching on this year's World Refugee Day Walk theme: Family Reunification.

We began at CCVT, where CCVT's staff and MP Christia Freeland welcomed the group, and discussed the importance of celebrating Canada's refugees. We then walked to our first stop, which was Regent Park Community Health Centre. Here, we learned about the range of services the centre provides for refugees, including support programs and mental health support due to delays in family reunification. Next, we passed by the Dahaabshil Remittance Shop, where we discussed the difficulties refugees face when trying to financially support their family members back home. We continued to Neighborhood Legal Services, which provides free support and legal services to refugees in the area. Our next stop was a corner store where refugees purchase phone cards to connect with family members back home. Here, used phone cards were handed out to the group, and we reflected on the difficulties refugees face when trying to connect with their family members back home. We continued to Sojourn house, where we learned about the many services it offers to refugees, including shelter and transitional housing. We finished at Moss Park, where we reflected on the walk and the stories we heard along the way.

Throughout the walk, we heard about the happy, sad and hopeful experiences of many refugees involved with the organizations discussed above, and who come from countries around the world, including Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. Many of these refugees are separated from their loved ones who remain back home, including a client of CCVT who has been waiting over seven years to be reunited with her husband and the father of her ten year old daughter, and a client of Sojourn House whose entire family, including her children, remain in Kenya. We also heard from refugees who waited years before their family members could join them in Canada. These refugees discussed the difficulties they faced both being separated from their family members and being reunited with them after so long. Each story emphasized that much has to be done for Canada's refugees to accelerate the process of family reunification.



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Julia Olioff (CCVT Volunteer)

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture



Analysis: A Discussion on the Right to Rehabilitation and the Role of the CCVT

After years of research studying the long-term health and wellbeing of victims of torture, evidence suggests that survivors need a broad range of supports and services to heal and rebuild their lives. This not only entails physical and psychiatric treatment, but a multilayered approach that includes physical, psychological, social, and legal aid to ensure that the various and varied effects of torture and war are treated appropriately. The R2R panel discussion explored just that. Dr. Azadian concluded from his extensive experience that fostering a sense of safety and belonging is central to effective rehabilitation. Dr. Hosseni echoed this point, noting that a lack of purpose and belonging can lead, in extreme cases, to a feeling of nostalgia about the past among victims. This is precisely what happened with one of Dr. Hosseni's clients who mentioned during a therapy session that he missed being back in prison and explained that this was partly due to the support network and sense of purpose he had there and which he was lacking here in Canada. Hence, it is crucial for survivors to be able to access comprehensive rehabilitation services to address the effects of their past experiences and be able to restore their lives. In fact, the multilayered approach that was explored during the R2R panel discussion is best exemplified by the work of the CCVT and the numerous activities and services it provides to its clients. The CCVT client, Alba, mentioned during her presentation that the support from her councilor, Sandrine, helped her learn and take advantage of the full range of opportunities that were available to her in Canada. As she stated, "having the right kind of support [which CCVT provides] is very important. Today I feel more confident and better about myself and I've been able to look forward". Other examples of how the CCVT is empowering survivors and providing them with the services they require to overcome the lasting effects of torture and/or war were evident throughout the event. For instance, the play organized by the Tamil Senior's Group, which told the story of how the Tamils were persecuted in Sri Lanka and their journey to Canada, illustrates how the CCVT has given survivors the space to support one another and be able to come forward and share their experiences with the public. Although centers like the CCVT have made great efforts to assist survivors overcome the traumatic effects of torture and war, the struggle does not end here. As a society we need to ensure that we continue to develop techniques to support survivors in their healing process and to establish the conditions that will foster the safety and sense of belonging they require to lead a dignified life.



By: Alejandra Espinosa, CCVT Volunteer

New Staff at the CCVT

Kubra Zaifi

I have experience working as social worker and settlement worker with UN-Habitat Afghanistan and Afghan Women’s Organization in Toronto, Canada and have knowledge of educational training and other programs available within the community. I have worked internationally as well and received a certificate of appreciation from Laura Bush the previous first lady of USA for my work for Afghan’s women community in Afghanistan and certificate of training of trainers of women entrepreneur from North Wood University in USA and Italy.

I speak and read two languages Dari /English fluently and have the ability to exercise patience work with people from all type of ethical background and to be sensitive to the needs of the residents while still proving excellent service. I look forward to meeting all of you and working with CCVT!

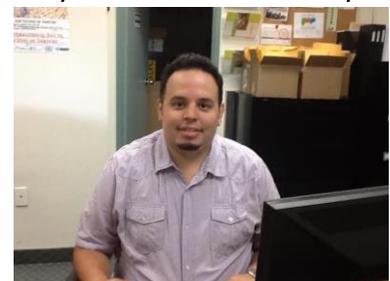


Goodbye potluck for Pernille Student placement from Copenhagen, Denmark



Giovanni Rico

Hello my name is Giovanni Rico, and I am the new Community Engagement Coordinator here at CCVT. It is an honour to have an opportunity to be a part of the CCVT team. Through CCVT is where I found my passion for the social sector. In the spring of 2000 I attended a round table discussion at CCVT on the effects of war on children. Through this roundtable I was chosen to represent the region of Toronto at the United Nations conference on war affected children in Winnipeg Manitoba. After attending this conference I saw how much I enjoyed social work. I started to look at the options to work in the sector through my studies in Philosophy at York University. I have been in the sector for 9 years. This has given me the opportunity to work with people from all walks of life and I have come to believe that the most rewarding aspects of this sector are the people you have the pleasure of working with. I can’t wait to meet all members of the CCVT Team and continue with the passion that working in this sector brings out in people. Please do not hesitate to stop by my desk if you have any questions about the Local Immigration Partnership or myself as I would be very happy to answer them.



CCVT Annual Picnic 2015



The sun was shining on a perfect summer day. My husband and I entered High Park and found Area 2 easily due to wonderful instructions by email. We walked a short distance from the parking lot and saw in the distance a group which we decided must be us "Victims of Torture" and indeed it was. I only come to the office on Jarvis so I was surprised by the number of people connected to CCVT. A nice woman motioned to us to sit down and we did. There was a kids table with paints, crayons, and paper and a lovely group of children drawing away. I thought how wonderful humans can heal and enjoy life, in spite of the past.

By: Gilda Katz (CCVT Volunteer)



The weather was beautiful and ambiance was great!

Dance and singing from our clients continued even after the event ended. Feedback from one client was

“Can we have another picnic before winter?”

Early Bird Announcement

Certificate Course: *Torture, Trauma, Psychosocial Impact and Mental Health: Meeting the*

Needs of War and Torture Survivors

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Registration Form

If you are interested in registering for the Certificate Course, *Torture, Trauma, Psychosocial Impact and Mental Health: Meeting the Needs of War and Torture Survivors*, please complete this form and submit it with payment to:

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

194 Jarvis Street, 2nd Floor

Toronto, Ontario,

Canada M5B 2B7

* Submit your form before **August 31, 2015** to take advantage of Early Bird Pricing.

Name:	
Phone Number:	
E-Mail:	
Organization:	

1) Please indicate your understanding:

I would like to register to for the **full** course. I understand that registration for the complete nine-session course costs \$400 (or **Early Bird Price** of \$350).

<p>Broad Aspects of Torture</p> <p>September 16, 2015</p> <p>2:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>A Cultural Psychiatry Approach to Refugee Women's Mental Health</p> <p>January 27, 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>Mental Health Needs of LGBTQ+ Refugees</p> <p>April 19, 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>
<p>Determinants of Refugee Mental Health</p> <p>October 21, 2015</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>Growing Older as a New Canadian: Intersections of Life Events and Life-Stage Issues</p> <p>February 17, 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>Recognizing the Risks & Signs of Addiction</p> <p>May 18, 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>
<p>Trauma, Stress and Resilience in Refugees</p> <p>November 18 2015</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>Fostering Adaptation in Families, Children and Youth</p> <p>March 16 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>	<p>Self-Care: Vicarious Trauma and Secondary Traumatization</p> <p>June 15, 2016</p> <p>3:00PM -5:00PM</p> <p>CCVT, 194 Jarvis St.</p>

2) Please indicate your Method of Payment:

- VISA
- Master Card Card Number: _____
- Cheque
- Cash Expiry Date: _____

cut along the dotted line

Volunteers Reflections

"I have learned so much from this befriending experience. I also gained a friend not only in my match but also her mother. They remain so positive and have such a positive outlook on life even after everything they have experienced. Seeing this has taught me to view all my hurdles as a test in which if I succeed, it will open a door for me. Hearing some of their stories has given me a reality check in which I realized that I take so much for granted. Being with them did not cause me to pity them; rather it made me look up to them. It is true that they are survivors; they have so much strength in them from which I should learn. I am so grateful for being matched with such a wonderful person and I am looking forward to befriending more people in the future. I was so nervous in the beginning and did not know what to expect. In fact I thought of all the worst case scenarios. The way my friend's mother cares for me; someone she doesn't even know, just amazes me. She treats me as if I am part of her family, not many would do that to someone they don't personally know. After spending a little more than a month with them I realized that this experience was a blessing in disguise. This befriending experience has changed me and the way I view my life and others lives. It is truly a learning experience"



Maiura Pathmanatha (CCVT Volunteer Befriender)

"The opportunity to interact with and get to know survivors as a citizenship teacher in these past months has been a true blessing. I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to help them through the process of become fully engaged citizens, and through the experiences they have shared with me I am learning to see Canada in new ways. My experiences with them have also shown me more about the world, good and bad, than I could ever have learned on my own, and for that I consider myself truly lucky."



Matt Currie (CCVT Volunteer Befriender)

First Light Celebration 2015



Save the Date

CCVT 14th First Light Celebration

Friday, November 13, 2015

6:00pm-11:00pm

Old Mill Toronto (21 Old Mill Road, Toronto)

\$125/Ticket (\$60 Charitable Receipt)



We are also looking for item Donations for the Silent and Live Auction. In the past staff/volunteers/community members have donated gift baskets, jewelry, Cottage rental for 1 week, Electronics, gift certificates etc. If you have any connections with any businesses that can donate items for our auction please send an email to mlumor@ccvt.org

Creativity at glance with our Volunteers

New CCVT Blog by Aylin Manduric

CCVTBlogs is a tool to help clients practice their English skills and build an online community around the CCVT. It works by allowing clients to share blog posts about Toronto life, advice for newcomers, or anything else, and is moderated by volunteers. Currently, the blog has two great client posts on it, and we are looking for more! Clients can send in posts via email, or become blog contributors by getting their own WordPress account and signing up. We would love to have new volunteers join the Blog team to help with intro to WordPress seminars for clients, proofreading posts, and updating the blog. Feel free to contact Mbalu at mlumor@ccvt.org to get involved.



CCVT YouTube Channel by Jala Rizeq



Jala Rizeq has taken the lead to create a CCVT YouTube channel and update

It with staff presentations and videos about the work CCVT does. We would also like to add volunteers experience/benefits working in various CCVT activities. To submit a video simply video tape yourself for no more than 2 minutes and send it to me. Feel free to also drop by my office and I will be glad to do the videotaping for you.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS



Volunteer Befriending Mentorship Workshop

When: August 17th, 2015

Time: 6:00pm- 8:00pm

Where: CCVT Downtown 194 Jarvis Street

Co-Facilitator: Chas Lawther (Long time CCVT Befriender)

Interpretation workshop

Dr. Wendell Block will be facilitating this workshop

When: September 23rd, 2015

Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Where: CCVT Downtown 194 Jarvis Street

GET INVOLVED

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

1. Volunteers needed for Homework club

-As of September 2015 (MON- THURS 3:30-5:00)

2. Volunteers needed for blog (one volunteer) to help moderate CCVT blog. If you also have skills in website design we would like to hear from you.

3. Love working with youth? CCVT is starting a new youth Art Based support group. We are looking for volunteers that have experience conducting workshops including but not limited to:

-**Visual arts** (drawing, painting, sketching, etc)

-**Dancing** (this can involve teaching a fun dance routine to youth, or having the youth come up with their own dance routine and perform to their favorite music)

-**Photography** (youth can learn different types of photography, how to take artistic pictures, etc)

-**Videography** (volunteers can teach youth how to make or edit videos using computers)

-**Creative Writing** (writing poems, spoken word, plays, etc)

-**Digital Media** (Refers to any media that is in electronic or digital format; this can include audio/sound/music that can be heard or video/visual that can be seen and heard) Examples include learning about music , such as MP3,video feeds found on the Internet on websites, or graphic design files and images used to create websites and games.

4. First Light Journal, Fall Edition Submission:

CCVT publishes a bi-annual journal, The First Light. All CCVT volunteers are eligible to make a contribution. This is a wonderful opportunity to have your work published and to share your thoughts with the wider community. The journal offers a lot of flexibility to its contributors – the style, approach and perspective are up to you. The length is also flexible – you can write a short article of 1-2 pages, or a longer one if you prefer. Artworks, photography, book reviews, film reviews, for example, are all appropriate for submission. Your perspective is unique and important.

Fall Edition Theme: Trauma