

CCVT EVENTS END OF THE YEAR 2018

THE CCVT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY 2018 AT THE BICKFORD CENTRE



The CCVT Holiday Party on December 9th, 2018 was a great experience for me and my Mentee together with her friend. My Mentee was so excited as she was chosen to be a Client Guest

Art section for little kids where they could face paint and also draw pictures. We spent the first 20 minutes in the Art section creating Art and doing face painting. There were CCVT staff going around with candies and were making the atmosphere for a Holiday party. As the event commenced, my Mentee presented her speech.

Thereafter, there was multicultural music where everyone danced and then it was time for serving the food. There was a variety of food such as Halal, Vegetarian, etc. to accommodate everyone. At the end of the party, they started distributing presents where kids were happy to receive different kinds of gifts and these included markers, crayons, drawing books and many others which were given out according to the age group of the kid.

I appreciate CCVT for giving me an opportunity to be part of the Volunteer Team!

**By: Rohina Kabir, Volunteer/Mentor,
CCVT Scarborough Location**

Speaker of the day. She had to prepare for her speech for several weeks before the party. Her speech was not only breathtaking but also the way she presented it was empowering.

The past 4 months that I have been mentoring her has been truly amazing. My Mentee is hardworking and constantly looking for opportunities to participate. She has a passion and for that reason she chooses to outline her pathway to her career and grasp any opportunity on her way. This Holiday Party was another great opportunity to practice her public speaking, in which she undoubtedly excelled.

We all arrived around 11:50am at the party. The room was filled with people and at the front of the room there was

The Connection

A PUBLICATION BY THE VOLUNTEERS OF
**THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
VICTIMS OF TORTURE**
SCARBOROUGH BRANCH

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALL CCVT VOLUNTEERS

JUNE - DECEMBER 2018

Volume 7

Issue 2



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Editors' Note:

The information provided in this publication is not controlled by the CCVT, and therefore may not reflect the Centre's views.



THE CCVT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY 2018 AT THE BICKFORD CENTRE



**THE CCVT ANNUAL FIRST LIGHT CELEBRATION
ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH, 2018 AT THE OLD MILL,
TORONTO**

CCVT STAFF AT THE GALA 2018



THE DINNER



**THE CCVT STAFF CPR TRAINING
ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018 AT THE CCVT
SCARBOROUGH LOCATION**



THE CCVT SCARBOROUGH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM A MENTORS' PERSPECTIVE

I first became a Volunteer at the Canadian Center for Victims of Torture (CCVT) in 2013. In early 2017, I expressed my interest in becoming a Mentor at the CCVT. Shortly after, in May 2017, a CCVT Counsellor matched me with a Mentee of Middle Eastern origin.

The Mentee and I were of the same age, we were both 21 years old at the time. Shortly after our initial meeting at CCVT, the Mentee expressed an interest in wanting to learn about, and eventually apply to programs at Canadian Colleges. I was more than happy to help my Mentee with this. I decided to show him the university I was studying in, and now have graduated from, the University of Toronto. I gave him a tour of the university—showing him the university's main library, Robarts Library, which is one of the largest libraries in North America. My Mentee was amazed at how grand the university was. For a newcomer to Canada, my Mentee was amazed at the potential opportunities that awaited him.

At Robarts Library, we sat next to a computer and I had my Mentee visit careercruising.com—it was a website that matched people's skills and interests with potential careers, College programs, and the website also detailed what courses students needed to take in High School in order to qualify for their desired College programs. He was attending an Adult Learning School at the time and hoped to graduate and apply to College. The website matched him with potential careers in the Business and Technology field. The website also recommended, we explore College programs suited to my

Mentee's career choice in College institutions like Humber and Centennial. My Mentee found the College programs very appealing and would later inquire with his school's Guidance Councillor about how he could apply.

A few weeks later, I met my Mentee again in order to help him revise and sharpen his resume to apply for student jobs. In addition, I showed him websites he could visit to apply for student jobs. I also helped him with English homework he received at the Adult School. In one instance, for his homework, my Mentee was required to give a speech to the class detailing his experience thus far in Canada. I helped him edit and proofread it. He later told me that the class loved the speech that he gave.

After helping him sharpen his resume, he later informed me that he had received a fulltime job in a food establishment. After months of mentoring, I began seeing the significant progress my Mentee had made since the first time I met him. He was going to Adult School from 9am to 1pm and, with his new job, he was working fulltime, Monday to Friday. Upon having found a job, and with the education my Mentee was receiving at the Adult School, he became more independent, resourceful, and more determined to succeed. As a result, my direct mentorship with my Mentee soon came to an end as he had found his own way in the world.

**By: Pitasanna Shanmugathas, Volunteer,
CCVT Scarborough Branch**

THE CCVT ANNUAL FIRST LIGHT CELEBRATION ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 9TH, 2018 AT 21 OLD MILL

THE CCVT FIRST LIGHT CELEBRATION 2018

A Volunteer's Recap of the Gala Night

By: Rosemary Namuyomba



On November 9th, 2018, I was privileged again to attend my 5th Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture First Light Gala 2018 at the Old Mill Toronto. This is such a great Fundraising Gala with guests from diverse backgrounds and remarkable professional glories including Medical, Legal, Social, Business, Political leaders and generous supporters of CCVT. This was a night where we enjoyed excellent dining, entertainment and inspiring speeches from first of all, the Keynote Speaker, MP Arif Virani and one CCVT client, a survivor of torture and war who bravely shared his story and extended his sincere appreciation to CCVT for comforting him during his time of need and the settlement services he received that brought a dramatic change into his life.

It is amazing that every year it has been unique and yet the same Mission 'CCVT aids survivors of torture, war, genocide, Human Trafficking and crimes against humanity; to heal and recover from the lasting effects of these traumatic experiences. We were once again reminded that, the Centre works with the community to support survivors in the process of successful integration into the Canadian society. The Centre works for the survivors' protection and integrity and also raises awareness of the continuing effects of forced migration on survivors and their families. The Centre gives survivors hope after the horror they experienced.

The evening started with opening remarks by MC of the night Ms. Adrienne Arsenault, co-Host of CBC's The National who invited the CCVT Executive Director, Mr. Mulugeta Abai for the official Welcome Remarks for the evening.

It was a Fundraising Dinner with lots of events featuring Live Auction which was excellently done

by Ms. Olivia Chow; Entertainment, CCVT Awards for community Leadership and Innovation, Rehabilitation of torture survivors and above all the Amina Malko Award 2018 Recipient for the year was Ms. Teresa Dremetsikas, the current CCVT Program Manager who was all in surprises as it was very obvious that she had no idea about this achievement until the very moment!

Every year I look forward to the Key Note Speaker of the night and this year, the night was graced with MP Arif Virani. I had an opportunity to learn more about listening to his story – His journey to Canada as a refugee at such an early age and today serving as an Member of Parliament resonates well with CCVT's Mandate; Hope After the Horror! Listening to his story gave me a chance to learn more about an advocate for human rights and access to justice as a constitutional litigator, former Ugandan Asian refugee and now proudly serving the community and country he calls home, as the Member of Parliament for Parkdale-High Park, and as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, above all serves as a Volunteer in Parkdale – High Park; a member of the Redwood Shelter for abused women, regularly helps at the Parkdale Food Bank, is an active Volunteer with Roncyworks and has led community efforts to address Mental Health stigma. As a Volunteer of CCVT, this gave me an assurance that we all have a part to play in this cause to make a difference in the world.

As usual, the evening went down well with a good meal and a mouth watering desert. Entertainment! Yes, that music was so refreshing, entertaining and left me on my feet. This year I was able to bring along two friends and my husband and had the best evening this year. I can't wait for the next Gala and I look forward to seeing all my fellow CCVT Volunteers and all Well-wishers attending this year November 2019 as this is an event that will fulfill your passion of helping individuals in need!

The CCVT Scarborough Kids' Activities 2018

The Summer Quest 2018

Children's Trip to the Ontario Science Centre



The Children's Group Visiting Thompson Park and The Scarborough Historical Museum



The Children learnt how to make Pizza at the Loblaw's Cooking School over the Summer



Volunteering at CCVT Scarborough Office From a Volunteer's Perspective



I have been a Volunteer with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) since June 2017. I would like to say it is a great honor to be volunteering for this Centre. I have volunteered to assist with the ESL Class as a

Teaching Assistant; Computer Skills Class as a Tutor; Arabic Language Interpreter at all different professional appointments, and One-on-One English tutoring at the Centre.

Because of the wars and the unstable security and political conditions in many countries of the world, many people with their families have been subjected to severe torture and have experienced shocking experiences and some of them were able to get out or escape and get to Canada.

Therefore, CCVT clients come from different countries, cultures and religions. The Centre helps them with education to improve their language skills and also helps them to socialize easily with the community in their daily lives.

Through my experience as a Volunteer in the ESL class, I see that all students came from different cultures, religions and ages and nationalities. There are individuals who take ESL classes as is required for certain proficiency in English in order to get hired or integrate into the Canadian society; and some are older people who take ESL classes because they have not had the opportunity to learn English in their native countries because of decades of war and political reasons there. Some are housewives who take ESL lessons because they want to develop themselves and learn more.

Every time I come to the ESL Class at CCVT, I find myself learning something new. For example, when the students explain the

nature of customs and cultures in their own countries or explain how is the life, Religion, Education, Health system or types of food they used to eat in their countries of origin.

Also, I teach in the Computer Skills Class and it mainly consists two groups; one group is of women and the second group is of men. Some clients from these two groups, for a vast majority of their lives never even encountered technology. Tasks which I teach my students are everyday tasks such as typing and editing in Word; writing an email, watching videos, searching pictures, and retrieving news from online websites.

Also, I do interpretation services for clients at doctor's offices or disability offices. It is my responsibility as an interpreter to ensure that I properly convey the correct information to the client and correctly interpreting the conversation. As an Interpreter, you witness clients at their most vulnerable and it is your job to help ease the situation by doing your duty to establish a level of communication between the involved parties.

I can say with confidence I have gained a lot of knowledge and experience during my work as a Volunteer, I was able to increase up on my communication skills and how to be responsible when handling confidential information of others, but more importantly this experience allowed me to provide services to the community.

I am grateful to CCVT for giving me such an amazing experience and allowing me to be a part of their team in serving survivors and I would like to thank all the CCVT staff and clients creating a comfortable atmosphere at the Centre, I am truly humbled and I will continue to render my services helping individuals in need!

**By: Ali Aljbouri (Ph.D. Student),
Volunteer at CCVT Scarborough Branch**

Volunteers' Activities and Events
New Volunteers' Orientation and Mentors' Training
On Thursday, August 9, 2018



09/08/2018

VOLUNTEERS HELP AT THE FRONT DESK



16/08/2018

VOLUNTEERS HELP WITH WRAPPING GIFTS



24/07/2018

A Volunteers' Training on 'Telling Your Story' conducted by Olivia Chow, former Member of Parliament and City Councillor held at the CCVT Main office.

The CCVT Scarborough Kids' Activities 2018

The Children were heading to the Kidstown Water Park at Birchmount and Finch, one of their favorite Summer Quest activities.



Playing at Christie Pitts Park during Summer Quest



Children's group at the Gardiner Museum learning about Pottery and making Clay Dragons in a professional class



Children's group at the Gardiner Museum learning about Pottery and making Clay Dragons in a professional class



A nutrition workshop was facilitated by Access Alliance's dietician and her team for the Arab Children's group that was held at the Victoria Park HUB over the Summer



The children were visited by the Young People's Theatre during Summer Quest to participate in an Interactive Communication Skills Workshop



The CCVT ESL Class Activities And End of Semester Party



The ESL class in Scarborough started in the Fall of 2010. Many students of different backgrounds have come and gone, gone onto higher learning, jobs, started families and have settled down in their respective communities.

The ESL program is not only geared to learning English, but also helps the students to become active participants in their ethnic communities and in the community at large. Sure, they learn how to make doctors' appointments, how to ask questions at the bank, how to understand transportation directions etc.

Recently in a speaking activity, I asked my students about their participation in any community activity and was surprised to know that many of my students never thought of volunteering for anything. So we spoke about doing for others or giving back: e.g. visiting a community member in hospital, offering help in the temple, offering help (if

needed) at CCVT, etc. Real World Task (WRT) new idea with Portfolio Based Learning (PBLA) came to mind.

I told the students that we could do a simple task of crocheting preemie hats for the hospital. Some welcomed the idea, others were not so sure.

We bought yarn and needles and set about learning to follow instructions to crochet hats. There was enthusiasm among some while others were still not interested.

The students for Eritrea threw themselves into the project with their knowledge and experience and helped the new learners. Big thanks to Nazreth, Broke, Binush, Samira, and Mizan. And generally to the entire class.

50 HATS!!!! That's our gift to Grace Hospital in Scarborough.

Job well done students!

By: Patricia Ramsay-Hope, Teacher

The Youth Programs At CCVT Scarborough Location

The Customer Service & Cash Register Training Facilitated by Sumbel Malik, CCVT Scarborough Volunteer



Customer Service Skills

1. Be a good listener and make eye contact, ask questions to the customer
2. Display positive body language (don't slouch or cross your arms)
3. Be confident + professional and obtain substantial knowledge about your company (what the company offers, return guidelines etc.)
4. Dress for Success (follow dress policy)
5. Treat others the way you want to be treated (includes customers, coworkers and managers)
6. Be friendly and most importantly smile!



The Youth Program at CCVT Scarborough

The Youth Roundtable 2018

The Theme was: "Facilitating Change on the Inside and Out"



A BEFRIENDER'S STORY



Through CCVT, I was introduced to a Syrian refugee family two years ago as they were nearing their first anniversary in Canada. They had suffered greatly during Assad's war before fleeing to Jordan. After almost three years there they were selected as part of Canada's push to relocate 25,000

refugees. The father, my friend now, was physically handicapped and was asking for help to learn English. The whole family had virtually no English on arrival but with the resourcefulness I came to recognize in this extraordinary family, the kids, the three teenage daughters and two adolescent boys were quickly becoming fluent through school. My friend was unable to sit for long periods in class because of his handicap and had difficulty focusing on the material given his war experiences.

I very quickly realized my good fortune in meeting this family. My friend was an educated and religious man very concerned about the fact that his religion had been co-opted by Islamists to justify their aggression. The daughters, in addition to getting excellent marks, all volunteered to help newcomers at their school and mosque. My friend's wife made a weekly journey from Markham to downtown to cook in a homeless shelter. The boys were polite and energetic and keen to learn hockey. This was not the life they had planned before being forced from a happy village life surrounded by extended family but for the sake of brighter futures for the kids they would make it work.

They welcomed me into their home.

At first, we were very busy with the myriad of things that needed to be done to move from the special first year support program onto the regular social assistance programs available. We arranged appointments, went to meetings, and filled in forms. I introduced them to Costco and loaded my car with pita and Middle Eastern staples from Adonis. We arranged medical and dental care for the whole family. We found ESL school for my friend to attend.

Our match shortly became all family relationship for both families, as my wife helped teach my friend's wife to drive and with some terrifying moments behind them she eventually got her licence. I taught the boys to skate and to swim. They offered me endless cups of "Syrian Scotch" (sweet tea) and always sent me home with a package of delicious homemade food.

I marvelled at the family's resourcefulness, always looking at ways to give back to the community, and impatient to become self-reliant. We share meals at both our houses and enjoy picnics at the beach and countryside. The boys are off shortly to go to an amazing summer camp courtesy of the generous camp owners. All the girls have interesting career aspirations and the eldest is attending George Brown next year.

My friend still struggles with English and finding work for him is difficult and remains our biggest challenge but we are very close to solving this challenge. My wife and I can now look forward to many graduations and weddings as this remarkable family takes their place in our society.

*By: Eric Aagaard, Volunteer Befriender
CCVT Scarborough Branch*

**The Arabic Speaking Women Support Group Activities
At CCVT Scarborough Location**



The Group attending a Computer Skills Class facilitated by a Volunteer, Ali Aljbouri



This was a workshop about One-on-One Money Management facilitated by Mark from a Credit Union.



This was a workshop about Mental Health and Wellbeing by ★ Domine Rutaishire, a Counselor at CCVT.

**Clients' Activities and Events
The Tamil Women's Group Workshops**

A WORKSHOP ON ELECTIONS



A WORKSHOP ON BANKING

