

Volunteer Opportunities at CCVT

“Helping Survivors to find Hope after the Horror”

CCVT YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM – MENTORS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED

Skills and Experience Required

Must be at least 21 years of age; reside in the GTA; agree to a one year commitment as a Mentor; attend Mentor Training as required; and commit to a minimum of 4 hours per month with a Mentee; also a good understanding of various youth life needs will be an added asset. Post-secondary students are welcome to apply!

Mentors are required to inspire Newcomer Youth Mentees ages 13-25 years. They will be involved in one-on-one mentorship; and will contribute towards the Mentee's goals and lifestyle choices by creating a healthy and a positive relationship.

Mentees expectations include: Build skills and work on their goals; Enjoy virtual fun activities with their Mentor.

Opportunity Requirements

All our Volunteer programs require participants to have a Police Reference Check Report for volunteering with the Vulnerable Sector! This report must be submitted before starting volunteering with CCVT!

The next step in our screening process for all potential volunteers is a virtual interview. The interview lasts approximately 30 minutes and is an opportunity for volunteers to learn more about CCVT and provides an opportunity for us to learn more about you. An updated resume will be required. After the initial interview, accepted candidates will be asked to provide 3 reference letters and after attending a New Volunteers' Orientation Training will be signing a Confidentiality Agreement, Insurance Benefits Waiver and a Volunteer Youth Mentor Contract.

Training: All New Volunteers will attend a mandatory Orientation Training session which is the first in a number of trainings that CCVT offers to provide insight and the tools necessary to support individuals and their families affected by war and torture from war-torn countries all over the world.

More Volunteer Opportunities:

- ◆ **HOMEWORK TUTORS** -Tutoring and helping Kids Grade 3-8 with their Homework (Virtually)
- ◆ **BEFRIENDERS** - Befriending an Adult CCVT Client (Virtually)
- ◆ **TUTORS** - One-on-One English Tutoring for Youth and Adult Clients (Virtually)
- ◆ **FACILITATOR**— Facilitating a Citizenship Class once a week (Virtually)
- ◆ **FACILITATOR**— Facilitating a G1 Drivers Class in English language once a week (Virtually)
- ◆ **FACILITATOR**— Facilitating a G1 Drivers Class in Arabic language once a week (Virtually)
- ◆ **INTERPRETERS**— Interpreting languages i.e. Arabic, Spanish, Farsi, Dari, Tamil, Turkish, Swahili, Albanian, Amharic, Tigrigna, etc. during Professional Appointments (Virtually)
- ◆ **TUTORS**— Tutoring Computer Basic Skills (Virtually)

To Apply for any Volunteer Opportunity at CCVT, please use this Link to fill in your Volunteer Application:

<https://app.betterimpact.com/Application?OrganizationGuid=d81bbe7d-f0ba-400a-b872-8b2cf3c6d55b&ApplicationFormNumber=1>

The Connection

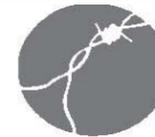
A PUBLICATION BY THE VOLUNTEERS OF
**THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
VICTIMS OF TORTURE**
SCARBOROUGH BRANCH

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALL CCVT VOLUNTEERS

JUNE–SEPTEMBER 2021

Volume 9

Issue 1



IN THIS ISSUE

The War in Tigray	2
The War in Tigray	3
One-on-One Eng. Tutoring.....	4
One-on-One Eng. Tutoring.....	5
Interpreter's Experience.....	6
Mentor and Interpreter.....	7
Volunteer Interpreter.....	8
Kids' Vibe Art Lessons.....	9
New CCVT Staff.....	10
G1 Dr. Class\Virtual Grps.....	11
Volunteer Opportunities.....	12

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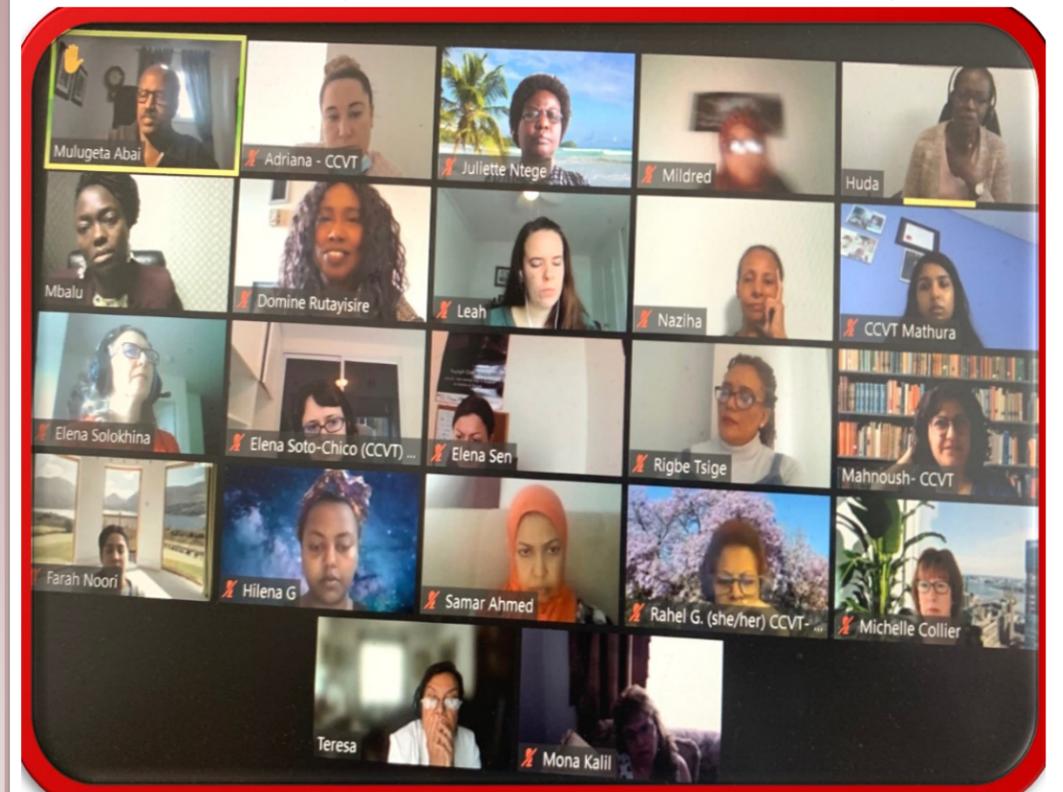
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Editors' Note:

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

CCVT VIRTUAL STAFF MEETING ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2021



FOR 44 YEARS, CCVT IS COMMITTED TO AID SURVIVORS OF TORTURE, WAR, GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY TO OVERCOME THE LASTING EFFECTS OF TORTURE AND WAR. WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY, THE CENTRE SUPPORTS SURVIVORS IN THE PROCESS OF SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION INTO THE 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 THE HORROR!

CCVT IS A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE!



Those who can Stop the Genocide in Tigray are Dancing like a Lily in the Wind

By Mulugeta Abai, Executive Director, CCVT

The War in Tigray is almost seven months old and at least 100,000 Tigrayans have perished under the watchful eyes of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and those governments who could and are able to stop it.

What is happening in Tigray is well documented and reported by the UN, EU, G7, US government, Germany, UK and many others. It is there for any body who cares for human life and condemns destruction. The head of Ethiopia's Orthodox Church, Abune Mathias, who was so far stopped from raising his voice, has recently condemned violence in Tigray in a video recorded by the director of a US-based charity, saying "they want to destroy the people of Tigray" with actions of "the highest brutality and cruelty." The Patriarch classified the state-sponsored violence in Tigray region as genocide and wondered why Ethiopia wanted to "declare genocide on the people of Tigray."

Abune Mathias is not alone in finding the multiple atrocities in Tigray as the crime of genocide. In January 2020, the leader of the Tigray People's Liberation Front and former president of Tigray, Debretsion Gebremichael, accused the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces for waging a "devastating and genocidal war" in Tigray. Tigrayans and peace loving people around the globe have demonstrated incessantly and echoed the same message in social media and at protest rallies and have asked for immediate intervention to stop the heinous crime of genocide and bring the perpetrators to justice.

The celebrated international human rights organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Doctors without Borders, UN Human Rights Commission, and all media outlets have documented and reported about the genocide that is taking place in Tigray. The whole population is systematically being decimated in a dreadful manner by the allied forces of evil: the Abiy Ahmed government, the Amhara militia and Special forces, special forces from other Ethiopian regions, Somali Republic Army, drones from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Isaias Afworki's Eritrean army.

They have used all sorts of weapons and ammunitions in their arsenals including napal bombs, poison gas and drones to exterminate the Tigrayan people. The magnitude of this scorched earth destruction and sordid acts towards the annihilation of the entire population is unprecedented in the world's modern history. They have also used rape and starvation as tools to further decimate the population. Girls as young as 4 years are exposed to brutal rape and their witnessing parents, brothers and other loved ones are brutally executed. It is estimated that over 10,000 girls and women have been raped or gang raped and kept as sex slaves for many days. Nails and other sharp objects have been placed in the genital organs of women and girls.

Genocide in Tigray is happening with such notorious techniques as ongoing state sponsored terrorism, torture, other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and deliberate starvation as a tool of war.

Continued on Page.....3

CCVT Virtual G1 Driver's Class A Student's Testimonial

Hello everyone,

I am writing this message to share with you all my experience as a CCVT G1 Driver's Class former student.

I am so grateful to CCVT for helping me attend the G1 Driver's Class which prepared me for the test that I successfully passed. The good news is, now I have my G1 Driver's License.

I would like to thank my teacher Mr. Ali Aljbouri for his patience; as well as Ms. Juliette Ntege, the Coordinator and Ms. Nisreen Al Khatib, my Settlement Counsellor who registered me for this Class; I sincerely appreciate all their support.

Thank you CCVT for all the care you give to all of us Survivors of Torture!

By: Dehab Abdurahman

السلام عليكم جميعاً،
احب اشكر الاستاذ علي، الاخت جوليت، G1 للسواقة. بفضل الله ثم هم قدرت ان اخذ شهادة ال G1 على مساعدتي باخذ كلاس ال CCVT احب اشكر
والاخت نسرين
شكراً جزيلاً،
دهب

CCVT SCARBOROUGH CLIENTS' VIRTUAL GROUPS TIME TABLE 2021

#	GROUP	DAY	TIME
1	Scarborough Seniors Support Group	Tuesdays	12:00pm-1:00pm
2	G1 Driver's Session in English	Tuesdays	2:00pm-3:00pm
3	G1 Driver's Session in Arabic	Tuesdays	3:00pm-4:00pm
4	English Conversation Circle	Thursdays	10:00am-11:00am
5	Citizenship Class	Saturdays	12:00pm-1:00pm

New Staff at CCVT



Hello, my name is Elena Soto-Chico and I am the new Spanish-speaking Settlement & Mental Health Counsellor at CCVT's Scarborough office.

Originally from Mexico, I came to Canada two years ago as an International Student and graduated with a Diploma in Social Services Work for Immigrants and Refugees at Seneca College. I also hold a Bachelor's degree in International Relations and a Master's degree in Human Rights from the University of Essex in England. I have background working in research on topics related to immigration, and I have worked directly with vulnerable populations, particularly immigrants and refugees, in countries such as Mexico, United States, India, United Kingdom and Canada.

I like travelling, reading, cooking, watching movies and going on long walks around nature. I do not like systemic oppression, discrimination and racism.

Kind regards,

Elena Soto Chico
Settlement/Mental Health Counsellor (Spanish Speaking)
Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Those who can Stop the Genocide in Tigray are Dancing like a Lily in the Wind(continued)

According to the Article 2 of the 1948 UN Genocide Convention and Article 6 of the Rome Statute for ICC, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intention of destroying, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group:

- Killing members of the group;
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- Deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about a group's physical destruction in whole or in part;
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

In the process of this ghoulish action, the perpetrators of genocide follow two intentions:

- 1) commit crimes against a group; and
- 2) destroy the group in whole or in part.

Despite the abundance of international conventions, covenants and treaties in dealing with genocide and similar ghoulish crimes that endangers peace and security of the family of nations, the wheels of international justice are slow, as if a whole population should be eliminated for the international Justice system to operate.

The process of enforcement and implementation is outmoded and highly bureaucratic. The international mechanism and the institutions set up for implementation of justice are paralyzed by endless and useless meetings.

Tigray is bleeding and all evil, inhumane atrocities are still taking place, as we speak, and those who can stop it are dancing like a lily blown by the wind. They need to act today not tomorrow before additional lives are lost by the barbaric actions of Abiy Ahmed, the lying chief, and Isaias Afwerki, who is considered by his people as the reincarnation of Adolf Hitler.

We demand:

- The full and unconditional withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Tigray under the supervision of representatives of the International community.
- Military force must be used to force verified withdrawal of Eritrean and Amhara special forces and militia from Tigray.
- Cessation of hostilities and beginning of all-inclusive negotiations for a durable peace
- Unhindered access to humanitarian aid and investigation of all human rights violations by credible institutions not by the lying machine of Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia and Isayas Afeworki of Eritrea.
- The use of humanitarian aid as a weapon of war is a grave violation of international humanitarian law and is putting at risk the lives of 5.4 million people. Immediate and full-scale assistance should be provided, in order to avoid starvation. Those responsible (Abiy's Ethiopian Army, Eritrean mercenary army, Amhara special forces and militia) for deliberately preventing timely access should be held account.
- Abiy Ahmed, the brutal and light-mined Prime Minister of Ethiopia as well as Isaias Afeworki, the President for life of Eritrea, should be brought to the International Criminal Court of justice.

Sources:

Amnesty International
Human Rights Watch
UN Genocide Convention

Virtual One-on-One English Tutoring Classes

Adapting to New Places & New Challenges by Leenzo Carmel, Student

My name is Leenzo. I am studying Grade 6. I came to Canada in December 2019. I am 12 years old. I have one younger sister studying Grade 2 and she is 6 years old. I like to play badminton and video games. I like cars. Ms. Iniyal is a Vice Principal with the Toronto District School Board. She is my English Conversation Tutor. She volunteers with CCVT in Toronto.

We started our English Conversation classes in July 2021. We meet every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. Our classes are one hour long. We have our Zoom meeting from our home. Zoom helps us see each other online. Jamboard and Google Docs help Ms. Iniyal and I learn new things. During COVID-19 times, you cannot meet in person because of COVID lockdown. So we meet on Zoom to do our English Conversation classes.

Our conversations help me improve my speaking and listening skills. I learn new words. We talk about many Canadian things such as sports teams, places to visit, and other interesting information. We both choose what we talk about. Sometimes I choose and sometimes Ms. Iniyal chooses. Ms. Iniyal is preparing me for Grade 7 by reading and writing.

I enjoy learning new things during our conversations. I look forward to asking Ms. Iniyal questions about what she did and what she is going to do.

Here are some examples of Jamboard Slides that we use during our Zoom English Conversation Meetings:



Virtual Volunteer Activities and Events

Children's Vibe Arts Lessons Spring 2021



In the spring, CCVT Scarborough hosted a Virtual Art Program for children. I provided support as a Volunteer to the children's Art Lessons which were held on Zoom.

The Art Lessons gave children an opportunity to socialize with their peers which was especially important during the lockdown, at the time.

Children shared and discussed their Artwork with each other and received positive feedback and encouragement from other participants.

The program highlighted how Art creates space for community and the importance of this, particularly during a period of social isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar programming is needed to create space for social connection, when in-person programming is unavailable, while providing opportunities to gain new skills.

I enjoyed this opportunity as the Group Assistant throughout the program.

**By: Fadumo Duale,
CCVT Volunteer, Kids' Group Assistant**

Each week, the children met with a facilitator who outlined exciting Art Projects for the children to engage in. The facilitator introduced the children to diverse Art Techniques, such as Typography, which they experimented within their work. The lessons were fun, educational, and interactive.

Throughout the weekly sessions, children created various Artwork they shared with the Instructor and other children in the class. During one session, participants were asked to create and draw an original Superhero. By using different colours, patterns, and settings, the children were able to highlight the personality traits and characteristics of their Superhero. Their Art reflected their own interests including Superheroes inspired by Anime, Movies, and Music.

The program provided children with an opportunity to express themselves in a healthy way through Art. The Art they created showcased their individual thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. The superheroes, including the strengths and weaknesses of each Superhero, often reflected each child's own personal beliefs about themselves and the world around them.

Through using different elements in their Art, such as colours, shapes, and patterns, children highlighted their ideas, interests, and feelings which emphasizes how Art creates space for self-expression.

Virtual Volunteer Activities and Events

Volunteer Interpreter's Story



missed it but what I really wanted to say was that you don't have to thank me, I wish I could do more, I wish I had a magic wand and could remove the brutality from your world, but I don't have any magic tricks up my sleeve, so I do this little thing that I can, I'll be your voice for the next one hour.

The client stories break my heart every single time, I can't fathom how the world can be so cruel, and then I am beyond impressed by how resilient the clients are, how strong they are as giving up is not an option. They keep picking up the pieces of their life to put them back together no matter how many times they are wounded by sharp edges.

Working with CCVT has definitely changed the way I see the world, it changed how I see myself and what kind of person I want to be. It taught me so much about how a little sympathy and empathy can go a long way.

**By: Sara Rezaee,
CCVT Volunteer Interpreter**

When the world turned upside down and we were all locked up in our houses, waiting impatiently for the virus to go away and things to get back to normal, I became addicted to the news. I was one of the lucky ones, I could work from the safety of my home, I could order groceries to be delivered to my door, I could stay in my safe cocoon far from all the outside world troubles, but I watched on the news how people suffer, how not everyone was as lucky as I was, how the world was unjust and unfair as usual even when we were all insisting on "we are all in this together". We were not and I wanted to be there for people who needed me. I wanted to help, whatever I could do, even if it wasn't significant, even if it wasn't going to change the world and make things right for everyone.

I applied for a volunteering position at CCVT as a Farsi interpreter as I like talking to people and switching back and forth between English and Farsi isn't an issue for me. Since I work 9 to 5 on weekdays, Zoom calls seemed to be a blessing as I could take an hour off of work and jump on a call and later make up for it. However, I learned in my very first call that finding a time in the calendar or interpreting itself are not the difficult parts of the job. In that first Zoom call, when the client told me how grateful she was that I put in the time to help her, I had a hard time holding back tears. I smiled and dis-

Virtual Volunteer Activities and Events

One-on-One English Tutoring



My name is Iniyal Inparajah and I am a Vice Principal with Toronto District School Board (TDSB).

When I was approached during the Summer to take on a tutoring session with a Middle School student who is a newcomer, it was an easy decision for me. As a Middle School educator for 18 years, this was part of my day to day responsibilities. What a perfect opportunity to connect with a family and work with the student towards transition to school reopening!

I am a new volunteer with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT). This is my first regular session with a CCVT member. I knew that I could support the student with the academics however, I also wanted to be there as a support for the parents as well, especially with questions about the Ontario Education System and the transition from Virtual Remote Learning to In School Learning.

As I would in the classroom, the first order of tasks was to speak to who I was serving (in this case the parent and student) and learn more about what their goals were. Establishing short and long term goals is essential to ensure a mutual understanding of the focus. Having these goals help align each session and work towards a common mutually agreed upon achievable goal. In this case, the goal was to work on English Conversation Skills. This was important for the parent because the student was entering school in September and communicating with students and teachers is crucial in sharing and demonstrating knowledge and understanding. Improving conversational skills is important for the student for different reasons - to make friends and to be social. Though the reasons for the parent and student were different, they serve the same function: **To Communicate, To be Successful, To be part of a Community.**

Since the student was involved in Virtual Remote Learning during 2020, meeting virtually was not a barrier we had to overcome. The family and student were comfortable with the Zoom platform. The student knew a variety of virtual learning tools that helped us set up a collaborative, interactive virtual learning environment. Our goal was to make

this time together purposeful but also engaging and fun. My first conversation with the student was to begin to build a connection. We were going to learn together - and from each other. Our focus was to talk about topics that we were curious about, interested in or wanted to learn more about. I found out through these conversations that the student enjoyed sports. He enjoyed playing Badminton, being active and being outdoors. Creating a learning environment that includes student interests is key to creating an engaging learning environment. After all, I am asking this student to spend an hour during the Summer with me practicing English conversation skills!

"Every Child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. When we recognize children as capable and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs and services that value and build on their strengths and abilities."

(Ontario Early Years Framework, 2013)

An example of one of our topics was Sports Teams from Toronto. This was a great topic because not only did we discuss logos, colours, symbols, sports equipment, but more importantly, it built a contextual knowledge. When the student goes to school in September and talks to his peers, this is background knowledge that would help him start or sustain conversation. Oftentimes, when we focus on the Vocabulary or Grammar rules in isolation, we forget the bigger picture. At the end of every lesson, without doubt, our topic for next lesson would emerge from natural curiosity -Taking Trips, The Olympics, Using Google Maps for Directions, Learning about the Community he lives in etc.

School reopening has been a positive one so far for the family. I am happy that I will be continuing with Tutoring the student. What I didn't know is how much of this experience would bring back memories for me as a newcomer to Ontario as a 11 year old entering Gr.7 student (similar to the student I was tutoring). To say the least, this experience has meant so much to me! Thank you CCVT for giving me this opportunity!

By: Iniyal Inparajah, One-on-One English Tutor, CCVT Volunteer

Virtual Volunteer Activities and Events

Volunteer Interpreter's Experience



My name is Milad, I am a Farsi language Volunteer Interpreter at CCVT since 2019. I knew that communicating in a language other than our mother tongue is not a simple thing to do; doing such a thing especially in a situation like a doctor's office, Border Services Agency, banking issues, etc. can bring huge pressure on any individuals by itself. Interpreting helps people who are struggling with a second language, face these situations with less stress and have a possible desirable outcome.

Many people around the world are looking forward to a major change or a fresh start in their lives. Many of those people consider immigration as their choice of fresh start which comes with a lot of challenges. Like many others, I went through many challenges after immigrating.

Since the time I came here to Canada, I have been trying to settle in my new life and luckily, I have been privileged with having the good support to overcome these hardships. So, I thought that by being a volunteer I would be able to help others pass through this transition a little easier. Many thanks to CCVT for providing such support to people in need and letting me be a part of this amazing team.

Before this unforeseen pandemic, most of the appointments were in-person and for sure you know both the upsides and downsides of these kinds of meetings. With the spreading of this ominous disease, almost all aspects of our life have been changed. As we have tried to cope with this new condition and new normal! I think holding these appointments virtually brings new blood to helping others although it has its drawbacks. I believe that the spirit of helping our friends outweighs these changes and hardships.

I do believe all of us will be able to pass this unprecedented time with the power of being together and helping each other. I hope CCVT and other social services continue their wonderful project which can aid in making a better society with a brighter future.

*By: Milad Ostovarravari
CCVT Volunteer Interpreter, CCVT*

Virtual Volunteer Activities and Events

A Mentor and Interpreter's Story



My name is Tarig Hagana and I am originally from Sudan. I have been in Canada since May 2019 and have also been volunteering at CCVT since February 2020.

Volunteering at the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) is honourable work, in the sense that, we Volunteers, support the services of CCVT by helping the victims of torture to integrate into the Canadian society successfully.

The nature of volunteer tasks that I am involved in are: helping with interpretation during professional appointments and also I help with document translations from Arabic to English and vice versa.

It's such a magnificent feeling when I see clients and healthcare professionals reach the status of understanding each other and getting their meeting fruitful because of my support.

In addition, I am mentoring a Youth under the Youth Mentorship Program.

I am mentoring a Youth in a sense of helping him to overcome challenges and difficult situations in a responsible manner which is always important and beneficial in the Youth period. I do my best to assist this Youth to develop life skills and obtaining additional resources in his new country Canada.

Indeed, volunteering at the Canadian Centre for victims of torture is an excellent way to integrate into the local community and to contribute towards the growth of the Canadian society. As well as that, I found it a good opportunity to improve and practice my interpersonal skills and also to acquire work-related skills.

The Canadian Centre for victims of torture Staff is very professional and helpful when it comes to human issues. Furthermore, CCVT provides Training courses for the Volunteers to make sure that the quality of the services is maintained.

In conclusion, volunteering at the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) has a positive impact on the Canadian community, self-life satisfaction and health stability. In addition to this, it improves personal knowledge and skills.

*By: Tarig Hagana,
CCVT Volunteer, Mentor and Interpreter*