



CANADIAN CENTRE  
FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE



# FALL NEWSLETTER JARVIS

Disclaimer: The CCVT Connections, is fueled by the following goals: to engage Volunteers in important events, news, and meetings. In doing so, it acknowledges the vital role they play in fulfilling CCVT's Mandate. It is published quarterly. The information provided in this publication is not controlled by the CCVT, and therefore, may not reflect the Centre's views, Staff and Team.



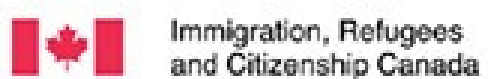
Dear readers,

This newsletter has been designed in collaboration with our dedicated volunteers, staff and clients to highlight the events that took place at CCVT between June 2023-August 2023. You will find exciting pictures, meet our new staff and learn about our upcoming events. We are indebted to our volunteers who work tirelessly to support all our programs and events. Be sure to check out the volunteer highlights in this newsletter to get to know the volunteer better!

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# CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) aids 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 Canadian society, works for their protection and integrity, and raises awareness of the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families. CCVT gives hope after the horror.

services offered at all locations

Downtown office:

194 Jarvis Street, 2nd Floor Toronto, ON.

M5B 2B7

Tel: 416-363-1066

Scarborough Office:

2401 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 310 Toronto, ON.

M1K 2N8

Tel: 416-750-3045

Mississauga Office:

130 Dundas St. E. Mississauga, ON. L5A 3V8

Tel: 905-277-2288

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Contributors: Farah Noori, Melanie Eastman Mills, Bayan Sabagh, Haein Roh  
& Yara El Oneis

# Land Acknowledgements

With gratitude, we begin by acknowledging that the land we are on is the traditional territory of many First Nations including the Mississauga's of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We are their guests and need to be better guests in solidarity with their struggles and the ongoing injustices they suffer. First Nation's history of the residential school system, cultural genocide, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls give rise to similar health issues which we at CCVT deal with regarding the impact of genocide, torture, and rape as an instrument of war and human and sex trafficking. CCVT stands in solidarity with indigenous people and communities and we have much to learn from their lived experiences. I would also like to acknowledge that we are all treaty peoples – including those of us who came here as settlers - as migrants either in this generation or in generations past; and those of us who came here involuntarily as refugees and as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. We honour the original intent of Two Row Wampum and are committed to fostering respectful relations with Indigenous communities as we pursue the Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

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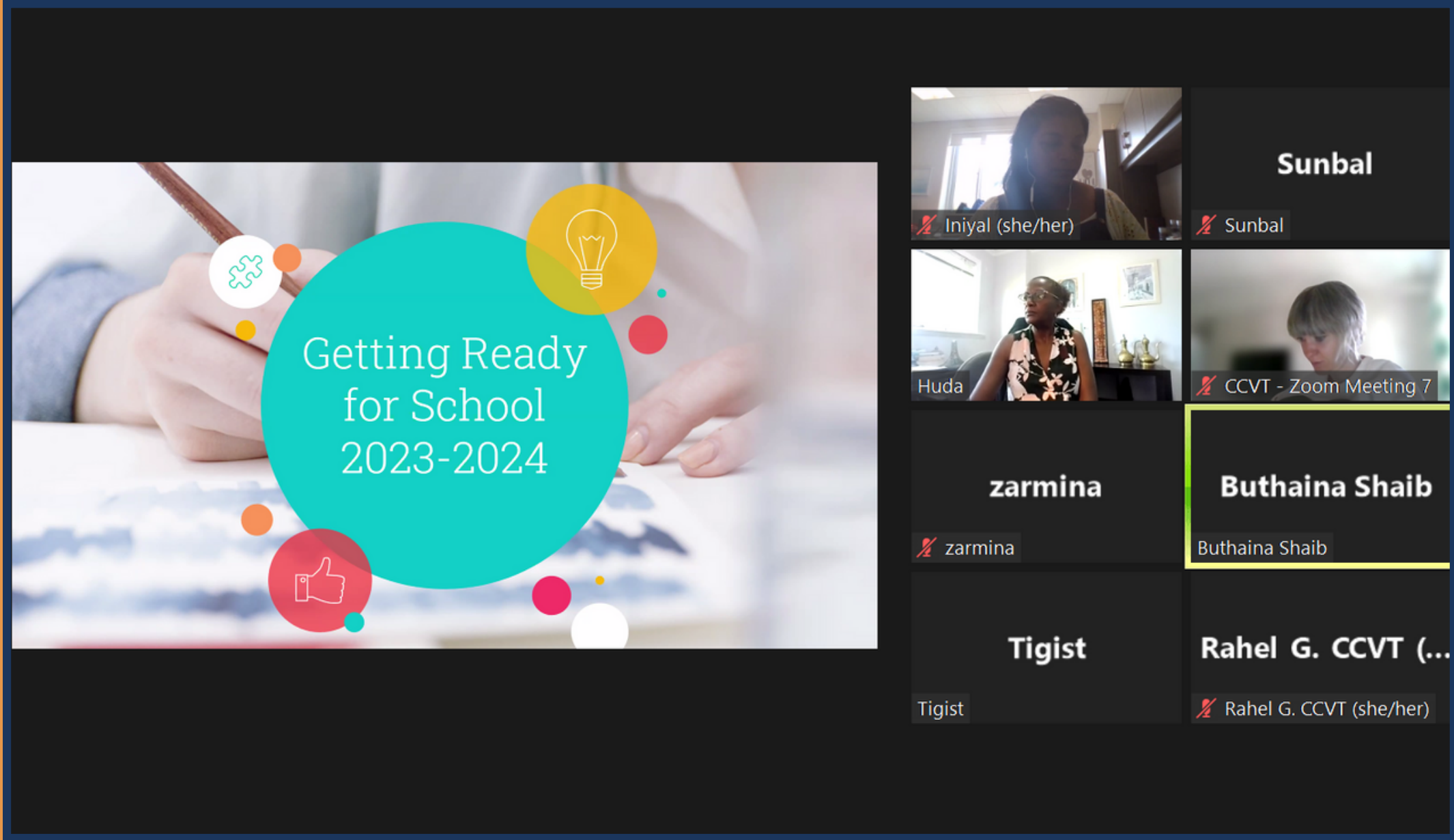
**On-going/Upcoming Events.....21-23**

# BACKPACK DRIVE

CCVT recently organized a Backpack Drive to help newcomer students go back to school September 2023. This thoughtful initiative aimed to ensure that every newcomer, wide-eyed and ready for the academic adventure, had the essential tools for success. From vibrant backpacks to the exciting school supplies, backpacks were generously donated by volunteers and partners!



# BACK TO SCHOOL WORKSHOP



Iniyal (a CCVT volunteer, as well as a school Vice-President) led a back-to-school workshop. This virtual event convened on the 1st of September 2023, garnered active participation from both esteemed clients and dedicated staff members. Iniyal's adept guidance and strategic approach ensured the seamless execution of this important initiative, setting the tone for a productive and collaborative academic year ahead.

Sample Schedule					
Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
8:45 - 8:50	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time
1 8:50 - 9:30	Drama	Phys. Ed	Drama	Math	Math
2 9:30 - 10:00	Dance	Math	Dance	Math	Math
10-10:15	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS
3 10:15 - 10:55	Music	Math	Science	Phy.Ed	Music
4 10:55 - 11:35	FSL	FSL	FSL	FSL	FSL
11:35 - 12:35	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:35 - 12:40	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time	Entry Time
5 12:40 - 1:20	Math	Language	Language	Language	Language
6 1:20 - 2:00	Math	Language	Language	Language	Language
2-2:15	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS	RECESS
7 2:15 - 2:45	Language	ART	Math	Science	Phy.Ed
8 2:45 - 3:25	Language	ART	Math	Science	Library

# ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING DISPLAY FAIR



The event was organized by CCVT in collaboration with Mary Ward Centre, St. Michael College and FCJ refugee Centre. It was held at St. Michael College on September 20.

CCVT lead a successful event to connect agencies that provide most needed services for Human trafficking survivors. It was attended by 30 agencies and the keynote speakers were a great highlight of the event.



# CCVT SAH ACHIEVEMENTS



CCVT's Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH), are pleased to share that one of our clients who was sponsored through the program has arrived in Canada and assigned a CCVT Counselor to support with settlement needs! He was extremely grateful to start his new life in Canada in safety and peace after escaping life under the Taliban Regime. CCVT continues to work on hundreds of applications to bring many more refugees to safety!



# IN COLLABORATION

## CCVT IN ALLIANCE WITH GRASSY WAYS

On Septmeber 27th CCVT Staff, volunteers and clients joined with 6,000 other Land Defence Alliance community members and supporters, to march to Queen’s Park, to show solidarity for protecting the lands and waters of the five First Nations



# YOUTH TRIP TO TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY ROOFTOP GARDEN TOUR

OCTOBER 2ND, 2023

Youth had the opportunity to learn about various plants and its uses including indigenous gardening and connections with the land



# TRC PHOTO CONTEST

September 30TH marked a National Day for the Truth and Reconciliation. It is an opportunity to learn about Indigenous histories and stories and reflect on the responsibilities as guests on this land. To mark this occasion, CCVT.

Newcomer Youth for Truth and Reconciliation organized a photo contest! We invited youth to submit a photo that captured learning about Indigenous history, people and culture. Toronto is filled with Indigenous histories and stories! We received many great pictures and awarded three prizes!



1ST prize: simon kinyanjui

A harmonious ecosystem reflecting our lives' variations in seasons, emotions, gender experiences, and life stages can be seen at The Toronto Metropolitan University's "Urban Farm", which reflects the synergy of the First Nations tenet of the four spirits. At the front, maize support the curling bean stalks, while squash leaves on the ground retain moisture and sunflowers at the back attract pollinators. The glue that holds varied people and the natural world together in perfect harmony is truth and reconciliation.

SIMON KINYANJUI

# TRC PHOTO CONTEST



“The inner self of a person lies the truth for reconciliation and it must start from within because without, everything is blurry”  
-Rita komo

2ND PRIZE: RITA KOMO

The earth is a unifying factor regardless of where we come from, we get our connection from mother nature. When we come together everything stands still and we let love reign, reconciliation and truth manifests its wings

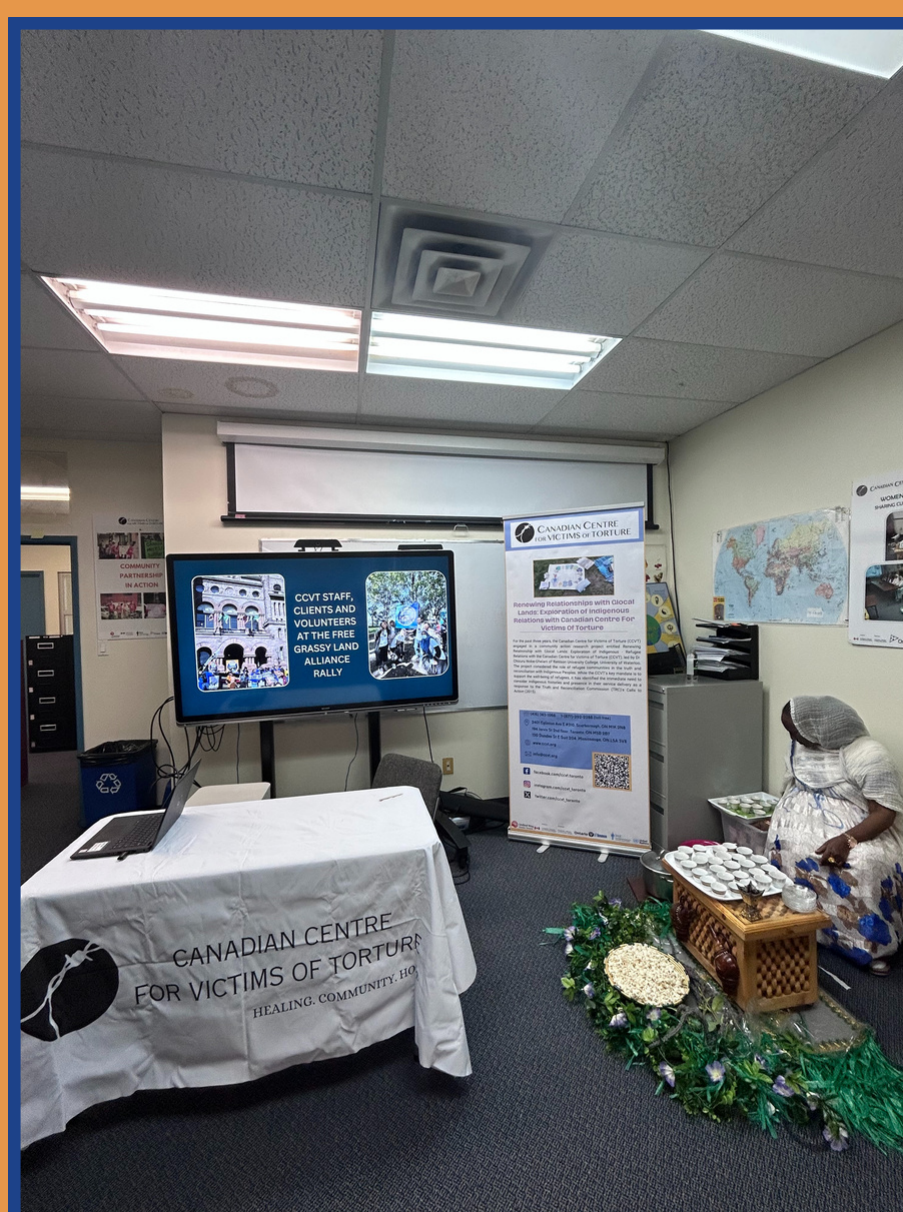
-grace thinono



3RD PRIZE  
GRACE THINONO

# CCVT Truth & Reconciliation Report Launch

**Renewing Relationships With Glocal Lands: Exploration Of indigenous - Refugee Relationships With The Canadian Centre For Victims Of Torture**



# Welcoming New Staff



**Melanie Eastman Mills**

Melanie Eastman Mills graduated from York University with an Honors BA in “Human Rights and Equity Studies” in 2021. In 2023, Melanie completed her Master of Arts in “International Development” in which she conducted a two-year research project exploring how COVID19 impacted the anti-human trafficking community. Throughout both degrees, Melanie worked professionally as an assistant program manager and in-take worker for a mental health and substance use counselling practice, which provides aid to women who are victims of intimate partner violence and domestic violence. Furthermore, also assigning male clients to the appropriate programs, who were perpetrators of gender-based violence. Additionally, Melanie has professional experience working closely with female survivors of human trafficking and sex trafficking through a trauma informed lens at an anti-human trafficking NGO. Melanie is staunchly devoted to advocating for survivors and refugees who have experienced human trafficking.

# Welcoming New Staff



**Bayan Sabagh**

Originally hailing from Syria, Bayan arrived in Canada as a refugee in 2014. Holding a degree in Chemical Engineering from Ryerson University, she has channeled her profound dedication to aiding individuals in distress by affiliating herself with CCVT, where she assumed the role of a settlement and trauma counselor. Demonstrating a fervent commitment to extending support to those in search of assistance and refuge, Bayan's motivation is deeply rooted in her personal experiences. These experiences propel her to establish a sanctuary of comprehension and empowerment for those embarking on the journey of establishing new lives in Canada.

# Student Placement

Brynnette Moshe



Brynnette Moshe is a Master of Social Work student from the University of Toronto. She has a diploma in Child and Youth Care and a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Carleton University, Ottawa. Being the daughter of refugees, Brynnette was always interested in supporting refugees, immigrants and newcomers transition to Canada. She worked for Lambton College, operating a drop-in mental health space for students. There she delivered programs to international students on settling in Canada and caring for one's mental health. She also worked with the YMCA's YMAP program - a group helping newcomer youth navigate school, work, and their community. Since being at CCVT, Brynnette has been challenged to grow in many ways. Her time here has taught her about the complex immigration process, as well as the unique barriers that newcomers, immigrants, and refugees face. She's appreciated the opportunities to learn about trauma interventions, such as somatic experiencing and narrative therapy. Most of all, she has valued the sense of kinship among the CCVT team and the service users. In the future, Brynnette aspires to work alongside women and children who have experienced violence, using art and writing to help them find their own voices.



# Student Placement



Haein Roh

Haein Roh is a third-year nursing student at Toronto Metropolitan University. As an immigrant from South Korea, she sympathizes with the difficulties that clients of CCVT face in resettling, and deeply appreciate the hard work of all the staff put in to support them. Haein is grateful for participating in the children's homework club and mentorship program as a mentee for youth clients. She will continue to support CCVT's activities and try to participate more proactively.

# Volunteer Highlight



Yara El Oneis

Yara El Oneis is delighted to have been volunteering at the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture. Currently enrolled in the Honors BSc Psychology program at York University, she specializes in the Youth and Development Stream. Yara's passion lies in giving back to her community, evident through her volunteer work at CCVT Homework Club. Serving as a mentor to these remarkable children, she finds immense joy in providing both academic and personal support. Witnessing their progress and growth brings her great satisfaction. Yara expresses deep gratitude for the support of the community and feels truly honored to be a part of CCVT.

# Volunteers at Work



Volunteering in this welcoming and supportive environment has been an absolute joy. It's incredible how the positive atmosphere here makes every moment of service feel purposeful and gratifying. Whether it's the friendly interactions with fellow volunteers and workers to the organization's commitment to growth and well-being, this environment has transformed my volunteer experience into something truly special.

- Nawal Said (CCVT Volunteer)

# CCVT ANNUAL FIRST LIGHT GALA 2023



On November 10th, 2023 CCVT held its Annual Gala which was attended by community partners, clients, volunteers, dignitaries and more! The event seamlessly blended entertainment and purpose. It was a night filled with entertaining performances, raffles, speeches followed by a dinner and dance!



# CCVT ANNUAL FIRST LIGHT GALA 2023

## BOARD MEMBERS



MULUGETA ABAI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MONICA FRANKLIN  
BOARD CHAIR

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



MAYOR OLIVA CHOW



EDLER TAMMARO



SISAY WOLDEMICHAEL

# CCVT ANNUAL FIRST LIGHT GALA 2023

## AWARDS CEREMONY

The Trevor Bartam award recipient

**Barbra Schlifer**   
Commemorative Clinic

Amina Malko Award award recipient



**Jennifer Stone**  
Neighbourhood Legal Services

FRANCISCO RICO AWARD RECEIPTENT



**Osman Ali**

FRANCISCO RICO AWARD RECEIPTENT



**Fabiola Cruz Li**

# CCVT ANNUAL GALA



CCVT Staff with Mayor Olivia Chow!

# CCVT ANNUAL GALA



Very talented Lance Freeman completing his live painting which was later auctioned. All funds were donated to CCVT.



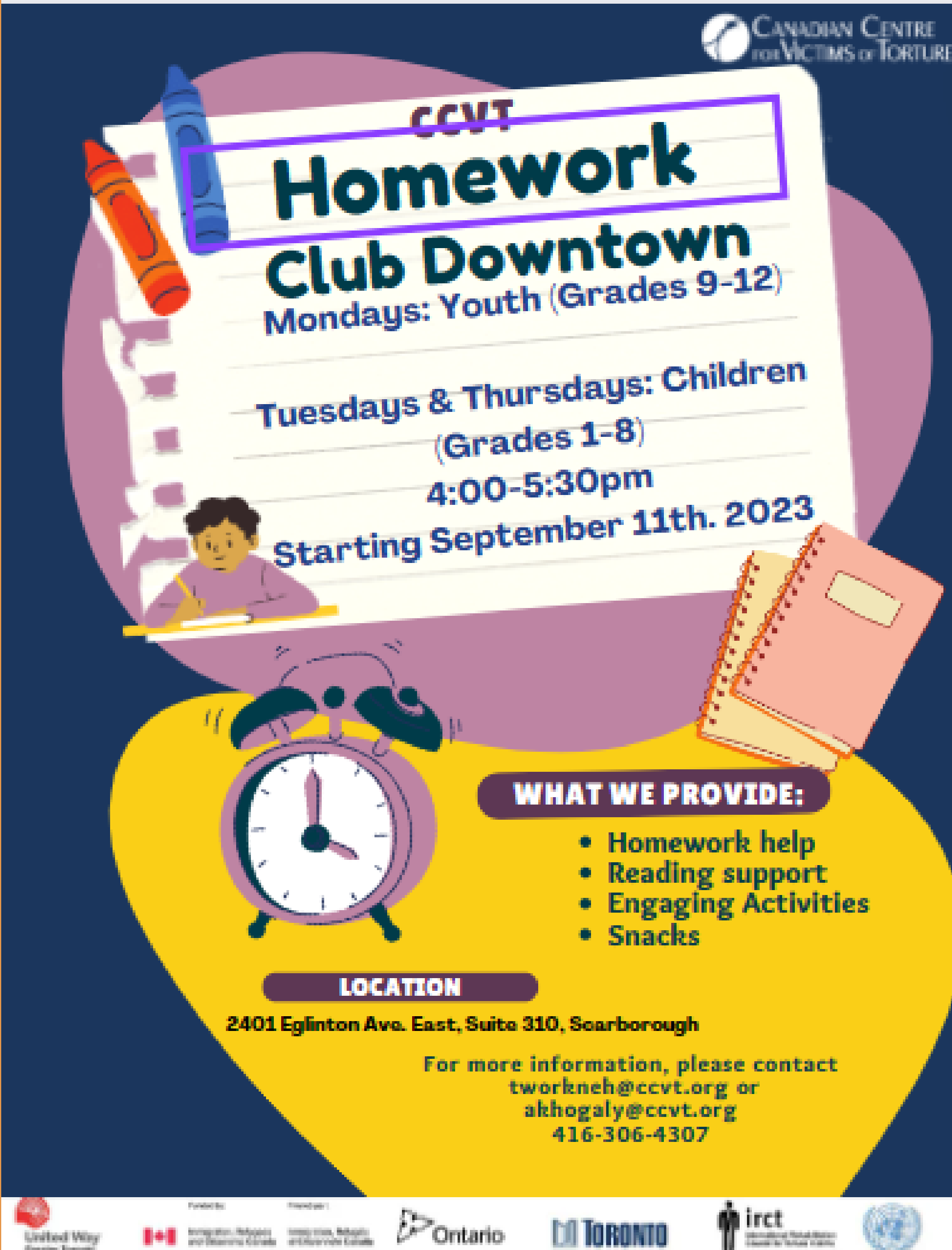
In a harmonious celebration of sophistication and artistry, Emily Belvedere, the enchanting harpist, graced the CCVT gala with her mesmerizing melodies.







# CCVT ANNUAL GALA



# ON-GOING PROGRAMS




**CCVT**  
**Homework Club Downtown**  
 Mondays: Youth (Grades 9-12)  
 Tuesdays & Thursdays: Children (Grades 1-8)  
 4:00-5:30pm  
 Starting September 11th, 2023





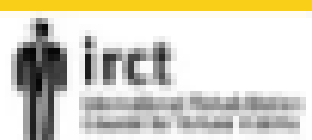

**WHAT WE PROVIDE:**

- Homework help
- Reading support
- Engaging Activities
- Snacks

**LOCATION**

2401 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 310, Scarborough

For more information, please contact  
[tworkneh@ccvt.org](mailto:tworkneh@ccvt.org) or  
[akhogaly@ccvt.org](mailto:akhogaly@ccvt.org)  
 416-306-4307

# UPCOMING EVENTS





**CANADIAN CENTRE  
FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE**

## COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH ART

**MUSIC FOR PEACE AND EDUCATION**

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**FACILITATORS: NOUR KAADAN - TAREK GHRIRI**  
**PARTICIPANTS :NEWCOMERS INDIVIDUALS AGES**  
**16-30**  
**SESSION 2 – DEC 4**  
**4-5 PM**

**LOGIN: MIRRORING GAME**

**BODY: COUNTING RHYTHM**

**LOGOUT: BREATHING EXERCISE.**

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**ZASTID PEREA**  
**ZPEREA@CCVT.ORG**  
**4163639516**



**REFRESHMENTS & PIZZA**






Funders:  
Immigrant, Refugees and Citizenship Canada



Partner:  
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY

Canadian Centre For  
Victims Of Torture



Le Centre Canadien  
pour les Victimes de la  
Torture

Cordially invite you to attend our

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

&

**HOLIDAY PARTY**

**DECEMBER 10th 2023**

**FROM: 12:00 – 3:00 P.M.**

**Venue:**

West End Alternative/Bickford  
(777 Bloor Street West, Toronto,  
M6G 1L6)



Join us to celebrate the holiday  
season and bring your favorite  
dish to share!

Refreshments will be provided!

Vous invite très cordialement à  
notre

**ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE  
ANNUELLE & FÊTE DE FIN**

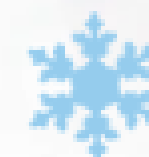
**D'ANNÉE**

**LE DIMANCHE**


**10 DÉCEMBRE 2023**

**Lieu:**

West End Alternative/Bickford  
(777, rue Bloor Ouest, Toronto,  
M6G 1L6)



Venez nombreux et  
accompagnés par votre famille  
pour célébrer cette saison  
festive avec nous. Nous  
fournirons le reste des  
collations!



**If you are interested in  
submitting an article to  
connections please  
contact:**

Community Engagement Team  
[communityengagement@ccvt.org](mailto:communityengagement@ccvt.org)



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