

YORK U-TD
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTRE



Annual Report

2019



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek [a-nish-na-bek] Nation, the Haudenosaunee [ho-dee-no-sho-nee] Confederacy, the Huron-Wendat, and the Métis. It is now home to many Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

"Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." - Albert Einstein

This quote from Albert Einstein, not only speaks volumes of a personal nature but one of a team accomplishment. It has been 1 year since my role began at the CEC alongside two of the most dedicated and passionate staff at York University, Tessa Jean (Administrative Assistant) and Talisha Ramsaroop (Community Projects Coordinator). All while having the leadership and support of Lorna Schwartzenruber (Associate Director Access Programs and Community Engagement). Throughout the year we work diligently to ensure we remained relevant and responsive to the needs of the community, while exploring innovative avenues to community engagement.

On June 10, 2019, York University and TD Bank announced the renewal of their support in the amount of 1 million dollars over the next 10 years. A testament to the commitment and hard work the CEC has done over the past 10 years to have a foothold in the community which it serves. We continue to offer services and activities in 4 main pillars; Community-based research, Access to Post-secondary, Experiential Education, Community Collaborations. The shift that was taking place in the community focusing on economic growth through an equity lens sparked a new complimentary pillar focused on supporting residents looking to make career pivots and shifts or individuals looking for supports in

the entrepreneurial realm. With this additional emphasis on careers and entrepreneurship, We have begun researching suitable forms of support that would be beneficial to the community and what role does the CEC play in it.

The York U - TD CEC continues to function under the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic. This has allowed the community to be represented at tables prioritizing the accountability of the University and its desire to be an Anchor Institution. This means changing and creating policy that will make for a more equitable neighbour University, for example the development and approval for a social procurement policy. The CEC also participates in several institutional committees looking to improve community and university relations e.i. the president's Sustainability counsel. The CEC has not stopped providing occasions for sharing and learning as it created in partnership with the Jane/Finch Centre staff, the Jane Finch Student Orientation to support the ongoing place-based student leaning in the hyper-local community.

This has been a year of growth and planning for the CEC. We will continue this pace into the new year maintaining the mandate and keeping our eyes peeled for innovations, opportunities and partnerships. Thank you for your decade of support and trust.



This year we awarded our 6th annual catalyst grant.

The Catalyst grant is focused on supporting awards to a community-university partnership working to enhance one of the mandates of the CEC. These grants are awarded by the York University TD Community Engagement centre's Advisory Committee based on applications and demonstrated success.

This year, the York University TD CEC funded three catalyst grant awards such as the Jane and Finch Tennis Association, The Jane Finch TSNS Resident Engagement Planning Table Steering Committee and the Know Your Worth Conference.

CATALYST GRANTS



JANE FINCH TENNIS ASSOCIATION

The Jane Finch Tennis Association (JFCTA) wanted to create healthy food habits for healthy eating. Subsequently, with the Catalyst funding, JFCTA implemented a healthy eating initiative for the program and is working on developing a community-based research project which evaluates and enhances the JFCTA after school program. This community-based research project intends to enhance knowledge, understanding and effectiveness of the JFCTA After School Program.

The project is focused on four main outcomes:

- Integrating a healthy eating initiative in conjunction with the program.
- Evaluating the quality and efficacy of the program using the Program Quality Assessment in Youth Sport (PQAYS) measure.
- Evaluating and exploring youth leaders' experiences delivering programs, with a focus on leaders' life skills development through focus groups with leaders, which draw on the Youth Leadership Life Skills Development Scale (YLLSDS)
- Creating knowledge translation tools (video, posters, other materials) to communicate the quality and the impact of the program on youth from the community.

THE JANE FINCH TSNS RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT PLANNING TABLE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Jane Finch TSNS Resident Engagement Planning Table Steering Committee delivered a project which addresses mental health/trauma issues experienced by Jane Finch Residents.

The target audience was youth who have been involved in the Criminal Justice system and single mothers. The goal of this project was to empower residents through the provision of Mental Health First Aid Training which will provide residents with certified skills to use with themselves, with their families and with the wider Jane Finch Community and that can also be used to enhance their employment opportunities. In addition, the project created a community of practice for residents certified in Mental Health First Aid in order to provide peer support, resources, and new opportunities to enhance their capacity around mental health issues/resources.

During the past couple months the group developed a community of practice and hosted a full day workshops focused on enhancing skills of 33 diverse residents already trained in MHFA, providing networking opportunities, experiential learning, peer education.

The workshop was focused on themes of adverse childhood experiences and separation/reunion. The group intends to host one more of these sessions in the future. In addition, the group delivered two MHFA training workshops for the Jane Finch community. One targeting women-led homes, the other targeting youth impacted by law enforcement and the justice system. A total of 48 residents were trained in MHFA..

KNOW YOUR WORTH CONFERENCE

The Conference was initially held in February 2017 to celebrate Canada's 150 years of confederation with the goal of bringing together 150 secondary students of African heritage from 10 TDSB schools with a focus on schools in the Black Creek community during African Heritage Month. The conference includes workshops and post-secondary students mentoring secondary students. The students spent a full day at the York University campus with the Black Law Students Association discussing and reflecting upon issues that matter to them. The initiative also is intended to encourage high school students to pursue post-secondary education in order to establish career pathways. In previous years, participants requested having more involvement in the planning and hosting of the Conference.

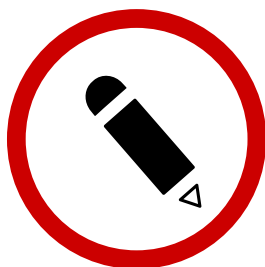
The Know Your Worth Conference will enter its fourth year in 2020.

This is why this year, using the Catalyst grant funding, the project will respond to these requests and give space for students' leadership and ideas. We plan to do that by convening students who attended the Conference in 2019, and collaborating with them to plan, host the event, and develop the leadership group. The conference will create opportunities for TDSB students to co-facilitate workshops and co-lead in the planning of the event along with Osgoode Hall student leaders from the Black Law Students' Association. In addition, that initiative will support TDSB staff in their endeavors to strengthen their teaching and learning strategies to engage and support students of African heritage.

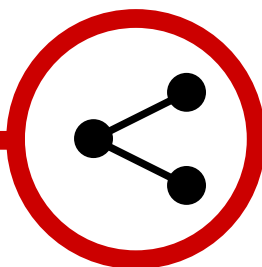
SOCIAL INNOVATION HUB



In January 2020, in partnership with the York University Faculty Association, The Resource Centre for Public Sociology, Success Beyond Limits and The Department of Sociology the York University - TD Community Engagement Centre launched the Jane Finch Student Innovation Hub. The Jane Finch Student Innovation Hub is nestled in Ross North room 141, a space shared with the Centre for Public Sociology and is open for students Mondays and Thursdays from 12-6pm. The Jane Finch Student Innovation Hub was created to help York University students from the local community develop a sense of self and belonging at York University.



COLLABORATE



SHARE



MENTOR





STUDENT ORIENTATION

In the summer of 2019 the York University TD Community Engagement centre and The Jane Finch Community & Family Centre started to work on the development of a Jane Finch Student Placement Training Guide.

This came after many residents and Community organizations voiced their concerns over experiences with placement students that were not mutually beneficial. In response the Black Creek Community Collaborative requested that a community organization take the lead on developing a general placement training guide that could be used to train placement students who were doing their placements in the Jane Finch Community.

In response the York University TD Community Engagement Centre and the Jane Finch Community and Family centre came together to develop a training that could be delivered to students. The training was developed with the intention to provide an outline of community history , stigmatization of the community, provide a holistic understanding of the community, and help students develop a anti-oppression lense of doing community engagement that is specific to the Jane Finch Community.


During the past year we held two sessions of the Jane Finch Student Placement Training, which consist of a full day workshop. One session took place in September 2019, while the other took place in January 2020. Students from both college and University were able to take part in this training and so far over 60 students have taken part in the training. We hope to continue hosting this training bi-annually moving forward as one of our consistent programs.



THE JANE AND FINCH COMMUNITY RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP



The Jane Finch Community Research Project which originally came together with the support of a Catalyst Grant in 2016 and created a report which identified the need for a community ethics protocol. In september of 2019 the group received a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) grant to continue this work. The CEC continues to support the work of the Jane Finch Community Research Partnership as they now aim to accomplish three goals :

- Establish a Jane Finch Community Ethics Advisory Group which will function as a community Ethics board
 - Develop training resources for researchers including Principles for Conducting research in the Jane Finch Community and 10 online training modules.
 - Establish the Jane Finch Research Collection which will function as an extensive open-access database containing easily-discoverable research about the community.
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WALK WITH EXCELLENCE

Walk with Excellence is an annual celebration of high-school graduates' achievements along with the efforts of their key educators, including school principals, teachers and partners. More than 500 recent high-school graduates from five area schools participated in the 2019 Walk with Excellence on June 11. This year, as the students marched to campus they were greeted by various community and Post-Secondary Partners who hosted activation spaces.

This included the 141 Toronto Fire station on Keele Street, York University recruitment who welcomed students with balloons and handed out inspirational lanyards, Seneca College who shared Granola bars and webcam covers, members of the York University Faculty Association (YUFA) who provided freezies,

The office of the president who lead the students into campus, the Centre for Human Rights Equity and Inclusion who hosted a moving photo booth, and The department of Sociology, Student Success and members of CUPE who cheered students along their procession. At the end of the event, the recipients of bursaries were announced and applauded.

Social Procurement Policy

York University is now one of Canada's first universities to have a comprehensive social procurement policy. York's Social Procurement Policy supports the foundational pillars of accessibility, connectedness, excellence and impact, and reflects its values as a university.

Social procurement considers how procurement – the process of buying goods and services – can positively impact the social well-being of the communities surrounding York university, and assist to reduce poverty, promote economic and social inclusion, and support local economic development and social enterprise. It fosters an enabling environment by embedding supply chain diversity and workforce development initiatives within procurement processes to promote inclusive economic growth.

TD Gift Announcement

TD Bank Group is giving \$1 million to support York University's programs in North York's Black Creek community, aimed at community building and experiential learning. The donation has been made through TD's corporate citizenship platform, the ready commitment which leverages the collective power of its philanthropy, its business and its human capital to help people feel more confident and achieve their personal goals in a changing world. Celebrating over a decade of impact, TD initially supported the creation of the York University TD Community Engagement Centre in 2007. The renewed commitment not only recognizes the accomplishments of this partnership in the Black Creek Community, but also supports a new approach focusing on mid-career bridging programs through training and re-skilling programs.



Back To School



The beginning of the school year is an important time for all students. The York University-TD Community Engagement Centre supported two separate Back to School events. The first event had 160 residents engaged at the Black Creek Farm and were coordinated by the Jane-Finch Education Action Group. The second event saw over 250 residents, and was organized in partnership with Freedom Fridayz, an art-based collective that creates transformative spaces; while giving emerging and established artists a platform to share their art with the community. Celebrating these important milestones with the community gives a strong message that education is important.

ADULT DAY SCHOOL OUTREACH



Adult Day School outreach provides direct support and key intervention opportunities to adult learners who face barriers accessing postsecondary education. The project focuses on individuals who are mature students, 20 years of age and older studying in adult day schools exploring pathways to PSE. Moreover, the project directly responds to known risk factors in student transition by developing programming that enhances student engagement, provide opportunities for skills building, and equip adult learners to navigate and participate successfully in their post-secondary experience.

ADULT DAY SCHOOL TOUR

