

York University – TD Community Engagement Centre (CEC)

Update to the community on the completion of the CEC Review

December 20, 2013

Vice Provost Academic Alice Pitt has issued the following update to the community on the completion of the CEC Review:

Over this past year, a review of the CEC was conducted to evaluate the CEC's role within the Black Creek community, establish a plan for continued engagement with the community and position the CEC for future sustainability. At the request of York's Provost Rhonda Lenton, the review was led by myself and supported by an ad-hoc CEC Review Working Group. Over 30 individuals were consulted as part of the review with representation from the Black Creek community, York staff/ faculty/students and key institutional partners from various sectors.

The Review confirmed that over its past five years, the CEC has been an important resource to the University and the Black Creek community by:

- Enriching educational experiences of students
- Promoting civic engagement of York community members
- Reducing or eliminating barriers to postsecondary education
- Providing fertile ground for new community/university collaborations
- Encouraging depth and breadth in collaborative research partnerships

We are pleased to report that the CEC has established some key foundational elements (e.g. promoting access to postsecondary education, supporting experiential education opportunities) and a great deal has been learned over the past five years. The CEC has emerged as an important pillar of York's community engagement efforts and benefitted from the generous contributions of community partners and York students, faculty and staff. Many also participated in the review process, offering valuable insight and constructive feedback, helping to shape the following **recommendations**:

1. CEC mandate be focused and its activities consonant with both community needs and York's academic priorities.
2. CEC governance and reporting structure be articulated clearly, reporting to the Vice Provost Academic, and that the activities of the CEC be informed by an Advisory Committee comprised of community/university representatives.
3. CEC revise its Integrated Resource Plan and a 3 Year Plan be developed that addresses strategic partnerships, evaluation and future sustainability.
4. CEC serve as a community engagement broker for all Faculties and other York units, as needed, by supporting catalyst projects and developing the tools/supports required to enhance York's capacity for community-university collaboration in the Black Creek community.
5. CEC play a more active and significant role in supporting access to post-secondary education.

6. CEC, along with other relevant York units, work collaboratively to develop a coordinated process/mechanism to respond to community requests (including but not limited to the Black Creek community).

A revised mandate and priorities has also been established for the York University-TD Community Engagement Centre and is outlined below.

Mandate

The York University-TD Community Engagement Centre supports the University's commitment to build a more engaged university by facilitating mutually-beneficial collaborations between York University and the Black Creek community.

Core Functional Areas

The CEC is a pan-university resource centre situated in the Black Creek community that:

- a. Fosters academic innovation in teaching and learning through community engaged pedagogy and experiential education opportunities
- b. Supports post-secondary educational attainment among community residents and the development of academic pathways
- c. Enhances capacity of York faculty/students and community partners to work collaboratively on community-based research

The CEC will also be part of a coordinated institutional structure/mechanism to respond to community requests and opportunities for university-community collaboration.

On behalf of the University, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the review of the York University-TD Community Engagement Centre. We are pleased to provide this update which summarizes the process and shares the recommendations, and refined mandate and core areas of activity. Comments and/or questions are welcome and should be sent by email to Yvette Munro, ymunro@yorku.ca or Lorna Schwartzentruber, lornas@yorku.ca. In early 2014, I will be establishing an Advisory Committee and we look forward to continuing great work at the York University-TD Community Engagement Centre.

Dr. Alice Pitt
Vice Provost Academic

