

CIWA Youth Forum: Fusion 2017

EMPOWERING DAUGHTERS - EMBRACING DIVERSITY



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"We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated."

– Maya Angelou

Introduction by Chief Executive Officer, Beba Svirig

CIWA Youth Forum is celebrating its fifth year. The forum, funded solely by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, highlights the individual experiences of mentees and mentors, their journey to Canada and involvement in the Youth Mentorship Program at CIWA. The theme of this year's event is 'Empowering Daughters, Embracing Diversity.' The event, publication and all related work has been coordinated by Youth Mentorship Program staff and participants.

Through this program, we want to support integration of immigrant youth and at the same time offer opportunities for mainstream youth to engage in the learning process that enriches their understanding of the world, multiculturalism and appreciation for newcomers living in the city.

The Youth Forum publication will guide you through the different experiences young immigrants face integrating into Canada, as well as the benefits mainstream youth experience by virtue of engaging in the process.

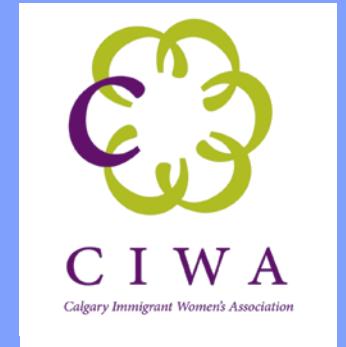
This year's Youth Forum includes CIWA's third annual Daughters' Day Awards. We secured generous sponsorship for four young women who will be presented with awards at the Youth Forum and will be recognized for their significant contributions to their communities.

I would like to thank CIWA staff, program participants, community supporters and all of you reading this publication, for supporting this initiative and attending this event. I can assure you some of the participants at the event are carving their way to become successful community leaders of the future.

About CIWA

Since 1982, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association has provided exciting opportunities for immigrant girls and women from all backgrounds to come together and develop skills to succeed in Canadian culture.

Through innovative programming including settlement, language training, employment skills and family services, CIWA supports immigrant women and empowers them through capacity building and networking opportunities. This allows them, as well as their families, to integrate into our diverse and great city.



CIWA Statistics:

- CIWA provides programs and services in 119 community locations
- CIWA serves thousands of clients through individual and group service every year
- Over 1,000 volunteers support CIWA programming
- Staff and volunteers speak a combined total of 56 different languages

Youth Mentorship Program

Youth Mentorship Program promotes intercultural understanding by providing opportunities to develop support networks and friendships. It also provides leadership development through community presentations and interactive opportunities.

Since its inception in 2011, CIWA's Youth Mentorship Program has effectively graduated girls into the society as leaders in both academic pursuits and extra-curricular feats. The program is available to immigrant girls between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Mentors and mentees plan and engage in activities that support social, personal and academic growth. The ensuing guidance and friendship create a healthy environment for the mentee to successfully integrate in Canada.

Youth Forum is an annual capstone event that highlights the accomplishments of mentors and mentees. It seeks to showcase the beauty in diversity and cross cultural learnings. Youth Forum is also an "all hands on deck" project that also offers the youths first hand leadership experience through stage by stage implementation of vibrant ideas, design and talent display.



Youth Mentorship Program Statistics

This year's 101 participants hail from 23 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Syria and Vietnam.

Participants took part in 6 field trip activities including: Telus Spark, Fort Calgary, Calgary Zoo, 4Cats Art Studio, Heritage Park and Calgary Drop-in Centre.

Program mentees delivered 10 presentations at their schools and in the community providing a platform for the youth to engage in public presentations and civic participation.

Participants contributed over 1300 volunteer hours including individual and group support to mentees, administrative assistance, planning and execution of a successful Youth Forum.

Community impact over the last 5 years:

- Over the course of the past 5 years, the program has worked with 560 participants
- Of the 560 participants, 252 have obtained employment and pursued post secondary education including medical school, nursing and engineering
- Twenty-five mentees have now transitioned into becoming a mentor to support immigrant youth in the program
- Two mentees and a mentor have received \$2000 each from the prestigious Gerda R. Bloomraad Scholarship Fund
- Three mentors have transitioned into full time employment at CIWA

Words from a Mentor



“Being a part of the Youth Mentorship Program has been truly fulfilling. It gave me a chance to be there for someone else and watch them grow. It also gave me the opportunity to acquire leadership skills. A true mentor is a leader, serving people and the community with patience and a smile. Thank you CIWA and to my mentee for this opportunity.”

~ Elizabeth

Words from a Mentee



“As a newcomer, I was scared and curious of what I might deal with or encounter here. Thanks to CIWA, I was paired with my mentor Kristelle, who guided and taught me things I needed to know to be successful in adjusting to the new environment and in order for me to become successful in the path that I will choose. Through CIWA, I learned about different resources that are available for us such as seminars, workshops and even concerts and shows that are worth the watch. Being a part of the Youth Mentorship Program helped me to understand more of the cultures that I’m newly exposed to. I’m looking forward to becoming a mentor so that I too can share the things I experienced while being a mentee.”

~ Shane

Welcome to Youth Forum 2017

Events and Stations

Henna Artists
Nail Painting
Puppet Making
Soft Puck Hockey Shooting
Origami
Popcorn and Cotton Candy
Photo Booth
Zumba Demonstration
Games and Activities
Raffle Draw



Performers

NLU Hype Team
Cambodian-Canadian Association of Alberta
Erykah Valdez
Kugekai Lion Dance
Bishop McNally High School Students

Keynote Speaker

Doyin Osuntogun



Doyin moved to Canada from Lagos in 2007 to study Chemical Engineering at McMaster University. While at McMaster, she was involved with various organizations – McMaster Engineering Outreach, Go Eng Girl, UNICEF, and Creating Leadership Amongst Youth (CLAY) before co-founding National Society of Black Engineers – McMaster chapter in 2010. Through volunteering with these organizations, she realized the importance that role models play in today's youth. Having moved to Calgary, she continues to be actively involved in elementary and high school education and outreach.

Participant Quotes



“It’s really an amazing experience of sharing different cultures between the immigrant women. All the women in this world don’t look alike but the love and caring for their family and surroundings are the same. Starting a new life in Canada was hard for both me and my family. It was a big change for me. There were lots of people who helped us starting a new life. I am thankful to CIWA for helping me in developing my confidence and making me more approachable and friendly. I was always afraid to speak in public. But CIWA helped me improve my public speaking skills. I really like the mentorship program because it gives me the opportunity to meet new people. My mentor Azka Qasim offers lots of help to me. I am very lucky to have a mentor like Azka. I don’t have a sister in my life so I consider her as my sister because of her selflessness.”

~ Karma

Participant Quotes



“I would like to thank the Youth Mentorship Program at CIWA; they provided me with an amazing mentor who is always there to support me. She teaches me subjects like science and mathematics in which I usually face problems. Thank you CIWA for kindly supporting me and my mentor for spending quality time with me.”

~ Chokey

Words from a Mentor

“My position as a youth mentor has been incredibly rewarding. I have had the chance to make a positive impact on my mentees’ lives by sharing my own experiences and organizing fun and beneficial activities for us to do together. I have learned so much from my mentees and am truly inspired by the girls that I have met through this program.”

~ Emina



Words from a Mentee

“One of the benefits of the Youth Mentorship Program was that my mentor helped me a lot with my essays and university applications when I was in Grade 12. She really helped reduce my stress and became a great friend of mine. When I started going to the same university as she did, I felt less nervous because I knew that I could count on her and ask her questions. I’m really lucky and grateful that I registered in this program and that I was paired with a great mentor.”

~ Niloofar



Daughters' Day Awards

Daughters' Day Awards celebrate the lives, contributions, and achievements of daughters based on an appreciation of gender equity in our society.

The annual event was created in Edmonton and raises awareness about gender discrimination as well as recognizes exceptional daughters who are making a significant contribution to their communities.

CIWA's Daughters' Day Awards recipients will be presented as part of Youth Forum 2017. Applicants were nominated in December 2016, and a jury has selected four award recipients for this year.

Daughters' Day Awards are generously supported by Gerda R. Bloemraad, former CIWA Board Chair and Shirley Turnbull current CIWA Board Director.



Daughters' Day Awards Jury

Alice Lam - Chair

Alice is a project manager who is currently working in the seniors sector. She graduated from the University of Alberta with a degree in Economics and more recently obtained a Master of Science degree in Management from IESEG School of Management in France.

Jade Duong immigrated to Canada from Vietnam with her parents as a young child. Jade was raised in Calgary and holds a Juris Doctorate from the University of Calgary. Jade has worked in both the private and public legal sector, and is an active member of the Alberta Law Society, the Alberta Justice Civil Lawyers Association, and is the Risk Management Coordinator for Alpha Gamma Delta.

Lourdes Juan is an urban planner and entrepreneur. She is an alumna of the University of Calgary with a Bachelor of General Studies and a Masters in Environmental Design. As the Director of LMJ Consultants, she also does community work with the non-profits she founded, Leftovers Foundation and Moonlight Market Foundation. She is on the Board of Directors with the Downtown Association, Hong Kong Canada Business Association, and Calgary Homeless Foundation.

Laura Manickaraj has dedicated much of her life to living with people with developmental disabilities in L'Arche communities, since 1987 in Calgary. For a number of years Laura has been living with cancer, which limits what she can do but her commitment to the lives of others often supersedes her own illness. Laura received a Daughters' Day Award in 2014 in Edmonton.

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