

V-POWER

FEBRUARY 2022

Volunteer Newsletter

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Elizabeth Grigg
Cooking Program Volunteer



Jasmine Lee
Digital Navigator Volunteer

Welcome to the second edition of the London Intercommunity Health Centre's volunteer newsletter! As with the first newsletter, it was created by and for volunteers of LIHC to stay connected and spread joy & laughter - so thank you for reading.

This issue features volunteer stories of, well - volunteering! Some jokes, information about London events, and thoughts on power & privilege.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and a big thank you to everyone who contributed!



MEET YOUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: ERIN WILLIAMS

For the past 15 years, Erin has been working at the Health Centre. She oversees many areas including internal and external communications, client experience surveys, and the students and volunteer programs.

For this year's newsletter, we interviewed Erin to learn more about the volunteer program at the Health Centre.

Tell us about yourself.

I have lived in London most of my life with my partner, four kids, and a bunny. Languages have always fascinated me and I enjoy opportunities to practice both French and Spanish with anyone who is interested.

Can you describe the volunteer program at the Health Centre?

Volunteers are exceptional people who dedicate their time to serving the community. We have a diverse group of volunteers who come from different backgrounds and life experiences. Some are university students, retired seniors, Health Centre clients, local community members, working professionals, and residents of the neighbourhood.

Throughout the pandemic, I have been inspired by our volunteers as they continue to work hard and adapt to constant change. They are making a big impact in the lives of others and are helping our community through difficult times.

"We are so grateful to work with such an amazing group of volunteers who bring passion and energy to the work that we do and have valuable expertise to share with us."



77% of our volunteers are Health Centre clients or program participants!

DID YOU KNOW?
THE VERY FIRST
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
WAS CALLED "SENIORS
IN SERVICE -
VOLUNTEER
OUTREACH", WHICH
SERVED IMMIGRANT
SENIORS. VOLUNTEERS
ACTED AS A
CONNECTING LINK
BETWEEN SENIORS AND
HEALTH SERVICES IN THE
COMMUNITY.

MEET YOUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: ERIN WILLIAMS



90% of volunteers said because of their volunteer experience, they better understand the strengths and needs of individuals who use the Health Centre.

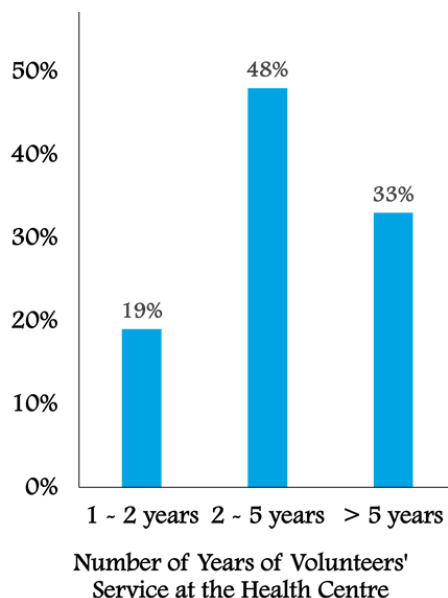
This year, the Health Centre created a volunteer coordinator position. How has this new role shaped the volunteer program?

Over the years, program supervisors have taken on the responsibilities of recruiting, onboarding, and supervising volunteers that support their specific programs without centralized volunteer coordination. This new role allows opportunities to enhance our volunteer program through a more coordinated approach across the Health Centre.

This year, we were able to streamline our processes for file management and volunteer orientation through new software called Better Impact. In addition, the coordinator role now supports volunteer supervisors with recruitment, onboarding, communication, recognition, and evaluation which reduces the amount of time volunteer supervisors spend on processing volunteers and allows more time for them to work directly with volunteers. Most importantly, having a volunteer coordinator has helped to shape a shared vision of building community throughout our volunteer program.

What can volunteers look forward to this year?

We are hoping to slowly bring volunteers back on-site when it is safe to do so. We have developed COVID-19 vaccine policies to ensure the safety of our volunteers, staff, and clients. All our in-person volunteers are asked to show proof of vaccination and those who do not wish to disclose their vaccination status are welcome to volunteer with our virtual opportunities. Last year, we brought on several new volunteers, and this year we hope to have even more join our volunteer program!



EVERYDAY HEROES: VOLUNTEER STORIES

Dena Clayton (NELCE Crafts)

Dena volunteers with NELCE and leads craft sessions over zoom. She's diligently put together a series of crafts that are affordable, easy to make, and creative for the NELCE group. Dena leads the sessions, instructing and demonstrating the craft for participants, answering questions along the way. These sessions are recorded and shared with the group afterward for anyone who couldn't participate on the day of.

Dena also creates several packets of supplies for every session and drops these off at the Huron site for pick up by anyone who would like to access the supplies. The craft sessions over zoom have been a great way to bring people together over the course of the pandemic. The crafts are all fun and original. Dena has been a phenomenal program leader and we are lucky to have her with us!

THE NORTH EAST LONDON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (NELCE) GROUP IS A RESIDENT-BASED, ACTION-ORIENTED COMMUNITY GROUP FOCUSED ON STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING THE COMMUNITY OF NORTHEAST LONDON. NELCE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COMMUNITY GROUPS TO OFFER ONLINE PROGRAMMING WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT.

THEY HAVE BEEN RUNNING WEEKLY ONLINE PROGRAMS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS WHICH FOCUS ON SOCIAL INCLUSION.



EVERYDAY HEROES: VOLUNTEER STORIES

Jonathan Hamilton (French Seniors Group)

THE FRENCH SENIORS GROUP OFFERS HEALTH PROMOTION WORKSHOPS AND SOCIAL EVENTS FOR FRANCOPHONE SENIORS IN THE COMMUNITY.

GROUP MEMBERS ENJOY MEETING OTHER FRANCOPHONES, CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS, AND LEARNING TO LIVE A HEALTHIER LIFE WHILE HAVING FUN IN FRENCH.



Access to health and social services in your own language is an important part of improving health and well-being.



Despite the pandemic, a busy schedule, and medical school, Jonathan has been volunteering with these virtual French Senior Group meetings on a weekly basis. With his presence, he provides helpful information on different health topics that are being discussed by the group. This year, there has been a particular focus on COVID-19 information such as transmission risks, safety precautions, provincial guidelines, and vaccination for seniors.

The French Seniors group enjoys having him participate in meetings and the knowledge that he brings around health topics related to aging healthy. Thank you so much for your ongoing commitment to this group. Vous êtes un bénévole très spécial! Merci pour toutes vos contributions.

EVERYDAY HEROES: VOLUNTEER STORIES

Carol Coulter (Seniors Tai Chi Program)

For over 20 years, Carol has been a volunteer and co-leads the Tai Chi Program. Before the pandemic, every Saturday morning Carol would lay out beautiful seasonal tablecloths with an assortment of cookies to please all food allergies and preferences. She would display interesting news articles or photos of the group's latest outing or class and would always have a birthday card for all to sign for group members. Carol made sure to connect with each participant, asking them about their grandchildren or family – always making group members feel unique and special.

Carol's kind and gentle spirit can be felt by all, many of the group members consider her a friend. When the pandemic hit, and the Tai Chi program was no longer able to run in-person sessions, Carol thought of a new way to keep the group connected. She began sending regular e-mails and updates to the participants which have helped them stay connected through these difficult times. Thank you so much Carol for all you have done over two DECADES! You are truly exceptional, and we feel blessed that you continue to be a volunteer of the Centre.



“Whenever I see Carol's name pop up in my email, I know I'm about to read something that will warm my heart and connect me to a very special person.”

THE TAI CHI PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY, AND BALANCE BY OFFERING GENTLE EXERCISE TO SENIORS.

EVERYDAY HEROES: VOLUNTEER STORIES

Diane MacMillan (Volunteer Income Tax Program)

THE INCOME TAX
PROGRAM SUPPORTS
HEALTH CENTRE CLIENTS
AND PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS WITH THEIR
TAXES.

**In 2021, Diane completed
227 returns for 117 clients,
helping clients receive a
total of \$604,213.85 in
benefits for 2020.**



Many people face barriers in completing their taxes on a yearly basis. The top three reasons according to Prosper Canada are insufficient access to clinics and services, not knowing where to get help, and not being aware of the need to file when they have no taxable income. The groups most affected by these barriers are families and single parents, people with physical and mental health challenges, and newcomers.

Diane has supported many clients who were behind in filing their taxes and brought them up to date. Because of her assistance, 117 clients will have received a total of \$604,213.85 in benefits for 2020. Many clients also now receive benefits such as the Canada Child Benefit, Canada Workers Benefit, GST, Trillium, and the Climate Action Incentive. Not only will these individuals receive past entitlements they will also receive them each year moving forward as long as they continue to file their taxes. This is why it is important to do your taxes every year! Diane is doing amazing work to help people who are living on low-income access the benefits and money they are entitled to.

EVERYDAY HEROES: VOLUNTEER STORIES

Shashi Sharma (*Women of the World Peer Leader*)

THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD (WOW) PROGRAM AIMS TO ENSURE IMMIGRANT WOMEN FEEL CONNECTED TO, AND INCLUDED WITH, THEIR CANADIAN COMMUNITY.

THE PROGRAM OFFERS MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES THAT FOSTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.



In 2016, Shashi Sharma was selected as one of six Peer Leaders, from a group of 20, to participate in a WOW Peer Leadership Training. After completing the training, she began to co-lead the Northwest Multicultural WOW Group.

Throughout the pandemic, Shashi has supported new Peers Leaders as they begin to form new ethnocultural groups by sharing her wisdom and experience. Shashi has also taken part in outreach strategies and speaking events such as the United Way Campaign, where she shared her own story and personal experience as a newcomer to Canada as an Impact Speaker.

Shashi is a very dedicated, hardworking woman. She is always keen to offer her skills and knowledge to serve her community. Shashi has demonstrated a deep understanding of the role volunteering plays and the connection to being part of the Canadian community. Being active in the community is an important part of her life and we are grateful for all her contributions to this program.

"Shashi's commitment to the immigrant community and her passion to assist anyone in need is admirable."

CHECK OUT OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS!

- Board of Directors
- Client Survey Support
- Digital Literacy Navigator
- French Health Promotion
- Income Tax Clinic
- North East London Community Engagement Group (NELCE)
 - Chatterbox Tuesday and Crafts
 - Euchre Time
 - JPll Community Garden
 - Knitting Group
 - Walking Program
- Social Media
- Tai Chi
- Virtual Cooking
- Virtual Singing
- Volunteer Newsletter
- Women of the World (WOW)
 - Afghan Group
 - Middle Eastern Group
 - Multi-Cultural Group
 - Nepali/Bhutanese Group
 - Yazidi Group

95% of volunteers felt their work gives them a sense of accomplishment.

100% of volunteers felt appreciated and recognized for their contributions to the Health Centre.

90% of volunteers said the Health Centre provides a positive place to volunteer.

For more than 30 years, the Health Centre has had a vibrant volunteer program working with an average of 120 volunteers each year.

Welcome, new volunteers!

Brianne Floriancic (*Client Survey Support*)

Doohwan Lee (*Client Survey Support*)

Jasmine Lee (*Volunteer Newsletter and Digital Literacy Navigator*)

Kaylee Huynh (*Social media*)

Mohsen Gabr (*Client Survey Support*)

Riya Pandey (*Social media*)

A BIG THANKS TO THE VOLUNTEER SUPERVISORS WHO LEAD OUR TEAMS OF VOLUNTEERS! DEBORAH CANALES, ERIN WILLIAMS, ISMA MALIK, LEN HUGHES, SARAH PATTERSON, SELMA TOBAH, SHELLY HAPPY, AND SONIA MUHIMPUNDU

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LONDON?

This winter, Indigenous people experiencing homelessness will be able to reconnect with their culture while temporarily housed through London's first Indigenous-led winter shelter program.

Hosted by Atlohsa Family Healing Services, the temporary shelters are located near Westminster Ponds and can accommodate up to 30 participants.

Participants will have access to private rooms, traditional meals, and support from Atlohsa in finding permanent housing. With the help of participants, a tipi has been set up on-site where a sacred fire is tended, offering participants a way to keep in touch with their culture.



ATLOHSA
FAMILY HEALING SERVICES



THIS TIPI ON THE SITE OF ATLOHSA'S WINTER PROGRAM WAS SET UP WITH THE HELP OF RESIDENTS. (JAMES CHAARANI/CBC)

Jokes



When does a joke become a 'dad' joke?

When it becomes apparent.



Jokes

What did one ocean say to the other ocean?

Nothing, it just waved.



Looking for your next great read but not sure what it is?

The London Public Library can help with that! **Personal Picks** is a service offered by the library where staff will prepare a personalized reading list, just for you!

If you like surprises, consider using their **We Pick** service! Library staff will select available titles for you based on your preferences and the age of the readers, and you'll be able to pick them up at your selected location.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LONDON?

Want to learn more about gender-based violence and how we can build a future without violence?

Check out ANOVA's **Peace by Piece** podcast! This bi-weekly podcast is hosted by Dr. AnnaLise Trudell, who will share tools and approaches to break down and understand gender-based violence and how we can stop it.



a future without violence.

Available on all major podcast listening platforms.



PRIVILEGE AND POWER: UNDERSTANDING YOUR SOCIAL LOCATION

The discussion of privilege can be difficult as privilege is seen as the other side of oppression. Some might feel that being privileged means that they are oppressing those who are not privileged or that they are benefitting at the expense of others. Some might believe that having privilege means their life has been easy and that they're immune to hardship. However, people are not either privileged or unprivileged and there are a number of factors to consider when discussing privilege.

(continued on next page)

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Adapted from ccrweb.ca

@sylvriaduckworth

PRIVILEGE AND POWER: UNDERSTANDING YOUR SOCIAL LOCATION

(continued from the previous page)

Before we talk about privilege, it is important to understand your social location. Social location refers to an individual's position in society based on a combination of factors including gender, race, ability, education, class, citizenship, and language. Everyone has a social location, and an individual's social location is unique to them. Your life experiences will differ from another person's, and this is due to the privilege and power, or lack thereof, associated with your social location.

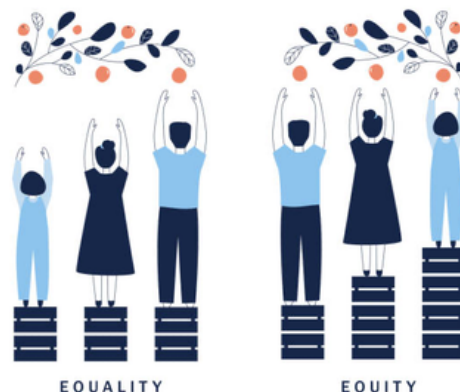
Privilege refers to unearned advantages or benefits one receives due to their membership in certain social groups. Take a look at the Wheel of Power/Privilege (above), you'll see some privileges listed on the wheel that you may argue can be earned. For example, you might say wealth can be earned by getting a post-secondary education, getting a job, working hard, and being financially responsible. This is true.

However, it can also be argued that certain advantages or benefits are more easily earned due to other privileges that an individual already has. An individual from an affluent family is more likely to be able to obtain a post-secondary education and a higher paying career compared to an individual from a low-income family who may need to defer going to

university in order to financially support or care for their family, thus remaining at the same class.

The privileges that individuals have (or don't have) has an impact on many aspects of one's life. Lacking certain privileges can mean an inability or difficulty in accessing certain services and opportunities, such as health care and wellness. Within health care, some barriers include poverty, homelessness, culture, and language. For example, a newcomer who doesn't speak English or speaks poor English would have difficulty getting or understanding treatment for their health concerns and may become discouraged from accessing health care.

Talking about privilege can be difficult, but it is important for us to understand our own privilege so we can be an ally to those who have less privilege. Having privilege also does not mean that we need to feel guilty for the benefits and advantages that were afforded to us, instead we can use our privilege to challenge the system of privilege and oppression and address the inequities in society.



WORD SEARCH

V O L U N T E E R I N G V O L U
A B I L I T Y N E Y T I N G I D
L T F U T U R E S O L V E O D E
U E E R S P R E P A R E A A E R
E N C O U R A G E E I N C L A W
T R O F F E A C C E P T A N C E
I A R E C N E I T A P R E D I B
M E E F A S E C N E I R E P X E
E L I S T E N L P E E R F U N E

VOLUNTEERING

PREPARE

TIME

VALUE

DIGNITY

LISTEN

RESPECT

FUTURE

EFFORT

GIVE

PEER

SAFE

SOLVE

ENCOURAGE

ABILITY

GOAL

ACCEPTANCE

IDEA

LIFE

LAW

PATIENCE

LEARN

EXPERIENCE

FREE

FUN

Find the hidden message with the remaining letters.

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