

# YORK UNIVERSITY-TD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTRE 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



## CATALYST GRANT RECIPIENTS

### Young Inventors Initiative

This March Break program exposed marginalized youth in JF to the design and development of technology through innovative experiential learning. It was steeped in the history of Black inventors and innovators. This was a partnership between the Harriet Tubman Institute, Access Alliance Multicultural Health Centre and SPARK.

### Critical Issues in Education: Parent Workshop Series

Education Involved Advocacy and the Faculty of Education partnered to outreach to parents looking for support and skill development in advocating for their own children within the school system. This project engaged in parent outreach, one-on-one consultation for participants, and a one-day parent conference.

### Jane Finch Community Research Partnership

The JFCRP hosted a day conference to address the challenges in accessing research about or conducted in the JF community; facilitate the sharing of ideas and provide a foundational basis for moving forward with the development of a community based research repository and community ethics process.

5

Catalyst Grants totaling \$27,000 were distributed for projects between a York and Community Partner

## 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 Black Creek Community.

The CEC reports to the Vice-Provost Academic, and is a pan-university re-source centre situated in the Black Creek Community that:

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

### STAFF:

- **Lorna Schwartzentruber** - Manager
- **Talisha Ramsaroop** - Community Projects Coordinator
- **Tessa Jean** - Administrative Assistant
- **Rawi Asghar** - Work/Study Receptionist
- **Karolin Markos** - Student Placement
- **Nikita Singh** - Student Placement
- **Sonal Mehra** - Student Placement
- **Tomika McIntosh** - Student Placement
- **Sidrah Mir** - BSW/Student Placement
- **Charles Jr Crawford** - Communications Consultant

Yorkgate Mall, Suite 232A  
1 York Gate Blvd.  
Toronto, ON M3N 3A1  
416-736-5980  
yorkcec@yorku.ca  
Yorku.ca/cec

/YorkUTDCEC  
 @YorkUTDCEC

### Temporary Employment Agencies in Jane and Finch Research Project

This project engaged in community based research to identify issues of temp employment specifically in Jane Finch. The project, a partnership with CLASP and the Jane Finch Action Against Poverty, will be used to either determine a law/policy reform project that can serve as a solution to precarious working conditions or further educate the community about their rights as temp workers

### Making the Connection

This community based research project's goal is to identify reasons for the lack of female participation in programs and youth spaces in Jane Finch. This relationship between The SPOT and a communications professor at York with a background in Tween girls has grown over the years through a number of EE projects. This time the focus is on girls and hearing directly from them to make sure they are included in the range of programs provided in the community.

## YEAR IN REVIEW

**2017** was marked by deepening

our relationships, reflecting on community engagement in changing social and political climates, thinking about best research practices in community based research, and getting more involved in schools and access to PSE activities. These were just a few of the larger themes that shaped our work. This report will give you an overview of the many ways that we practiced and learned from community engagement in 2016.

Special thanks to the TD Bank and the York University President's office for their on-going financial support of this work. Also thanks to the staff that animate the work daily, in particular Nathan Stern and Tessa Jean. We are appreciative of leadership from Dr. Alice Pitt and Yvette Munro as they guide the CEC and its place within York University, and our Advisory Committee, Cheryl Prescod, Michael Johnny, Talisha Rasaroop, Heidi Siero, Byron Grey, Henry Decock, Anna Hudson, Uzo Anucha, and Jacqueline Spence, for keeping us well rooted.

-Lorna Schwartzentruber, Manager

## Community Based Research

Through the Jane Finch Community Research Partnership, we have been deepening our thinking about research ethics and research sharing. A group of passionate community members, librarians, knowledge mobilization specialists organized two events this year (see Catalyst Grant section). This work has explored the following explore, 1) what research is being done in Jane and Finch and how does the community access that research, and 2) what does a community ethics process look like and how do we develop an accessible research collection in Jane and Finch.

### Experiential Education

**13** Courses were supported in developing community partnerships for Experiential Education in Economics, Humanities, Communications, Environmental Studies, and Social Sciences.

Thanks to funding from Osgoode Law School, the Creek Community Health Centre, CLASP, and the held two community workshops, one on Tenant Rights and Responsibilities, and a youth focused "Know Your Rights" workshop. Over 50 people attended the two workshops

### Enabling Community Building Connections

**14** community groups used space at the CEC on a regular basis for community meetings, programs, and training events.

Through these events over **380** community members who were welcomed to the CEC.

**Anchor Institution Framework** – The CEC is represented on the Presidents Sustainability Council and the Human Rights and Social Justice Committee of the PSC is co-chaired by Lorna Schwartzentruber. The work of that committee is to define the role of the university in the community and to develop a plan of action to address the needs of the community.

### Published

**The Morning After: Stakeholder Reflections on the Sustainability of a Community-campus Engagement Center in the Changing Environment** – Dr. Michaela Hynie (York University), Cheryl Prescod (Black Creek Community Health Centre), Barry Rieder (Jane Finch Community Ministries), Wanda McNevin (Jane Finch Centre) and Lorna Schwartzentruber (CEC) wrote an article published in the Journal, 2016 Metropolitan Universities Vol. 27 No. 3 (Autumn 2016), DOI: 10.18060/21385. While most analyses of the success and sustainability of community-university engagement initiatives focus on the university environment, our article explores the impact of changes in the larger social and political systems on the community environment.

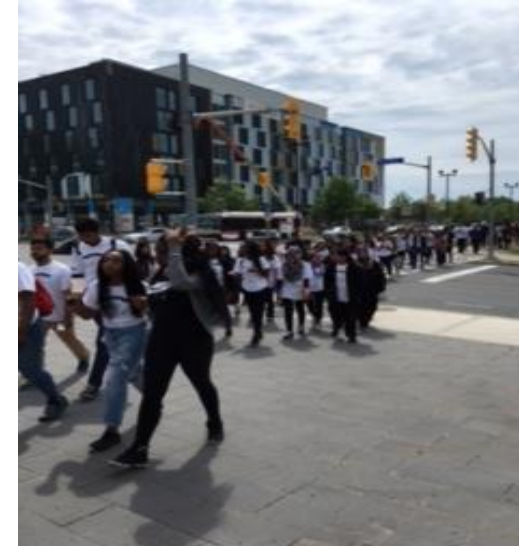


## Access

### "Count Yourself In"

We put on two access to Post- Secondary Education (PSE) events this year along with Seneca College, Humber College, Toronto Employment and Social Services, and the Council of Educators Toronto, to bring information and workshops to approximately 250 newcomers and other adults and youth living in Toronto's northwest. The events were planned for non-traditional students or those who have faced barriers to PSE in the past. The first event was held at York and focused on Newcomers to Canada, with an emphasis on bridging programs and other pathways to education. The second event held at Humber College was of a more general nature to make sure that life learners find out about educational opportunities that include them, including bridging programs, financial aid, and areas of study and hands-on learning.

*This event helped me to know the pathway of getting into my field of study and answer how to fund it. Such an awesome experience. learn and heard about so many*



### First Year Network (FYN)

Every spring we reach out to students from the local high schools who have decided to go to York and invite them to join the FYN. FYN builds a network, helps with transition from high school to university, and connects students to the School of Women's Studies in celebrating 25 years of the bridging program.

### Women's Bridging Program

54 women participated. This program continues to be an innovative and socially significant educational outreach program offering mature women a way to qualify for entry into PSE.

### Reading Black Canada

A book club series in partnership with the Harriet Tubman Institute, we held reading circles that discussed: Brown Girl in the Ring, The Illegal, Red Jacket, What We All Long For, and You Can Get There From Here.

**155** Of community members stopped by our office to discuss admissions to York U or other Post-Secondary Education

**653** People stopped by our office to find out more about

**Black Creek Financial Action Network** – We continue to host and facilitate the BCFAN, a network of organizations doing financial empowerment in the Black Creek community. While not directly an Access initiative, financial literacy is a key component to imagining oneself in PSE, as the financial implications can contribute to barriers in access. This year the BCFAN educated itself on OSAP changes, and shared information on the Canada Education Bonds. It also made submissions on payday loan legislation changes in Ontario, developed a free tax clinic for small businesses for 2016, and shared ideas and best practices for on-going financial empowerment work among members.



## 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 Black Creek Community.

The

### Reading Black Canada

A book club series in partnership with the Harriet Tubman Institute, we held reading circles that discussed: Brown Girl in the Ring, The Illegal, Red Jacket, What We All Long For, and You Can Get There From Here.

### Experiential Education

**13** Courses were supported in developing community partnerships for Experiential Education in Economics, Humanities, Communications, Environmental Studies, Social Work, Health, Social Sciences, Accounting and Community Legal Education.

### Enabling Community Building Connections

**14** community groups used space at the CEC on a regular basis for community meetings, programs, and training events. Through these events over **380** community members who were welcomed to the CEC.

