

St. Christopher House E-Newsletter
May and June 2008
Year 2 – issue 8

Welcome to the St. Chris monthly newsletter, alerting you to what's new at St. Christopher House. We hope you enjoy the read, and please contact Fernando Lusvarghi, Volunteer Developer with any comments or questions about the contents of the newsletter, and/or if you no longer want to be on this email list. Fernando Lusvarghi can be reached at fernandolu@stchrishouse.org or by phone at: (416) 532-4828 ext. 105.

Community Sweep 2008 – We need your help!

Please join us in our Annual Community Sweep on Saturday, May 24th, from 10-2:30pm and on Tuesday, May 27th from 5-9pm – we need your help in talking to community members! This is a fun volunteer day, with lunch included! All are welcome to come and help out, please contact Fernando at fernandolu@stchrishouse.org or ph. 416-532-4828 ext. 105 if you can join us.

GED semi-annual graduation – on May 15th

The GED preparation program will be having our semi-annual graduation on the evening of May 15th. This is a time for us to celebrate the accomplishments of our students who have worked to prepare for their high-school equivalency exam. We are really proud of each person's accomplishment and we wish each the best. Thank you to our great team of volunteer tutors and evening reception who provide much needed support to the program.

The GED team:

Linda, Evelyn and Annie - *Learning Coaches*
Joanna – *Program Coordinator*
Lambrina – *Unit Director*



Host Youth Mentorship Program – Volunteers needed

The Immigrant and Refugee Services Program (IRSP) at St. Christopher House is pleased to call for volunteer mentors for youth. Mentorship is a critical foundation of support for youth participating at our program. Low self-esteem is one of the greatest barriers our youth face, especially for newcomers who have an extra burden of settlement and integration. A mentor, through interaction with a youth, will have a positive impact on the newcomer youth's self worth and view of the world as well as understanding how to settle and integrate in the Canadian society. Increased self worth allows the young person to progress toward their goals, whether personal or career-related as much as the growth of their relationships, social inclusion and familiarity with the Canadian norms and practices.

If interested in volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Program at volunteers@stchrishouse.org or (416) 532-4828 ext. 105.

25 in 5: Network for Poverty Reduction

The 25-in-5: Network for Poverty Reduction is a multi-sectoral network comprised of more than 100 provincial and Toronto-based organizations and individuals working on eliminating poverty. St. Christopher House is a founding member of 25 in 5.

The Network was formed around the call for a Poverty Reduction Plan with a goal to reduce poverty in Ontario by 25% in 5 years and 50% in 10 years. The Government of Ontario has subsequently committed the province of Ontario to develop a poverty reduction strategy. There are a number of key principles that should guide the government's approach, and are crucial planks of a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy.

Start with the principle that a hard day's work should equal a fair day's pay, through minimum wage increases, stepping up the enforcement of labour standards, and breaking down barriers based on discrimination. Give adults and children real income security by bolstering the newly created Ontario Child Benefit and providing adequate systems of support for those who cannot work full time. Include policies that specifically address the disproportionate impact of poverty on racialized communities, aboriginal people, women, persons with disabilities and newcomers. Make affordable housing and quality child care top provincial priorities. Ensure that everyone has real access to medical and dental care

Music School concerts

The Music School will be holding our end of term student concerts on Wednesday, June 18 and Thursday, June 19. Both concerts are held in the Community Hall at 248 Ossington and start at 6:30. These are free and are open to the public.

Announcing new CRA Director

We are very pleased to announce Lynne Woolcott as the new Director of Community Response and Advocacy. Lynne comes to us from Regent Park Community Health Centre where she was Clinical Director. Many years ago, she was Coordinator of the Meeting Place and then became a Board member of St. Chris. She lives locally and her son is a Music School student.

Lynne has a Masters of Social Work and many years of experience working with networks advocating for social justice for marginalized people. Her more recent work in community-based health care (both Queen West Community Health Centre and Regent Park Community Health Centre) will also be an asset to us.

Employment Preparation Program's - Workshop Series Schedule from May 5th to May 16th

Smart Serve, Laurie Reiner, facilitator, (416) 848-7980 ext. 248

Learn what it is to be responsible working with alcohol. Receive Beverage Service Training.
FEE: \$21.50 (maybe covered by Ontario Works)

Customer Service, Gladys Klestorny, facilitator, (416) 848-7980 ext. 222

Customer Service Excellence focuses on developing your customer service strengths and working within a team to provide the ultimate customer service experience for your clients. The skills you will learn in this workshop are the fundamentals of being a service professional. **FREE**

WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) Gladys Klestorny, (416) 848-7980 ext. 222

WHMIS is a Canada-wide system designed for employers and workers information about hazardous materials used in the workplace. Who Should Attend Hazardous Materials Training: All employees who may be exposed to hazardous substances in the workplace. For example: janitors, cleaners, housekeepers, cooks, mechanics, etc.

FEE: \$11.50 (for non Ontario Works participants). Sign up today. Space is limited ☺

Volunteers Needed at St. Chris

We have a wide range of volunteer needs, so please check out our volunteer opportunities to get involved. If you can help out or if you know of someone else who would like to help out, please contact our Volunteer Program at volunteers@stchrishouse.org.

We are still recruiting for volunteer CYCLISTS for our Meals-on-Wheels program, to deliver meals by bicycle during the spring and summer months. This is a very exciting volunteer initiative, where you can get exercise, enjoy the outdoors and help support seniors, all in one!

*All issues of the St. Chris monthly newsletter are sent from the address fernandolu@stchrishouse.org. Please use this address when configuring email or spam filter rules, if you use them.