

New Year, New Images, New Spirit...



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Spring 2011 will feature Culturelink in a new Website with a brand-new CultureLink Logo. The CultureLink Website Development Committee is working very hard as a team to have a great product to be launched in Spring 2011.

As someone rightly put, "the only thing constant is change!" Under CIC's new strategic direction, the Modernized Approach, CultureLink is well poised to offer new and innovative ways to address our clients' needs.

We will welcome a new website and turn it an essential tool for newcomers, volunteers, staff and the public in general to communicate. The website will facilitate our service oriented approach in its ever flexible platform. Here are some of the great values that the new website will exhibit:

Look and Feel

The new website employs a warm buoyant yellow color to create a vibrant youthful background. The speech bubble theme echoes the meaning of our new logo (see Page 3) symbolizing a warm embrace for dialogs. The theme pictures of CultureLink's community members holding "welcome" signs in different languages create a heartfelt welcome atmosphere for the visitors.

Client-centered Web Structure

Previously, our website displayed the organizational structure up and front, but the service information that was not given deserved prominence. Now the new website focuses more on clients' needs and their web experiences by reversing the structure to make our service information extremely accessible to clients. Our goal is to catch clients' attention right by their first click.

It is indeed exciting! The spring 2011, we have a lot to look forward to....

"At CultureLink we believe that:

- Newcomers are critical to Canada's future;**
- Our staff and volunteers are our organization's most important resources."**

CULTURELINK AMID SECTOR CHANGES



We celebrated a great Holiday Season the past year.

As the New Year brought new challenges, there were CIC funding cuts and changes to the sector. This is a topic that has been on the news and the minds of organizations like CultureLink since last December. The entire sector has had an extremely harsh winter. Unfortunately, some of our community partners did not survive.

Our program has received many phone calls and emails from concerned clients, volunteers and community partners who are worried about CultureLink’s fate. We are very touched by the solidarity expressed by our community. Thank you, our friends!

We want to assure you that we are fine. If CultureLink could be viewed as a tree, this tree, with its deep and healthy roots in the community, robust trunk and well positioned branches supporting each other, shall remain intact despite the environment change. Luckily, even our smallest twig is still capable of sprouting and blossoming. Just as the funder stated in the acceptance letter, CIC “assessed agencies on set criteria such as relevance to need, value for money, cost effectiveness, organizational governance, as well as agencies’ track record in reporting and financial accountability”. In all these areas CultureLink showed a job well done. Therefore, after a long unbearable winter, we are still here, strong and confident, for our clients.

However, CultureLink is left in a situation where we have to double our efforts to innovate, find new and better ways to cater to client’s needs and an effective organizational structure to take advantage of the modernization changes as well as to fill the vacuum in servicing people when many similar services are disappearing. We’ve come a long way, yet still a long long way ahead of us.

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CultureLink's New Logo
Linking Cultures, Promoting Dialogues

In this issue, we cannot seem to stop talking about changes! After introducing a major facelift of the organization - the overhaul to our existing website, now we are again surprising our constituencies with a fresh logo. This is a total makeover of the brand identity that we have been attached to for over 20 years.

Not only will the new logo's modernized look and minimalist configuration be much easier to work with in all settings, it is also felt that the new logo communicates our identity more vividly: The colors, dark brown and golden yellow, are distilled from the colors of sunflowers. CultureLink's people believe that the sunflowers symbolize the spirit of adaptation, the tireless pursuit of sunlight, and the eternal longing for integration. The 'C's and 'L's are the words 'Culture' and 'Link's initials, but they also emphasize that different 'C'ultures and 'L'ifestyles mingle here at CultureLink by participating in open dialogues. The dialogues will be embraced in speech bubbles are formed by 'C's and 'L's) by linking with each other amicably.



CultureLink in the News

On January 28, 2011, Fei Tang, our Host Program Manager was invited to TVO Agenda with Steve Paikin, to be part of an engaging and informative conversation on whether immigrants consider Canada home; with four other guests from very diverse and different organizations

"When does Canada become 'home'?" the video archive can be viewed in TVO's Website.



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

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We got mail!

Mail from a Host volunteer ...

Hi Eman,*

How are you? I hope all is well with you.

I received a call from you informing me that my case with Weiwei is now finished. I just want to tell you that we created such a good friendship and both of us are happy to be friends since we started to be paired together by your program.

Again thank you for the opportunity and if your organization is still looking for volunteer please inform me.

All the best,

Reggie Capina



Mail from a newcomer participant...

Dear Eman:

I am really delighted with the fact that you have chosen Jai as the person to whom I may match. We have become good friends and his valuable time every week is really worthy for me. I would not be able to know many things about Toronto if I would have not known him. I do really appreciate all he is doing for me.

I have to thank you all for the good job you are doing for newcomers like me. It is really not easy for any immigrant who decides to come to Canada as I did. I am still struggling to get a rental apartment nearby my job and my daughter's school, and Jai is supporting me in this fact.

Best regards,

Martin Romero

* Eman is a Program Counselor with CultureLink Host Program



WELCOMING COMMUNITY NEWS

**CultureLink
Settlement
Services**

Volume 2, Issue 2

January 2011



CultureLink is a settlement agency located at Bloor and Dundas West in downtown Toronto. For twenty-one years, we have upheld our mission:

CultureLink is dedicated to facilitating the independence and full participation of newcomers in Toronto's diverse community. CultureLink works within an anti-discriminatory framework to ensure a respectful, safe and inclusive environment.

We hope you have enjoyed Volume Two, Issue 2 of our Welcoming Community Newsletter, and that you will enjoy future issues.

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**KNOW SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO JOIN
CULTURELINK'S HOST COMMUNITY?
HAVE THEM CONTACT US!**

**VISIT US AT:
WWW.WELCOMINGCOMMUNITY.CA
WWW.CULTURELINK.NET**

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The Host Newsletter invites you, the members of the CultureLink Community to share your story with us. Please send your story, comments and thoughts to:

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