



URBAN UPDATE

Urban Alliance on Race Relations Newsletter

Volume 23
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY: GARY PIETERS

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations (UARR) mission "is to promote a stable and healthy multicultural, multi-ethnic environment in Toronto."

We passionately believe in the UARR goals, vision, values and strategic plan, and our organization continues to remain as relevant now as it was when it was formed in 1975 in protecting the public interest, and making Toronto, the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario and Canada, a society where people of all diversities can live, work, prosper and succeed.

We urge everyone who shares our goals to consider taking out a membership. Forms are available on our website at urbanalliance.ca or here at the AGM.

This is my first report as President of UARR and I would like to express great thanks and appreciation to the Board of Directors, Staff, Community Partners, Partner Organizations and Funders, members, volunteers, and participants/supporters for making the organization a vital part of the city, and for enabling the organization to meet its objectives successfully.

This AGM and forum is happening on a very significant day – the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. We are here in Regent Park and thank the Toronto Community Housing Corporation for allowing us to use this facility at 246



Sackville St. for our AGM and forum.

As a small organization, we continue to use existing human, financial and in-kind resources to improve our research, advocacy and community-based work to address emerging issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion that covers all equity seeking grounds and their intersections with race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, language, age, and gender.

I am pleased to report on some of the highlights of this year:

Policing: We have continued to work on advocacy activities to improve how the police and policing affect our communities. We provided deputations to the Toronto Police Services Board expressing concerns about the carding of racialized young people and racial profiling.

We were granted leave to intervene at the

Supreme Court of Canada in the case Schaeffer/Minty et. al. Our reason for this application is that “the issues raised in this appeal relate to procedures in SIU investigations and are central to the system of police accountability and oversight” in Ontario.

Gender-Based Violence Prevention: We have undertaken work that addresses violence against women, and the prevention of gender-based violence on post-secondary campuses. We have just ended a 3-year gender-based violence prevention camp funded by Status of Women Canada, Trillium and the City of Toronto. Over 500 young people benefitted from workshops, and the project ended with a 2-day conference in March 2013 that was attended by 75 young people. The legacy of this project has and continues to be empowering young people to take action in their communities through the creation of media that will permanently educate others to take action to eliminate violence against women. We appreciate the work of the project coordinator and project staff whose leadership had a significant positive impact on the success of this project.

Last year, we also received funding from Status of Women Canada Grant to partner with the Humber Students Federation and Humber College for a Gender-based Violence Prevention project on a Post-Secondary Campus. Deemed Making Noise @Humber, the project will be conducted over the course of a 28-Month partnership at the North and Lakeshore campus. Currently, we are in the 1st year of the project delivering numerous activities such as: campus safety assessments, Gender-based Violence surveys and focus groups, all of which to capture current attitudes and awareness of violence and safety on campus. The 2nd year will be dedicated to a Gender-based Violence prevention awareness campaign.

Awards Dinner: We hosted our successful 37th Anniversary Awards Dinner in October 2012 at the St. Lawrence Hall and recognized community members Charles Roach (deceased), Jenny Ahn, Grace-Edward Galabuzzi and Carol Goar. This event was attended by over 150 guests from various sectors.



Rexdale Project: We received funding from the City of Toronto's Access, Equity and Human Rights for community engagement work in Rexdale. Activities are ongoing and will make a difference in building the capacity of young people in Rexdale to build safer communities.

Public Education: We were invited to present or to host display tables at several community conferences. In May 2012 two UARR Directors presented a workshop at the Toronto District School Board FUTURES equity conference. UARR staff presented at the Truth and Reconciliation Conference in May 2012, and also staffed display tables at the Antiracism Multiculturalism Educators Network of Ontario (AMENO) Conference in June 2012.

Workers Rights: We addressed the 'We are Toronto' rally at lawns of the Ontario Legislature, Queen's Park on April 21, 2012 urging that Ontario continues to accelerate prosperity not austerity and that the colour-coded labour market that sees racialized minorities making less gains in access to good jobs be remedied. We also talked of the income gap, and racialization of poverty as issues that affect the highly racialized workforce in Ontario.

We have returned to the Good Jobs for all Coalition in July 2012. Discussions at the meeting focus on community benefits, fair wages and workers rights to decent jobs.



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Embracing Hope Building Communities: In response to the rise in gun violence in priority neighbourhoods including Kingston-Galloway (Danzig St Shooting), Regent Park, Jamestown and Jane and Finch, we brought together 30 community-based organizations to dialogue on proven ways to prevent violence in communities. Together, we endorsed and published a joint statement in the Toronto Star calling on all levels of government and the private sector to positively engage young people in local communities as one of the key measures to counter gang violence. The statement received widespread applause and was considered in Ontario's Youth Action Plan.



Media/Social Media: The Urban Alliance on Race Relations have an updated website urbanalliance.ca, facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/125617860855504/> and twitter @uarrtoronto. Our social media presence has continued to grow. Over the past year, our twitter account grew from just 20 followers then to over 450 members. Our facebook group has also increased its users both in terms of visitors and posts. The UARR website traffic has experienced an increase, with over 100 views on some days of the week. We invite all of you to visit us at these sites at any time.



We have also generate media interest, and staff and directors have appeared either as subject experts, were quoted, or wrote Opinion/Editorial pieces in various publications including the Toronto Star and Huffington Post. The UARR activities were highlighted in the media including the Toronto Star, Share News, Caribbean Camera, Humber News, CityTV, and Dr. Vibe Podcast.

I am pleased with the work of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations. We had a challenging and rewarding year, we have done great work and there is even greater work ahead. We are proud of our collective work at the Urban Alliance on Race Relations and sincerely thank you for all of your support.

Email: gary@urbanalliance.ca

Making Noise!

GV CAMP 3 Year Reflection

By: Ashley McFarlane

The three-year Making Noise! Project has wrapped up and the experience has left me at a loss for words. Imagine after Making all that Noise, I've realized it's time to be silent, reflect, and of course write the final reports. The experience, however, cannot be wrapped up in a written piece. Sometimes language is not enough.

How do you explain the feeling you get after a youth worker lets you know that because of your organizations workshops they have decided to devote one day a week to female-specific programming in their organization?

How do you digest the impact you've had on a young woman who has put up a Facebook post about how she woke up and had the ability to confront her arguing neighbors the night after the conference and was better equipped with managing a domestic altercation by listening and trying to understand both people with the awareness that violence against women affects all people?

How do you cross those lines and build healthy spaces where we can all thrive free from any form of violence?

Fortunately, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations is part of a long legacy of people who have fought for change in the city. We have created space for challenging, yet respectful discourse to happen. The organization has been able to guide us youth, give us space and trust us to connect with our peers. I am grateful for this, as I have seen how these peer-to-peer relationships have allowed the Making Noise Staff and community partners to mentor and guide over 500 youth across the GTA.

Youth Workers across the city have also benefited from the Youth Worker Support Trainings we hosted in the



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Summer of 2011 and Spring of 2012. These trainings, our workshops and meetings with our Youth Advisory Committee informed our work throughout the years. The feedback and conversations we had in all these spaces led to the development of the Making Noise! Learn. Act. Heal. Community Conference on Gender-based Violence.

The Community Conference was an inspirational culmination of the 3-year project. We were able to bring back youth, youth workers and services providers who have been involved with Making Noise! throughout the years. The buzzword Making Noise! was being repeated throughout the various workshops. We got people talking, thinking, acting, and healing. Diverse communities were engaging around the issues of Gender-based violence in inclusive and understanding ways. In addition to taking the time to relax and heal from the work they are doing and the effects of violence in their lives.

Though often extremely critical of everything, I am also very happy with the project. It's been a long three years and I don't think I could have had this experience anywhere but at the UARR. Neither could this work have been done without the entire UARR team of Staff, Board of Directors, participants and Community Partners. It truly takes a village. Special thanks to everyone who Made Noise! and will continue to Make Noise!

In Sol,

Ashley Alexis McFarlane
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For more information and to see media, videos and art created by youth during the project visit:

www.urbanalliance.ca
Youtube: UARRFYC
Twitter: UARRToronto







“MAKE YOUR MARK” & “MAKE THEM PROUD”

We have all wanted to leave a lasting memory of our selves – for our families, our friends and our colleagues. And the best way to do it is to make a donation to an organization like the UARR.

You could donate a small amount every month or a lump sum. You could also transfer stock or mutual funds. Or perhaps you want to donate a property for a permanent home for UARR.

Your donation could be made to mark a special occasion like a Birthday or a family event. It could be made to honour a loved one or a friend.

Think about it and then give us a call. We at UARR are here to help you make that special donation. We are a registered charity and will issue tax receipts to eligible donations. Contact our Administrative Assistant Yumei at (416) 703-6607 ext. 5 or by email at yumei@urbanalliance.ca to get more information.



Making Noise @ Humber Update

By Jason Merai



With funding from Status of Women Canada, the Urban Alliance on Race Relations (UARR) has partnered with the Humber Students' Federation (HSF) and Humber College to raise awareness on gender-based violence prevention on campus. The project will be conducted in two years, with the first year dedicated to research and review of Humber's current policies, practices and procedures. The second year will focus on a gender-based violence awareness campaign on campus.

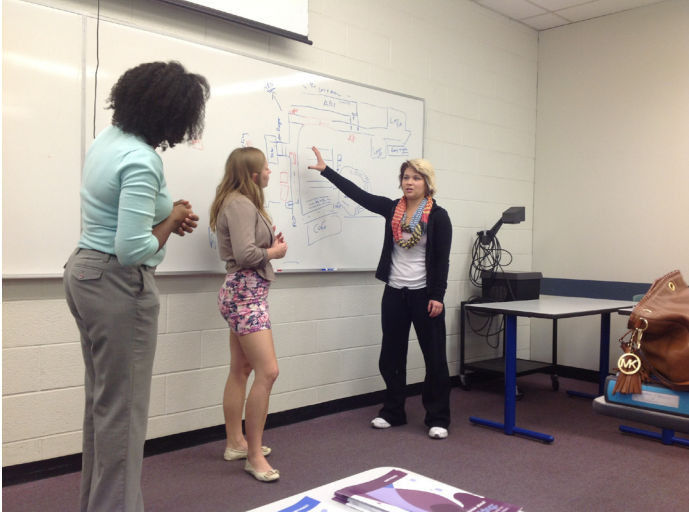
The project receives great guidance from a community advisory committee consisting of Humber College partners as well as external members, including The White Ribbon Campaign, Family Service Toronto, Ernestine's Women's Shelter, Women's Habitat and Microskills.

Deemed Making Noise @Humber, the project is carried out in support of a student committee with representation from both the Lakeshore and North campuses. Last November, student committee members received

training from the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) on how to conduct safety assessments of their campus. An assessment will be taking place in March with staff support from Humber's Public Safety Department. In addition, partnership with key events has allowed for the project profile to be raised on campus, including guest speaking at the December 6th event to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Furthermore, survey gathering and focus group discussions have been conducted to capture current attitudes and awareness of gender-based violence on campus.

In April, the student and advisory committee will review the results of the surveys, focus groups and safety assessments to make key recommendations for Humber College to implement. Information gathered from these findings will also help direct the creation of an-online toolkit to address

gender-based violence on campus for students and staff to utilize. With such important assistance from the Humber community, Making Noise @Humber is excited about laying a foundation for social change through on-campus leadership.



Photos of: Community and Humber Partner Advisory Council Meetings, Campus Safety Assessment Training, International Women's Day, Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Poetry Corner:
"PREPARATIONS FOR PROPHECY "
By: Ashley McFarlane

*At this point
We can't say we weren't expecting it
For humanity to be hanging on the thread of
extinction
For the storm to finally catch up to the brewing winds
For balance to once again
Rock the shores
Of the myth of unlimited growth*

*We knew it would happen
But we just weren't sure how
When
The changes would come
The degrees of this change in each place
Point
In space and time
Worldviews collapsing and converging
The opening of our minds eye
The days that chaos
Would seek
To level out
The trajectory
Of peace*

Preparations for prophecy

*Quick
Haphazard
Waking up to the great sleep
Now clear
Flowing and converging
A joining of paradigm rivers
In the distance
We see the environmental, economic
Political and social relations
Capitalism's value of money
Over life
Of money
On the backs of colonialist death*

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*For all these things to catch up
And stretch us back
Past modernity
Breaking the cycle
And returning to tradition
To our whole selves
In a whole universe*

We weren't prepared

*Because those who were
To prepare us
For this journey
Had not been prepared
During the journey by those
Before them
For so many generations*

We are beginning anew

*Each time
Guided only by
Those tip of the tongue
Blurry sight
Memories
Our ancestors
Could scrape together
As they scraped the wealth of the grounds*

*Bare Backed
Whipped
From our past
Strong
We are them
Journeying
Becoming
Lighting our future
Feelings
Heart
Healing
Sight
Being
Again
Fast*

Preparing

*For the great cleanse
The trajectory
That the foolish powers that be
Have set us all on*

We must see

*Again
Where this is going
In our heart of hearts
Already
Feeling
Not yet speaking
But
Knowing*

*We must all be
The change we wish to see
In the world*

We must be

*Because at this point we can't say
We weren't expecting it
For humanity to be hanging
In the balance
On the wisps
Of a dangling string
As the winds the storms
Brewing
Bring in
Sweep over
Under
And through us
Transforming
And preparing us
For prophecy*

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. .
. .*

Ashley is a Program Development Coordinator for the UARR, Poet, Fashion Designer, and Energy Healer. Her writing was recently published in the first collection of contemporary Black Canadian poetry "The Great Black North"

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Ontario Trillium Foundation
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Antiracist Multicultural Education Network of
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Assault Women's Helpline
Chair-man Mills
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Chandwani/Mendez Family
Community First Developments Inc. (CFDI)
CUPE Local 4400
CUPE Local 79
CUPE Local One
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
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Munira Gangji
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Public Service Alliance of Canada
Ryerson University
Social Planning Toronto
Special Investigations Unit (SIU)
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St. Lawrence Market Complex,
TD Bank Financial Group
The Society of Energy Professionals (IFPTE Local 160)
Toronto & York Region Labour Council
Unite Steel Workers
UARR members, staff, volunteers, individual
donors and attendees of the 2012 Awards Dinner.



Status of Women Canada
Condition féminine
Canada



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Membership Categories (please check one)

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