

Supporting Newcomer Community Engagement

An AUMA 'Good Municipal
Practices in Immigration' Webinar

Building a Diverse Volunteer Program: Some Considerations

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Overview

- Benefits of a diverse volunteer force
- Strategies for supporting the creation of a diverse volunteer force
- Questions for Consideration

What is Meant by a 'Diverse' Volunteer Force?

- New(er) Canadians
- Members of the LGBTQ community
- People with Disabilities
- Including younger (or older) volunteers
- Ensuring gender balance

Benefits of a Diverse Volunteer Program

- Diversity can bring a richness of ideas, experiences, skills, values and attitudes to organizations that actively embrace it
- Involving volunteers from different communities increases an organization's understanding of the entire community, and can help improve provision of programs and services to diverse communities

Benefits of a Diverse Volunteer Program

- It has the potential to diminish stereotypes and generalizations
- Having a diverse volunteer force may be a starting point for more diversity within the employees of the organization
- Organizations that do not include and serve the full range of individuals within their communities are not fulfilling their responsibilities to their communities

Including New(er) Canadians

Understand some of the Particular Challenges New(er) Canadians might Face

Migration can have a powerful impact – it can be helpful to know what new(er) Canadians face or have faced:

- Loneliness “Where are my family and friends?”
- Isolation “Nobody cares about me”
- Frustration “Why is nothing simple here?”
- Being overwhelmed “This is too much for me”

Understanding Immigrant Communities' Perceptions of Volunteering

- Seek feedback from community leaders on how volunteering is understood and perceived in their community
 - Volunteers from different backgrounds are not solely interested in working for their own communities
 - Volunteers are often seeking ways to connect with the wider community

They share the same diverse motivations for volunteering as anyone else.

General Strategies for Inclusion

- Ensure there is **commitment** to diversity and inclusion from management
- Assess your organization's **readiness** for diversity and inclusion
 - Identify the areas in your volunteer management **process** that need to be changed or adjusted
 - Policies (recruitment processes, recruitment sources, forms, volunteer expectations, etc.)
 - Practices (unwritten, unspoken rules, ways of interacting with others, etc.)

Strategies for Inclusion (cont'd)

- Provide **education** about diversity and inclusion
- Get **buy-in** from everyone by sharing the rationale and benefits of diversity and inclusion
- Make the D&I initiative part of your organization's **Strategic Plan**

Diversity and Inclusion won't just happen
You have to be intentional and strategic about it!

Questions for Consideration

- What is your organization's level of readiness?
 - Policy
 - Practices
 - Awareness
- Is there commitment at all levels of the organization? Where are the gaps/barriers?

Every Vote Counts

April 2011



Report to the Community
Debbie Belgrave and Charla Vall


ISCC
IMMIGRANT SECTOR
COUNCIL OF CALGARY


Ethno-Cultural
Council of Calgary
Bridging Our Communities...
Building Our Collective Voice

Project Overview

- * Voter turn-out rates likely lower among immigrants
- * Every Vote Counts (EVC) aimed to understand why
- * Used an action-research approach

Main Activities

- * Pre and post-election Surveys (174 and 112 responses)
- * Pre and post-election Forums (39 and 24 participants)
- * Action & Planning (multiple sessions and spin-offs)
- * Mayoral Town Hall (150 attendees)
- * Report Launch

Highlights – Action Planning Session

- * Participants developed action plans to implement ideas
- * Ward Leaders established
- * Tool-kits provided information and resources



Highlights - Mayoral Town Hall

- * Planned by staff and EVC participants
- * 150 attendees & 11 mayoral candidates
- * Candidates responded to issues facing immigrants



Highlights – 2010 Municipal Election

- * Calgary voter turnout rate: 33% in 2007 and 54% in 2010
- * Our Survey: 24% voted in 2007 and 58% in 2010
- * Most EVC participants voted & encouraged others to vote

"I want to contribute to what is happening in my town and choose who I think represents minorities better."

– Post-election survey respondent

Results & Learnings

- * Barriers deterring voter participation: language, awareness, logistics, etc.
- * Long and short-term recommendations identified
- * With education and resources, participants could address barriers themselves

Results & Learnings

Multiple benefits from EVC's approach:

- Recommendations emerged from those affected
- Participants gained knowledge
- Civic participation increased
- Candidates learned about issues facing immigrants

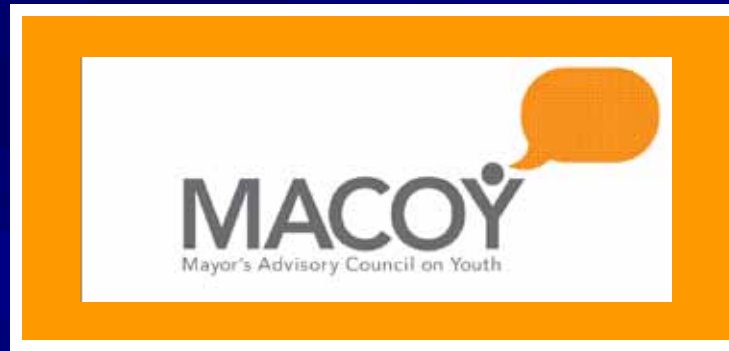


Lessons for Municipalities

- * Barriers apply to other areas and must be addressed
- * Greater benefits when immigrants participate in identifying solutions
- * Increased civic participation → enhanced democracy and stronger communities

"The citizens and community need to be part of the change we want."
– Post-election survey respondent

M.A.C.O.Y



The Mayor's Advisory Council
on Youth

What is M.A.C.O.Y?

- M.A.C.O.Y was founded in 1993 to serve as an advisory body responsible for advising City Council on services, programs and issues as they relate to youth in the region.
- They provide a voice to Mayor and Council on issues concerning youth in the community

Mission and Purpose

■ Mission

- To empower and engage youth in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo both actively and inclusively to make a significant difference in their community.

■ Purpose

- The purpose of MACOY is to empower youth to become actively engaged citizens who have a voice in decisions that affect them. MACOY members are champions of their community who work to improve the quality of lives of all citizens.

Responsibilities and Membership

■ Responsibilities

- Identifying the current, new and changing needs of youth throughout the Region
- Communicating relevant information to appropriate authorities

■ Membership

- Membership is open to all Youth ages 13-18 years old residing in the Region
- Opportunity is provided for MACOY alumni to participate in a mentorship capacity

Adult Support

- Adult Support
 - The RMWB shall provide youth-friendly, enthusiastic and committed adult mentors who will support MACOY members in their endeavors
 - Commitment of behalf of Regional Council will be to provide a representative to each MACOY meeting.

**ONGOING
PROGRAMS &
PROJECTS**

-THESE ARE PROJECTS THAT
MACOY IS COMMITTED TO
EACH YEAR

ADVOCACY

-YOUTH VOICE FOR MAYOR
AND COUNCIL
-YOUTH VOICE FOR ALL
MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS
-YOUTH VOICE IN THE
COMMUNITY
-PROVIDE UPDATES TO
MAYOR AND COUNCIL

MACOY
Mayor's Advisory Council on Youth

MENTOR, SUPPORT, ADVISE

**VOLUNTEER
AS MACOY**

-MACOY MEMBERS MAY
PRESENT IDEAS TO THE
TEAM
-AT LEAST 5 TEAM MEMBERS
MUST BE COMMITTED IN
ORDER FOR IT TO BE A
MACOY EVENT

**VOLUNTEER
AS YOU**

-MACOY WILL BE PROVIDED
WITH ALL VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE
TO YOUTH IN THE COMMUNITY
-YOU MAY CHOOSE TO
VOLUNTEER ON YOUR TIME

M.A.C.O.Y.- Successes!

- Created a Youth Mentorship Partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wood Buffalo
- Participated in the BBBS Curl for Kids Sake
- Raised money and food for the residents of the Parsons Creek Fire
- Acted as advisors to the Municipal Transit System
- Partnered with the Justin Slade Youth Foundation to re-energize their programs