



**Sarnia-Lambton Immigrant
Youth Engagement Project
2016 Outcomes Report**

Acknowledgements



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- The Ontario Ministry of Immigration, Citizenship and International Trade for funding the Immigrant Youth Engagement Project (IYEP) for a second year. This funding allowed both immigrant and indigenous youth in Sarnia-Lambton to reap the social and educational benefits of arts programming.
- The Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery, in particular the IYEP Project Leader Brittany Sitzes. Brittany worked tirelessly to develop and promote the art workshops, and collaborated with local artists and youth to ensure that programming was engaging for and accommodating of the needs of diverse youth.
- All of the children, youth and parents who participated in IYEP and who provided valuable feedback and comments which are included in this report.
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Introduction

Research has shown that arts and culture programs have numerous benefits for participants, particularly when they are newcomer and immigrant Canadians. Arts based programs can help engage marginalized and underserved children and youth, significantly improve academic achievement, improve resilience, life skills and employment opportunities, enhance self-esteem and self-expression (Ripley, 2010). Sharing stories and gathering together to create multi-medium art can also help newcomer and racially/culturally diverse Canadians feel less isolated when dealing with the challenges of resettling in a new country. Some benefits derived are: learning a new language, finding employment and address issues of racism (Charlton, Barndt, Dennis et al., 2015).



In recognition of these and many other benefits of youth participating in art programming, the second phase of Immigrant Youth Engagement Project (IYEP) focused on engaging immigrant and newcomer youth. IYEP was launched in December of 2014 with the intention of reaching out to local immigrant youth as a way to encourage, support and increase the participation of sport and recreation activities. The impetus for IYEP came out of a number of recommendations which resulted from focus group

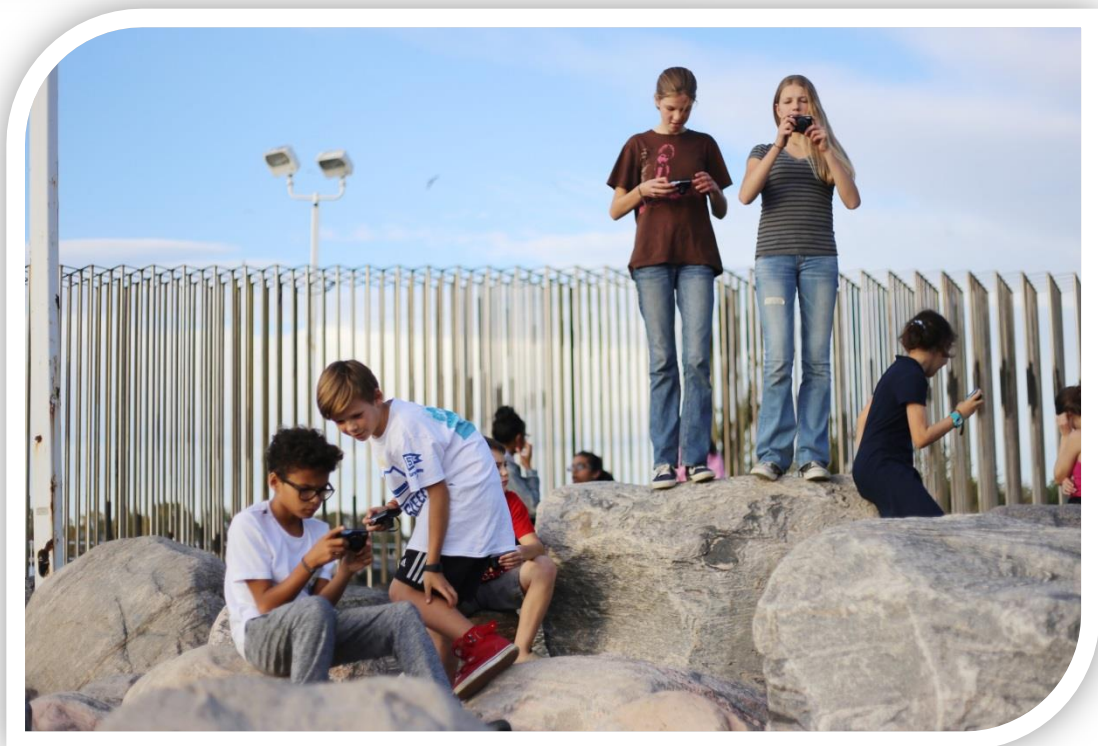
research conducted by the Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) and Lambton Public Health in 2013. The first phase of IYEP, which concluded in August of 2015, was successful in engaging immigrant youth in a number of sports, recreation and educational activities and programs.

Despite the numerous benefits of arts programming for youth, particularly those who are new to Canada, research, including focus group interviews conducted by the Sarnia-Lambton LIP and Lambton Public Health in 2013 and survey results collected throughout the 2015 phase of IYEP, found that engagement in the fine arts was proportionately low amid immigrant and newcomer youth, even though youth expressed an interest in activities such as drawing. Of the 27 youth (from 16 families) who participated in the first phase of IYEP in 2015, only four participated in arts based programming, and no youth participated in visual or fine arts programs. Survey research, conducted by LIP staff at events organized through IYEP in 2015, also found that amid youth who were enrolled in extracurricular activities, none were taking part in arts programs. This is noteworthy because when asked to rate their interests based on a list of seven activities, arts activities focused on visual art, drama and music were ranked number one by survey respondents. Interestingly, arts based programs can also reach youth who may otherwise be uninterested in, or intimidated by more competitive activities and sports (Ripley, 2010).

Due to the numerous benefits of art programming for immigrant youth, the second phase of IYEP focused its attention on offering immigrant youth the opportunity to expand their interests.

In order to do this, the Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) partnered with the Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery (JNAAG), Sarnia's public art gallery to host the program. In 2016, IYEP focused on raising awareness of existing arts programs at JNAAG, and creating 11 new weekly workshops which took place in the fall and winter of 2016. Volunteer recruitment and religious and cultural awareness and accommodation were also key components of the program.

The following report outlines the positive impact that IYEP had upon local children, youth and other stakeholders.



Access to Art

The numerous benefits of extracurricular arts programming for youth, particularly immigrant and culturally diverse youth are well documented: culturally diverse children and youth are more prone to marginalization, but arts and culture programs have been proven to help engage marginalized and underserved children and youth (Ripley, 2010). Furthermore, research has shown that the arts are an effective means of celebrating cultural heritage and diversity, fostering pride in one's cultural background, and a tool to help identity formation (Ripley, 2010). The arts are also a powerful tool in overcoming racism and discrimination, particularly when working with children and youth.

When asked, Sarnia-Lambton immigrant and newcomer youth expressed an interest in arts, but felt there was a lack of fine arts programming locally, and were not enrolled in any such programs at or outside of school. This is in line with research which has shown that “there are several challenges to developing audiences from Aboriginal and ethno-racial communities” (Smith, 2012). Therefore, IYEP's aim was to ensure that immigrant and newcomer youth were more aware of and could enjoy the many of fine arts programs locally.

This was accomplished through:

- Increasing awareness of and access to existing programs among immigrant and newcomer populations
- Creating specialized programming with a focus on bringing in a culturally diverse range of artists and art practices from around the world
- Removing barriers identified through research
- Providing diversity training to JNAAG staff, volunteers and art instructors and ensuring that all gallery programming (in addition to IYEP programs) accommodates religious and cultural beliefs and practices
- Recruiting and retaining immigrant teens to be JNAAG volunteers

The following sections of this report will highlight the details and successes of each of these outcomes.



Increasing Awareness of and Access to Programs

The first stage of the IYEP program in 2016 focused on increasing immigrant awareness of, and participation in, existing Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery (JNAAG) summer art programs: Three *TNT: Try New Things* workshops for children aged 9-12 and three *RAAW: Random Acts of Art Workshops* for teenaged youth aged 13-18. There was also a full-day PD Day Camp held on June 30th, 2016.

Although these annual summer workshops have been very popular with youth in Sarnia-Lambton, often acquiring waiting lists, immigrant and newcomer youth have not historically taken part in these programs. IYEP successfully increased awareness of and access to these workshops:

- Spots were reserved for immigrant youth in the PD Day camp and in the *RAAW* and *TNT* workshops
- The \$55 fee for the PD Day camp was waived for three immigrant youth who registered through IYEP
- In order to accommodate the large number of immigrant youth aged under 13, the age range for the third *RAAW* workshop was expanded to include youth aged 9-18.
- A special emphasis was placed on promoting the final *RAAW* workshop, “Imagining my Sustainable City”, to immigrant youth with the aim of fostering social inclusion, civic engagement and appealing to diverse interests; such as architecture, design and urban planning. The multidisciplinary nature of this workshop was especially relevant in attracting more immigrant youth, as ‘traditional’ arts programs are often considered by their parents and some newcomer communities to be of lesser importance than other fields such as science and math (Charlton, Barndt, Dennis et al., 2015).

As a result, thirteen immigrant youth ranging in age from six to 15 participated in JNAAG’s 2016 summer programs. Survey results indicate that for 71% of these youth, it was their first time visiting JNAAG and their first time taking a class or workshop at the gallery.

Additionally:

- 100% of youth learned something new
- 100% had fun in the workshops
- 100% made new friends in the workshop
- 100% planned to ask their parents if they could take more arts programs

Imagining my Sustainable City

The “Imagining my Sustainable City” workshop in particular had a notable positive impact on participants, most of whom were newcomers: Six out of the ten participants were immigrant youth. A seventh immigrant youth had also registered for the program, but withdraw due to illness.

This one of a kind three day program allowed these youth to work with Toronto’s *No. 9* collective, an arts organization that uses art and design to work with youth in order to raise awareness of environmental concerns and sustainability.

Participants learned principles of sustainability, urban planning and architecture. After walking through Sarnia's downtown core, they worked collaboratively to build a scale model which showed their reimagining of what Sarnia's downtown could be. This impressive model was then presented at a reception for participants' families and local dignitaries and politicians, including the County of Lambton's Warden, city councillors and other stakeholders. The reception was also attended by local media and the workshop (and IYEP) was highlighted in *The Sarnia Observer* (Simpson, 2016). The model built by youth was also on public display for the several days at the Judith and Norman Alix Art Gallery.

This workshop offered all participants, including immigrant youth, a unique and valuable learning opportunity, which was not only educational but instilled a sense of community engagement and civic pride. Furthermore, as noted by the Creative City Network of Canada (CCNC) and cited by Ripley (2010), when children and youth have the opportunity to display artwork they have created, it offers "meaningful public affirmation" and can be a "powerful force in developing self-esteem, particularly for youth who struggle for recognition, validation and support in other areas of their lives" (p. 17).

The positive benefits of the "Imagining my Sustainable City" workshop are made especially evident through the example of three siblings who registered in the workshop through IYEP. These youth had previously never visited JNAAG or taken a class there, and were not aware of any of the programs offered until IYEP staff reached out to diverse religious and cultural communities. The family enjoyed the workshop so much that all three siblings registered in additional IYEP programs taking place at JNAAG or signed up to volunteer.

As one of the youth noted about the "Imagining my Sustainable City" workshop:

"The program is a great opportunity for us to convert our dreams into reality. It helps teenagers like me explore different fields of work and helps narrow down what path I'd like to take later on in life."

This family's positive experience in IYEP is featured on page 24 of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's 2016 Progress Report titled *A New Direction: Ontario's Immigration Strategy*.



Ensuring Cultural Competency in the Arts

In order to ensure meaningful inclusion and support of immigrant youth and communities in arts programs, it is imperative that stakeholders gain a deeper understanding of religious and cultural diversity. When equipped with this knowledge and understanding, gallery staff, volunteers and instructors can then better support diverse youth and eliminate, or at least minimize the barriers they may face, allowing them to enjoy the full benefits of arts programming alongside their peers.

On September 20th 2016, a diversity training workshop, focused on cultural and religious accommodation in the arts, was held at the Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery (JNAAG). The session was attended by 35 JNAAG staff, art instructors and volunteers

This interactive workshop presented the experiences of culturally and religiously diverse populations in the arts, and offered research based strategies and accommodation which could be used by JNAAG staff, volunteers and instructors when developing and carrying out future programming and events.

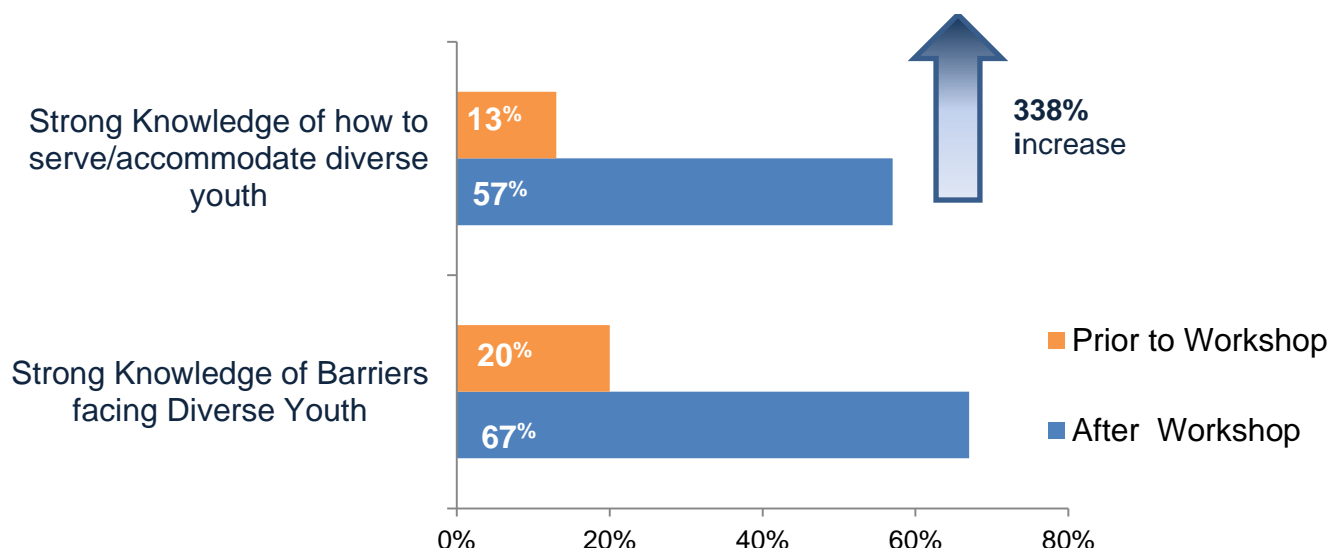
Workshop participants provided feedback through surveys, which indicate that overall, all of the objectives of the workshop were met and/or exceeded.

These objectives were to increase:

- Knowledge of the barriers facing diverse youth in visual arts
- Knowledge of how to serve/accommodate diverse youth
- Knowledge of tools and resources to help overcome the barriers facing diverse youth in arts programming
- Staff and volunteer motivation to ensure the ongoing inclusion of diverse youth

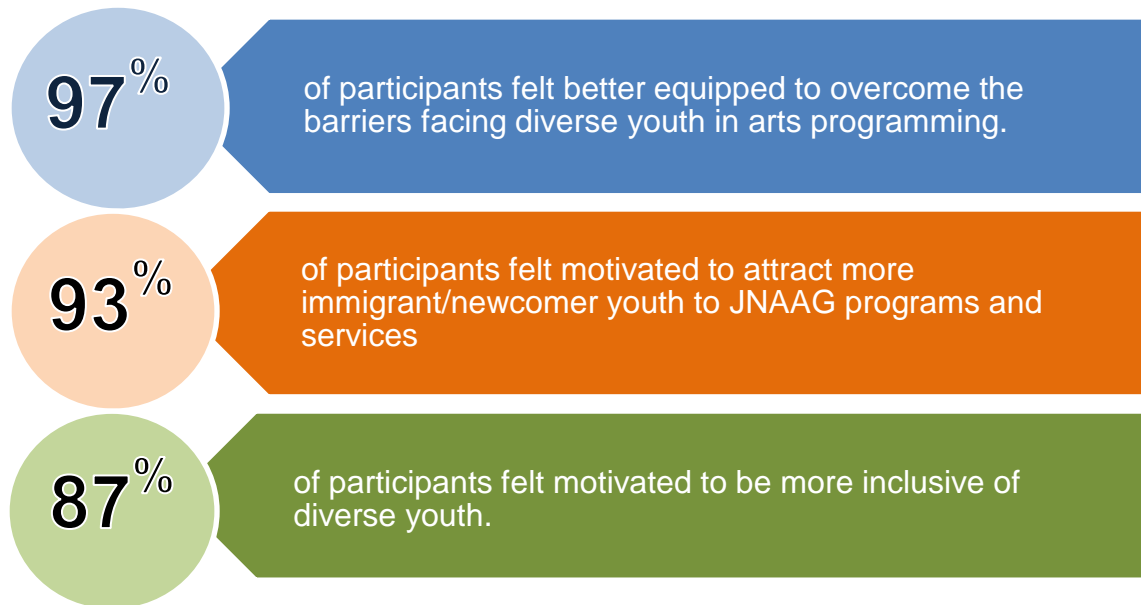
Increased Knowledge & Capacity

Workshop participants reported a significant increase in their knowledge of the barriers facing diverse youth in the visual arts and how to serve and accommodate them:



Motivation to attract and include diverse youth:

After the workshop, participants reported feeling better equipped to overcome the barriers facing diverse youth in arts programming. They also reported feeling significantly more motivated to ensure that their organization was more inclusive of diverse youth. An overwhelming majority of respondents also felt highly motivated to attract more immigrant and newcomer youth to JNAAG:



This motivation translated into tangible and ongoing results: After the workshop, JNAAG and Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) staff worked together to ensure that all JNAAG events, programming and classes considered diverse audiences and perspectives, and made accommodations whenever possible. For example, Muslim youth participating in the IYEP *TNT Fusion Workshops* in the Fall/winter of 2016 were provided with a prayer space, and JNAAG staff ensured that all snacks took religious dietary restrictions into account.

It is significant to note that accommodations were made not only for IYEP programming, but for other gallery events and programs as well. For example:

- At events where alcohol is served, gallery staff and volunteers now serve non-alcoholic drinks at a separate table in order to respect religious diversity
- Ongoing children's *TNT Fusion* workshops continue to offer youth prayer space if necessary.
- Through the IYEP program, meaningful relationships were developed with diverse artists from a range of racial, cultural and religious backgrounds, and ongoing efforts have been made to include more diversity in workshops and classes

The survey results acknowledged the changes in gallery programming and indicate that the diversity training workshop had meaningful and lasting impact. Immediately after the training, participants reported feeling significantly more knowledgeable and equipped to best serve immigrant and diverse youth. The marked increase in motivation amongst participants to attract and include diverse youth and communities in gallery programming also resulted in positive and impactful changes in JNAAG programming. These ongoing efforts to accommodate diverse youth and their families will ensure that all enjoy the full benefits of arts programming in a safe and welcoming environment.

Creating New & Culturally Relevant Workshops

The key component of IYEP programming in 2016 was the creation of free, weekly two day art workshops for youth aged 9 to 13. This series of workshops, named *TNT Fusion* ran over 11 weeks, from October 12th through until December 22nd and took place after school hours, from 4-6 pm at the Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery.

Although the workshops were open to all youth, spaces fill up extremely quickly so spots were reserved for immigrant youth in every workshop.

Diversity of Participants

Youth that registered in the IYEP *TNT Fusion* workshops came from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and countries, including:

- Canada
- USA
- Pakistan
- Japan
- Cameroon
- India
- Holland
- Korea
- Iran
- England
- South Africa

Additionally, one youth identified as First Nations and proudly noted in her feedback survey that she was attending the workshops from the nearby Kettle & Stony Point First Nation reserve, one of three reserves in Lambton County. A number of non-immigrant IYEP participants were visible minorities and first generation Canadians, with 20% of them having one or more parents who were born outside of Canada. Many of these youth accessed the cultural and religious accommodations that were made throughout the program.



Promoting Diverse Artists & Art Practices

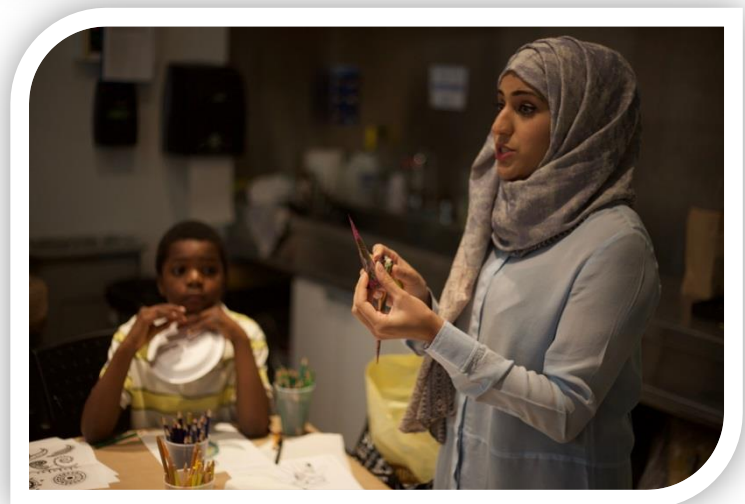
One integral aspect of the IYEP *TNT Fusion* art workshops was to ensure the inclusion of culturally diverse artists and art practices. Research has extensively shown that it is essential for arts programs to be reflective of cultural and racial diversity, particularly when reaching out to immigrant, newcomer and racialized youth and communities (Charlton, Barndt, Dennis, et al., 2013; Ripley, 2010; Smith, 2012).

Hiring immigrant artists of diverse backgrounds and involving them in art-based programs, particularly those in galleries, is beneficial for all stakeholders involved. Immigrant and newcomer artists often face barriers to inclusion in art galleries and arts programming and many have advocated for Canadian galleries and arts based organizations to do more to ensure their inclusion (Cooley, Luo & Morgan-Feir, 2015; Grant & Buckwold, 2011; Ripley, 2010; Smith, 2012). Their guidance through teaching also benefits the youth who participate in their programs; Non-immigrant youth benefit from interacting with diverse individuals while also learning about multicultural art forms and practices. For immigrant, newcomer and diverse youth, arts and culture activities can help develop self-esteem, particularly if they feel marginalized, as it is “important for the children to see themselves reflected in their teachers so that the classroom becomes a safe place to explore past, present and future identity” (Charlton, M, Barndt, D, Dennis, K., et al., 2013).

Programs like IYEP also help to challenge racism and stereotypes, by building intercultural understanding, for example, during the *TNT Fusion* workshops, some participants incorporated elements of their religious and cultural identity into their pieces, which they proudly showed to the instructor and their peers.

Diversity of Art Instructors and Lessons:

- Tami Araki, a Japanese artist who immigrated to Canada, taught the students about origami, the ancient Japanese art of paper folding. The modular paper sculptures created by participants were then used to create a public art project which was displayed in one of the JNAAG windows
- Sana Syed-Chaudhry, a professional henna artist, taught workshop participants about the ancient art of henna design. Youth practiced traditional South Asian and Middle Eastern patterns, and also created their own unique designs



Immigrant youth also had the opportunity to learn more about their community and Canadian history, art and culture:



- Moses Lunham, a local Indigenous artist, shared his knowledge, culture and skills with participants and youth learned about storytelling traditions, thus serving as inspiration for their own paintings
- Tara DiMuzio and Shawn McKnight, two local artists who are passionate about nature, taught students about the art of nature conservation, the importance of the Monarch butterfly and the role that native plants and wildlife play in environmental protection.
- Several workshops involved participants leaving the gallery and exploring different areas of downtown Sarnia. Off site visits and interactions included a walk on the waterfront, a visit to a professional music production studio, and interaction with Lambton College photography faculty and students with a few words from a filmmaker from Rocketship Productions and other local artists
- Participants learned about JNAAG's current exhibitions featuring Canadian artists, and entered the gallery's Collections vault to see Norval Morrisseau's work as well as valuable and well known pieces.

Culturally diverse art practices help young people understand the world around them, and research has shown that programs like IYEP, which encourage youth to explore multicultural art, can help participants understand not only their own culture, but also to gain a deeper respect and appreciation of, and empathy towards other cultures (Ripley, 2010). The *TNT Fusion* workshops greatly benefitted the instructors, staff and youth involved by hiring diverse artists, promoting intercultural art practices and by inviting and encouraging youth to share their own experiences, identity and culture through their artwork.

Outreach to Diverse Communities & Families

Raising Awareness of Arts Programming in Diverse Communities

As previously noted, LIP research conducted in 2013 and again in 2015 found that immigrant youth were not participating in gallery facilitated arts programming in Sarnia-Lambton, and were not aware of which programs were available to them locally.

Therefore, in addition to regular promotion of JNAAG's programs, promotion for the *TNT Fusion* workshops included ongoing outreach to religious and cultural groups, contacting 2015 IYEP program participants, and updating the IYEP Facebook page to include information, photos and videos from each of the workshops.

Steps were also taken to remove any barriers which may have hindered immigrant and newcomer participation in arts based (or other) extracurricular activities. In addition to diversity training and cultural/religious accommodations, funds were also allotted for interpretation and transportation if needed. To address potential financial barriers, all IYEP programs were provided free of cost with all materials provided.

The results of these efforts were recorded from a number of immigrant youth participating in the *TNT Fusion* workshops, many of whom were first time JNAAG visitors:

- The majority of youth reported attending JNAAG programming for the very first time, with **75%** of *TNT Fusion* participants reporting that they were first time participants in a gallery run art program
- An average of four immigrant youth per week participated in the 11 workshops- **over the course of the 11 workshops, 56 immigrant youth took part**

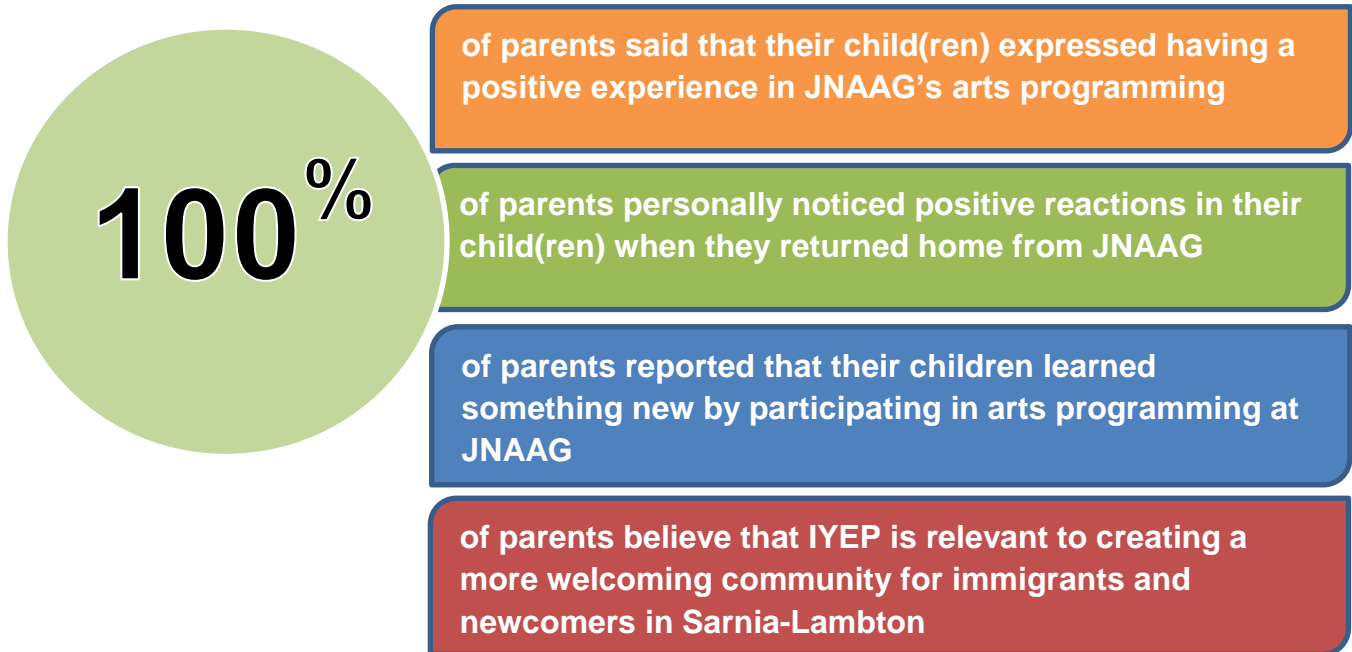
Supporting Family Involvement in the Arts

Involving parents and families was an important part of IYEP. Given that many immigrant families come from collectivist cultures (Kwak, 2003), including parents and keeping them informed not only helps them feel invested in their child's activities, but it also respects their cultural norms and intergenerational bonds, while also helping to foster their social inclusion and engagement.

JNAAG staff offered all parents the opportunity to participate in their own arts and crafts activities at the gallery while their children took part in the *TNT Fusion* workshops. Parents were invited to share tea and snacks while the IYEP project leader and a LIP staff member answered questions shared information about any new activities, workshops and opportunities planned. Due to the relationship built in previous phases of IYEP, LIP staff also served as a point of contact for parents, making them feel at ease and helping some of them through the registration process if they requested assistance.

Immigrant and newcomer families, as well as other ethnic communities, were informed about free and/or low cost arts programming and events at JNAAG. For example, the free 'Family Sundays' which take place on a weekly basis and are open to all families and future *TNT Fusion* workshops.

When the *RAAW* and *TNT Fusion* workshops concluded, all parents and their children were invited to provide feedback on participant and family experiences in the programs. Survey results indicate that parents unanimously agree that IYEP had had a positive impact on their children, and in the community as a whole:



Parent Comments about IYEP:

"My daughter loved the henna session. She still practices drawing designs that she learned that day."

"While I am not an immigrant I am happy this program exists also for my child, and that he can meet people who are new to Canada and be a goodwill ambassador & make new friends."

"My child loved the program"

"Thank you for opening the door to new experiences for my children. And awakening possibilities for their careers as adults".

As these results indicate, the IYEP sponsored art workshops at JNAAG were successful in encouraging immigrant children's participation in the arts, while also encouraging their parent's involvement in these activities. Furthermore, all parents expressed a very high level of support for arts-based activities, and appreciated the opportunity for their children to learn new skills and to interact with other youth free of cost.

Ongoing Engagement in the Arts

As a result of participating in IYEP programming in the summer and the *TNT Fusion* workshops in the fall of 2016, immigrant youth reported a desire for and indicated a willingness to commit to a longer term relationship with the arts.

After participating in IYEP sponsored arts programs, youth were much more likely to ask their parents if they could continue taking more arts programs:

- **100%** of youth who participated in the *RAWW* summer workshops reported that they planned on asking their parents if they could take part in more arts programs
- **99%** of youth who took part in the fall *TNT Fusion* workshops planned to ask their parents if they could take part in more arts programs

This enthusiasm translated into ongoing and meaningful participation in the arts among youth, with many immigrant (and Canadian born) youth returning for multiple workshops:

- **63% of immigrant youth attended multiple workshops and programs**
- **48%** of all *TNT Fusion* participants attended multiple programs

Due to the success of the *TNT Fusion* workshops and the high levels of participation, JNAAG is planning to offer more programs for the 9-13 year old age group. Many IYEP participants have expressed an interest in taking part in these workshops, with at least two signing up in advance of registration. This is yet another indication of how IYEP programming has led to a long term relationship with the arts amid immigrant, culturally diverse and indigenous youth.

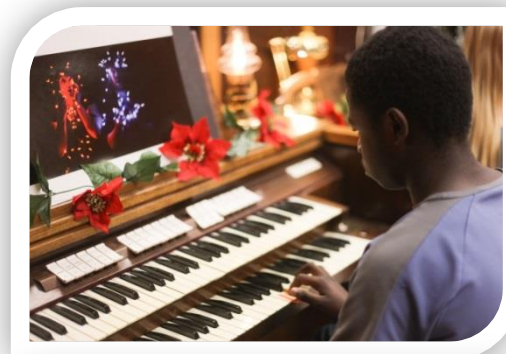
Learning Something New

The *TNT Fusion* workshops at JNAAG aimed to offer youth a variety of unique lessons in a wide range of media. Participants had the opportunity to engage in activities which involved painting, film, photography, multimedia, sculpture, ceramic painting, music creation and henna.

97%

Of youth reported that they tried something new during the workshops

The multimedia classes offered through *TNT Fusion* workshops offered youth a chance to learn new skills while exposing them to new and different forms of artmaking. Participants also learned that the arts can be, and often are, integrated into a range of different fields thus broadening their interests and possible future career opportunities.



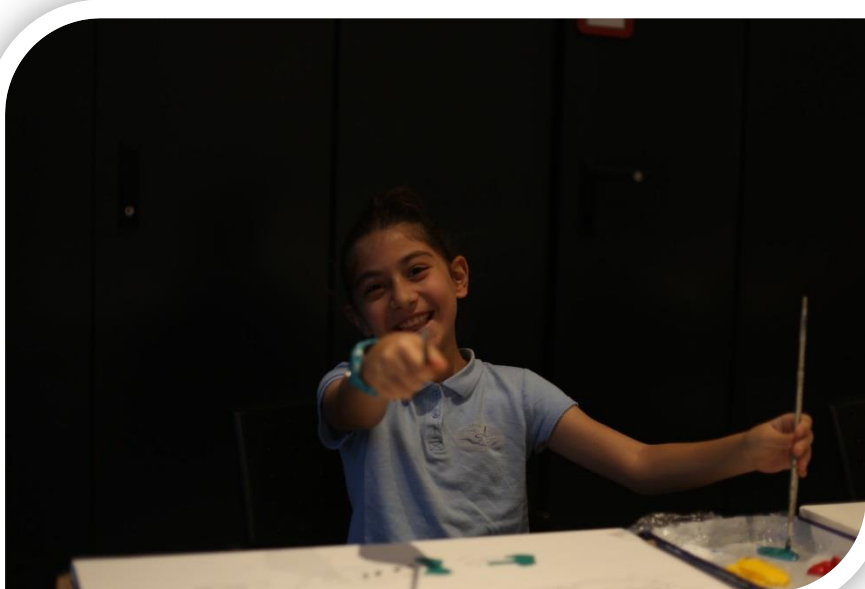
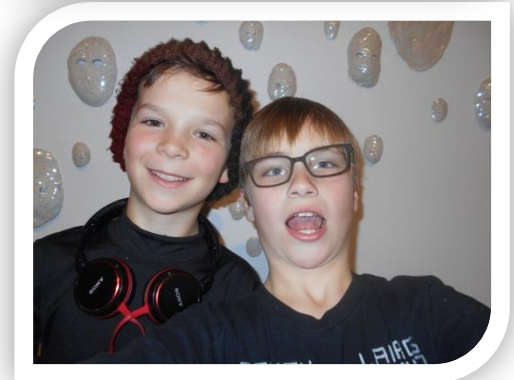
Making New Friends While Having Fun

Another priority of IYEP was to provide a venue in which youth could meet new people and make new friends. Research has shown that children and youth who engage in the arts in group settings are able to “socialize outside of their family boundaries, giving them the opportunity to explore ways of expressing their self-identity to others and exposing them to the ways others express their sense of self” (Ripley, 2010, p. 17). Ripley further notes that this process also helps youth with “positive identity formation and increased tolerance and empathy for others” (2010, p. 17).

The *TNT Fusion* workshops served as a connector of immigrant and Canadian born youth. The small size of the workshops ensured that youth engage one another in a meaningful way with those from different areas of the community.

Furthermore, interaction between workshop participants was encouraged, through activities which involved partner and group work, as well as more organic and informal interactions. A number of youth who participated in many workshops developed close bonds with one another and shared stories and information about their lives outside of the program. As a result, **63% of *TNT Fusion* participants reported that they met new friends by participating in the workshops.**

The positive interactions between youth and the development of friendships also contributed to the enjoyable and interactive atmosphere of the *TNT Fusion* workshops. Nearly all youth (**97%**) said that they planned to ask their parents if they could take part in more workshops and **100% of youth who participated said they had fun in the workshops.**



Clearly, IYEP helped to foster a safe, friendly and engaging atmosphere for youth participants. By working together and getting to know one another, youth were able to learn new skills and create art while also developing their social skills, and make new friends.

Increased Access to Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering has numerous positive benefits for immigrant youth including developing and learning new skills, meeting new people, learning about one's community and community services, gaining valuable workplace skills, acquiring Canadian experience and the opportunity to share one's culture and experiences with others. Immigrant youth who participated in the County of Lambton's initial focus group research in 2013, also expressed a desire to volunteer but were unaware of volunteer opportunities in the community. Therefore, promoting volunteer opportunities for immigrant youth has always been a priority for IYEP. The Sarnia Lambton LIP and JNAAG staff saw an excellent opportunity to incorporate volunteering into this year's program.

Through IYEP, teenaged youth were offered volunteer positions at JNAAG that were in line with their interests. Youth were taught the numerous benefits of volunteering and offered letters of recommendation and references from JNAAG staff.

As a result four teenaged participants signed up as volunteers during the IYEP program, two of whom were immigrant youth. A third immigrant youth signed up as a volunteer, but had to later withdraw due to an unforeseen scheduling conflict.



One of the youth volunteers was a participant in the IYEP summer program at JNAAG which led her to become a volunteer for the remainder of the 2016 fall program. This participant continues to serve as volunteer for all JNAAG programs.

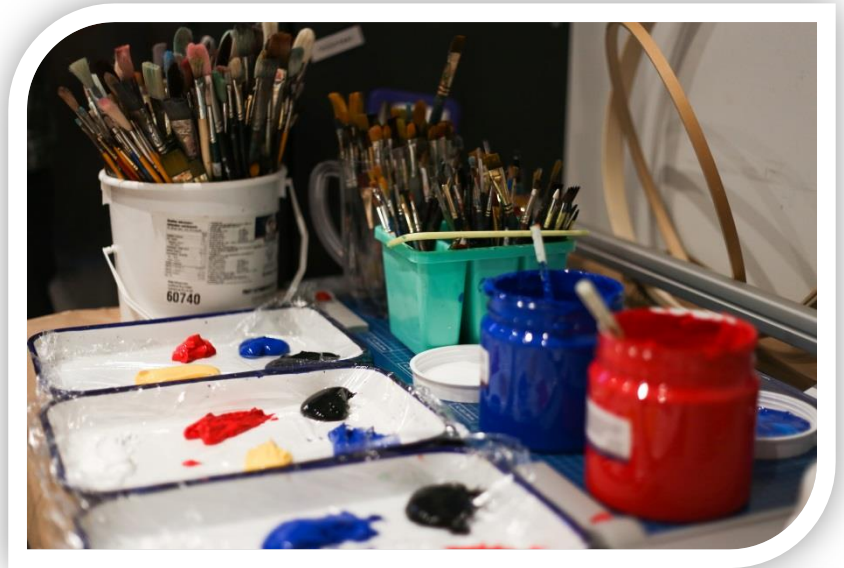
Another volunteer, who registered through IYEP, had never previously attended JNAAG or any other arts based programming in Sarnia-Lambton before he enrolled in the IYEP summer program. He was inspired to volunteer and had very positive feedback about the experience.

“I also love volunteering as it gives me more references and experience not just in the workplace, but also helps me learn about life from my peers.” - IYEP participant/volunteer

Additionally, this participant reported that volunteering had allowed him to develop new friendships and improve social skills, while also discovering new arts based interests and opportunities.

A Concept: Arts Based Youth Group

One of the recommendations of the 2013 focus group research (conducted by the Sarnia-Lambton LIP and Lambton Public Health) was to create an arts based youth group. In the planning stages of the 2016 phase of IYEP, LIP and JNAAG staff contemplated creating an arts based youth group which would continue once the *TNT Fusion* workshops came to an end in December 2016. This idea was not pursued. Given that youth enrolled in IYEP ranged in ages from 6-16, it proved challenging to have such a range in maturity levels to collaborate meaningfully. Instead, volunteer opportunities were offered to teenaged youth. Furthermore, JNAAG already offers free 'Family Sundays' on a weekly basis, which are open to families and children of all ages, and has also scheduled more *TNT Fusion* workshops in 2017.



Conclusion

By offering the Immigrant Youth Engagement Project (IYEP) to immigrant youth in the community in partnership with JNAAG, it was possible for local youth to reap the numerous benefits of their arts based programming.

75% of IYEP participants reported that it was their first time participating in a gallery run art program and 100% of them reported that they learned something new and that they had fun in the workshops.

Participants indicated that they would happily recommend these and other similar arts based programs to other newcomer youth:

100%

of immigrant youth who participated in IYEP programming believe that it is important for other kids new to Lambton County and/or Canada to participate in workshops like the arts programs at JNAAG

These workshops also led to an ongoing and meaningful connection with the arts for these youth with the majority of workshop participants (63%) enjoying their experience so much that they signed up for additional programs. Teenaged youth also have registered as volunteers at the gallery on an ongoing basis and the majority of youth reported that they made new friends as a result of participating in the program.



Furthermore, through diversity training and awareness, JNAAG staff have committed to ongoing efforts to attract immigrants and newcomers to the gallery, and to ensure that their programming is accessible and welcoming for diverse religious, cultural and ethnic populations. These efforts have been recognized and acknowledged by IYEP participants.

As a result of their positive experiences through IYEP, youth and their families have indicated that they are more engaged in the community, and have gained an awareness and appreciation for the arts and many other opportunities that are available to them locally.

And finally, feedback from IYEP participants showed that:

100%

of parents and 99% of youth who participated in IYEP believe that the program is relevant to creating a more welcoming community for immigrants and newcomers in Sarnia-Lambton



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