

AFRICAN DIASPORA ASSOCIATION OF THE MARITIMES

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UNITED WE STAND IN DIVERSITY, DEMOCRACY, PROSPERITY AND PEACE

Our Vision

ADAM envisions a society in which all individuals, including those of African descent, have equitable opportunities to realize their full potentials, and to participate meaningfully in the building of the Maritime Provinces.

Board of Directors' Annual Business Report for 2013

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The Chair's Report for 2013

Dear Community members,

Thank you for the privilege you gave me to lead our esteemed Association over the past four years. I can sum up our progress in the words often heard in the indigenous black community where a popular refrain says “we have come a mighty long way.” I honor the courage of our community exhibited by the willingness to right wrongs and rebuild our great Association. As a soccer player, coach and referee, it is noteworthy that our Executive came in shortly before soccer world cup 2010 in South Africa. We are concluding two months to the start of world cup 2014 in Brazil. There is a similarity in the excitement and anticipation of leading a community group and looking forward to both world cup finals. Whenever we gather for an event, the atmosphere can resemble that of the world cup finals complete with the highs and lows that come with winning and losing.

REALITY CHECK

Every year when I sit down to write the annual report, I try to anchor it in real time events with a strong impact on people's lives. This year, I am writing against the back drop of our 2013 excellent end of year gala which brought together a very diverse group of performers. That was quickly followed by the outstanding positive aging conference which amazed everyone and really put ADAM on the map with numerous agencies, government and non-government. Then just last week, our family was privileged to host the first ADAM children sleep over in our basement. Eight children came together under Ngozi's watchful supervision for a night of movies and popcorn. Assisted by hosts Martha and Monica, a wonderful theatre atmosphere was created beaming Netflix movies on the wall through the LCD projector. Loud speakers completed the theatre feel and for a while it appeared no child wanted to fall asleep. Eventually they passed out. This outing gave many parents a much needed time out. More such sleep overs will be hosted in the future.

Let me share some more highs with you.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

From the outset, we wanted to build a sense of togetherness which is an important element in community building. Having raised four children and numerous dependents in Canada, I saw the need for community. A community enables people to feel at home and enjoy some of the joys of the African homeland in the diaspora. A community also gives children a much needed identity which is essential for a sense of belonging. Without such a strong base, children can feel lost and lose motivation for life's pursuits. We began to do this by bringing our community together

to watch the 2010 world cup final game. We were expecting about twenty people only to be surprised by more than seventy. The rebuilding was taking shape.

The Soccer programs

Although ADAM did not have a hand in the founding of the teams, we joined hands with Soccafrique to enhance the opportunity of bringing men and boys together to play soccer. In doing so, we provided a weekly gathering time for more than just the players as community members came to watch the team play. This program was boosted by the rise of the women's team Soccachique. This gave the community a positive high profile visibility opportunity. On one occasion at a game in Sackville, so many people came to ask where this all-African girls team came from. "Did you fly in from Jamaica?" one lady asked in a display of interesting curiosity. It was an opportunity to tout the presence of continental Africans right here in Nova Scotia.

PROGRAMMING

When you read the staff reports, you will catch a sense of the high level work being done by the ADAM staff. Our settlement work has made a big impact in the lives of numerous new arrivals. Ms. Mavis Suh Chembende leads this work with a passion and commitment that takes her as far as North Preston in service of our people. Our cultural sensitization portfolio led by Ms Keira Carey has given opportunity to show case the rich African culture while bringing mentors and employers to connect with aspiring professionals. The family support programs under Ms Ngozi Otti brought a level of personal care and micro-level assistance for families in crisis as well as a macro-level planning for the greater good of the community. Last but not least is the mental health portfolio under Ms. Rhonda Atwell to round off the regular programming. These four areas cover a wide spectrum of life, enabling ADAM to make significant impact in lives of our people.

JOB CREATION

At the start of my first term, ADAM had no staff person. The Board served as staff with meetings every week for several months to put the organization back on track. The first staff person was a ten hour position in November of 2010. This was followed by two full time positions in 2011. In April 2013 came the part time family support position. A full time mental health program started in November 2013. This gave ADAM three full time positions and one part time in the past year. In addition, two part time student workers in the summer gave ADAM six employees. This work of creating job opportunities for our people needs to continue. The results of the hiring process have been a truly diverse workforce with two staff coming from continental Africa, one from the Caribbean, and the other from the indigenous local Black

community. This is a record the board is very proud of as I am that ADAM has become an important employer of our people.

PARTNERSHIP CREATION

Although we are creating community, we are not making an island. We know that in the context of the global village, partnerships are critical to fulfilling goals and making more progress. ADAM now has partnerships with ISIS, the government funded Immigrant settlement and Integration agency. We are collaborating on all elements of our programming from settlement to mental health. There is also Pier 21 with whom ADAM has done some excellent work like the joint African heritage movie two years ago and the recent collaboration on the end of year gala. The positive aging conference brought together numerous partners showing the growing reach of ADAM and the respect afforded the organization by government and other agencies. There is the partnership with the YMCA which has enabled ADAM to offer the community an exchange program that takes children from our community to Toronto for the almost unheard of price of \$50.00 per child. We now have partnerships with all the health boards in metro and will seek to expand these beyond metro. We are now a major partner with a number of government departments who see us as a channel through which to fulfill government objectives. These and many more partnerships will only continue to grow with time and give ADAM an opportunity for many more achievements.

IMPACT ON FAMILIES

While ADAM may never be in a position to help everyone in need, I want you to know that a great effort goes into problem-solving with individuals and families in the course of each year. This past year, ADAM assistance to families varied from supporting a child on an important life quest, a young mother trying to survive while facing serious challenges, assistance to a family in a serious transitional phase, as well others facing legal issues. There was also assistance to keep students in school and prevent deportation. These examples are given to show that as an Association, ADAM is not blind to the severe realities that fall upon many of our people in the process of settling down. The hope is that ADAM can do more as the African Community Investment Cooperative (ACIC) venture develops and with it the African emergency relief fund. You will hear more about this later today.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

As an Association, many of our numerous events require catering. It has been our pleasure to give business to a variety of African entrepreneurs both formally organized ones as well as loosely connected informal ones.

NEW INITIATIVES

The launch of ACIC

This year ADAM is pleased to launch the African Community Investment Cooperative. There is time later in the program to introduce ACIC. ACIC is an independent unit birthed by ADAM but to be run as a separate investment bank for the community. This is an example of the forward looking nature of ADAM as well as capacity to breed great ideas in our midst. At ADAM, we are convinced that this is Africa's time both at home and abroad. But this requires careful planning and bringing our best brains to process ideas. ADAM has become a great community think tank.

Work with Canada Border Services

This year, another new partnership will emerge as we seek to work with Canada Border Services to prevent the rash of deportations that have hit the community recently. I am pleased that officials from the Canada Border services are here to today enhance our understanding of the system so that these deportations can be reduced if not eliminated.

Training opportunities

This year the ADAM Board began much needed leadership development training to raise the level and quality of leadership provided by an already strong professional team of board members. This is a thirty-six-hour training program on a variety of leadership subjects. The good news is this: This training is not limited to the ADAM board. Other African Associations will be invited to participate and also organize training for their own executives. Student Associations will also be included so that Africans in the diaspora will demonstrate solid capable leadership across the board. Any groups that will be willing to take up this training offer from ADAM will also receive the benefit of fundraising. Each Association that opts to undertake the training will also receive an amount up to \$1,500.00. This way, Associations will have the advantage of leadership development and fundraising at the same time.

The Child Care initiative

Our newest effort is the partnership with Bayers/Westwood Childcare center where an experimental program of child Care will run for six months. This time will allow ADAM to assess the need and viability of a childcare venture.

ADAM FINANCIAL WELL BEING

Four years ago, ADAM inherited a deficit financial situation. I am pleased to highlight a growing financial strength. Each year our budget has grown as we have reached new heights. Under the capable hands of our treasurer and Bookkeeper, ADAM finances have become an

example of transparent reporting uncommon for small organizations and Associations like ours. The commitment of the ADAM board to excellence is demonstrated yet again this year. Our Association has passed a stringent financial audit by a professional team from WBLI chartered accountants.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

As I conclude my time as chair, I am pleased to have worked with a very professional team of board members. Many of them are young energetic leaders who will give ADAM solid leadership with new ideas in the years ahead. I ask you to give the incoming board even more cooperation now that you have seen the integrity of our Association rise. We must all work hard to preserve the hard won respect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my family, who yet again, has offered me for service to the community. They have been an amazing strength for me as well as volunteers when I needed them. I am grateful to my Vice Chair Mr. Imhokai Ogah who in the course of service became a great friend. I am thankful to the whole board and staff as well as numerous people including the African Nova Scotia Affairs office. They took us under their wings to ensure we developed well when no one gave us a chance. Their presence here today is indicative of an ongoing relationship. Thank you ANSA. I am also grateful for the community which has enabled ADAM to thrive. The sky is the limit. So it is with a very high sense of gratitude and anticipation that I leave the chair's position. I will be serving in a missionary capacity ministering in Zambia and Canada. It is an honor to extend the good done in ADAM to others far and near. Best wishes for a prosperous future.

Sincerely,



Rev Elias M. Mutale

Program Reports

Information and Referral Program (Settlement Services)

The Partnership Intervention Program for Integration and Retention of African Canadians Immigrants in Nova Scotia, has two major goals:

1. To make ADAM a welcoming centre for all immigrants of African descent or African Canadian Immigrants (ACIs)
2. To help improve education, employability, and the standard of living for immigrants of African descent in Nova Scotia

This fiscal year the program focused on 4 areas of integration as agreed by ADAM and the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration. These are: skill enhancement-cultural diversity and inclusion, awareness, case management, and assessment. This report summarizes outcomes in these areas.

SKILL ENHANCEMENT-CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

ADAM works to integrate clients into the African immigrant community and into the broader Nova Scotian community by:

A) Organize social events (i.e. African movie nights, barbecues and sports teams (soccer) in order to build on their social networks and skills within Nova Scotia.

B) Ensure that the community is aware of and will encourage participation in activities in the larger community that will support integration.

C) Refer ACIs to cultural diversity training opportunities which will improve their ability to culturally adapt to their new life; within the workplace, the community and the Nova Scotia Society.

Expected Outcomes

A) 200 clients will participate in ADAM activities. Through this effort, it is hoped that African Canadian immigrants will be more comfortable working in a culturally different environment as well be an asset as a result of their own unique culture.

B) 200 clients will receive information about mainstream Nova Scotia, as well as immigrant events, activities, and training. It is expected that through such interactions with the diverse Canadian society, ACIs will learn and adapt to Canadian/Nova Scotia culture.

C) 50 clients will be referred to training related to cultural diversity and inclusion in the workplace and the community.

Actual Outcomes:

A total of 578 individuals were served in this category.

A) 310 clients participated in ADAM activities such as the Victoria Day BBQ, the multicultural networking event for young professional, the annual gala, needs assessment sessions for professionals, youth forum, baby showers, financial training information session etc.

B.) 268 individuals were referred to training, events and workshops related to cultural diversity and inclusion in the workplace and the community. Some of these activities included referrals to Supper Nova community potluck, cultural competency training

C.) More than a hundred emails regarding such events named above have been distributed to the community through the mail list server, Facebook and the ADAM website. At least 600 individuals are being reached with information that encourages their participation in the community here in Nova Scotia.

AWARENESS

ADAM continues to build welcoming communities by encouraging the non-immigrant community to embrace the skills, talents and diversity that ACIs bring to the province. Therefore ADAM reaches out to;

A) Federal and Provincial Government departments through networking opportunities such as tabling events, community booths, outreach activities, presentations and workshops.

B) Create partnerships with various religious institutions

C) Create partnerships and awareness within Corporate and private sector organizations

D) Creating and maintaining partnerships with key persons from the mainstream community. These individuals are included in ADAM's contact list and providing continued updates on the organizations activities.

Expected Outcomes:

A) 20 mainstream organizations will be contacted and information provided pertaining to ACI's and program activities

B) 10 religious institutions will be contacted and will receive information about the program and ACIs

C) 20 Private corporations and business will be contacted and sensitized about the benefits of working with ACIs

D) 20 nonimmigrant Community Leaders will be contacted, added to ADAM email list and provided educative information on ACIs. ADAM will seek out the community leaders it feels will be well suited to support ACIs

Actual Outcomes:

A.) 60 Mainstream organizations were contacted and provided information pertaining to the advantages of recruiting, working with and some of the challenges faced by ACIS. This also included both provincial and federal government departments.

- B.) 11 religious institutions including received information about the programs and services available at ADAM as well as provided information about the community.
- C.) 28 private corporations such as hiring agencies, universities, banks, call centres and companies requiring bilingual services received information about ACIs
- D.) Various key leaders in Nova Scotia such as University presidents, local counsellors, MLA's and other key leaders have been invited and participated in ADAM activities this year.

ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the assessment is to determine the strengths and needs of the clients. This assessment will determine the organizations to which the client can ultimately be referred so that the client will be successfully integrated into life in Nova Scotia. A major part of assessments is locating the clients. ADAM recognizes that many African immigrants are so isolated that they do not access programs or drop out of programs. It is through personal contacts and through partnerships with other organizations that ADAM locates and assesses their clients.

Expected Outcomes:

A minimum of 80 clients will be located. They will:

- A) Receive an assessment of strengths and needs; The focus is on employability skills, community connections and support, social services, learning and personal development needs
- B) Receive information about services and programs available in the community;
- C) Develop an action plan with the help of the coordinator, which will include identification of client's goals in terms of employment and successful integration into life in Nova Scotia.
- D.) Receive follow up support.

Actual Outcomes:

A total of 87 new clients were identified and received the above named services.

CASE MANAGEMENT

The purpose of this activity is to ensure that ADAM clients have the skills and confidence necessary for successful integration in Nova Scotia. ADAM accomplishes this primarily by referring its clients to the program and services of other organizations (for example ISIS, YMCA, Job Junction, Trade unions, apprenticeship programs, business development programs, etc)

Expected Outcomes:

200 clients will either receive information or referred to organizations or government agencies for language, employment upgrades, or any other integration supporting activities in the community (health, education, housing, legal issues etc)

Actual Outcomes:

134 clients received information related to training and other opportunities to increase their chances of employment such as training programs, information on trades, business development contacts, needs assessments etc. within other organizations.

35 clients were referred to English language testing and support services.

Over 50 employment opportunities were emailed to clients individually.

ADAM email list sent out more than 400 information listings on relevant topics such as employment, education, information on scholarships for African Canadians, free programs, grants, and community events.

Mavis Suh

Information and Referral Program Coordinator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mavis Suh', is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Youth Mentorship, Cultural Sensitization & Soccer Program

The Youth Mentorship, Cultural Sensitization & Soccer Program, in partnership with Citizen & Immigration Canada entered its last year of operation in April 2013 and will conclude March 2014. The program began in October 2011 and consists of three core components that aim to help the African Immigration community better integrate into the mainstream Canadian society. These components include:

- ❖ Youth Mentorship
- ❖ Cultural Sensitization Workshops
- ❖ Sporting Events

In its last year of operation the program has continued with one-on-one mentoring, participation in the Exchanges Canada program and evolved to include leadership workshops and training through the HRM Volunteer Service. This year's program highlights include the successful matching of twenty (20) students/young professionals with seasoned professionals in the ADAM Youth Mentorship Program; ADAM's twinning and travel with youth from Toronto Ontario, seven (7) cultural sensitization workshops exploring the uniqueness of African culture and integration with mainstream Canadian communities; and weekly summer soccer kick-arounds, also hosting a community soccer cultural challenge with multicultural soccer teams.

ADAM Youth Mentorship & Exchange Program

This year the ADAM Youth Mentorship Program kept the same format as last year's program with one on one mentoring and the youth exchange program. New addition to the program included "Set Up to Leadership" training sessions in partnership with HRM Volunteer Services.

One-on-One Mentoring

For one on one mentoring, program participants were recruited in late August, with mentors and mentees matches in late October 2013. All program information and materials about the ADAM Mentorship program components were made available to the community on the ADAM website, sent through email, and posted at community centers, university and school campuses. The program officially began, with the program orientation/meet & greet that was held in late October at the Hub Halifax. During the mentoring partnership, each mentor/mentee pair completed a mentor-mentee partnership agreement, which was used as an evaluation tool to outline the mentee's learning goals, and the expectations from both participants.

As of March 29th the ADAM Youth Mentorship Program one-on-one mentoring has:

- Successfully recruited, selected and matched 10 students from high school, universities, immigrant centers and community groups with 10 professionals from the community, government offices, universities and private companies within the HRM.

- Hosted an orientation/meet & greet which allowed participants to learn details of the program, meet their mentors/mentee and establish their expectations for their mentoring relationship
- Successfully completed the mid-point mark of the mentoring relationship, also completing mid-point assessment.
- Formally end mentoring relationship and providing program feedback with 1-hour exit interviews.

The program is scheduled to officially end March 31st 2014.

Youth Exchange Program

The ADAM Youth Exchange program in partnership with the YMCA and Exchange Canada twinned a group of 20 youth from Woodgreen Community Centre, “Rites of Passage” program in Toronto with 20 youth from the ADAM community here in Halifax. The purpose of the exchange is to engage both youth groups in cultural activities which explore the heritage of African Canadians and the cultural diversity which exists within both provinces. The ADAM Youth group members consisted of youth from both immigrant and African Nova Scotian backgrounds. In preparation for the exchange, the ADAM youth group participated in weekly leadership development meetings, held fundraising initiatives and aided in the planning of cultural activities.

The ADAM youth group travelled to Toronto during March Break and will be hosting the group from Toronto in late June 2014. Some of the highlights from the Toronto trip included visiting the Underground Railroad and Niagara Falls. While in Nova Scotia, the youth will engage in activities such as visiting The Black Cultural Centre, Africville, East & North Preston, and Peggy’s Cove.

Step Up to Leadership Board Training

Step Up to Leadership training was provided for board members of university society communities. During this session HRM Volunteer Services provided a 3 hour presentation which focused on topics such as planning, team building, understanding diversity, embracing diversity, and legalities and practicalities of boards.

ADAM Cultural Sensitization Workshops

As of March 29th 2014, we have hosted and supported seven cultural sensitization workshops in partnership with community organizations, government agencies and private institutions within the HRM. These workshops included various forms such as performance arts, networking, and community dialogs. All cultural sensitization workshops were open to the public, where the interest in learning about African culture was expressed through the levels of workshop participants from diverse backgrounds.

The workshops were as followed:

- Workshop 1: “*IWK Diversity & Inclusion Council Immigrant Community workshop*” held at Saint Andrew’s community centre in partnership with the IWK health Centre Diversity & Inclusion Council. This workshop was directed at improving cultural competency at the IWK Health Centre. The event featured first voice experience from immigrants and more specifically immigrants of African descent on the topics of Maternity and Newborn Care and Stress and Coping for Youth. This event reached over 100 health care professionals.
- Workshop 2: “*Multicultural Networking Event*”, held in September 2013 at the Hub Halifax. This event provided an opportunity for professionals to connect and share their experiences of working and living within Canada. The event included presentations and was hosted in a form of a wine & cheese event. This event attracted approximately 60 persons of different cultural backgrounds and professions.
- Workshop 3: “*Multicultural SupperNova*”, held in November in partnership with ISIS (Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services) and the SupperNova committee. This event consisted of a multicultural potluck where community members got together to meet and welcome newcomer families, and celebrate the diversity which immigrants bring to the community. This event attracted over 200 participants.
- Workshop 4: “*Cultural Competency Training for working with Immigrant Seniors*”, held in November in partnership with ISIS and Positive Aging Immigrant Senior’s group. This workshop focused on building understanding of challenges faced by new immigrant seniors, their families and caregivers when accessing services. As well as the relevance and need of cultural awareness when working alongside immigrants. This workshop reached approximately 30 persons from mainstream and immigrant servicing organizations.
- Workshop 5: “*International Human Rights Day Event, Speak up Against Discrimination*”, held in on December 10th, 2013 in partnership with the NS Human Rights Commission and Partner’s for Human Rights. This event raised awareness to the issues of human rights within the province of Nova Scotia. It included cultural performances and presentations from surrounding communities. This event attracted approximately 400 persons of diverse backgrounds.
- Workshop 6: “*Multicultural Holiday Gala*”, held on December 14th, 2013 in partnership with the United African Canadian Women’s Association (UACWA), other community organizations such as Partner’s for Human Rights, Floria’s Wellness Life Coach and supported by Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21. This event provided an opportunity for celebration and exchange of cultural values & traditions through the display of cultural music, performance art, and food. This event received positive reviews and attracted approximately 250 attendants.
- Workshop 7: “*Multicultural SupperNova (African Heritage Month)*”, held in February 2014 in partnership with ISIS and the SupperNova committee. The event was held in

recognition of African Heritage Month. The event consisted of a multicultural potluck with African cultural performances (dance & drumming) by the Maritime Centre for African Dance (MCAD) and a presentation by the African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes which focused on the significance of African Heritage month within Nova Scotia. This event attracted more than 150 participants.

Soccer Program

During the summer months, ADAM soccer teams Soccafrique and Soccachique competed in the provincial summer league in Halifax. During the winter months both teams continued with weekly soccer kick-a-round's which also encouraged the participation and engagement of members from the larger Halifax community. ADAM also hosted its second annual Cultural Soccer Challenge on August 30-31st 2013. The purpose of the competition was to bring together soccer players from different ethnic communities and national teams for friendly games. This year friendly competition featured four teams, Soccafrique, Halifax Celtic Metros, Dokdo FC and Clayton Park Spurs.

Submitted by:

Keira Carey,

Project Coordinator

Youth Mentorship, Cultural Sensitization & Soccer Program



Family Support and Positive Aging Program

INTRODUCTION:

ADAM received some grants from IWK, Dept. of Seniors, and New Horizon Program for Seniors to implement a program for women, families with children 0-16 years and immigrant seniors. The overall goal of the program is to improve the wellbeing of families and seniors by:

- Increasing participation in community activities
- Providing information about available service for families and seniors,
- Promoting networking opportunities to build bridges across different ethnic divides to reduce isolation among seniors
- Enhancing capacity, build self-confidence, and support financial retirement.

To achieve these goals, several activities and projects were implemented.

- **ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Community Baby Showers:**

A baby shower is a community practice that was originally used as a medium to provide advice to mothers on the art of motherhood and family life.

To achieve some of the goals of the program, the community baby shower was adopted as a strategy to gain and increase the participation of immigrant women and seniors. The community baby shower was found as an effective entry point because it specifically targets grandparents living with or caring for their children/grandchildren and women/mothers.

Community baby showers were organized monthly for moms and grandmothers from different cultural background to get together, discuss, learn, and share ideas, experiences and coping strategies about wellness and experiences using available services. The Community Informational Baby showers were used to disseminate information on ADAM and other programs and services available for their use. During the baby showers, we also invite key women figures in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) as a symbol of solidarity to newly arrived families and seniors. Community members and friends bring in some gifts for expectant moms and babies. Interpretation services are provided by ADAM and fellow participants. The shower became a social gathering to promote intergenerational learning, get the grandmothers and seniors out of the house, generate ideas, learn from experienced mothers, pair experienced mothers with younger ones for support if need be, and opportunities to practice with English-speaking participants.

A total of 10 community baby showers were organized from June to December. Participants represent 7 countries Botswana, Nigerian, Sudan, Canada, Kenya, Mali, Togo and Ivory Coast.

Each shower attracted an average of 15-25 participants, 3 out of these 10 participants were referred to partnering family resource centers such as the Home of the Guardian Angel- Westwood Family Resource Center. Participants usually comprise of grandmothers, new mothers and other immigrant mothers. About 150 persons were reached.

Furthermore, through the Informational Community Baby Showers, ADAM has been able to conduct needs assessments and generate ideas for programs and services needed by seniors and immigrant families with Seniors. ADAM continues to use the forum to meet the larger immigrant women community. Interest in the shower is growing within immigrant community as women and grandmothers are beginning to look forward to the monthly event to connect with other grandmothers, mothers, and to hug babies. Our Member of Parliament, Megan Leslie and MLA, Maureen McDonald have participated in some of our community baby showers.

b. Conference on Positive Aging for immigrant seniors and their families

Through the informational community baby showers, one of the needs identified was that immigrants' seniors and their families have little or no knowledge/understanding of services available for their use. Based on this need, ADAM mobilized other partners and stakeholders to initiate plans for a Positive Aging Conference titled '*Positive Aging among Immigrant seniors and families: Celebrating diversity, Exploring New Approaches, Examining Options*'.

ADAM formed a working group comprised of senior women and others for the conference. Members of working group included partner organizations such as ISIS, ABSW, Tatamagouch Center, Shannex etc. The active involvement of senior women in the working group brought immigrant seniors and other seniors to work together in planning the conference, discuss and choose presentation topics and prepare budgets. This has increased networking relationships and bridge building across different ethnic and racial divides.

The conference took place on the 18th January 2014 in collaboration with the department of Family Studies and Gerontology, Mt. St Vincent University. The conference provided a forum to present and create awareness about services for immigrant families, seniors and care givers in a culturally sensitive environment. More than 30 countries and 20 community groups were represented. A total of more than 200 participants were present in the conference and interpretation services in 6 languages French, Arabic, Nepali, Persia, Mandarin, Spanish was provided. The conference featured creative performances, dances, presentation by key figures such as Dr. Janice Keefe- (Founder) Nova Scotia Centre for Positive Aging; Heather Hanson- Director of Communications and Community relations (Shannex Ltd); Dr. Wanda Thomas-Bernard of Dalhousie University School of Social Work and Founder of Nova Scotia Association of Black Social Workers; Dr. Felicia Eghan and Dr. A'ine Humble –Chair of the Department of Family Studies and Gerontology, Mount Saint Vincent University; Dept. of Police; and Dept. of Medical Education, Dalhousie University. The Deputy Mayor of HRM Darren Fisher was also present. Various community groups and service providers had exhibits for seniors. We also had

representation from Federal Government Services and New Horizon Program for seniors. Jackie Aiden the Senior Development Officer of the New Horizon Program for seniors and Jean Gilles were one of the presenters among many others. The Minister of Seniors- Alice Wong sent her regrets and message in acknowledgment of the significance of the conference. The conference was captured by Chronicle Herald and SNAP Halifax:

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1180792-diverse-realities-of-aging-immigrants>

Http://www.snaphalifax.com/?option=com_sngevents&id%5B%5D=628301&utm_source=email&utm_medium=snapd

The conference major outcome was the height of interest that registered the need for an Immigrant Senior Forum. A forum that would promote intergenerational learning, increase networking, solidarity and cross-cultural bonding among seniors from different ethnic backgrounds etc. A total of 67 seniors have already registered as a member of the Immigrant Seniors Forum.

The conference evaluation by participants showed that the conference was very successful and needs to be an annual event. Participants registered interest to participate in another conference next year. About 5 new organization and partners have contacted ADAM for next year's conference in 2015.

ADAM would follow up on this and other initiatives through her Integrated Seniors Program that aims to build on the outcome of the conference and to provide integrated services for seniors.

c. The establishment of a community advisory group within the structure of ADAM

Through the baby showers, it was revealed that senior women are willing to participate in community events and to take on some roles and responsibilities if interpretation and some training are provided. Based on these, ADAM expanded its organizational structure to include advisory groups to ensure inclusion and wider participation of seniors especially women in providing guidance for ADAM programs and services. Through ADAM existing programs such as the Information and Referral program, the Youth Mentorship Program, the Positive Aging Program etc, the advisory groups are expected to reflect on the effectiveness of these programs and provide feedback. Through the advisory groups, senior women have found constitutional voice in ADAM and in the community.

d. Leadership training.

Furthermore, ADAM in collaboration with HRM services organized a leadership training to enhance the capacity of seniors in taking leadership roles in the community. During the baby

showers, it was also revealed that some of the women are leading their group/ethnic meetings but needs some training. Topics covered in the training included organizing effective meetings, presentation skills, listening, facilitation, conflicts transformation/resolution, community mobilizing, ICT etc. The training was conducted in November and the last session would take place in February (TBA). After the training, ADAM would continue to support the women in their effort to lead their groups in the community.

e. Direct Support Services for seniors.

Similarly, in an effort to meet identified needs, ADAM has been providing direct support such as transportation, interpretation, referral and information services to enable seniors participate and attend community events and access services.

f. Basic Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Workshops:

Needs assessment has been conducted to determine knowledge level on the use of basic information, communication and technology in relation to accessing health, safety and related information. The needs assessment reveals that though majority of seniors needs some more training as most on-line related information are not immigrant and user-friendly. Seniors would still need a lot of support to be able to access on-line health, safety and other related information. In this regard, ADAM has been providing culturally defined one-on-one support services related to the use of ICTS for specific reasons that meet senior's immediate need. Translation and interpretation are also usually provided during the sessions. About 10 seniors are benefiting from the one-on-support service. When the client gets confident with using technology, the client would be referred to the larger ADAM computer workshop being planned to start in 2014.

ADAM is seeking for funding that would enable the organization enhance its capacity to provide integrated and one-on-one support services for immigrant seniors.

g. Financial and Retirement Planning Workshops:

A drastic need for financial and retirement planning was one of the needs identified among immigrant seniors. Most of the seniors and their families have little or no knowledge about options available for financial planning and retirement. Majority have not lived in Canada for long and have little or no understanding of benefits upon retirement. Also, majority of the immigrant seniors are usually unemployed and on welfare and cannot afford saving for retirement.

Based on this, a community information session was organized. The need for a community investment cooperative was identified. Through my office, I initiated, coordinated and we registered a new social enterprise- the *African Community Investment Cooperative of Canada* (ACICC). The cooperative became fully registered on December 16th 2013 with more than 100

members. The website has also been created (Pls. visit www.acicooperative.ca). Currently, the on-going development, coordination and support of ACICC is part of ADAM seniors initiative.

In addition, ADAM organized a financial and retirement planning workshop. ADAM ensures that workshops are tailored to meet language needs of participants and that on-going financial and investment education is integrated into the goals of the cooperative.

Overall, there has been no significant change from the original goals of the project. Rather, there have been significant achievements. The project was well received by the community. The interest is reflected in the membership of the African Community Investment Cooperative and Immigrant Seniors' Forum. Issues around seniors that has long been neglected suddenly resonated among community members.

The most rewarding aspect of the project was to be able to see seniors participate in meetings and activities, sharing ideas on how to make ADAM programs more effective in meeting the needs of seniors and community. To feel the sense of community being generated through the programs. Hearing the hopes and dreams of immigrant seniors who think that their lives have lost relevance in this fast-paced society; knowing that they are being recognized, thought of and planned for is priceless.

Also the Informational Community Baby Shower has been met with rewarding interest and appreciation. I receive thank you messages from participants especially those who do not have lots of friends.

CONCLUSION:

Generally, the program has evolved very well. We are very thankful to the New Horizon Program for providing this grant opportunity tailored to the needs of our seniors. There have been unexpected expenses especially with the conference. We are still soliciting for some donations from partners to cover extra cost.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ngozi OTTI

Program Coordinator

Mental Health Promotion Project

The ADAM Mental Health Promotion Project is part of the Government of Nova Scotia's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy and is funded by the Department of Health and Wellness. The "***Community in MIND***" project objectives are to address the needs of the community around mental health and addictions with a focus on increasing education and awareness on the topic of mental health and reducing the related stigma. The project focus has four main objectives.

Objective 1

To collaborate and build relationships with community partners in conducting an in-depth capacity needs assessment with ADAM staff, board members and community leaders. The focus of the assessment will be made specific to the African Diaspora Community to identify the determinants of mental health and well-being.

Objective 2

To address identified mental health stigma among immigrants of African Decent and to provide educational awareness on mental health and well-being through workshops/kitchen counter discussions.

Objective 3

To work with mental health service providers to develop or access culturally competent practices and policies and provide representative information on mental health awareness and available services in the community.

Objective 4

In addition, provided with the appropriate funding, there will be free Mental Health First Aid Training guided by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, made available to community leaders and community members. The possibility to get future funding for this initiative looks positive.

The Mental Health Promotion project started on November 4th, 2014 and is funded for 1 year with the possibility of future funding to continue the work. Currently, the ADAM Mental Health Promotion Project ("***Community in MIND***") has and continues to implement the following:

Partnerships and Collaboration: Relationship building and collaboration efforts continue to develop with community organizations, agencies and networks such as the Health Association of African Canadians (HAAC), the African Canadian Health Network (ACHN), the Refugee Clinic, the Immigration Settlement & Integration Services (ISIS), the Association of Black Social

Workers (ABSW) and Self Help Connection (SHC). In collaboration with SHC future mental health first aid initiative planning and proposed funding efforts have been established.

ADAM Positive Aging Conference: As part of the event information package, a *“Mindful Aging- for Immigrant Seniors”* brochure was created, addressing identified sources of stress, immigrant/ newcomer challenges and issues, mental health stigma, mental illness (signs and symptoms), self-care measures, community resources and service provider contact information. There were 150 copies of the brochure printed and distributed as part of the positive aging information package and given to all attendees. At the end of the conference a mental health promotion question was presented as part of the evaluation.

Youth Mental Health Forum: In collaboration with Lana McLean (HAAC) and Elizabeth Dantzer (ABSW) the planning and delivery of the *“Mind Matters and Heart Hurts –Mental Health and Addiction Issues for Youth of African Descent”* was an overall success. Held at the Cornwallis Street Baptist Church on February 4, 2014; there were over 75 community members in attendance and media coverage by CBC present. Organizations like LOVE and Teens Now Talk (TNT) were present with available resources and information. There was also a powerful presentation by a panel of first voice speakers, community psychiatrists, and social workers who spoke to many important issues that are affecting our youth regarding suicide, mental illness, services-“what we have and what we need” and the importance of culturally competence services and delivery. New immigrant mental health and trauma was addressed by a first voice client of ADAM from the Congo; a very powerful presentation. The event ended with a question and answer period between the panelists and attendees. The overall experience was invaluable with positive feedback given by attendees following the event.

Board and Staff Consultation: In collaboration with Folami Jones as Health Coordinator from ISIS and current board member of HAAC, we held a very informative and progressive consultation meeting. We examined the current situation of the African Refugee community; part of the conversation explored the current mental health situation of African refugees within a Canadian context. We reviewed the ADAM mandate and identified specific supportive objectives that in the future could further support this marginalized community. With the board and staff that were present there was an overall consensus that further discussion and action should be taken to facilitate onward change.

Community Workshop/kitchen table talk series: As part of the *“Community in Mind”* Mental Health Promotion strategy, we will explore the communities' perception of mental health and equitable access to services. To date, two sessions with ISIS will be held this month which will address mental health issues, related stigma and self-help and community resources and services that are available. Currently registered for two workshops are members from three main communities; Republic of the Congo, Eritrea and Sudan. There will be two groups divided into two sessions; the first one will be with women and women interpreters' and the second session

will explore men's mental health understanding. Further sessions will be scheduled and ongoing.

Written and Submitted by:

Rhonda Atwell

Project Coordinator, Mental Health Promotion

Audited Financial Statement

Our audited financial statement for 2013 appears on the following 12 pages.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, thank you to the members of the Board of Directors (current and past) for the time, effort, commitment, money etc. that they gave to support ADAM. A lot of work has gone into bringing ADAM so pat everyone on the back to say well done!

Thank you to all our community pillars who supported ADAM through the downs and donated their time and money for a worthy cause.

Thank you to all our volunteers. We wouldn't be able to meet all the community demands without your freely given time and commitment.

Thank you to the ADAM staff for all the hard work. Your commitment, support, and positive energy in getting the work done is much appreciated.

Thank you to all the ADAM members and the community at large. We appreciate your commitment in paying your dues as that has helped ADAM meet some of its financial obligations.

Finally, we will like to say a big thank you to all our Funders and Partner Agencies for the financial support, encouragement, and belief in the work of ADAM. We appreciate the support that has gone into making this past year a very successful year for ADAM.

Remember:

UNITED WE STAND IN DIVERSITY, DEMOCRACY, PROSPERITY AND PEACE!