

Think the secular and the religious don't have much in common? Think again

Inspirit Foundation announces \$250,000 in grants for 15 community projects that will strengthen connections between young Canadians of different religious and secular beliefs

Toronto, November 13, 2012 - The Inspirit Foundation today announced the 15 organizations to receive a total of \$250,000 in funding to help bring young Canadians of different spiritual, religious and secular beliefs together around the common goal of improving their communities. The Inspirit Bridge Building Grants support community projects across Canada that give young people the opportunity to actively engage with peers of different beliefs, change misconceptions about each other that may exist, and discover shared goals and aspirations. To learn more about the first projects to receive the grant, please visit <http://www.inspiritfoundation.org/how-we-work/supported-projects>

"Recent global events clearly make the case for the Inspirit Foundation's mandate to inspire pluralism among young Canadians of different spiritual, religious and secular backgrounds," said Andrea Nemtin, President and CEO, Inspirit Foundation. "The projects we support will help the leaders of tomorrow build a more inclusive and pluralist society; a society where we actively engage with each other's differences and where all these differences, which include our ethnicity, culture and beliefs, are celebrated."

Projects were selected based on three criteria: learning, collaboration and community building. The Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), for instance, was selected for a project that will provide a forum for youth of various faith groups to start a dialogue to address misconceptions. The One Voice project, which will take place in Windsor, Ontario, is a partnership with the All Saints Anglican Church, the Windsor Islamic Association, and the Jewish Community Centre of Windsor.

"The purpose of the OneVoice project is to use faith as a means of communication and understanding as opposed to a means for conflict," said Remy Boulbol, Director of the Rose City Islamic Centre, an institution of the Windsor chapter of MAC. "In our community, while there is a great deal of diversity, there is also a great deal of misunderstanding and misinformation. The program will work to change this type of discourse through education and dialogue, thereby bringing about change in thoughts and actions on a larger community level scale."

The grant will also support a Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. project in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where Aboriginal youth will introduce newcomer youth to indigenous history, spirituality and strategies that foster social integration and respect for diversity. The project is a partnership with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba.

"The goals of our Indigenous Ways of Being on Turtle Island project are to help newcomer youth gain a better understanding of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and to improve relations in Winnipeg's inner city," said Leslie Spillelt, Executive Director, Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.

(more)

The successful grantees are:

1. Abbotsford Community Services Society - Abbotsford, BC
2. Apathy is Boring / L'apathie c'est plate - Montreal, QC
3. Atwater Library and Computer Centre / Bibliothèque et centre d'informatique Atwater - Westmount, QC
4. CultureLink Settlement Services - Toronto, ON
5. Girls Action Foundation / Fondation filles d'action - Montreal, QC
6. House of Friendship / Maison de l'amitié de Montréal - Montreal, QC
7. John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights - Edmonton, AB
8. Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. - Winnipeg, MB
9. Muslim Association of Canada - Windsor, ON
10. Native Canadian Centre of Toronto - Toronto, ON
11. Nipawin Oasis Community Centre Co-operative Ltd. - Nipawin, SK
12. Peterborough Green-Up - Peterborough, ON
13. Sikhs Serving Canada - Mississauga, ON
14. The United Way of Lunenburg County - Bridgewater, NS
15. UforChange - Toronto, ON

To receive updates on the Inspirit Bridge Building Grants, including information about the next call for applications when it becomes available, please connect with us through Twitter [@InspiritFdn](https://twitter.com/InspiritFdn) and/or facebook.com/InspiritFoundation

About the Inspirit Foundation

The Inspirit Foundation is a national grant-making organization that supports Canadians, particularly young adults, in building a more inclusive and pluralist Canada. One way the foundation does this is by funding initiatives that promote engagement and exchange between young Canadians of different spiritual, religious and secular beliefs. For more information, visit www.inspiritfoundation.org.

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Media contact:

Luciana Tuzino - ltuzino@inspiritfoundation.org - 416-644-3600, ext. 5 - Mobile: 647-802-1296

Program contact:

Gwen Joy - gjoy@inspiritfoundation.org