

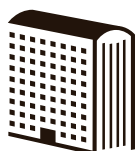


Engaging Girls,  
Changing Communities

# Newsletter: Winter 2012



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Urban Environment  
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# About the Project

In This Newsletter:

**Engaging Girls, Changing Communities: Examining Girls' Processes of Civic Engagement and Leadership (EGCC)** investigates how young women and girls engage in leadership and civic activities in new urban environments. The lack of appropriate leadership programs that take into consideration factors that shape the development of leadership by girls at the grassroots level has resulted in a gender imbalance in both Canadian community and political life. EGCC research is designed to create insight into the complexities of nurturing girl specific leadership. Our leadership research will produce an understanding of gendered civic participation and engagement patterns.

We invite girls to re-define leadership in their own terms. An overarching goal in EGCC is to develop and enhance a partnership between academic institutions and community organizations that fosters girls' leadership aspirations and community engagement. The products of our research will offer partnering community organizations the opportunity to create innovative youth centered and youth informed leadership learning programming. Further, EGCC will mobilize knowledge from research activities to local school boards with the intent to effect policy change at the Ministry level. We are dedicated to promote the development of girls as future leaders and engaged citizens.

Read more about EGCC at the Jean Augustine website: »<http://jeanaugustine.apps01.yorku.ca/projects-research/egcc/>

## About the Project Fall 2011 Activities

EGCC Forum in Windsor

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SSHRC

Jean Augustine Chair

Multicultural Council of Windsor  
and Essex County

Skills for Change

Thornccliffe Neighbourhood Office

Working Women Community Centre



# Fall 2011 Activities

## EGCC Windsor Forum: Great Event – Remarkable Turnout!

Engaging Girls Changing Communities (EGCC) officially launched in Windsor on Oct. 4th,

*Dr. Martha Lee speaks about the importance of encouraging girls.*



2011 when we held a forum for the Windsor community. The event brought together community organizations, researchers, academics, youth and community leaders to discuss salient issues related to girls' leadership and civic

engagement in New Urban Environments. Forum speakers included Dr. Martha Lee, Dean in the Faculty Of Education at Windsor, Michele Legere of United way Canada, Shannon Ciampa – Training and Employment Manager at the Multicultural Council of Windsor/Essex county. Dr. Yvette Daniel, the Windsor project lead applicant, engaged all parties in planning the project's initial event. Nailah Peters, a York graduate student and the data coordinator of the EGCC Toronto branch joined us for the program kick-off and introduced the day's programme by performing a poem. Dr. Daniel captured the audience by elaborating on project goals and engaging participant in interactive activities.

*Dr. Yvette Daniel addresses the audience, giving an overview of EGCC.*



Participants broke out into groups to ponder, discuss and give feedback on issues relevant to girls, leadership and community engagement.



*Attendees participate with high energy and collaborative spirits.*

The discussion that ensued was rich and highly nuanced, as the young women in attendance candidly articulated their opinions and voiced their ideas about barriers and enhancers to leadership and civic life. Overall, the event was a great success! We are truly appreciative of the overwhelming support from community leaders and are especially pleased with the attendance and participation of the girls. The event captured the spirit of EGCC by engaging youth and creating a positive space wherein issues pertinent to exploring girls' leadership and community involvement could be freely and openly discussed. It was refreshing to see so many young women empowered and eager to participate in a project they could embrace as their own.

Thanks again to all those partners, supporters and youth who made it out and participated!

*Nailah Peters  
Data Coordinator, Toronto*

*Natasha Koustova  
EGCC Project Coordinator, Windsor*



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# Community Feedback

I'm so excited to be part of this. It feels good!

When I came across this project, I thought, "Yes!" This will be perfect for my girls.

There really should be more projects like this. Happy to be a part of it!

I'm excited for a project like this. It feels like people actually care about what I have to say.



*Some of the youth interns gather for a discussion*



## What's Coming

### Internships Underway!

We are fully into the next phase of EGCC. We recruited and trained youth interns to act as interviewers for data collection. The interviewers have been conducting in depth interviews about how girls experience civic participation and leadership within their communities, everyday lives, and society as a whole. EGCC interviewers in Toronto have already completed  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the projected interview target! Interviewing is about to go into full swing in EGCC Windsor as 3 peer interviewers have just been hired. After necessary training, these youth interviewers will contribute to the project by conducting face-to-face interviews with the female youth participants.

Involving youth as interviewers has effectively allowed the EGCC team to build upon youth capacity and promote leadership qualities and confidence; enacting the core values of the project.

## To Watch

Look forward to our next newsletter that will be out in Summer 2012. At the conclusion of our data collection and analysis phase, youth interns and selected interviewees will be given the resources to engage in our Summer initiative. Keep an eye out for upcoming news and more! Be sure to check us out on the web at the Jean Augustine website to see more photos from the Windsor forum and Youth intern training:

»<http://edu.apps01.yorku.ca/jeanaugustinechair/projects-research/egcc>

## Girls In the News

### Ambrose Calls on all Canadians to Continue to Work to End Violence Against Women

The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, has called on all Canadians to continue their actions and leadership in the efforts to end violence against women and girls. The federal government's support for community-based projects that improve women's economic security and prosperity, and advancing women in leadership and decision-making roles has nearly doubled since 2006-2007, growing from \$10.8 million to close to \$19 million, its highest level ever.

»[Read more at www.swc-cfc.gc.ca](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca)

### Pathways to Education celebrates 10 year anniversary

Pathways to Education is helping youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and successfully transition into post-secondary education. Pathways addresses systemic barriers to education by providing leadership, expertise and a community-based program proven to lower dropout rates.

»[Read more at http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/about-us](http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/about-us)



# Funding and Partners

## SSHRC (Funder)

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is the federal agency that promotes and supports postsecondary-based research and training in the humanities and social sciences. Through its programs and policies, SSHRC enables the highest levels of research excellence in Canada, and facilitates knowledge-sharing and collaboration across research disciplines, universities and all sectors of society.

»[www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca)

## Jean Augustine Chair (Funder)

Named after the Honorable Jean Augustine, the objective of this chair is to enrich a multitude of activities at York University with research and academic expertise in the areas of educational policy and practice, immigration, community engagement, and cultural diversity.

The Chair will support Canada's next generation of teachers, educational leaders and researchers working to improve schooling in contemporary metropolitan cities.

»<http://edu.apps01.yorku.ca/jeanaugustinechair/>

## Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County (Partner)

The Council's mission is to promote and encourage a harmonious society in Windsor and Essex County that is multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-faith, and to work toward the social equality of all cultures.

»<http://www.themcc.com/>

## Skills for Change (Partner)

Established in 1982, Skills for Change (SfC) is a non-profit agency based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Their mission is to provide learning and training opportunities for immigrants and refugees to access and fully participate in the workplace and wider community.

»<http://www.skillsforchange.org/>

## Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office (Partner)

Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office is a community based multicultural, multi-service agency providing community-based services to residents of Thorncliffe Park and surrounding communities. Programs and services include information and referral, a family violence program, women's counseling, settlement services, language classes for newcomers, employment assistance services, an Ontario Early Years Centre for Don Valley West riding, youth services and delivery of community information workshops and seminars.

»<http://www.thorncliffe.org/>

## Working Women Community Centre (Partner)

Working Women Community Centre is a non-profit and charitable organization that provides immigrant women and their families with opportunities to improve the quality of their lives through self-development and community action.

»<http://www.workingwomencc.org/>

