



Newsletter of the Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning Project

Learning Changes

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Israt Ahmed leads a discussion on the City of Toronto budget process during an APCOL training session.
Photo Courtesy of Joseph Sawan

THE 4 Es

by Sharon Simpson



Welcome to the second issue of the Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning (APCOL) newsletter. Along with supporting grassroots community organizing, using popular education and implementing low-cost dissemination tools to share what is learned, the APCOL project intends to capture and share information about how community members and groups become engaged in and stay engaged in work that addresses poverty.

To do this, we selected specific neighbourhoods in which to do research work. A challenge APCOL faces is how to showcase other endeavours that are taking place while maintaining its specific research focus. I would like to use this inside cover to bring attention to another venture that is taking place in the quest to address poverty issues.

The Lawrence Heights community faces many challenges and in response has given birth to a variety of innovative approaches to address them. One such approach is being championed by Tinashe Kanengoni who is employing his own unique approach to anti-poverty organizing and learning which he refers to as the “4 Es”.

Working out of the local city-run Lawrence Heights community center and doing a significant amount of work with young people, Tinashe has utilized his 4 Es concept of Engage, Educate, Employ, and Empower to

address local poverty issues. He explains the concept as follows:

ENGAGE -- From his perspective engagement goes well beyond simply being involved in something. Engagement denotes a sense of ownership over what is being done. This in turn results in real investment in working for possible solutions to a confronting issue, such as poverty. Engaging develops relationships and makes connections.

EDUCATE -- Once a person is engaged and invested in the work being done Tinashe see education as the next natural step in the process of addressing a confronting issue. He sees the work being doing in the engagement process as fertile opportunity for learning about the confronting issue. When you have a relationship and connections you have a platform for attention

EMPLOY -- Following on the heels of educate is the opportunity to employ what has been learned. The application of what has been learned then feeds back into keeping participants engaged and allows for further opportunity for education. These 3 factors then hopefully gives rise to the final “E” in the 4Es concept which is empowerment.

EMPOWER -- The belief here is that once a person has become engaged in a way that builds capacity they become educated in a way that empowers them to take self driven initiative in dealing with poverty issues and concerns.

Sharon Simpson is Special Projects Coordinator for Labour Community Services, and community co-leader of the APCOL project. ☘

IT'S WHERE WE LIVE:

HOUSING AND ANTI-POVERTY ORGANIZING IN SCARBOROUGH

by Joseph E. Sawan



Anti-poverty organizing takes on many forms, but I believe that successful movements share some key qualities: hope, perseverance and enthusiasm. The residents in East Scarborough, specifically in the Kingston Galloway - Orton park (KGO) neighbourhood, go above and beyond in their organizing efforts. From the Market to Community Speaks to its busy East Scarborough Storefront office on Lawrence Ave., this is a place where it seems an increasing number of residents are working to engage more people in their work and encourage social change in their community.

Beyond my initial meetings with residents and organizers along with the rest of the APCOL KGO case study research team, my first real introduction to KGO was during a Housing Consultation with MPP Margaret Best. Israt Ahmed, a Community Planner with Social Planning Toronto and the community co-leader of the case study, was one of the organizers for the event and together with a number of other community activists decided to take the consultation to another level. Prior to the event, Israt put together a housing tour with MPP Best to better illustrate what residents would speak of later that evening. Taking us throughout East Scarborough, the disparity became clear, beginning with Scarborough Village near

Eglinton and Markham, we witnessed the overcrowding of Cougar Court apartments, “motel row” on Kingston Road and the Guildwood community on the other side of the tracks, literally.

The response was profound. During the consultation, it was clear that our earlier tour had provided the necessary context for the MPP to visualize the frustrations presented by the 150 residents later that evening.

Organizing must always take on a multi-dimensional approach, which Israt explained very clearly; “We must take every opportunity we get to show our politicians the condition of housing in KGO and demand that residents be a part of decision-making for more accessible and affordable housing, but it can’t stop with politicians. The first priority really must be organizing in the community itself. Building from who and what is there.”

Ultimately, it is a question of providing necessities for a community to thrive and prosper, not simply to survive. As one participant during the housing consultation explained, “Housing is a necessity, like healthcare, so why isn’t it a right for all?”

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY

When thinking about anti-poverty organizing, a significant portion of the work is about changing perceptions. As we complete

our interviews, focus groups and training sessions, one of the consistent themes is related to the power of perceptions both within and those directed toward the KGO community from outside. Since the City of Toronto established its 13 priority neighbourhoods, a new level of attention has been brought to areas that have experienced a variety of issues.



Philip Isaacson and Gail Murray present issues to residents during a housing consultation with MPP Margaret Best. Photo Courtesy of Joseph Sawan

While residents and organizers are happy to finally see attention brought to their community that can provide necessary resources, they are also wary that it may deepen negative perceptions of their community. Ultimately, it's about engaging residents and the public as to what can be done to improve the conditions residents face and to highlight the inspiring work being done by residents in the KGO community.

Part of the APCOL project is to provide spaces for these discussions and training opportunities for emerging leaders. But, the project's goals also include studying anti-poverty activism in action as well as in reflection. So far, we have had weekly meetings with recently hired organizers and animators from the KGO community.

In our first APCOL training sessions, led by Israt Ahmed, we discussed the wide array of issues surrounding "poverty" and the potential solutions that we can envision. Israt challenged our team to reconsider what is poverty and who is affected by it. Beginning to articulate the challenges we face on a daily basis provides another tool to change perceptions and to demand resources to encourage social change.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP

Poverty and anti-poverty action is a dynamic process that demands multiple approaches. The APCOL project has been focusing on a number of different anti-poverty activism pathways including educational completion, good jobs and health/nutrition. But in KGO the focus begins (but doesn't end) with the matter of housing, starting with the development of their own local housing strategy.

The general question that weaves into the work of KGO activists as much as it does with the other anti-poverty activist groups across Toronto is: What does it take to build and sustain a movement for change? While passion and enthusiasm, existing injustices and a sense of inequities may help start a

Wow! We marched! The Storefront didn't disappear and we still have it. And now it's actually growing!

campaign or a movement, sustaining them is much harder. For residents and organizers in the KGO community, the solution is in action. Sustaining a movement requires a balance between service-delivery and empowering residents to take action not as clients but as members, activists and leaders.

The Storefront has become a hub for service delivery, and has expanded to provide opportunities for community development in East Scarborough. Their vision sums it up clearly:

“East Scarborough is a safe, well educated and prosperous community. The Storefront contributes to making the impossible possible by providing accessible sites for community members of all ages and cultures to find and share solutions they need to live healthy lives, find meaningful work, play and thrive.”

In collaboration with the Storefront and other local organizations, KGO's Residents Rising Community Association is a “grass-roots community development team” that works to engage residents with community events and create new strategies for community change. Such an array of projects and organizations provide residents with diverse opportunities to engage in their community.

It is here specifically that KGO's APCOL case study is seeking to contribute the most. What are these opportunities? What types

of opportunities for engagement are most effective for building community strength at the grassroots level? And, who finds their way into these opportunities and how?

In KGO, momentum is building with a dual perspective: building leadership by providing spaces for existing leadership to be recognized and, building new leadership that broadens the representativeness of activism on the housing question. In either case, it is the contribution of the APCOL case study project to encourage both existing leaders and new ones to take their leadership to a new level.

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH BEGINNING TO SHOW?

What is so often missed in community anti-poverty research is the fact that activism almost always has a long history. As we carry out our research work with residents, this is certainly the case for the KGO community. In understanding anti-poverty activism in KGO, the research is documenting a previously unwritten history – one activist story at a time.

These stories tell how people learn from their activist experience in other places and on other issues. The stories reveal their involvement and growing awareness of organizing and anti-poverty, from petitioning for transit changes in KGO to making changes

in police services and social service provision on “motel row.” These stories tell of the many ways that activism emerged in the course of the community taking greater control over the uses of public spaces where people could meet and begin working together. Taken together, the dense fabric of past and present activism is gaining a new level of appreciation for researchers and residents alike.

But, what are the real origins, supports and barriers to activism? What are the roles of the unique individual, family, street and neighbourhood “biographies” that seem to fuel anti-poverty activism at its deepest levels? How are the rich social networks that form the foundation of an activist community infused with memories and deep commitments? Each of these matters, and more, are coming into ever sharper focus in the research.

One of the many activist leaders who sat down with our university and community researchers to be interviewed described such

things when asked – Has she seen changes in anti-poverty organizing in KGO in the past decade?

Yes, absolutely. And I think everybody who’s involved would say the same thing. You know, we started off feeling like – “Can we change anything?” Especially when you are in Toronto Community housing... Well, we had a march in this community when the Storefront lost funding... This was 2005-2006 and so we had the march on the hottest day in June and Oh my Gosh we had hundreds of people. Now that was very empowering to residents!... So that was another way of community feeling: Wow! We marched! The Storefront didn’t disappear and we still have it. And now it’s actually growing! So, in some ways, we must have done something to affect that change. So yeah, I would say that from the time I started in this community in the crime prevention aspect, to now 10 years later, it is a whole different ballgame for residents. They’re really starting to know that they have a venue and have an ability to speak out. It’s all collaboration. It’s not just Residents Rising,

it’s not just Westhill organizing, it’s not just the Storefront – its all of us together doing this and that’s why I think it’s been successful because it’s not one core group that is doing all the work, it is expected of everybody.

Clearly, KGO “must have done something to affect that change.” But what exactly was it, and what were the kinds of visions of change that animated activists? Organizing, campaign tools and a strong network of community groups are impor-



The APCOL team of community animators and organizers at the Residents Rising / Action for Neighbourhood Change office in KGO. Photo Courtesy of Joseph Sawan

tant. But, what is at the heart of anti-poverty activism? It is summed up by two other interviewees who, in discussion together with us, posed a series of questions and concluded by offering a vision of activism that on top of all the nuts and bolts of organizing work, may be as simple as it is powerful.

Interviewer:

Every time we think about poverty we seem to think about it in terms of money. Now if we inject this community with ten million dollars would poverty be done?...

Omar:

With ten million dollars where would poverty be? I feel like if you do that it might create construction jobs: Lots of big buildings and things. But then this neighbourhood would be just some other downtown then. So, I think: What do we really want? We want to live in peace. In the right place where, I dunno... Some nature, some people, and some simple things.

Alice:

Yeah simple things! That's what I want. [For instance] I like our market. Our Festival Market. It's green. You see the kids playing. You watch the seniors just sit and gather. That's what it is for me when I think of anti-poverty... Like me for instance, I do volunteer work around the neighbourhood. And I can't seem to say no. I like doing it... But I'm living on a month on what I used to make in a week. And I've been successful at it for six years, seven years. It's wearing me down... But then again I can't see me getting too burnt out with this because I love it. I feed off it... For me, it's when my friend went through a tough thing this week. I say, "Call me. If you need to talk, just call me". And that's where [anti-poverty] starts... I

think a problem shared is a problem cut in half. It doesn't solve the problem, but at least you can get to where the action is!

NEXT STEPS

As the KGO case study on anti-poverty organizing and housing moves forward, the development of an expanding organizing team committed to their community will provide the necessary infrastructure to develop more leaders and a strong network of activists in East Scarborough. A community of activists doesn't just appear – a community of activists builds it. How they do this is the type of “learning-in-action” that is at the centre of one of the first case studies in the APCOL project as a whole. It is a case that will benefit other activist across Toronto and it is a group of activists intent on finding opportunities to communicate with these other activists and organizations throughout the GTA. Their goal? To enrich the learning process and foster diverse organizing strategies to change the face of community housing and the many other activist goals that are at the centre of a strong anti-poverty movement in the city.

More resources:

<http://www.ourkgocommunity.com/>

<http://www.thestorefront.org/>

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SPOTLIGHT: CHRIS HARRIS REFLECTS ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN TODAY'S TORONTO



Photo courtesy of Peter Sawchuk

In January 2010 APCOL's Guest Speaker Series welcomed Toronto activist Chris Harris (formerly of the Black Action Defence Committee, BADC, Toronto) who spoke to OISE/University of Toronto students and other community activists. This is the opening part of his talk. Chris sits on the Steering Committee of the APCOL project.

Neighbourhood organizations in the Third World are set up by people's movements. Sometimes it's labour, the women's movement, or the anti-racist movements who get things moving. Those organizations are under-resourced, don't have any formal support, but respond directly to the needs of the people and form the base for broader social

justice and radical movements to transform society. They become the training ground from which militants arise.

State funding provides real political and ideological contradictions in non-profit activism in Toronto. A lot of the funding that flows to social movement organizations and social justice organizations is to fill cracks in the system which are becoming wider with the economic crisis and rising poverty. They are hiring hundreds of new welfare workers because of the number of workers going on welfare, but really this advances the interests of the ruling class that controls the state.

There is this illusion that a lot of grassroots work in activism in the non-profit sector is very progressive and is really having an impact. I agree there is that potential, but we have to move beyond the parameters of a lot of funding programs and agendas that are being advanced by the state through this funding.

Resources for work with Black youths are under code words like "at risk youth" and "priority neighborhoods", which mask the oppressive relationships in the community. This means problematizing and technologizing the Black community, rather than looking at the systemic issues responsible for its oppression. In response, a group like BADC needs to get funding for work in civil society,

but also to sustain parallel political organizations. Then we have a clear separation of social work and political work.

One of the key victories for the Mike Harris conservative regime was eliminating the ability of most community based-organizations to do advocacy work in order to qualify for funding. Today a lot of organizations are stepping up the challenge, bringing social justice work back into the non-profit sector. I am part of that process.

In my work with gangs, I see youths that are experiencing the effects of the neo-liberal policies implemented by provincial governments over the past 15 to 20 years. They are in a state of permanent unemployment. At an earlier time in the history of BADC, the anti-racist struggles of the 70s, 80s, and 90s dealt with racism in the police force, police brutality and police murders of civilians. In the last decade, we have been working on what we call horizontal violence in the Black community. Not Black on Black violence because it is more the impact of the political economy which creates a cut-throat survival situation in our communities. Coming out of decades of anti-racist struggle, clearly we are involved in class struggles now in the Black community.

The fundamental issue for Black youth is class. Many Black youths have to struggle today to enter a stable working class. The jobs that their parents worked in the city are no longer there, the communities that they grew up in are becoming destabilized by the government and through gentrification. Lawrence Heights and Regent Park, relatively stable working class communities with a

lot of people of African descent and immigrants, are being systematically destroyed and replaced by Yuppie communities. Lawrence Heights is beside the booming Yorkdale Mall, so the forces of capital are driving out the working class families and building condos.

We see a great migration of entrepreneurs and professionals from the suburbs back into the city. For that to happen, you have to relocate a lot of working class people from the city out to the suburbs. Regent Park was the beginning of this massive gentrification of the City of Toronto. Similar efforts are underway in Jane-Finch and Lawrence Heights. All over the city there are plans underway, selling off land to private developers. A lot of young people today, especially Black working class youths, are aware not so much of the racial oppression in society but of the class divide. Toronto is becoming a place of “haves” and “have nots”.

There is a huge backlash against Black-focused schooling, but the majority of inner city schools where Black youths are going are already segregated schools. Middle class White families are pulling their kids out of these schools, putting them in private schools or alternative schools for middle class kids. Some of these schools will be shutting down. So really, a lot of our struggles are linked to other struggles on the left. We need alliances with the labour movement, with different social justice organizations like OCAP and with Marxist groups like Basics newspaper, to develop campaigns against unemployment, police brutality and gentrification.

For this, we need institutional development. Two years ago a group of progressive

A lot of Black people are being pushed out of the new economy and there is no plan “B” for them.

middle class parents of the Dufferin Grove Community at Dufferin and Bloor mobilized to form a social justice school with an environmental focus because they didn't want their kids in a conservative learning climate. They wanted their kids to have a richer educational experience, where ecology and social responsibility and community activism were at the centre of learning. I believe this school has Grade 1 to 3. They had their own struggles, but they are a relatively affluent community and they were very organized and strategic. In a short period of time they are implementing a school.

That kind of institutional development like the Grove Community School is where we need to be heading as educators. We shouldn't just be looking to get teaching jobs in the bourgeois schools and the mainstream public schools, but also to be creating really innovative alternative schools. Their alternative programs are linked to social justice organizations, to the social economy that's extending in our city, and a broad range of forces on the left.

We are going to develop the Norman Richmond Academy for Peace and Justice. In that school, we will develop courses on anti-racism, women's studies and labour activism and those three will intersect in different courses. We will be integrating youths into different social justice organizations so that there is a real self-reflected practice. The students will be learning theory in a popular

education way, and applying classroom ideas in real life. A key difference with the Black focussed school is that we are focusing on working class learning; although Black youth experience racism and need to develop their identity we also need to focus on the survival of the community.

A lot of Black people are being pushed out of the new economy and there is no plan “B” for them. Ultimately its not just about developing the identity of these youths, but they actually need to be engaged in anti-capitalist struggle as they grow into adults for the survival of their communities. And it's not just Black working class communities, but its all working class people. This school will be opened to diverse youth of colour from the South Asian and Latino communities, as well as a number of White working class youth who have fallen through the cracks. Our school, the Grove Community School and the Black focussed school are all part of transforming the education system.

These institutions of learning really bring forth the contradictions of the society. Addressing those contradictions of capitalism and patriarchy, of homophobia and White supremacy with young people can inspire them and sustain us for the struggles ahead. I think this is a very important moment... ❧

The full text and audio version of this talk and those of other APCOL Guest Speakers are coming soon to the APCOL Project Community-University website – www.apcol.com. Stay tuned.

FILLING HOLES: SOCIAL NETWORKS, ACTIVISM AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZING

by Stephanie Ross



Recently, people involved in anti-poverty policy-making, community economic development and social movement action and research have begun to focus their attention on the role of social networks in facilitating community action and change.

Social networks are our webs of relationships, whether family, friends, schoolmates, co-workers, neighbours, or fellow movement activists. These networks link us not just to each other as communities but also to the institutions of power in our society. Some researchers argue that our social networks and relationships should be understood as social capital because they allow us to access a range of economic and non-economic resources. In other words, as the old saying goes, “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know, that matters.”

The presence or absence of social ties of various kinds can shape whether people can gain access to information, educational or employment opportunities, political influence or economic resources. Some researchers have emphasized that communities with lots of close social bonds, tight networks,

high levels of trust and subsequently more social capital are better able to act collectively to make sure that community members are taken care of when they fall on hard times.

However, others point out that, like other forms of capital, social capital is unevenly distributed: some people’s social networks give them access to more valuable and powerful resources than those of others. This second perspective encourages us to think carefully about the development of social capital. From this perspective, researchers ask whether existing social networks help to foster positive social change in our communities, or whether they work to reproduce existing economic and social inequalities. In other words, there is a need to treat the idea of “social capital” as an open question.

People who study social movements have shown that our social relationships and networks play an important role in shaping whether we get involved and stay involved in activism. Because we are all involved in multiple sets of relationships, becoming involved in activism requires us to respond to the way this engagement is viewed by the important people in our lives, often in conflicting ways.

Research shows that people are often recruited into activism through family and friends. Once involved, their participation is often sustained by those ties of trust, loyalty

and friendship as much as through a commitment to the issues.

Understanding the role these relationships play across workplaces, neighbourhoods, the home and the host of other groups and



Social Networks:
webs of relationships such as family, friends, schoolmates, co-workers, neighbours, fellow movement activists.

to whom in a workplace allows an organizer to take advantage of informal communication networks and trust relationships to get the message out.

It also helps to identify those who are already acting as leaders and organizers – whether or not they are formally recognized as such. Thus, pre-existing social ties – and our knowledge of how they work – can have a positive effect on spreading activism and effective mobilization. Furthermore, careful attention to these social ties also allows us to raise important questions about who is being left out, who experiences challenges to their activism and why.

Many people also have to negotiate the impact of being an activist on their relationships with those who don't encourage or approve of such engagement. This can be

difficult, particularly if these relationships are quite emotionally important. Becoming an activist can challenge our own established identities as well as other people's ideas of 'who we are' or, at least, who we have been with them in the past.

In other words, our pre-existing social networks can keep us out of activism even if we want to participate: where activism isn't seen as 'normal' or acceptable by those close to us, it can be difficult to defy those norms and withstand the disapproval, negative judgments or even hostility we might encounter. Understanding how social relationships can act as barriers to mobilization is therefore also crucial to effective activism.

Another challenge to people's activism related to social capital is the matter of exclusion. As was pointed out earlier, a community's social capital can be unevenly distributed across its members.

In activist groups or organizations, exclusion is typically not part of anyone's conscious plan or agenda. Most organizers see exclusion as a problem. Even so, if you are an



Participation:
sustained by ties of trust, loyalty, friendship as much as through a commitment to the issues.

activist, take a look around your next gathering. It should be obvious that some people sit with, talk with and have relationships with some and not others. More broadly still,

look around again at this same meeting and take notice of who isn't present at all. One might think: this is a matter of people's available time, personal energies, understanding of the issues at hand and, thus, their level of commitment. But, if there is one thing that all activists share it is the ability to overcome these barriers of time, energy, and understanding of the issues.

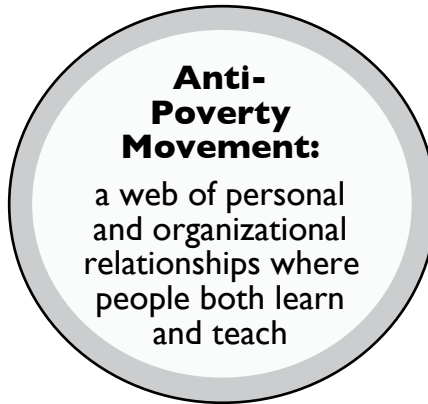
Therefore, attention to the power of social networks and social ties is central to understanding the distributive power of social capital and broadening forms of activism. In other words, where there are noticeable patterns of participation, we often find these patterns rooted in social differences such as gender, racial or ethnic background, first language, housing, educational or broader social class background. In such situation, we are likely see types of social capital development that are unevenly distributed.

In a more general sense, social networks are important to understanding the relationships between social movement organizations, and whether groups who work on a common issue – like anti-poverty activism – are able to come together in coalitions, share information and strategic knowledge, mobilize a wider group of activists and supporters, and work together in a sustained way on common initiatives.

Organizations are part of a web of relationships too, and whether they are included or excluded, central to or isolated from the movement community as a whole has a

huge impact of their potential effectiveness. Therefore, both the position of anti-poverty organizations within a broader social movement network, the particular kinds of connections between them, and the social capital these connections potentially provide, are all key issues for the Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning (APCOL) research project.

One element of the APCOL project is therefore to bring to light the role that social relationships play in the lives of individual anti-poverty activists as well as in the interactions between organizations in the anti-poverty movement in Toronto. The goal of this work is to better understand what kinds of social relationships sustain effective activism.



More than simply documenting and analyzing these relationships, with the APCOL project we also hope to gain insight into what new and existing practical strategies effectively mobilize the social capital of anti-poverty activists and organizations, and what means we might use to develop the kinds of social relationships that sustain movement work.

Stephanie Ross teaches in the Work and Labour Studies Program at York University. She is the academic co-lead on the FoodShare Toronto case study for the APCOL Project. ☘

WHAT'S NEXT?

by D'Arcy Martin



Photo courtesy of Line Bolduc

The first year of this project draws to a close in the spring. We are now compiling and analyzing the results of two case studies, one with FoodShare and the other with community groups in the Kingston-Galloway neighbourhood of Scarborough. From this, we can already see some of the ways that food security and housing interact to reinforce inequalities, and some of the strategies to turn this around.

CASE STUDY -- The next case study will explore an initiative to provide skills training for apprenticeships, recruiting participants from at-risk neighbourhoods and providing support for moving from precarious to more stable employment. The community partner will be George Brown College.

SURVEY -- The survey has been designed in cooperation with Armine Yalnizyan of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Grace-Edward Galabuzi of Ryerson University. It has engaged several graduate students and provided David Livingstone with another opportunity to meld quantitative with qualitative research. This is not an effort to document the inequalities that

generate poverty, but rather an exploration of what moves people to actions that increase equality. The survey will not provide a detached and supposedly objective overview of a social problem. Rather, participants in anti-poverty efforts of the case studies will be engaging with others to draw out the role of mentors, the impact of mass media coverage, and the development of a sense of personal grievance.

CONFERENCE -- The conference will provide a chance to bring together our initial findings with those of people working parallel to our project. By mid-2011, our initiative should have something to bring to the table, and the capacity to co-host an event with practical and policy consequences. By dialogue with others, we hope to turn the corner from study into action, urging support for learning that equips people as social actors. In the second half of our project, we will be taking our direction from a wider range of community groups, academic researchers and policy developers.

Gradually, this project is developing a community of practice – a group of people engaged in critical and respectful dialogue around a pressing social issue, whose purpose is to understand and to support the learning required for greater social justice. The ride may seem bumpy at times, but we are all headed in a good direction!

D'Arcy Martin is an activist educator and coordinator of the APCOL project. ☘

FURTHER READINGS OF INTEREST: TORONTO COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT REPORTS

Community Voices: Young Parents Speak Out About Work, Community Services and Family Life: A Report for the Prospects of Young Families in Toronto Project; Community Social Planning Council of Toronto & Family Service Association of Toronto, 2004

Losing Ground: The Persistent Growth of Family Poverty in Canada's Largest City; United Way of Greater Toronto, 2007

Poverty by Postal Code; United Way of Greater Toronto, 2004

Toronto's Quiet Crisis: The Case for Social and Community Infrastructure Investment; Clutterbuck and Howarth, 2002

Access Not Fear: Non-Status Immigrants and City Services; Nyers, Wright, 2008

Toronto Vital Signs; Toronto Community Foundation, 2007

Youth on Youth: A Report on Youth Led Organizing in the City of Toronto; Warner, Grassroots Youth Collective, 2005

Working on the Edge; Gellatly, 2007

Towards a Living Wage: Ontario Provincial Profile; Campaign 2000, 2007

Aboriginal Mental Health Strategy: Strategic Directions and Service Model; Anishnawbe Health Toronto, 2005

Ten Ways of Seeing Precarious Employment: Report to Toronto by the Community University Research Alliance on Precarious Employment; Toronto Training Board, 2005

Employment and Community-Building: A Report Addressing the Needs of the Markham-Ellesmere Community; Progress Career Planning Centre, 2006

Towards an Integrated Strategy: Maximizing Use of Local Resources: A report on the current successes, best practices, barriers and challenges to the use by Somali youth of employment services in North Etobicoke; Warner, 2006

Work Isn't Working for Ontario Families: The Role of Good Jobs in Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy; Campaign 2000, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, and Canadian Labour Congress (Ontario Region), 2008

If Low Income Women of Colour Counted in Toronto: Final Report of the Action-Research Project, 'Breaking Isolation, Getting Involved'; Khosla, 2003

Ontario ACORN People's Platform; Association of Community Organizing for Reform Now

TDSB Maps Related to Inner-city and Achievement Issues; Brown, 2005

Who's Hungry: 2008 Profile of Hunger in the GTA; Daily Bread Food Bank

Where's Home? 2006: A Picture of Housing Needs in Ontario; Ontario Non-profit Housing Association and Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada - Ontario Region, 2006

Gentrification Dynamics and Inclusive Communities in South West Toronto: A report on the volunteer engagement forum; Vanzaghi, Chan, and Shugurensky, 2006

Housing Policies for Tomorrow's Cities; Hulchanski, 2002

Toronto Training Board Trends Opportunities Priorities (TOP) Report, Toronto Training Board, 2009

APCOL SPEAKER SERIES

by Peter Sawchuk



Israt Ahmed, Joseph Sawan and Tashnim Khan share their experiences and views of Toronto housing activism. Photo courtesy G. de Montmollin.

The APCOL Speaker Series continued its tradition of linking leading community anti-poverty activists to the public as well as academic researchers with its co-sponsorship (with the Transformative Learning Centre, OISE) of a panel on Toronto housing activism. Scarborough organizers Israt Ahmed and Tashnim Khan took time out from their work to share their thoughts and experiences with University of Toronto students and community activists in a session facilitated by APCOL researcher Joseph Sawan (OISE).

Ahmed is a long-time anti-poverty activist in Canada and internationally, as well as a resident of the Kingston Galloway – Ortin

Park neighbourhood and a Social Planning Council (Toronto) organizer. She offered her insights on the unique approach of the “Residents Rising” group in the community, while Khan, a newly emerging community leader, was able to give the audience a glimpse of how activists learn and develop in the course of a housing campaign.

Said Ahmed, “Our approach is not simply to protest... We are building capacity by building networks of people.”

Peter Sawchuk is a co-leader of the APCOL project and Professor of Sociology & Equity Studies, University of Toronto. ☚

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Members of the APCOL project are committed to communicating with groups and individuals interested in issues and campaigns involving Nutrition and Food Security, Housing, School Completion, and Jobs/Living Wages. If you would like to be part of this exchange of information please send an email to info@apcol.ca and we will add you to our electronic listserv.

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