



United Nations Association in Canada “A Sense of Belonging” Initiative 2007 Newsletter, Volume 3

National Activities for *A Sense of Belonging* – Winter 2007

The National Project Team has been very active over the past few months increasing the outreach and engagement of the initiative. Knowledge, experiences and good practices from our community visits has been integrated into a report to share our growing body of knowledge and to help those who set policy see new challenges.

The team published the first research-based *SB* report in March 2007 (Canadian Diversity Opportunities and Challenges: A Report). The report brings together findings and recommendations from a series of community consultations during the second half of 2006. It synthesizes trends observed in all nine *A Sense of Belonging* communities. To receive a copy of the report please contact an SB team member. This is a bilingual document. Electronic copies, price: free. Hard copies, price: \$20.

Poster Abstract

Saad and Rebecca presented a poster abstract at the 9th National Metropolis Conference held in Toronto in February. The abstract highlighted key challenges identified in the synthesis report and presented both the project and UNA-Canada to over 300 spectators. To receive a copy of the poster abstract in French or English, please contact a member of the *SB* team. Copies are available in both French and English. Price: \$15

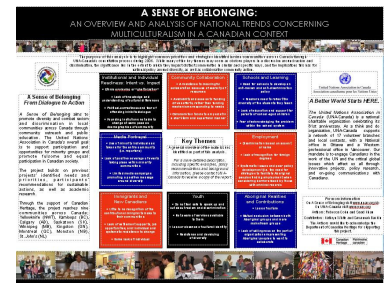
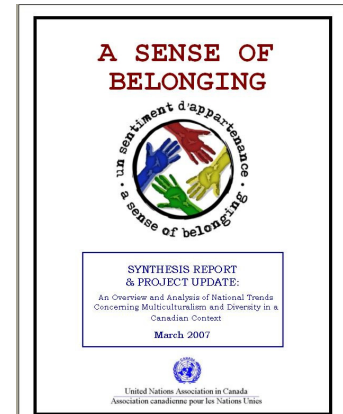
Report Presentations

Vanya presented *A Sense of Belonging* at the Canadian Commission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (CCUNESCO) Annual General Meeting in March, building partnerships and relations with key stakeholders. She also traveled to Moncton to mark March 21st at a panel discussion hosted by Regional Coordinator, **Angelique Reddy** and partner organization, Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area (MAGMA). Both presentations were based on findings from the synthesis report.

March 21 – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The National SB Team coordinated and provided support for a series of activities across the country marking March 21st – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (see page 3 for more details). These events were made possible through the hard work and coordination of UNA-Canada branches across the country.

Nationally the project marked March 21st with a film screening and panel discussion in Ottawa at the National Gallery of Canada. *A Sense of Belonging* partnered with the National Film Board of Canada for this event and featured a Canadian-made film by film director Ann Shin. The film, *Western Eyes*, examined the search for beauty and racial identity through the eyes of young women of Asian descent contemplating cosmetic surgery to make their eyes look more “western.” The panel discussed Media Imagery and Messaging: Fostering Dialogue or Encouraging Stereotypes? Panelists included Film Director, **Ann Shin**, the Creator and Host of CHIN Radio's *Dialogue with Diversity*, **Dr. Qais Ghanem** and University of Toronto Assistant Professor, **Minelle Mahtani**.





Regional Highlights

Yellowknife

- ✓ Welcome to *SB* interns **Elias** and **Withney**
- ✓ Monthly newsletters
- ✓ Multiple school presentations inviting student groups to get involved in the project

Kamloops

- ✓ Welcome to **Kevin Cole**, who joins **Kim Rathwell-Austin** as a co-Regional Coordinator
- ✓ Community Directory nearly complete
- ✓ Diversity breakfast and video on the horizon

Calgary

- ✓ First draft of online community directory
- ✓ Presented *SB* at the Southern Alberta Diversity Forum

Winnipeg

- ✓ Film screening and panel discussion marking March 21st
- ✓ "Uniquely Winnipeg" Youth Challenge on the horizon

Saskatoon

- ✓ Song Writing Contest (Youth Challenge)
- ✓ Welcome Day - teaching New Canadian children about Aboriginal culture

Kingston

- ✓ Welcome to **Julia Lebedeva**, who joins **Lorraine Payette** as a co-Regional Coordinator
- ✓ Diversity art exhibit on the horizon

Montreal

- ✓ Essay Writing Competition (Youth Challenge)
- ✓ Prepared survey to send to local stakeholders

Moncton

- ✓ Film Screening and Panel Discussion marking March 21st
- ✓ Newcomer Success Stories Booklet
- ✓ MAGMA Anniversary Dinner supported by *A Sense of Belonging*

St. John's

- ✓ Essay Writing Competition (Youth Challenge)
- ✓ Presented *SB* at Model United Nations
- ✓ Presentation at *Sharing Our Cultures* - an event marking March 21st

For a more information, please contact the SB National Project Team.



March 21



International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

On this day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws." Proclaiming the Day in 1966, the United Nations General Assembly called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

UNA-CANADA & A SENSE OF BELONGING MARK MARCH 21 ACROSS CANADA

Ottawa, Ontario

Film Screening and Panel Discussion

Organized by the *A Sense of Belonging* National Team

Vancouver, British Columbia

Public Event/Safe Harbour Training

Organized by the UNA-Canada Vancouver Branch

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Film Screening
and Panel Discussion

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Winnipeg Branch

Quebec City, Quebec

Integration &
Multiculturalism Gala

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Quebec City Branch



Toronto, Ontario

Youth Event - Evening of
Workshops, Games and
Other Activities

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Toronto Branch

Hamilton, Ontario

Week Long Celebration &
Translation of Safe Haven
Brochure into Arabic,
Hindi, Cantonese, etc.

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Hamilton Branch

Moncton, New Brunswick

Film Screening and Panel Discussion

Organized by *A Sense of Belonging* Regional
Coordinator, Angelique Reddy and partner organization,
Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Cultural Diversity & Race Relations
Month Awards Ceremony

Supported by the UNA-Canada Saskatoon Branch

Belleville, Ontario

Conference

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Quinte Branch

Calgary, Alberta

Youth Session

Organized by the UNA-Canada
Calgary Branch



Featured Article

On this day, reach out to someone of a different race

Featured in the Vancouver Sun – March 21, 2007



BY PATSY GEORGE – President of the UNA–Canada Vancouver Branch

A year or two ago, in a Vancouver suburb, a teenaged boy went to get on a farmer's bus for his first day of work blueberry picking out in Chilliwack.

He was still a new refugee in the Lower Mainland. The bus was filled with people from a group different than the boy's own, and those on the bus would not allow him to board.

He could not go to work, or earn money, to help feed his mother and sister. Yes, racism happens here. According to an Ipsos Reid survey, 1.7 million Canadians would not welcome someone of another race as a next-door neighbour.

Today, March 21, marks the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On this day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people and injured many more at a non-violent demonstration against the apartheid "pass laws" in Sharpeville, South Africa.

Under these pass laws, urban areas in South Africa were designated as "white." All black South Africans over the age of 15 in cities and towns had to carry passes at all times. Anyone found without a pass would be arrested immediately and sent to a rural area.

Pass laws also stated that black Africans could not hold a higher business position within a company than the lowest white employee.

These passes became the most despised symbols of apartheid.

In 1966, proclaiming this annual day, the UN General Assembly appealed to member states that, in combating discriminatory practices, education and culture should be directed, and mass media and literary creation should be encouraged, towards removing the prejudices and erroneous beliefs, such as the belief in the superiority of one race over another, which incites such practices.

The system of pass laws was not repealed in South Africa until 1986.

At times it seems that we are not gaining all that much on racism, internationally. The Internet is used for the propagation of racism. The number of victims of human trafficking is rising.

The Canadian census, released last week, confirmed that our population here is no longer able to replace itself. The only way our community can support itself is to have a taxpaying workforce.

We need immigrants. We must come to a way of better accepting one another. New immigrants must receive some settlement training that tells them that acceptance of multiculturalism is integral to being Canadian.

Canadians need to be educated on the value of immigration, and how we can better welcome them.

The number of people from visible minority communities in Canada is expected to double by 2017.

We do have remarkable examples of change.

In the early 1900s in Vancouver, racism toward people in the Chinese community was overt. Today, the Chinese New Year Festival has become the Lunar New Year Festival, including those who come from Vietnam, Taiwan, and Cambodia. Parade floats were from groups representing aboriginals and many nationalities already settled in Canada. People of all cultures, by the thousand, come to take part in the event.

March 21 pushes us individually, to reflect. Do I have any prejudices? What is my responsibility as a Canadian citizen to reach out to those who are different than me? It pushes us to reflect, so that there is more unity in our country, so that we are a community more accepting of everyone.

We can ask ourselves, what can witnesses to racist acts and racial comments, do? Oppose the behaviour, not the person — don't accuse them of racism.

People are rarely open to listening to feedback if it is not respectful, and if you label the person, you'll lose them. Tell them that comment made you uncomfortable, because to you it's a put-down.

Say something. As Martin Luther King Jr. paraphrased the English philosopher Edmund Burke, "all that evil requires to triumph is for good people to remain silent."

I challenge you, invite you, to reach out to at least one person, today or this week.

Reach out to a person from a community other than your own, and try to find out what might be important to them.



UNA-Canada is a national charitable organization celebrating its 61st anniversary. As a 'think and do' organization, UNA-Canada supports a network of 17 volunteer branches and local contacts, with a National office in Ottawa and a Western professional office in Vancouver. Our mandate is to engage Canadians in the work of the UN and the critical global issues that affect us all, through innovative projects, policy research, and on-going communications with Canadians.

JOIN US NOW! Become part of our family of like-minded and committed Canadians working for a better UN and a better world.

http://www.unac.org/en/get_involved/donate/index.asp

For further details on all UNA-Canada activities we invite you to visit our website at www.unac.org



From left: Mara, Vanya, Rebecca and Saad

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