



## Welcoming and Retention: The case of Kirkland Lake Multicultural Group

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Magnetic North

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### Outline

History of KLMG



Current Challenges from our community



Learnings and Recommendations (Holistic Approach)



Summary

## Kirkland Lake Multicultural Group (KLMG) was founded in 2008

-Small group of newcomers from non-English backgrounds are feeling isolated

- Decide to meet regularly in each others homes to practice English
- Becomes an invaluable support network, creating social connection and reducing isolation
- Unforseen advantages included:
  - Sharing of culture
  - Feelings of cultural pride
  - Exchange of food
  - Exchange of stories
  - 'Family' away from home
  - Support group to navigate challenges of living in Northern Ontario









- Practicing English
- Learning about local and social norms
- Establish social support network (i.e celebrate family milestones)
  - Family events (i.e. Birthdays, Baby showers)
  - Each country's independence days
  - Celebrate local activities together



#### Early Years of KLMG



### KLMG Takes Root in Kirkland Lake and was incorporated in 2015

## Multicultural group takes root in KL

KIRKLAND LAKE - Kirkland Lake has a long history of being a multicultural community and on Sat. Oct. 13, from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m.,

This will be the first time mins. this type of event is being held in Kirkland Lake and it looked out for each other Repair, McDonalds and the belongs to them. wanted to share their cultures with others and at the the MP said, it is time for embraces multiculturalism. booths where people will be

really exciting to have a event, Angus said, started at munity.

sent North where they and a number of local busi- out in the community. ended up working in the nesses have stepped up to Chantal Bruneau, Con- wearing their altural the many cultures that make intering includes and the said adding ites, TD Canada Trust Kirk gration work in the office

Lake Gold, OPP Association put down roots in the comand shared their cultures Town of Kirkland Lake.

immigrant 20 years ago and There is no admittance This multicultural day was accepted into the com- charge but people are asked

number of other communi-cery stores and they started noted a big portion of their Army's Food Bank.

He said that in the earlier As well Angus is very people from different cul- tion people will be given days, many immigrants pleased that Branch 87 of tures and they see first hand five tickets that they can came to Canada and were the Royal Canadian Legion how people help each other exchange for food.

sponsor the event. The list stituency Assistant for Angus clothes and will answer any That is what his grandpar- includes Swastika Laborato- said they do a lot of immi- questions the publichive. that 68 nations are repre- land Lake Branch, N L Traf- and they want to see people a number of ervice sented in the mines in Tim- fic Management, Kirkland not just move in but to also providers will be setup giv-Angus said the immigrants Branch 12N, Speedy Auto munity and feel like it services that are available in

with each other. Now that TD Canada Trust Manager event on Saturday, the big started the multicultural Kirkland Lake is booming, David Dickinson said the TD hall at the Legion will have group and they now have same time contribute to the MP sata, it is time for the noted he too was an able to taste various foods. group This group has a walk to be available to taste various foods. developed a strong support multicultural day in Kirk-the grassroots level with Lauren Bailey and Bailey food item, which will be The group is about baring in the stopper we were the grassroots level with the grassroots level w Inductate and the grassroots level with Lauren bailey and Bailey food item, which will be the group is abuse while in the group is abuse while in the richness we have in this area.



New Mining Act regulations kick in Nov. ration plans and apply for As well regulations con- include consultation of First licence will also have to take Northern News permits. While the regula- cerning what is eligible for Nations. Another change to the course. Prospector have KIRKLAND LAKE - Area tion goes into effect Nov. 1 assessment credit have been the new Mining Act is that two years to take the ourse prospectors have until April released and again there are companies can voluntarily but if they want to sub prospectors are learning 1, 2013 to comply. They will changes. Work recording do rehabilitation work on about the regulations in have to know the new regu- GPS information

# Growth in early years (2015-2019)

- Now run by coordinated volunteers with regularity
  - Place for volunteers to do outreach
  - Some activities were established
  - Reaching out to more people
  - Meeting at local establishments
    - for better access (i.e. coffee shops)
    - for high visibility
    - to reduce barriers
- Attracting new Canadians
  - To offer support
  - To have fun together
  - To reduce Isolation for families (i.e. children knowing others kids)
  - Support of community to fundraise and donate to continue the grow the KLMG
- Offering services and working with the community to raise awareness, fundraise and to continue the grow the KLMG





Taste of the world Fundraising



' Social support enhances quality of life and provides a buffer against adverse life events' (https//phctheproject.org)



### The Stope (2019-Present)

- KLMG moves to a highly visible safe space

- Unofficial welcome center of Kirkland Lake

- Regular planned activities
  - Opportunity for members to share their passions

First Grant awarded
(2022) for Anti-Racism
Anti-Hate project

Outdoor activity allows locals to take the lead to introduce newcomers to northern living

- Snow sledding party
- Snow shoeing
- Fishing / ice fishing



### Newcomers wedding at the Stope

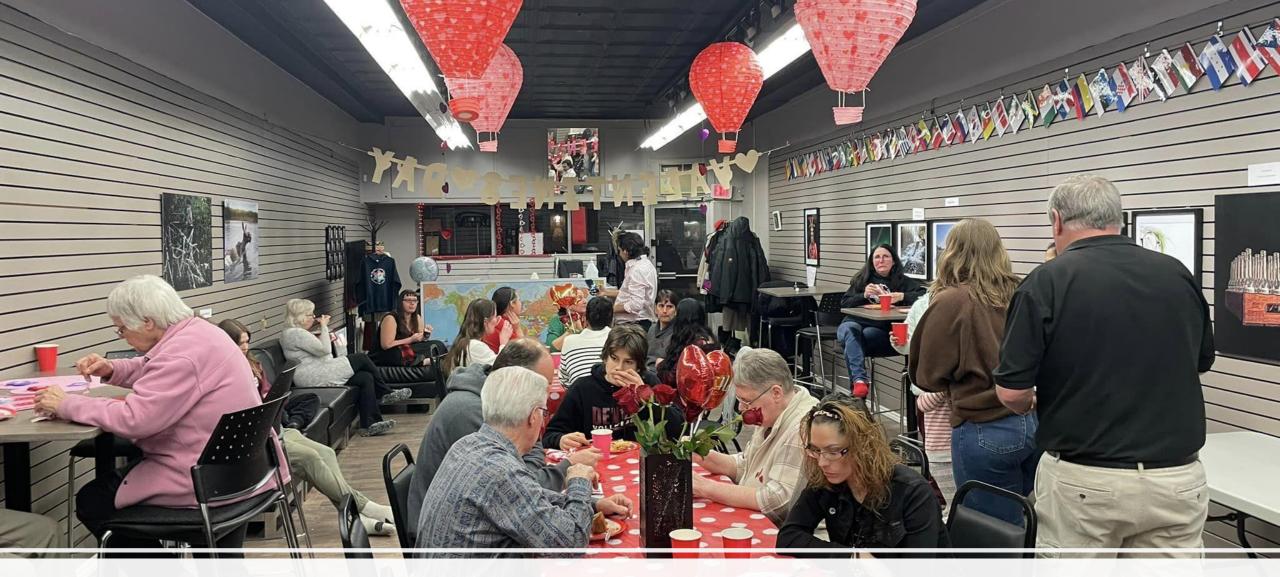






•'Social support is considered one of the protective factors of resilience'

•-Australian journal of Psychology-



### **Celebrating Holidays together**

# Expansion- KLMG leading the way

- In welcoming all newcomers (i.e. Canadians and immigrants) in Kirkland Lake and surrounding areas
- **Connecting/serving as a link** to foster positive relationship between newcomers and locals
- Giving short and long term support in the community through orientation, help in settlement, integration and social connection and education opportunities
- Networking with institutions and local chambers, schools and other community group driving positive change in the community





## World Chats-Connecting Cultures





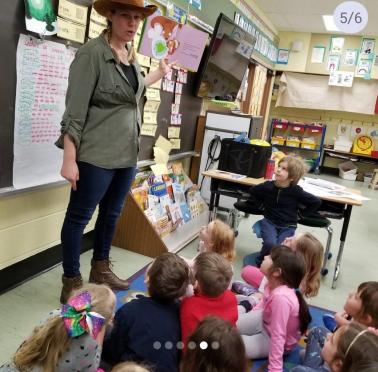


# Education through shared experiences

Neutral space, non threatening and positive experiences:

- Tea Time around the World
  - (What does 'tea time' mean in different countries)
- Stories from Around the World
  - (Stories and craft, for children and families)
- The Blanket Exercise
  - (Education opportunity to understanding Indigenous History)





More cool animals and some jumping like a Kangaroo!







# Partnering with the community



### Welcoming and retention: What are we missing?

People come and go in Kirkland lake but why can't we retain? and where does that leave our community?

Current State:

- Workforce / workplace :
  - Government and employers are looking to new immigrants to fill worker shortages
  - Group of underutilized skilled men and women already in the community
  - FIFO/DIDO workers (growing portion of workers) 'taking' from community
- Community:
  - Stretched /limited resources (Government run settlement services)
  - No connection to community
  - No social support / isolation
  - Some negative perception of local community toward newcomers



### Stake holder buy in: Holistic approach

#### Welcoming Workplace:

- Encourage shift work and incentives for workers to move to community
  - Support basic resources ie housing, health care, schools to make this a possibility
- Flexibility of working hours to appeal to untapped skilled community members
  - Job sharing / flexible hours / consideration of spouses and their skills and willingness to work/ volunteer/give to the community
  - i.e. Establishment and support of afterschool/ before school program (childcare)
- Undertaking cultural awareness accreditation courses for employers to be more appealing, welcoming and harmonious
- Recognizing employees who could benefit from social support
  - Sponsoring KLMG membership
  - Including social supports as the orientation package
  - Actively introduce new employees to social /community /interest groups



# Stake holder buy in: Holistic approach

#### Welcoming Community:

Acknowledging the importance of social connection and support for employees to be part of the community:

- Part of business mindset/culture/practices/plan to support communities
- Leadership and cultural shift within your own establishments (celebrate differences an similarities) to drive a connection for new employees
- Bridge the gap between employees and the community
  - Bringing community groups to the table
  - Partnering in events
  - Financial support
  - Giving time and attendance to events
  - Supporting, encouraging and recognizing employees that contribute to the community
- Established and continued communication and support between employers, municipalities and those able to provide social support is necessary for long term retention.





## Summary

- Kirkland Lake is a diverse community, yet isolation and disconnection continue to effect newcomers and their ability to thrive
- KLMG was established due to a need within the community and plays a huge supporting role to our community and industry alike
- KLMG's ability to be further effective is directly impacted by financial constraints, volunteer availability and the level of support of local businesses and municipality
- It continues to seek partnerships to become a more inclusive partner for change.
- Industries also need to take an active role in supporting their new employees and their families to ensure they are socially supported
- By facilitating and fostering integration between locals and newcomers, KLMG continues to be a dynamic force in creating a harmonious, vibrant and thriving multicultural town in Northern Ontario.

#### Thank you for your time, we hope you will join us!

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Facebook: KLMG FB private group: KL Multicultural



### "Neighbors" - people in the area born outside of Canada



