



Toronto Food Strategy Community Food Works: A Pilot Project for Arabic-Speaking Newcomers.

Overview:

This is an opportunity for students interested in learning about community-based health and employment-generating initiatives to participate in evaluating a pilot peer-learning program with a particular newcomer population in the city.

The Placement:

The Toronto Food Strategy Community Food Works (CFW) program integrates food handler training, nutrition education and food skills, as well as employment skills support to low income residents in Toronto. Participants get support with job skills, build social networks and learn about food safety and healthy eating. The program uses a learner-centered participatory approach where sessions are tailored to meet the needs of the communities and held in community settings to enable better access to services. Community Food Works is a partnership program between the Toronto Food Strategy, Toronto Public Health inspectors and dietitians, Toronto Employment and Social Services, and multiple community agencies. Some of the participants who were successful in getting the Food Handler Certificate were able to find jobs, start their own business, and volunteer in community food-based programs. Participants are also pursuing further education in culinary arts.

The Community Food Works for Arabic-speaking newcomers is a pilot version of the program tailored to the specific needs of the newly-settled Arabic-speakers in the City, a population that includes the significant numbers of recent refugees from Syria. In this pilot program Community Food Works is partnering with the Victoria Park Hub (<http://www.communityhubs.ca/victoria-park-hub>) and the Canadian Centre for Victims of Toronto (<http://ccvt.org/>).

The position: 2 students

The students will provide support for and work together with community members who are involved as peer educators in the program to observe, collect data, document and evaluate the program over the four months. They will be working with supervisors from Toronto Public Health.

The opportunity:

An opportunity to learn about peer education and community-engaged research in community-based public health programming, to learn about culturally-translated forms of support for newcomer populations, to develop cultural competency skills and practice key community-engaged research skills.

The Ideal student:

Students with academic backgrounds in Equity, Community Development, Public Health, Food Studies, Immigration/Refugee studies who have a strong interest in community health and community work, are keen and quick learners, are flexible and work well in teams. It would be best if at least one of the students was Arabic-speaking.

For more information about the Community-Engaged Research course and application process, go to: <http://www.newcollege.utoronto.ca/academics/new-college-academic-programs/community-engaged-learning/new498h-independent-community-engaged-research-seminar/>

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