

Connecting women
in need with
technology through
mentoring

iSisters Technology Mentoring Inc.

February 2008
Newsletter



New Partner

iSisters begins new learning program for women who are homeless

It's been a very busy fall at 172 O'Connor! In November, iSisters started a new program at Cornerstone Shelter, an incredible organization which provides temporary shelter, food, safety, and support for women who find themselves homeless. The staff then help locate suitable housing for the women and provide support and assistance as the women take steps to regain control of their lives, return to school, and/or find meaningful work.

Late in October, the computers and furniture arrived at Cornerstone, and a 6-station lab was set up. The first session to run was a professional development course for Cornerstone staff which will be instrumental in ensuring the lab's use is maximized.

Since the holidays, we have run our first trial program with Cornerstone clients. The program is exciting and is presented in a condensed 4 week format - a big departure from iSisters' usual lengthier course format. The learners receive some basic technology training which includes an opportunity to develop better keyboarding skills, an introduction to Word and desktop management, an introduction to safe and skillful use of the Internet and key email fundamentals. The course also addresses some key employability aspects, such as preparing a résumé, networking, and searching for jobs. The first group of learners will graduate from this intense program in mid-February, opening the way for another cohort to begin.

The official launch was held on February 14 with the theme - Love of Learning.



Proud teachers Judy Puritt (Program Manager, iSisters) and Julie Levesque (Transition Worker, Cornerstone) hand out graduation certificates at the grand opening, Love of Learning event held at Cornerstone on February 14.

Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO) Update

Computer classes have resumed for new learners in January of 2008 after a short break for the holidays.

Thank you to Zahide Yilbas and Gloria Schwartz who run classes, workshops and open lab sessions at the centre for iSisters. Great work ladies!

IWSO and iSisters have begun to develop a sustainability model for this program.

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Our Mission:

- To provide access to technology
- To develop and deliver technology mentoring programs
- To enhance career opportunities through technological awareness

www.isisters.org

New (or re-newed) iSisters Supporters

The Frank Cowan Foundation

In the fall of 2007 iSisters applied to the Cowan Foundation for a \$20,000 grant for our new program at Cornerstone. To our amazement, the Cowan Foundation replied by tripling our request! By sharing our vision for a sustainable program in three years, the Cowan Foundation has committed to support all three years of the program with a grant every year. Thank you very much to the Cowan Foundation for sharing in our vision.

Community Foundation of Ottawa

The Community Foundation of Ottawa has renewed its support of our learning programs by providing a pilot grant for our new program at Cornerstone and multi-year funding for our ongoing program at Immigrant Women Services

New Directors

iSisters is please to announce the election of two new board members. We are proud to have Ann-Marie Phillips and Jane Sayer join our leadership team.

Jane will be assuming the role of Treasurer. Jane brings many years of experience in the finance world and brings creative ideas to the board table.

Ann-Marie will be responsible for monitoring our grant reporting and related governance. She brings a unique combination of skills which includes a formal financial background and an MBA in marketing.

These complementary financial roles on the board of directors are an important part of our managing our current and future growth. Welcome Jane and Ann-Marie!

Ottawa. Thank you to the CFO for your continued support, you have been an important part of our success by helping us access resources required to build and run our programs.

Advanced Business Interiors



One of our earliest supporters was Advanced Business Interiors (ABI). We wanted to make special mention of this generous company who has provided furniture for all of our labs. Recently ABI chose to donate furniture again for our Cornerstone learning centre. To learn more about this innovative company visit www.makespacework.com.

Volunteer Week



National Volunteer Week is an important week set aside between April 27 and May 3 to honour the people who donate their personal time and energy. It is also a time to raise awareness of the vital contributions volunteers make to our communities across the country. From coast to coast, volunteers strengthen our communities. Volunteers do the work they do because they believe in causes, equal opportunities, clean, healthy and safe community spaces, active living, and helping others. Volunteers simply aspire to make life better for others and we honour them for doing so.

Thank you to all volunteers for your hard work, contribution, dedication and passion!!

iSisters will be announcing our recognition events soon.

Conference Board of Canada & the IPN

By invitation, iSisters participated in the 2008 International Partnership Network (IPN) event held in Toronto on January 21, 2008.

The Conference Board of Canada hosted the event which welcomes guests from England, France, Finland, Sweden, the United States, and Canada,

The International Partnership Network brings together partners working with schools, colleges and businesses, and other education-business programs across the world to share learning and expertise on a global level.

The key objectives of the IPN are to interpret the present to influence the future. The IPN does this by organizing a continuing series of international and local events, all of which contribute to a dynamic and continuing program of education, community and economic development in the participating countries. A feature of these events is that they integrate the public and private sector and the organizations within them toward common cause.

The objective of the Leadership Meeting is to bring together senior international representatives from the IPN with a select group of educational, community and business leaders to discuss Canadian and international perspectives and best practices.

This meeting was held to discuss the issues associated with building leadership capacity required for developing partnerships involving education, employers and communities. The round table explored the qualities of leadership that are vital for developing partnerships between education, employers and communities to improve learning outcomes; and how can learning contexts and experiences contribute to building the personal qualities and abilities that define effective leadership.

Participants discussed key issues challenging leaders in public and private sector organizations as they develop partnership approaches to schooling and continuing learning for tomorrow's global economy.

iSisters also participated in the last IPN event in Canada which was held in 2004 in Montreal.

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How can you help?

Share this newsletter

Donate online www.isisters.org

Volunteer at iSisters, email jennjmcevoy@isisters.org for details

Organize a fundraiser at your work place on behalf of iSisters

Events

IWSO 2008 Program Resumes

Thursday, January 24

Cornerstone Grand Opening

Tuesday, February 14

International Women's Day

Saturday, March 8

International Volunteer Week

April 27 - May 3

Hike and Picnic in the Park - TBA