

DIVERSEcity is the recipient of a "Seniors' Independence and Participation Funding Stream Grant" funded by the United Way in the amount of \$40,000. Parks, Recreation and Culture are contributing to this partnership with staff resources and facility space funded through the Social Well Being Initiative budget.

These resources are funding a project that focuses on South Asian seniors who are living in isolation due to: language issues, transportation, lack of knowledge of local resources, and the responsibilities of taking care of their grandchildren while their own children are at work. The project's purpose is to connect South Asian seniors to recreation and seniors' facilities in the Newton Town Centre and to provide outreach activities and resources, social and physical recreation opportunities, and educational workshops on various topics to this same group.

DISCUSSION

The Newton Community and Leisure Services Section staff is continually striving to increase the number of participants from the different ethnic communities in recreation programs and services. DIVERSEcity has a relatively long history of working with new immigrants that have moved to Surrey and their latest goal is to enhance the participation and independence of South Asian seniors' in the community. Together the staff of Parks, Recreation and Culture and of DIVERSEcity has formed a partnership to accomplish this goal by applying our available resources in a collaborative manner and by seeking additional funding through grant opportunities.

The core initiatives to be implemented as part of this one-year project are:

- Recreation programs (Fitness, dance, card playing and social time);
- Day-care for grandchildren;
- Bus transportation;
- Multicultural worker – on-site assistance and interpretation (Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu);
- Marketing – program guides and newsletters translated in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu;
- Integration with other senior participant groups in regular programming; and
- Cultural awareness special events within Civic facilities (e.g., Diwali, Vaisakhi, Chai time, etc.).

CONCLUSION

DIVERSEcity Community Resource Society has received a "Seniors' Independence and Participation Funding Stream Grant" from the United Way in the amount of \$40,000. Staff of DIVERSEcity and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department have partnered to develop a pilot project to utilize the grant resources with a focus on the integration of South Asian seniors in local recreational opportunities. The project will take place in Newton and will assist the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department to develop strategies related to removing barriers to participation by immigrant seniors in the City's recreation programs.

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