



The Buzz is a quarterly newsletter devoted to informing the broader community about the activities of the Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre. This issue covers the period of December 1, 2012 to February 28, 2013. Previous issues of the Buzz are available for downloading at www.regentparkfocus.com

Volunteer Appreciation Party

On December 26th, 2012, the Regent Park Focus staff, volunteers, and Radio Regent programmers, gathered at the Daniels Presentation Centre to formally meet each other and celebrate all the stellar achievements of 2012; much appreciation was extended to the many staff and volunteers who keep our Media Arts Centre and Radio Regent up and running. It was a fun night filled with great food and great people – a terrific way to wrap up the year of 2012! Special thanks also to everyone who contributed to the pot luck for keeping guests' bellies very full and happy that night!

3, 2, 1 ... Action! The Television Studio is ready to go!

The new year is off to a great start. After almost two years of planning and fundraising activities the television broadcast studio has finally launched. The television studio will be used to produce a weekly show about Regent Park on Rogers Community 10. Regent Park Focus staff began training in January to use the brand new Regent Park TV (RPTV) studio control room. So far, the workshops have been very successful, and we are optimistic that new content will be produced very soon! Regent Park Focus relays its gratitude to both Rogers and Deltech for their assistance in setting up the studio and leading the way on this great community asset. We would also like to thank the Trillium Foundation for their generous investment which helped us to purchase much needed equipment.



“You Are What You Eat” & Holiday Food Drive / The Divas and Boyz to Men

Focus is still in the game of using media arts to create positive lifestyle messages. “You Are What You Eat” is a project designed to show youth within the community the connections between healthy eating and mental health. The purpose of the project is to engage adolescents and demonstrate how daily food choices can have a large impact on their lives, both mentally and physically. The project is sponsored by the Ministry of Health Promotion and involves partnerships with Toronto Public Health and SAMI Research fellows from the Centre for Additions and Mental Health (CAMH).



Prior to the winter holidays, SAMI researchers led a healthy holiday food drive to collect tasty but nutritional snacks for program use. After the holiday break, The Diva Girls met a slew of awesome guest presenters including Toronto Public Health reps Sara and Chantal, who stopped by to discuss healthy eating and how to live an active lifestyle. The Diva program also welcomed Dr. Laura Lachance, a guest speaker from SAMI-CIHR/CAMH, who spoke to the group about the relationship between mental health and food habits. Having the girls draw pictures of healthy versus unhealthy foods, and having a subsequent discussion on the pros and cons of daily food choices, allowed for a thorough exploration of how eating affects the mind and the body.

The Boyz to Men participants enjoyed a fun healthy eating workshop facilitated by Jorge Ginieniewicz, a SAMI-CIHR Fellow from CAMH. The boys began

by drawing all of the healthy and unhealthy foods that they could think of, and from there, Jorge led a discussion about common misconceptions about healthy foods and eating habits. As a follow-up to the workshop, the Boyz to Men group designed comic strips on the topic.

Another presenter the Boyz to Men group hosted was Chris Leonard from the Regent Park Community Health Centre. Chris facilitated a great resiliency workshop for our youth, sharing different strategies youth can use to protect themselves and bounce back from tough times and adversity. Furthermore, Chris spoke about the benefits that come with healthy self-confidence and a positive attitude. Youth contributed to the conversation by speaking about some of the experiences they have had in their lives thus far. The “You Are What You Eat” project aims to improve healthy lifestyles knowledge while simultaneously offering youth a chance to enhance their camera and computer skills. The Divas and Boyz to Men youth are now busy transforming their knowledge into the creation of very cool Photovoice and webcomic resources. This project shows the strong utility of media arts as a means to learning in an effective, and super fun, way! Stay tuned to RPTV where these resources will be premiering soon.



Radio Regent Presents: The Jam

Many thanks to Toronto Community Housing (TCH) and The Daniels Corporation for supporting our community event series. 2013 started off right with a great event on January 25th! The Jam took place in the Daniels Spectrum lounge and featured some great sets, including a classical music performance by the Regent Park School of Music and folk songs by Regent Park resident, Diem Lafortune (aka Mama D). On February 22, the Jam's theme was Black History Month. The evening was kicked off by 'The Focus House Band' who continue to mesmerize the community with their lively energy, enthusiasm, and original scores. Murphy Brown, a Radio Regent programmer and host of a show called Word Of Mouth, followed their set. Brown has been a long-time advocate for equality among people of all racial backgrounds, so it was fitting that she spoke to the audience about the history of Black and Native peoples in Canada.

Updates

Don't forget to check out our event and activities blog online at: <http://regentparkfocus.blogspot.com>

Also, if you would like to host a radio program please contact us at: regentparkfocus@gmail.com for an application form – we would love to hear your ideas!

About Regent Park Focus

Established in 1990, Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre (Regent Park Focus) is a not-for-profit organization located in Regent Park, Toronto. Regent Park Focus is motivated by the belief that community arts and participatory media practices play a vital role in building and sustaining healthy communities. Regent Park Focus seeks to increase civic engagement and inspire positive change by giving youth the tools and support to create artistic works and media productions. Youth are encouraged to work collectively to develop resources that explore issues of relevance to them and their communities. These resources, along with the process of creating them, increase personal well-being, contribute to community health and address systemic barriers to equitable social participation.

Last, but not least, Emmanuel Jal, a world renowned artist from South Sudan, performed. Jal is a former child soldier, who has worked his way to becoming an international hip-hop star; he is also a humanitarian activist and advocate for social justice and human rights. Jal shared his compelling personal story, including his childhood experiences of hunger, migration and war. The part of Jal's speech that really hit home was his powerful message regarding peace and harmony, and the severity of world hunger and poverty.

Overall, the night was a blast! Don't forget to join us for the next Jam which will be on Thursday, March 28, 2013. The event's theme will pay homage to International Women's Day with performances by several exciting female artists!



Regent Park Focus is funded by:

**The Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council
and Rogers Communications.**



Did You Know?

Did you know that **1,175** people took part in program activities offered by Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre during the Winter 2013 season?

Or that Regent Park Focus conducted presentations to **30** people and received **10,821** website visitors during this same period?

We're still busy!

