

## Alumna builds on Public Affairs Grant to bring STEM education to Ottawa communities



CANADA-U.S. EXCHANGE ALUMNI  
ANCIENS DES ÉCHANGES CANADA-É.-U.



### FAMILY MAKER DAY

Sunday May 22nd 2016  
11 am - 2 pm  
Boys & Girls Club  
2825 duMaurier  
\$5 individual/ \$10 family

Activities  
Leap Motion Controller  
Michael Bourda, the Illusionist  
Face Painting  
Little Bits Electronics Lego EV3  
Smart Green Pod  
3D printers  
LEDs in bottle caps & ice cream!

Co-sponsors  
Britannia Woods Community House  
Networking4Youth, a program of  
Jewish Family Services of Ottawa & PrototypeD  
[www.britanniawoodsdmz.ca](http://www.britanniawoodsdmz.ca)

In August 2015, Erica Bregman, Networking4Youth Coordinator at Jewish Family Services and 2011 IVLP alumna, organized the “Kids Can Code” workshop event with support from the U.S. Embassy’s Public Affairs Grants Program.

More than 100 children from Somali and Chinese communities in Ottawa heard from Jefferey Sweeton, Founder of CodeCreate.us, on the latest apps to teach youth to code. In her role as Networking4Youth Coordinator, Erica worked with partner organizations to coordinate a series of activities on innovation, technology, and creativity:

- The *Britannia Woods Maker Space Camp*, in partnership with the Britannia Woods Community House in August and March.

- A fieldtrip for refugee families to participate in the

Ottawa Maker Faire 2015, where participants were able to play with software and hardware and experience new technologies such as a virtual reality headset.

- The upcoming Family Maker Day on May 22, 2016 (see photo), which will offer fun activities for families to play with new apps, 3D printers, and much more.

#### In this issue:

Halifax Alumnus Robin Churchill  
Moves to Haiti

Montreal Public Affairs Hosts  
Discussion for Upcoming IVLP  
Traveler Noah Redler

Toronto Consul General Hosts  
Alumni Breakfasts

Winnipeg Alumni Collaborate on  
New Inuit Art Centre

Winnipeg Alumnus Denys Volkov  
Making a Difference in his  
Community

Fulbright in the News

#### Upcoming IVLPs:

June 5-15: U.S.-Canada  
Educational Exchanges

July 18-August 5: Anti-  
Radicalization and Combatting  
Violent Extremism among Youth for  
Community Organizations

August 21-31: Identity Politics in  
U.S. Elections

Take a look at the 2015 Youth Makerspaces Ottawa video [here](#) and learn more about the timeline of STEM activities that took place in Ottawa.

Erica leveraged the success of “Kids Can Code” to reach bigger audiences across the Ottawa region to promote STEM education for youth. The U.S. Embassy Ottawa is proud to support alumni efforts that connect youth with the technologies of tomorrow.

## What's Happening in Your Alumni Community?

### Halifax

#### [Alumnus Robin Churchill Moves to Haiti](#)

Halifax Alumnus Robin Churchill and his family have embarked on a new adventure. In the summer of 2015, Robin, his wife, and their two children moved to La Gonave, a small island off the Haitian mainland. Before he retired, Robin was an RCMP officer. In 2013, he participated in an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) on “Gender-Based Violence & Human Trafficking.”

The Churchills moved to La Gonave to work with a development agency that provides water, electricity, and other services to the island's population. The family's story was the focus of a recent CBC radio documentary that explored their work and their adjustment to life on the island.

Robin is a proud IVLP alumnus and was active in the alumni community in Halifax. The U.S. Consulate General in Halifax misses his presence in Atlantic Canada but salutes the work he and his family have undertaken in Haiti.



*Photo Credit: U.S. Consulate General Halifax*

### Montreal

#### [Public Affairs Hosts Discussion for International Leadership Program Traveler Noah Redler](#)

Public Affairs Montreal hosted alumni for an informal discussion over coffee at Consul General Fite's residence on April 7. This was an opportunity for recently returned alumni to share their advice for upcoming IVLP traveler Noah Redler, the Campus Director at Montreal's Notman House, a Google for Entrepreneurs tech hub partner. He was chosen to participate in an exchange to promote opportunities for young entrepreneurs.

The group also had a chance to hear from Multi-Regional Project alumnae Marian Misdrahi from the Centre for Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence and Jocelyne Lebrun from the City of Montreal. They returned to Canada on March 19 after a unique exchange titled “Strong Cities - Building Community Resilience to Radicalization and Violent Extremism.” The Strong Cities program began with introductory remarks by Secretary of State John Kerry to participants from 10 countries, and both Montreal alumnae are already working on implementing ideas that resulted from connections they made during the trip.



*Photo Credit: U.S. Consulate General Montreal*

## Toronto

### [Consul General Hosts Alumni Breakfasts](#)

Toronto Consul General Juan Alsace and the U.S. Consulate General Toronto Public Affairs team launched the *Toronto Alumni Breakfast Series* earlier this year to deeply engage with Department of State alumni and to learn about the work that they are doing in Toronto. Hosted at the Consul General's residence, the event attracted alumni from the fields of academia, energy, business, and environmental issues.



On April 14, Toronto Consul General Alsace hosted a breakfast for State Alumni in the academic sector, which is the majority of Toronto's alumni group. The conversation at this event centered on educational exchanges between the United States and Canada and the upcoming U.S. elections. The alumni at this breakfast represented York University and the University of Toronto, showing the close relationship that Toronto PAS has had with York's Glendon School and Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs.



*Photo Credit: U.S. Consulate General Toronto*

These breakfasts have highlighted the outstanding work that Canadians are doing to create synergies between the United States and Canada within their own sectors.

## Winnipeg

### [Two Winnipeg Alumni Collaborate on New Inuit Art Centre](#)

Two Winnipeg alumnae are involved in spearheading the Winnipeg Art Gallery's (WAG) proposed \$65 million Inuit Art Centre. Susan Thompson, Executive Consultant to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and Darlene Coward Wight, Curator of the WAG's Inuit Art collection, are both International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumnae. Thompson is a former mayor of Winnipeg and Canadian Consul General who participated in an individual IVLP in 1997. Wight participated in a 2009 IVLP for Museum Administrators and has been developing the Inuit collection throughout her 30-year career at the WAG.



*Artist's Rendering of Inuit Art Centre Photo Credit: Michael Maltzan Architecture*

There is another U.S. connection for the Inuit Art Centre: the project was designed by award-winning Los Angeles-based architect Michael Maltzan.

The Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre Initiative promises to be a spectacular addition to the city's cultural scene. The Centre will be a cultural landmark adjacent to the existing Winnipeg Art Gallery building. The four-level, 40,000 square foot facility will include:

- Visible Vault--an open storage system in the grand entrance that allows Inuit carvings to be seen from street level on St. Mary Avenue, changing Winnipeg's streetscape. The vault can hold up to 10,000 pieces.
- Inuit and Contemporary Galleries, which include the largest single gallery space in Canada devoted to Inuit art and culture, as well as a dedicated showcase for emerging and established contemporary indigenous artists.
- Artist-in-residence and curator-in-residence spaces will expand opportunities for artist exchanges as well as skills training for young artists and curators.

- Five studios will serve as year-round education and outreach venues where students from across the city and province can make traditional and indigenous art.

The Winnipeg Art Gallery holds the largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art in the world with more than 10,730 works. The creation of the Inuit Art Centre underscores Canada's commitment to the North and it facilitates economic and cultural ties between North and South, while enhancing an understanding of Canada's history as a nation. Construction is slated to start in 2017 and the Centre is scheduled to open in 2019.

### [Denys Volkov- Making a Difference in his Community and Around the World](#)

Denys Volkov continues to be one of Winnipeg's most active alumni! He is involved in a number of projects that enable him to make a positive difference in his adopted community of Winnipeg, and his home country of Ukraine. He was recently re-elected as Vice-President of the Manitoba Soccer Association. Last summer, Winnipeg hosted the FIFA Women's World Cup, which featured several games with the U.S. national team. Denys also serves on the board of directors of Folkorama, the largest and longest-running multicultural festival of its kind in the world.

He is also active in Winnipeg's Ukrainian-Canadian community. Denys dedicates most of his spare time to raising awareness of the ongoing political situation in Ukraine. He provides regular updates to local media and serves on a number of committees to raise funds for people in need in Ukraine. For example, Denys participates in and promotes the Adopt-A-Soldier initiative, which is part of the Ukraine War Amps program based in Toronto. Thanks to Denys' involvement, this program opened its first branch outside Ontario in Manitoba. This initiative matches Canadians who are willing to provide monthly funding support with individuals who were injured as the result of the Russian invasion of eastern Ukraine. Denys was a part of the "Euromaidan" committee of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (Manitoba) who received three refurbished ambulances from the Province of Manitoba that will be delivered to Ukraine later this year. This committee also provided funds to refurbish an additional ambulance for this nation-wide initiative run by the national Ukrainian Canadian Congress. The "Euromaidan" committee also provides support to the Hero's Companion project, which allows training of service dogs to assist injured military members in Ukraine. Denys is currently assisting with initiatives to send a container of medical supplies to Ukraine this summer.



*Winnipeg Consul General Chris Gunning with Denys Volkov.  
Photo Credit: U.S. Consulate General Winnipeg*

## Fulbright Community

### [Tutoring & Mentoring Program for the Syrian Refugee Youth in Montreal](#)

Say Ça! is a language and cultural support community for Syrian refugee youth aged 14-18 in Montreal, providing tutoring and mentoring sessions in French and English. The project is a Community Leadership Program funded by Fulbright Canada and the U.S. Embassy Ottawa. It is supported by current Fulbright student Justin Park in partnership with Fulbright alumni Peter Stoett (2011-2012) and Ben Gold (2014-2015). It offers weekly free tutoring and mentoring sessions, and monthly cultural outings in Montreal with students. The project aims to facilitate the academic re-integration of students who are affected by the refugee crisis. As teenage years can be vulnerable and crucial times, the burden of internal pressure to succeed as students in a new environment can be overwhelming. The goal of the project is to increase future employability in the local and international job markets for Syrian refugee youth who recently settled



*Photo Credit: Fulbright Canada*

in the City of Montreal.

In March, Say Ça! organized two training workshops for the 13 new language tutors and mentors at Concordia University. The main topics of the training were Syrian cultural heritage and customs, nonverbal communication and active listening skills, literacy and education, and crisis management techniques.

### [RDC Green Campus- Cafeteria and Catering Compost Challenge](#)

Current Fulbright student Starr Brainard is using her Eco-Leadership Program grant to pilot a composting program at Red Deer College. As an intern with ReThink Red Deer, she is installing three community-sized composters on campus to recycle cafeteria and catering food waste that can then be used for landscaping onsite, rather than shipped to landfills. The composters were delivered and assembled at the EcoLiving Fair at Red Deer College on March 12, with a workshop on how to compost and use the machines. The EcoLiving Fair also featured exhibitors selling organic local produce, worm composting towers, and heirloom seeds. In workshops, people learned how to build pollinator hotels, collect seeds, and keep bees and chickens in the city. Electric cars and art about sustainable food were on display, recycled urban lumber was being milled in the courtyard, and a Repair Cafe offered lessons to teach participants to fix things rather than throw them in the landfill. Starr's project will continue with International Permaculture Day on May 7, 2016, and promotion of the program to incoming students in the fall.



*Photo Credit: Fulbright Canada*

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