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## DCE English Language Students Learn the Universal Language of Music

Learning a new language in a new country with new people is not easy, especially for learners whose recent past can also require a lot of healing. Recently, Durham Continuing Education (DCE) organized 100 English language learners to participate in two 1-hour drumming sessions creating sounds everyone can become familiar with. Drumming sessions took place in Oshawa at DCE's E.A. Lovell and in Pickering at the Bayly street location.



Tanya Porter, local founder of Rhythmic Re-framing and The Inner Space presented each student with their own drum and introduced drumming and music as a fun type of communication. In the world of barriers, borders, and divisions, rhythm and music provide a path to unity. In one of the musical activities, students were asked to begin the activity by drumming to a personal rhythm and getting to know their "drumming voice."

As students learned their "voices," the sound of the melodies changed, grew and evolved until everything came together and turned into a beautiful, synchronized drumbeat.

Much like our classes, schools, communities and country, people who come together through music and their many differences can work together to create something amazing which all of us can call our own. Ms. Porter showed students how something as simple as a small djembe drum can help the healing process and even bring on some fun.

This event was made possible by funding from the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, and carefully guided by Principal David Sasseville and Vice Principal Joanne Docherty.



The staff in the Adult Language Programs department of Durham Continuing Education, facilitated by the Department Head, Dika Gajic, helped plan and supervise the event as student volunteers helped with the setup of an informal music stage at both schools.

Thank you also goes to Wendy Elton from Shaw Percussion, who not only provided the drums for this great event, but also assisted in facilitating the sessions.

Student enjoyment of these musical sessions is best illustrated by the words of one learner who stated, "Teacher, we need a music lesson one hour – every week!"

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