

CACD CANADA PRESENTS



# CACD WINTER SESSION

## INCREASE EDUCATIONAL & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

provide youth, 15 to 24, with the skills and knowledge to become full participants in Canadian society

### THE PROJECT WILL HAVE FIVE MAIN COMPONENTS

Financial Literacy & Entrepreneurship, Digital Literacy, Black Canadian History, Leadership & Mentoring, and Employability

**FEBRUARY 1ST - MARCH 31ST, 2021**

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# Looking Back to Move Forward With New Programs

by Ron Cunningham, Citizens for the Advancement of Community Development

As 2020 comes to an end, we look back as we stand poised to take on the challenges of 2021.

CACD, like many other community organizations, has been gravely impacted by COVID-19.

As we attempted to rethink delivery of our mission in this physically distanced world, we are forced to find ways to meet the needs of the most vulnerable youth of our communities and the programs benefiting at-risk youths in Peel.

During COVID-19, we abruptly lost revenue due to the cancellation of fundraising events, steep drop-off of donations, reduction in individual giving, and earned income opportunities.

Further, we had to modify our existing programs, developing new ones – dramatically changed working environments.

We shifted to virtual operation due to the closure of the Mississauga Valley Community Centre (MVCC).

This virtual operation subsequently led to unexpected challenges of new technology, staffing and volunteer recruitment, and other infrastructure needs.

With this upheaval, CACD will be offering the program “Expanding Economic Opportunity for African, Black and Caribbean (ABC) youth” ages 15-24 in Mississauga.

This project has six components and will run for three days per week, over three eight-week cohorts for the winter,

spring and summer.

This project will include the following: (1) improve academic, occupational, and employability skills; (2) facilitate transitions to the labour market through training, networking, career counselling, mentorship opportunities (Cops, Internship, placement, apprenticeship); (3) Leadership and Mentorship (4) Digital literacy & innovation skills for future jobs; (5) Black Canadian history/anti-black

teachers and administrators in the school setting.

With these realities, CACD has expanded its programming with Black youth to offer support, empowerment, employment, digital knowledge, and increase awareness of Black culture.

This new thrust serves to enhance their personal growth, self-esteem, and new ones created by COVID-19.

We are all aware that education is a stepping stone to achieve or reach

and algorithms.

Reports have shown that the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 will be far more significant and more likely to deepen existing inequalities than the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 on individuals with lower education levels.

Inequality is most likely to be exacerbated by the dual effect of technology and the pandemic recession.

As we have come to learn, there are long-standing in-

Canada is among the most educated countries; however, too many youths still face barriers that prevent them from graduating from high school and pursuing post-secondary studies or skilled trades programs.

Despite the many and varied barriers to education, the cost of post-secondary education is a concern for youth.

Students are worried about the amount of debt resulting from higher education and the time it will take

ence barriers to employment.

This programming will also provide them with skills and ideas to position themselves for this new economy and the future of work. Thus our effort for the last few years has been on the rapidly changing job market, and the new skills employers are looking for.

Youth need access to a variety of learning opportunities and relevant tools to enhance their employability. Young people will also need access to continued learning to prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow.

Supporting digital and technology-based skills will help young Canadians become active participants and leaders in the digital economy.

In this regard, our programming is reimagining our organization, which the current crisis is forcing many organizations to do.

At times, the challenge feels overwhelming, but we have underpinned and will continue to brace ourselves for it, despite how painful it might be.

Nevertheless, this moment also represents an opportunity for us to reinvent who we are, to better focus on our mission, and to better serve our community. Therefore, we look forward to 2021 and the promise of a better year ahead for all. Support our Winter Program by connecting us with black youth ages 15 to 24. For further information, call (647)339-2223 or visit us at [cacd-canada.org](http://cacd-canada.org).



racism and discrimination; and (6) Start-up business, entrepreneurship & financial literacy.

However, the growing recognition is that rather than being a great leveller (equalizer), the pandemic may exacerbate existing inequalities for the black youth who face multiple barriers.

Over the years, Black youth in the school system reported feeling undervalued, teachers having low expectations, experiencing negative stereotypes, which resulted in poor academic achievements and low self-esteem.

The Peel District School Board has implemented the “We Rise Initiative” to address systemic and Anti-Black racism among

economic empowerment. In this global economy, young people need help to gain the educational skills and work experiences necessary to achieve their full potential.

Therefore, we must forge ahead, despite the challenges we face to turn things around for those experiencing systemic anti-black racism and discrimination, lacks access to education, overcome the barriers to employment, and other sociological-economic factors.

Employers have estimated that by 2025, we will see a significant shift between humans and machines. Millions of new roles will emerge that will be more adapted to the new division of labour between humans, machines

equities in terms of who receives funding and how. These inequities make it particularly hard for the organizations closest to marginalized communities—often grassroots organizations led by people of colour—to build the financial reserves and capacities that help during times of crisis.

As we watch the spread of COVID-19 disproportionately impact communities of colour, funders must be judicious in their efforts to fund these organizations as they serve these communities so that they can continue their work, change course where needed, and ultimately recover.

All young people deserve access to affordable quality education, no matter their circumstances.