

Special Thanks

North Bramalea United Church

RDR Capacity Building Working Group

Tahmena Bokhari, Chair (Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel)

David DeForest (City of Brampton)

Susan Cheeseman (CNIB)

Sharon Douglas (United Way of Peel Region)

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Tough Questions Café

Is Homophobia the New Racism?

January 11th 2012, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

North Bramalea United Church

363 Howden Blvd, Brampton

Canada 

Promoting respect and equity within organizations and institutions for a respectful and harmonious community

Event Schedule

1:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductions
David DeForest, RDR Chair

Tough Questions Café Panelists

Jeremy Dias: ED, Jer's Vision

Caleva Kelly: Educator

Tim McCaskell: Author

Suhail Abualsameed: Community Activist

Moderator: Natasha Fatah – Journalist and documentary maker

1:10 p.m: Jeremy Dias

1:20 p.m: Caleva Kelly

1:30 p.m: Tim McCaskell

1:40 p.m: Suhail Abualsameed

2:00 p.m: BREAK

2: 15 p.m: moderated discussion with the audience

4:00 p.m: wrap up

RDR News

The New & Improved Regional Diversity Roundtable Website

The brand new Regional Diversity Roundtable website will be revealed by the end of the month! Look for a cleaner website that is easier to navigate. The website will be a rich source of resources, tools and materials for Diversity & Inclusion practitioners and those who are interested in learning more about the work of the Regional Diversity Roundtable.

RDR Diversity and Equity Curriculum

The Regional Diversity Roundtable is in the process of testing Peel Region's first diversity and equity curriculum for Human Service professionals. The curriculum is a unique approach to diversity and equity training that will complement the work of practitioners in Peel. Once testing is complete, we will take the finished product to the community!

About our Speakers

Tim McCaskell

Tim McCaskell is a Toronto gay activist, educator and writer. He was a collective member of The Body Politic, Canada's first national magazine for Lesbian and Gay Liberation from 1974 to 1986, chair of the Public Action Committee of the Right to Privacy Committee which fought back against police raids on gay baths in the early 1980s, and a founding member and of AIDS ACTION NOW!, an activist group which won access to experimental treatments, funding for medications and the establishment of a national AIDS treatment information service in the 1990s.

For more than twenty years he worked at the Toronto Board of Education, developing and delivering anti-racism, anti-homophobia and anti-sexual harassment programs with students and teachers. He is presently a member of the Toronto District School Board's Equity Policy Advisory Committee and chair of the Community Council for the Triangle Program, Canada's only public school program for LGBTQ youth.

He is author of "Race To Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality" (Between the Lines Press 2005) a history of the struggle for equity in Toronto public schools.

Participation Guidelines

Diversity and equity initiatives often create hot debate, interesting questions and trailblazing possibility. The Tough Questions Café is meant to centre these critical conversations, and create a space for interested members of the Peel community to dialogue and shift attitudes on how complex issues are understood.

In the spirit of mutual respect and understanding we note that as participants:

We are responsible for respectful interactions with all those present

- We value respectful listening:
 - Asking questions before telling your opinion
 - No cross talk/interruptions
 - Suspending judgment
 - Taking pause between people's stories/offerings
- We value speaking from your own experience, telling our own stories; using "I" statements
- We value taking risks; being honest; being vulnerable
- We value the expression of emotions; Emotions are welcome here
- We value being respectfully challenged
- We value silence; you have the right to listen and "pass" on active participation.

We have a shared responsibility for today's success

About our Speakers

Jeremy Dias

Jeremy Dias was born in Edmonton, Alberta, and grew up there until moving to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, where he attended high school. As a youth, he was motivated by social and political inequality to take action, volunteering with numerous organizations and charities. In high school he started and lead a number of clubs including Stop Racism and Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving. He also founded and coordinated the Sault Ste. Marie first regional LGBTQ youth group.

After coming out in high school, Jeremy faced extreme cases of discrimination by students & school officials. At 17, he began a legal case against his school and school board, and at 21 he won Canada's second largest human rights settlement. Jeremy used the money to found Jer's Vision: Canada's Youth Diversity Initiative, the international Day of Pink and the Jeremy Dias Scholarship.

Jeremy has been featured on Canada AM, Much Music, CTV News, Global News and CBC News; and has been a keynote speaker at countless conferences and events. He has completed a degree in Psychology and Political Science at the University of Ottawa, continues to volunteer for a number of organizations including Housing Help and the Imperial Court. He is also a columnist for 2B Magazine in Montreal.

About our Speakers

Caleva Kelly

Caleva immigrated to Canada from Jamaica in 2001 when he first begun to accept his sexual identity and became an active participant of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Youth of Toronto at the 511 centre in Toronto. It was there he developed a passion for working with young people. Caleva has since graduated from Ryerson and the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Social Work, MA in public Policy and administration and a Bachelor of Education. Today he continues to work with youth as a Family Studies/Social Sciences Teacher with the Toronto District School Board.

Suhail Abualsameed

Suhail Abualsameed, an immigrant to Canada from his native Jordan, is a community worker, public speaker, researcher, designer and human rights advocate.

Suhail has been working with immigrant and refugee queer youth as well as addressing health related issues within Muslim communities. With a background in Architecture and an extensive travel history, Suhail carries loads of diverse experiences and knowledge which he makes good use of in many forums and spaces speaking at Universities, high schools, conferences and other public forums around the country and the internationally on issues of identity, human rights, immigration, youth and queer issues and the social determinants of health.