



## Franco-Ontarian Philanthropy

In May 2014, the Association of Fundraising Professionals Foundation for Philanthropy – Canada hosted a conference that brought together charity leaders, donors and volunteers to explore the philanthropy of the francophone community in Ontario. Here is a collection of insights from the conference and beyond.

### AT A GLANCE

**12 800 000** Number of French-Canadians

**611 500** Population of Franco-Ontarians

**1 400 000** Number of Ontarians who speak French

**128 620** Population of the Franco-Ontarian community in Ottawa, the largest in the province

**42.2** Percentage of French-Canadians in Eastern Ontario

### TERMINOLOGY

**Franco-Ontarian:** Francophone residents of Ontario, regardless of their place of birth, and people of French-Canadian ancestry born in Ontario, regardless of their current place of residence.

### CASE STUDY

When Caroline Bisson qualified for biathlon and cross-country skiing events at the 2014 Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia, the Franco-Ontarian community raised funds to support her participation. In 2009, Bisson was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer that required the amputation of her shoulder, collarbone, arm and part of her chest. Only several months later, she met a few Paralympic skiers from Norway who encouraged her to take part in the Ontario Cup, which began her journey to the Paralympics. The Francophone community rallied together, hosting numerous fundraising events and initiatives that enabled Caroline to join her teammates and represent Canada on the world stage.

### WISE WORDS



“The Franco-Ontarian community has a 400 year history and more than 600,000 members. It is quite diverse due to factors such as geography, origins and expanding francophone immigration. In addition, there are 1.4 million people who speak French as a second language. The community has made many strides, particularly in law, academia, social services and culture, due in part to dedicated advocacy efforts over the past 100 years. As a result, the generations who fought for rights and recognition, hold these gains close to their hearts. At the conference, we learned about the importance of valuing and respecting all of the sensitivities related to linguistic diversity. That said, francophone pride is more closely associated with cultural awareness and socio-economic advantages, especially for a large number of youth and new immigrants. Also, despite the fact that the vast majority of Franco-Ontarians are bilingual, everyone appreciates it when we are approached in French – in a genuine and consistent manner. The greatest success comes when charities can connect people to their mission and programs en français.”

— Denis Vaillancourt, Community Leader and Chair, Francophone Philanthropy Conference

### BACK IN TIME

#### THE FRENCH PRESENCE IN ONTARIO DATES BACK TO THE MID-17TH CENTURY.

Early settlements in the region include the Mission of Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons in Midland in 1649 and Sault Saint Marie in 1668. Southern Ontario was part of New France and was later part of the province of Quebec until it was divided into Upper and Lower Canada in 1791. Many Franco-

Ontarians are descendants of people who moved to Ontario from Quebec in the 19th and 20th centuries. In 1968, The Ontario government amended the Education Act, creating French-language elementary and secondary schools. Franco-Ontarians were guaranteed the right to receive government

services in French in 1986. In 2010, the Ontario government designated September 25 as Franco-Ontarian Day. This date commemorates the official raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag in 1975.

## INSIGHTS FROM THE CONFERENCE

Conference presenters and participants shared many great examples and tips about giving within the francophone community. Here is what we heard:

PARENT COUNCILS AND SCHOOLS CAN OFTEN HELP IDENTIFY FRANCOPHONE FAMILIES.

FUNDRAISING IS CONTEXT-DRIVEN AND REGIONALLY-BASED - RURAL/URBAN, EAST/WEST AND SO ON.

"WE ALL HAVE A LIMITED AMOUNT OF MONEY TO GIVE. WE GIVE TO THOSE WHO BEST SELL THEIR CAUSE."

THE BEST RESULTS COME WHEN YOU CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS AND SOLICIT FUNDS IN FRENCH.

WHILE RELIGION HAS INFLUENCED GIVING TRADITIONS AMONGST MANY FRENCH-CANADIANS, THE NEXT GENERATION IS LEARNING ABOUT PHILANTHROPY FROM A NUMBER OF NEW SOURCES.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING FUNDRAISERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING FRENCH-SPEAKING VOLUNTEERS TO CULTIVATION AND SOLICITATION MEETINGS.

MAKE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS BASED ON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

IF YOUR BUDGET DOES NOT ALLOW FOR PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATION SERVICES, REACH OUT AND RECRUIT QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP.

WHILE THE MAJORITY OF FRANCO-ONTARIANS LIVE IN EASTERN ONTARIO, THERE ARE MANY FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITIES AND CHARITIES THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE.

FUNDRAISERS NEED TO COME UP WITH CREATIVE IDEAS: EVENTS CAN GET STALE.

IMMIGRATION IS INFLUENCING THE RAPID GROWTH OF THE FRENCH-SPEAKING POPULATION IN CANADA.

RECRUIT FRANCOPHONE LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY TO REACH OUT TO THEIR PEERS.

BEWARE OF DIRECT TRANSLATION: SOMETIMES THE ESSENCE OF THE MESSAGE CAN GET LOST IN TRANSLATION.

TOP ISSUES: ACCESS TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SERVICES IN FRENCH; EMPLOYABILITY; LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION; AND THE INTEGRATION OF FRENCH-SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES THAT TRANSLATE ONLINE MATERIALS MAY SOMETIMES MAKE GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS EASIER.

QUALITY TRANSLATION MAY BE COSTLY, BUT IS A CRITICAL INVESTMENT IN ORDER TO ENGAGE AUTHENTICALLY.

**FOR A FULL LIST OF REFERENCES, VIDEOS AND RESOURCES, PLEASE VISIT:**

[www.afpinclusivegiving.ca](http://www.afpinclusivegiving.ca)

The Francophone Philanthropy Conference was part of a series for fundraising professionals, donors, and volunteers to develop a greater understanding of the giving traditions and charitable interests of several diverse communities in Ontario. Organized by the AFP Greater Toronto Chapter and the AFP Ottawa Chapter, this initiative was generously funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's Partnership Project and the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy – Canada.