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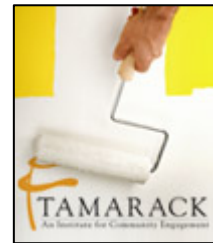
Engage!

A New Year. A New Beginning.

It's a New Year, which means another chance to change the world!

Our wheels are turning faster than ever as we set in motion the events, projects and processes that will help to colour this year with collaboration, innovation and inspiration.

And, we're bringing these things to you via live events like the Communities Collaborating Institute (save the date – September 15-19!), virtually with a new website and online communities, and in many of the ways you're already used to – slightly tweaked for improvement.



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You've already been introduced to some of the exciting new things underway at Tamarack, including learning circles, certification as a Tamarack Peer Coach, and blogs that explore the questions, concerns and issues that challenge us all.

What would you like Tamarack to do in 2008 to make your work easier and more effective? What articles would you like to see in *Engage*? What themes would you like to see explored through tele-learning?

Change is a collaborative journey and your presence is important.

Not only do we want you along for the ride – we want you to help us create the path forward!

Change – it's a good thing!

 [Let us know what you want to see in 2008](#)

Related Links:

- [You Clicked, We Counted](#)
- [Check out the Communities Collaborating Blog](#)

By: Rachel Gainer

Right to the City

In my neighbourhood, gentrification is considered a good thing.

Young families and professionals are moving back into the downtown core and new services, artist shops and restaurants are popping up to serve the revitalized community.

But, gentrification isn't always positive. Who gets pushed out as others move in? Are we ensuring that our neighbourhood spaces are vibrant, healthy and affordable places for all?



Across the U.S., working class neighbourhoods and Black, Latino and Asian people are being displaced from the cities at an unprecedented scale. Sky-rocketing rent, mass evictions and low-wage jobs have eroded vibrant historic communities that are being replaced with luxury condominiums, shopping centers and tourist attractions.

Right to the City (RTTC) is an alliance of organizations from cities across the country, as well as researchers, academics, lawyers and other allies. Established in January 2007 to build a united response to gentrification and the drastic changes imposed on cities, the alliance stands together under the notion of a right to the city for all.

[More...](#) [Learn more about the Right to the City campaign](#)

Related Links:

- [Learn about the experience of revitalization in Toronto's Regent Park](#)
- [What's behind the new gentrification?](#)

By: Louise Kearney

Know No Bounds

It started out as a modest goal to assist 5,000 households in their journey out of poverty. Community by community, this grew exponentially to become 35,978 impacted by the work of Vibrant Communities' partners.



Now, as we enter 2008 and a new phase in Vibrant Communities, we strive to assist 100,000 households in their journey out of poverty by 2011.

We know that, across Canada, there is more than enough vibrancy to exceed this goal.

Achieving the goal will be made possible by endless community ingenuity.

Improvements are essential for Canadian households, communities and systems. Heating and energy savings plans have helped keep the heat on and reduce household expenses.

Numerous schools now provide food programs that increase students' abilities to be alert and to learn. Many communities have generated creative ways to provide affordable transit passes and help community members stretch their minimum wages. Also, more businesses and governments are introducing fair wage procurement practices.

Our innovations know no bounds!

[More...](#) Find all the news that matters at Vibrant Communities through our community updates!

Related Links:

- [Vibrant Communities Saint John Tackles Energy Poverty](#)
- [Calgarians Celebrate Affordable Public Transportation](#)
- [Wheels for Workers in Niagara](#)

By: Kathleen Kevany

Vibrant Communities Updates

Waterloo Region, ON – Opportunities Waterloo Region has several recommendations for the Federal and Provincial poverty reduction strategies. Learn more by clicking [here](#).

Calgary, AB – In an attempt to answer the question of why some Calgarians continue to work for low wages when higher paying jobs are vacant, Vibrant Communities Calgary surveyed Calgary employers and employees in low paying sectors of the economy. The results can be found in the newly released report, *Low Wages in a Boom Town*. Read it [here](#).

BC's Capital Region – Looking for practical tips and resources to help employers tap into hidden labour markets? Check out some tips from the Community Council's Labour Market Dialogues project [here](#).

Assess Your Collaboration

Ever hear the [story](#) about the goose that laid the golden egg?

It laid so many golden eggs that people assumed the goose, itself, was made of gold.

The same story often plays out for collaboration. We tend to focus a great deal of energy on – and evaluate – the outcomes of our collaborative work, and precious little time assessing the design and workings of the group itself.



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In doing so, we risk not taking care of the goose that lays the golden eggs.

There are a lot of ways to go about evaluating a collaborative effort. Each collaboration is unique and deserves an approach that reflects that uniqueness. Still, it's nice to be able to build on frameworks and tools.

We have found at least four frameworks in our work across communities. While each emphasizes different characteristics of a collaboration, all are designed to gather feedback from participants.

[More...](#) [Learn more about the four self-assessment processes](#)

Related Links:

- [Partnership Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Evaluating Collaboratives: Reaching the Potential](#)
- [The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory](#)
- [The "Spider Web" Tool](#)

By: Mark Cabaj

Resolve to Solve – Together!

Will your New Year's resolution make a difference?

The success of traditional diet, exercise or bad habit resolutions rests with one person. If we resolve to change something that affects others, we improve the chances of achieving the goal.

[Change Everything](#) offers [cash incentives](#) for progress towards exciting, achievable goals – most of which involve other people. For inspiration, check out the stories of [last year's winners](#).



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The [Case Foundation](#) showcases the [Top 100](#) proposals they received for the [Make it Your Own Awards](#). Online voters will choose the final winners. The same foundation helps regular folks change the lives of other people through [giving](#) – as little as \$10.

My annual New Year's resolution – to have more fun – depends on other people. I think it is the essential first step towards any change!

Related Links:

- Add your [resolution](#) to the page at [Spark](#), CBC Radio's show about online technology
- A list of [environmental resolutions](#) from PlanetLovers.com
- The Washington Post describes the [Case Foundation's initiatives](#)
- Forbes Magazine explains how you can [Give Like an Entrepreneur](#)
- [Facebook Causes](#) – support or start a cause of your own

By: Brenda Doner

Featured Resources

Evaluation Blues - Accountability requirements hurt small, innovative programs the most. This article from the Stanford Social Innovation Review, shares the example of the Washington-based organization New Future, and its efforts to prove its programs work. Read the article [here](#). [Source: Stanford Social Innovation Review]

Non-profit Governance Models: Problems and Prospects - The authors of this paper argue that there is currently no agreement about a prescriptive or ideal model of non-profit governance. They suggest that within the current diversity of thought about governance there is an exciting opportunity to create new models which are hybrids of existing and emerging models. Read the paper [here](#). [Source: The Innovation Journal]