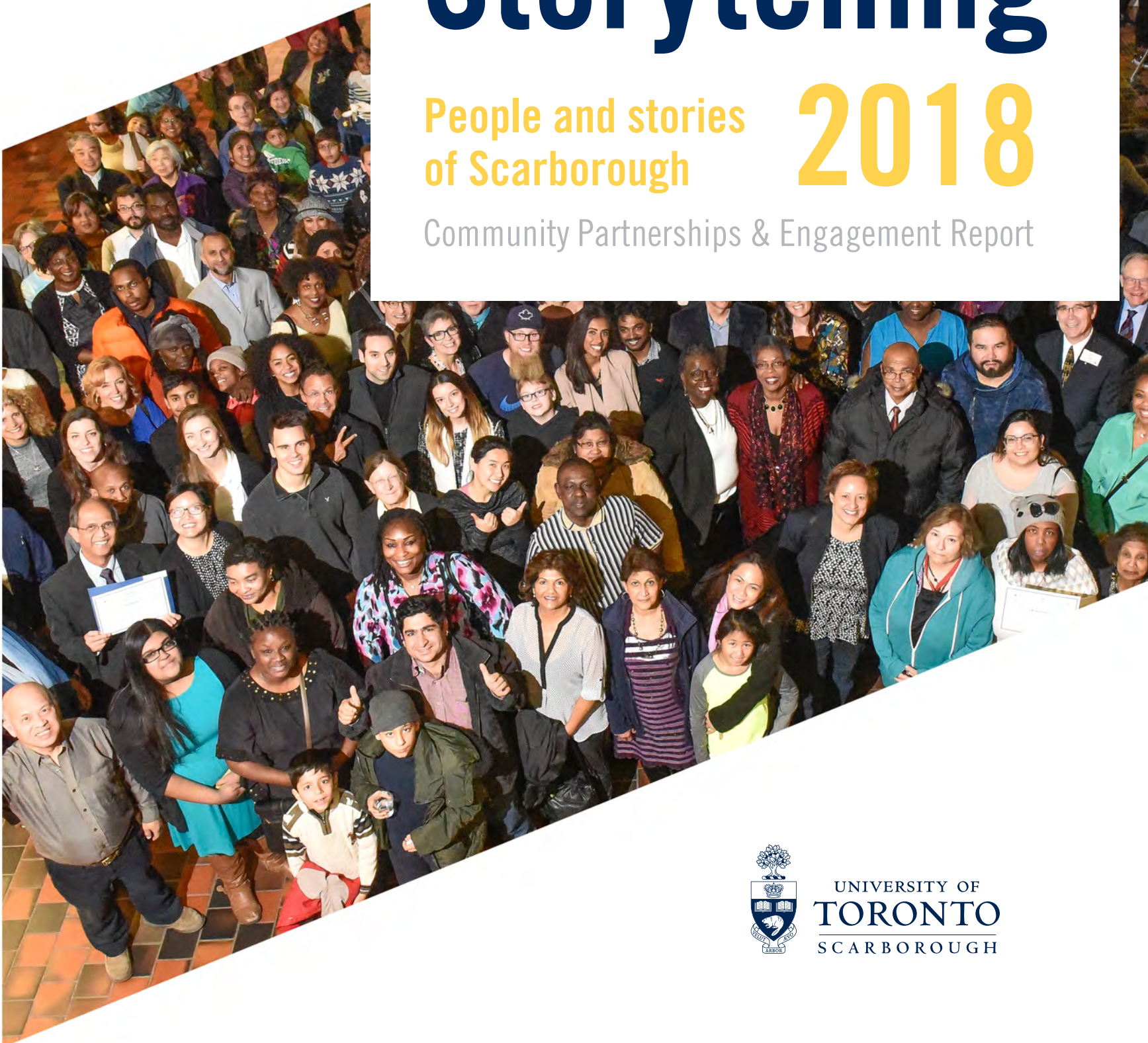


# The Power of Community Storytelling

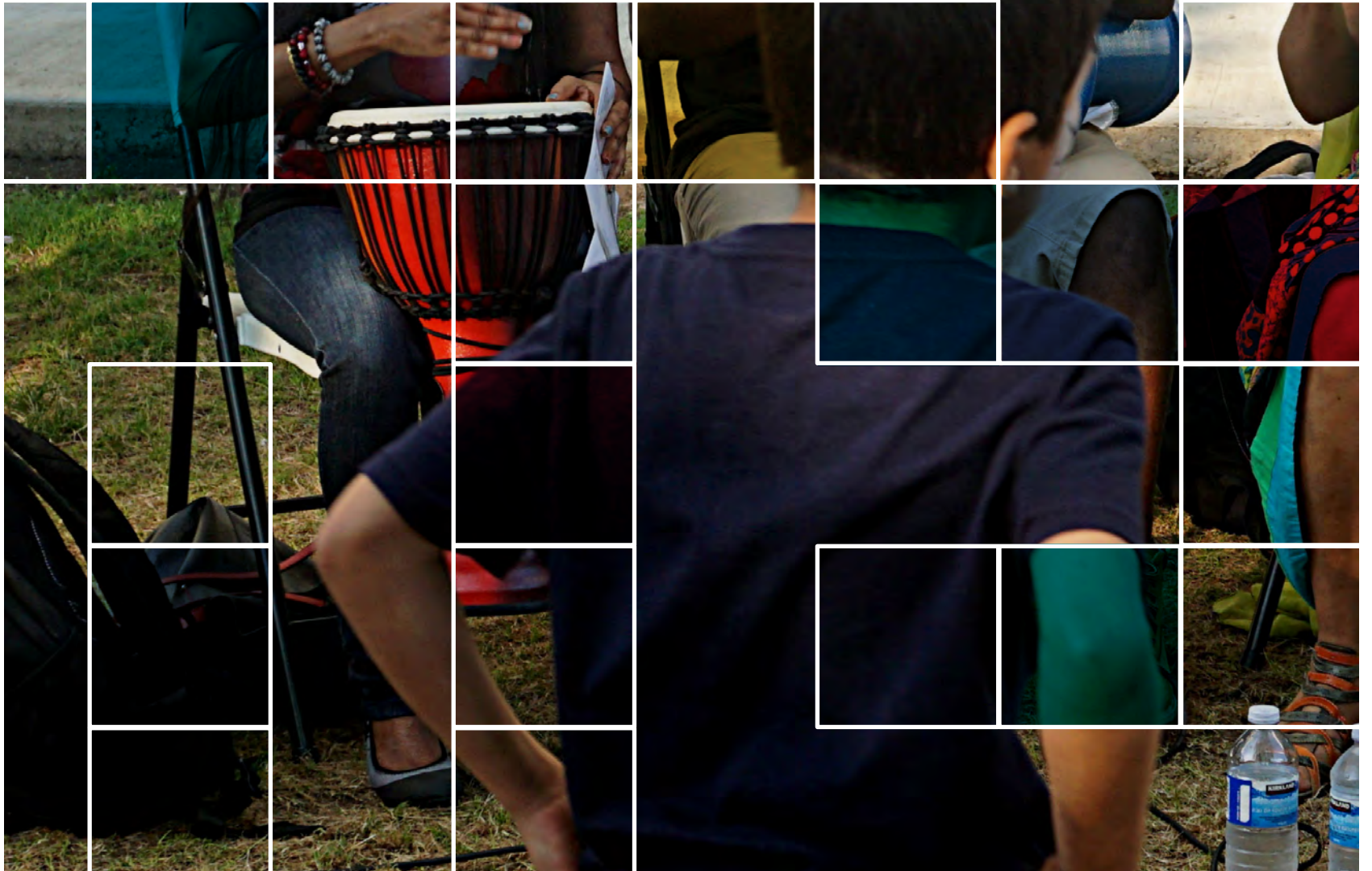
People and stories  
of Scarborough

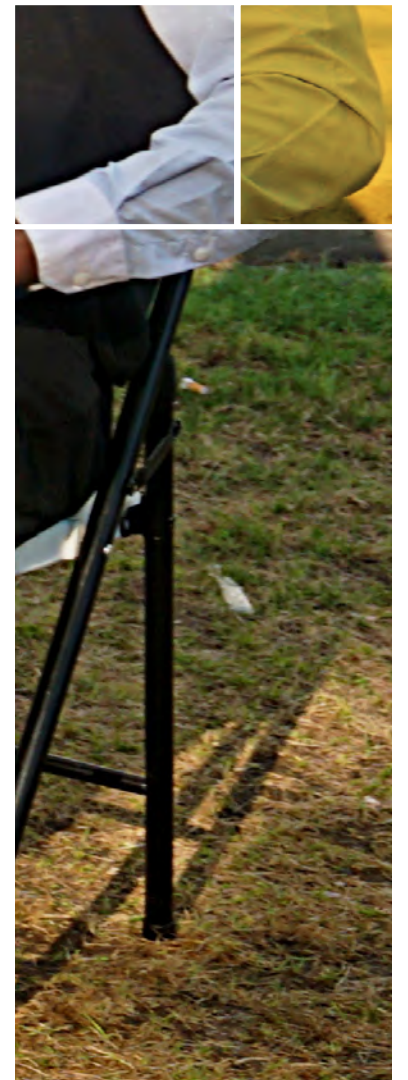
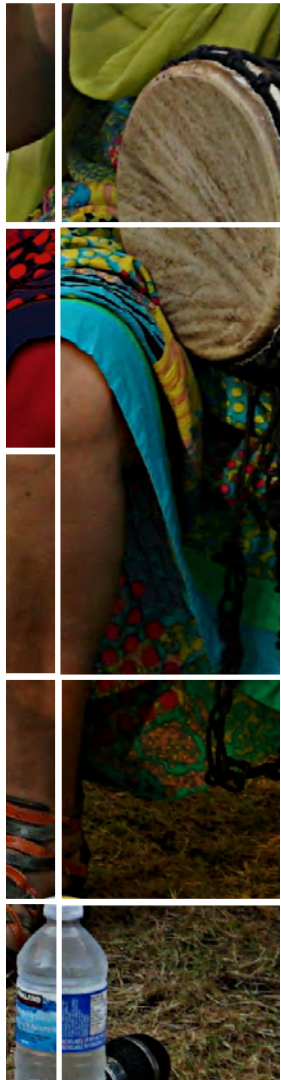
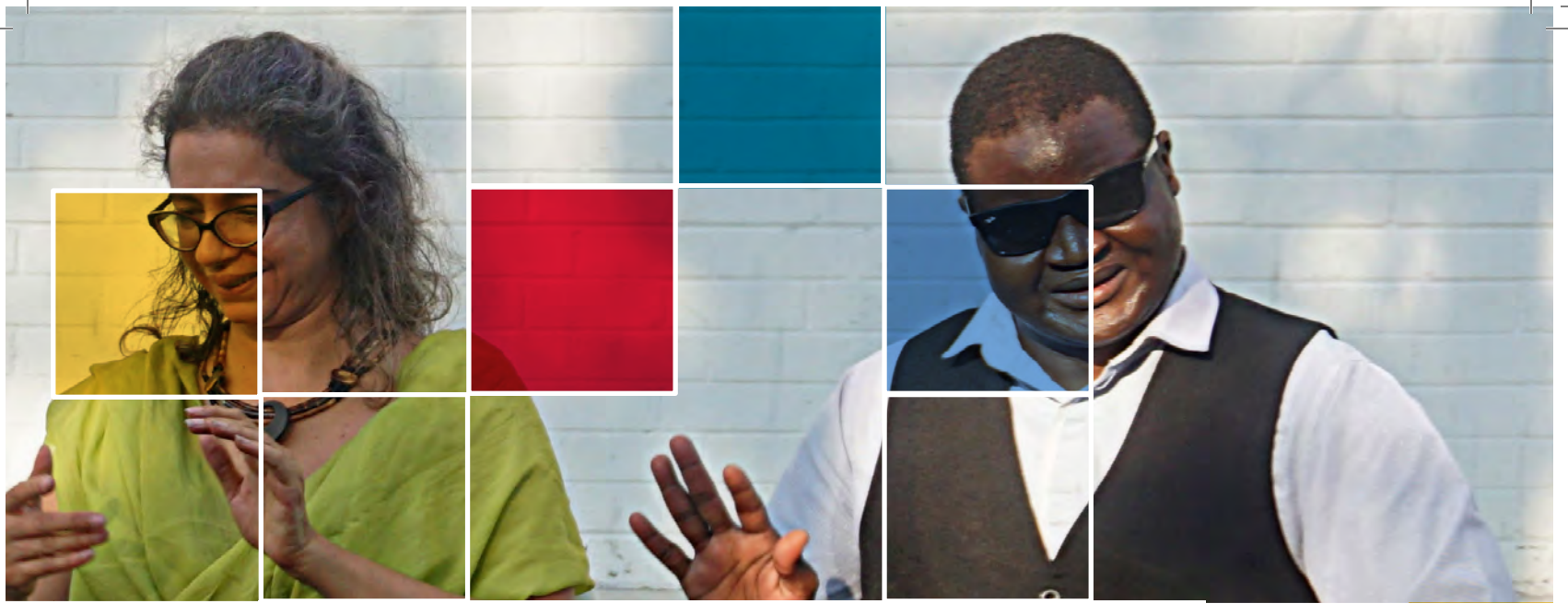
2018

Community Partnerships & Engagement Report



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
SCARBOROUGH





## The Power of Community Storytelling

In the past few years, the University of Toronto Scarborough has shifted its institutional culture so that faculty, staff, and students see themselves as civic actors within the larger community. Together with community partners, we have developed a unique and successful community-university reciprocal learning partnership approach (KGO-U of T Scarborough Partnership – Planning for the Future Report) that has tremendous potential for transformational change locally and profound implications for community/university work across the country.

With a focus on understanding each other's needs and values, the University and its community have developed and implemented place-based action plans that meet both pedagogical goals and local social change agendas.

In that spirit and in recognition of Canada 150, U of T Scarborough engaged with local community groups, agencies, public sector partnerships, businesses, students and alumni to strengthen Scarborough's position in the Canadian context as a point of influence, knowledge exchange and inspiration.

As an anchor institution in the eastern Greater Toronto Area, U of T Scarborough was in a position to promote greater public engagement with the community by supporting unique projects and partnerships that reflected on the past, present and future of our campus and country; offered critical reflection on Canadian history; and demonstrated U of T Scarborough and the local community's influence on our nation's evolution.

Special consideration was given to initiatives and projects that addressed Indigenous experiences, stories and perspectives from varied backgrounds, and/or interrogated traditional ways of being. The University used Canada's sesquicentennial to prompt reflections, examinations and social events that acknowledged the multicultural pluralistic nature of our communities, further interrogating the narrative of who we are as a nation, community and institution and creating ongoing dialogue to share learnings, exchange knowledge and use our collective voices and actions towards positive socio-economic change.

# Telling Scarborough's Stories

U of T Scarborough invested more than \$120,000 along with central University of Toronto 150 Funds to realize our shared goals. Some of the initiatives included:

## 1. Nation, Migration and Place-Making between the TRC and Canada's Sesquicentennial

Situating Scarborough as a crossroads and place of migration in relation to its Indigenous and immigrant histories and present, the Department of Sociology is undertaking two initiatives funded by the University and by U of T Scarborough's Office of the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean. The initiatives reconciled the sesquicentennial with Canada's enduring Indigenous presence in the eastern GTA.

- A curricular initiative through two courses, Immigrant Scarborough and Migration Narratives, encourages students to think about what it means to be Canadian or to have "Canadian values." Exploring Scarborough's layered and heterogeneous story, students transform their research into podcasts that bring broader understanding to the notion of this area as a historic immigrant and Indigenous gateway.
- Scarborough Crossings was a workshop designed to initiate a conversation between migration scholars and scholars of indigenous issues about how we define and do research on belonging, membership and place-making in Canada. Scarborough Crossings is open to the public, faculty and advanced graduate students.

*Submitted by: Prof. Patricia Landolt and Prof. Paloma Villegas, U of T Scarborough, Department of Sociology. Funded by the U of T Sesquicentennial Faculty/Librarians Initiative Fund and U of T Scarborough Office of Vice-Principal Academic and Dean*

# Over **\$120,000** invested by U of T Scarborough to realize initiatives

## U of T Funding for Canada 150 Projects

- The **U of T Scarborough Canada 150 Fund** promoted greater public engagement with the University by supporting unique, one-time projects that reflected on the past, present and future of our campus; that offered critical reflection on Canadian history; and that demonstrated U of T Scarborough's role in the Canada that is becoming. In the spirit of truth and reconciliation, special consideration was given to proposals that address Indigenous concerns.
- **Canada 150 Student Fund @ UofT** supported projects that explored, challenged or celebrated the connection between the University and Canada's past, present and future, linked to the University's priorities: urban engagement, international partnerships or re-imagining undergraduate education. Sixteen student initiatives were awarded up to \$1,000 each.
- **Canada's Sesquicentennial Faculty/Librarians Initiative Fund** supports faculty members in academic initiatives tied to Canada's 150th birthday. These projects took the form of conferences, workshops, panels, or guest speakers, with all events taking place during the 2017 calendar year. The value of funding per initiative was a maximum grant of \$2,500 and were matched by the division or academic unit leading the event.



## 2. Africadian Poetry: A celebration and interpretation of 150 years of Canada's Black history

Celebrating multiculturalism in Canada with a U of T lens, Canada's seventh Parliamentary Poet Laureate, Governor General Award-winner and U of T Professor George Elliot Clarke, re-wrote Canada's constitution as poetry from his own Africadian interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Clarke also gave attention to the types of and division of power between the federal, provincial and territorial governments. A recitation was performed at the William Doo Auditorium at New College on the St. George campus.

*Submitted by Arts & Science student, Malia Omale and U of T Scarborough student, Bukama Muntu. Funded by the Canada 150 Student Fund @ U of T*

## 3. Indigenous Film Series

This series introduced over 300 people to a range of Indigenous issues. Each screening was followed by a facilitated Q&A discussion, during which invited panelists answered questions, exchanged ideas, and shared their expertise/knowledge of each respective theme and subject matter. This series was done in collaboration with the Department of Student Life, Students of Sociology, Steeles L'Amoreaux Youth Empowerment, and the U of T Scarborough Library. Through this initiative, the organizers of the Indigenous Film Series at U of T Scarborough helped highlight the importance of this land's Indigenous narrative.

*Submitted by: Elder, Wendy Phillips, U of T Scarborough Department of Student Life, Students of Sociology, Steeles L'Amoreaux Youth Empowerment (SLYE), and the U of T Scarborough Library. Funded by the U of T Scarborough Canada 150 Fund*

#### 4. Canadian Identities/Canadian Stories

Marking its 10th year, U of T Scarborough student organization ArtSideOut explored the complexities of historical and contemporary Canadian identities. Funding supported a series of events rooted in Aboriginal traditions, including guided walks through the Highland Creek Ravine at U of T Scarborough, storytelling and traditional Aboriginal performances. In keeping with Scarborough's growing reputation as an urban cultural hub, local artists and guides lead these events; students from all three U of T campuses participated.

*Submitted by U of T Scarborough students Kali Banner and Laura Enriquez. Funded by the Canada 150 Student Fund @ U of T*

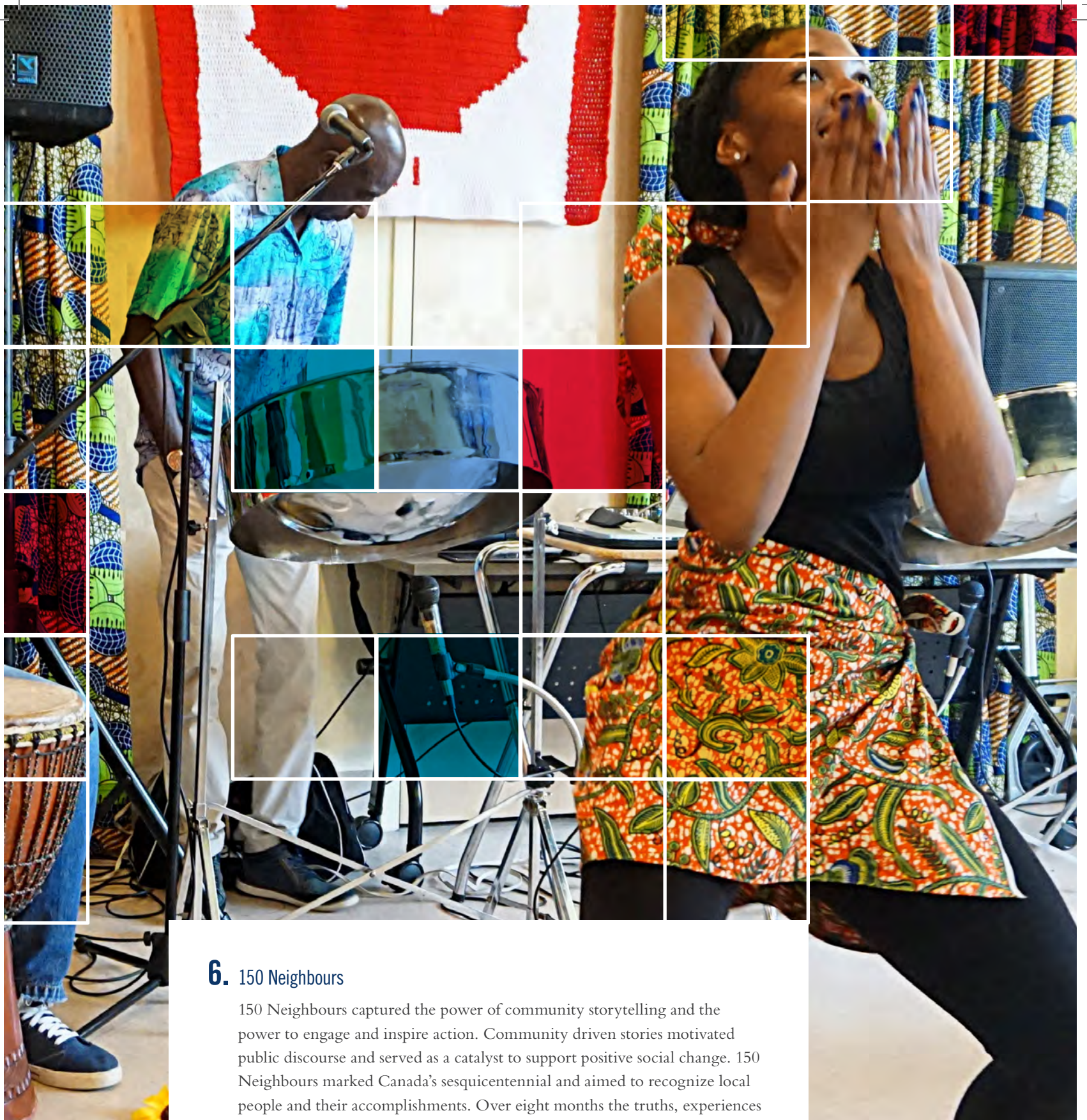
#### 5. Canada by Treaty: Confederation and the Significance of First Nations/Crown Alliances and Land Purchase Agreements

Showcasing the history of Canadian treaties and their importance to Confederation as well as their contemporary significance as agreements between nations, this pop-up exhibit moved across U of T to all three campuses.

The exhibit made relationships between Confederation, colonialism and First Nations history accessible, inviting the campus community and our surrounding neighbours to reflect on our living relationship to treaties.

*Submitted by Professor Heidi Bohaker. Funded by the U of T Sesquicentennial Faculty/Librarians Initiative Fund*





## 6. 150 Neighbours

150 Neighbours captured the power of community storytelling and the power to engage and inspire action. Community driven stories motivated public discourse and served as a catalyst to support positive social change. 150 Neighbours marked Canada's sesquicentennial and aimed to recognize local people and their accomplishments. Over eight months the truths, experiences and voices of the community were featured. Taking a non-traditional approach, U of T Scarborough chose to use this grant as an opportunity to disrupt normative thinking, and re-imagine and re-think new ways of learning, sharing, creating and engaging.

*Submitted by U of T Scarborough's Office of the Vice President & Principal and Office of Business, Operations and Strategic Affairs. Funded by Department of Canadian Heritage*





## 150 Neighbours

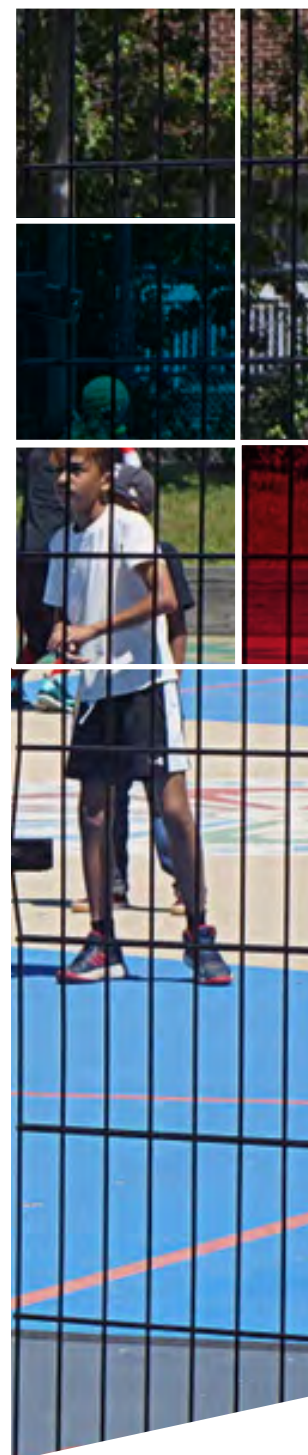
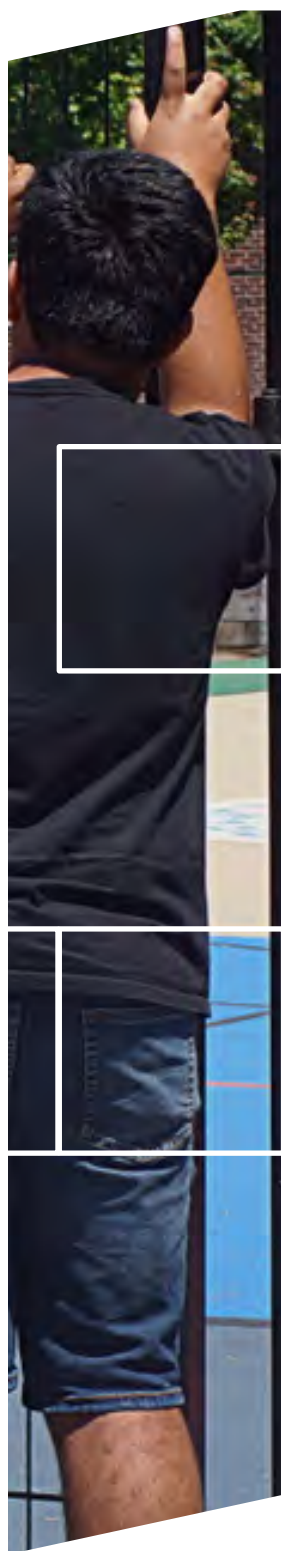
Scarborough is home to a global community that shares perspectives from many different walks of life. From community and nation builders, to celebrities, to seniors and youth, past and present, 150 Neighbours represented individuals whose stories are often untold and undervalued, people who speak to the depth, wealth of experience, knowledge and brilliance of the Scarborough community.

U of T Scarborough received a \$100,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage to implement an initiative that recognized the people of Scarborough. U of T Scarborough approached this grant differently, by moving away from traditional, top-down approaches to community-university partnerships, where universities parachute in and are the sole creators and owners of knowledge.

Instead, together, community and university worked to co-develop 150 Neighbours, capturing stories through multiple mediums, creating accessible ways to develop and share knowledge, raising awareness of the various ways lived experiences can be shared, and showcasing that no one type of knowledge base should be valued over another.

In alignment with the U of T Scarborough's community-university, reciprocal-learning partnership approach and the University of Toronto's Presidential Priorities of leveraging location, urban partnerships and internationalization, the University worked across communities, departments and sectors to co-design and co-create a robust, ground up project that represented the richness, global perspective, brilliance and inspiration of the people of Scarborough.

Through this adaptable and fluid process, U of T Scarborough was able to leverage its position as an anchor institution in Scarborough to mobilize and connect communities and partners - demonstrating the unique role post-secondary education institutions can play in community building. By investing over \$50,000 directly back into the Scarborough community, U of T Scarborough demonstrated a commitment to collaboration and building local capacity.



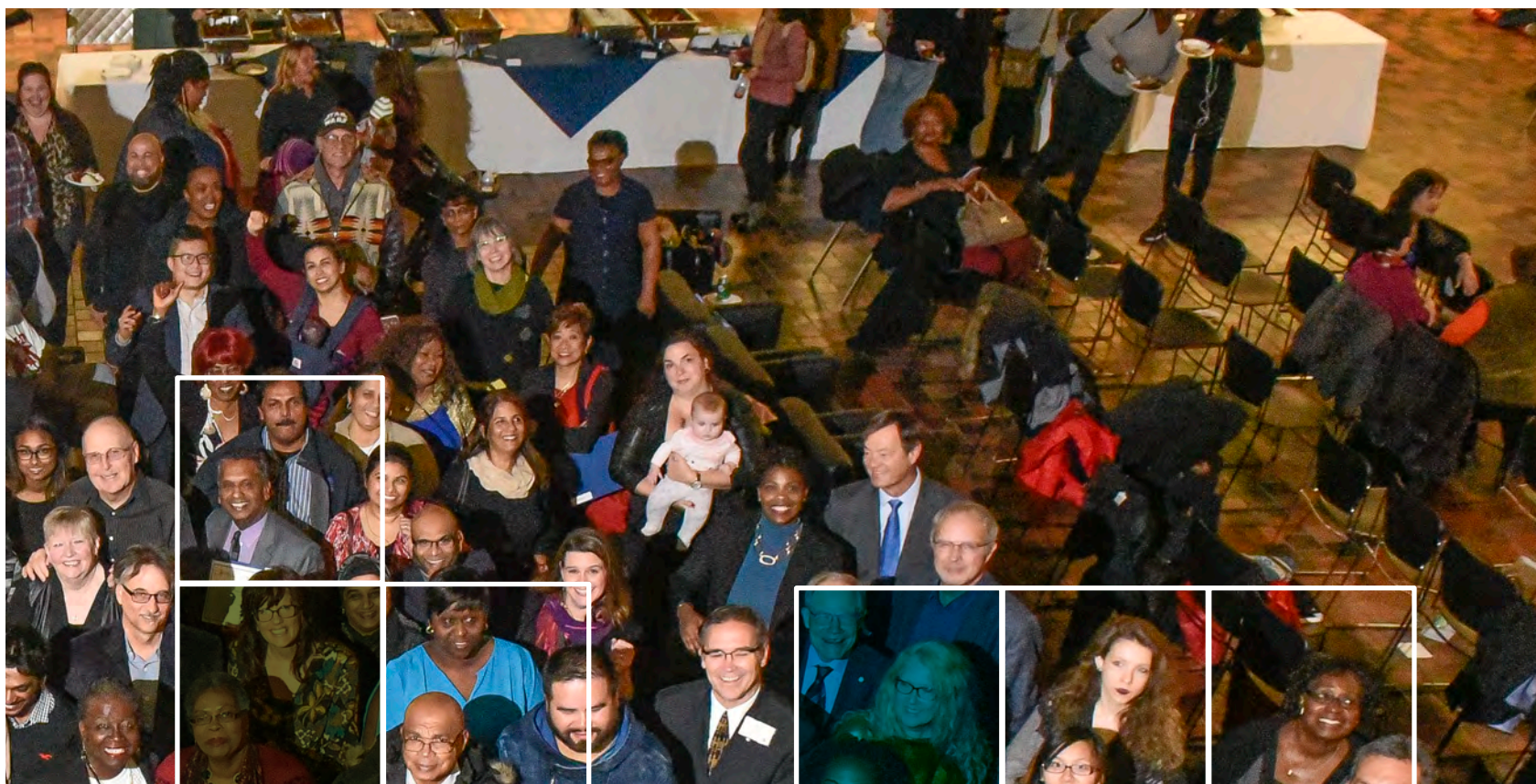


In that spirit, 150 Neighbours recognized the Scarborough community by:

- Co-hosting events that captured people's stories and honoured the importance of the oral storytelling tradition represented in the diasporas of Scarborough.
- Offering free workshops to teach digital media storytelling skills to community members, thereby supporting capacity building from within the community.
- Profiling online, over 150 Scarborough neighbours over 150 days, showcasing the vastness and depth of the Scarborough experience. These stories of Scarborough are now part of a robust online exhibit — [150neighbours.ca](http://150neighbours.ca) — that will be used for years to help tell Scarborough's story.

The project closed with a year-end event that offered an opportunity for improved understanding, acknowledgement and affirmation of our complicated history as a nation, increasing dialogue around our vision of how our country's future may unfold, and our individual and shared legacy contributions.





“ This initiative was only possible because you, the people of Scarborough came together to share, inspire and build community through your stories. Without your work and commitment, 150 Neighbours wouldn't exist. ”

Andrew Arifuzzaman, Chief Administrative Officer, University of Toronto Scarborough

### 150 Neighbors Objectives

1. Increasing civic engagement, understanding and recognition of the various voices and stories that reside in Scarborough
2. Building awareness of the important work that Scarborough residents are engaging in, helping to build a sense of pride; providing opportunities for developing social legacies
3. Providing pathways and opportunities for residents to become more active, better connected, and leaders in their communities
4. Building the capacity of individuals to strengthen community organizations through their participation as volunteers, which will build the vitality of the community
5. Helping to solidify U of T Scarborough's place as an intellectual, cultural and sporting hub of the Eastern GTA; a place in which the community can take pride and experience positive change





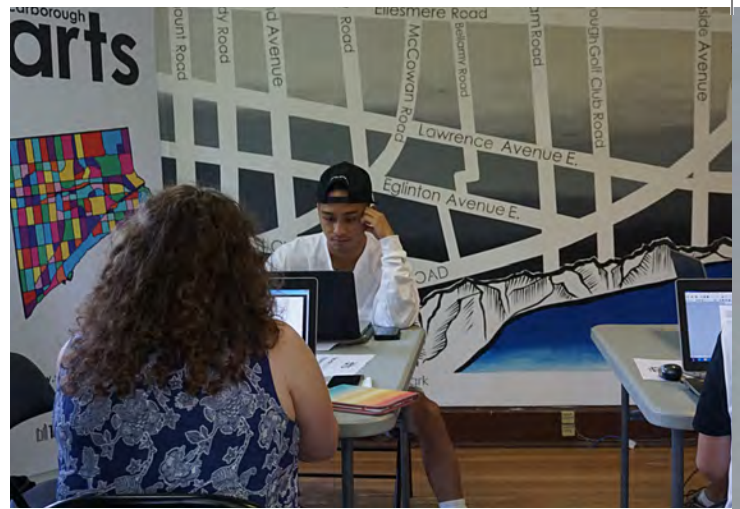
## Storytelling as Engagement

The multifaceted project reached across boundaries and sectors to create opportunities that fostered meaningful community building. The inspiring stories born out of collaboration and community resulted in authentic relationship building and storytelling from people of all ages, races and backgrounds, highlighting the diverse ways stories can be told and affirming whose stories are valued.

## Take It To The Streets

Take it the Streets was a two-day digital storytelling workshop in collaboration with 10 community organizations across the 10 wards of Scarborough. Workshop sessions were led by Ryan Fukunaga of Digital Storytelling Toronto an initiative of Community Learning & Development, with Free Geeks providing access to free technology as needed. The workshops provided an interactive space to create narratives through scripts; residents designed and directed short multimedia stories that served as a window into their lives and experiences.

The digital workshop was a tool for engagement and outreach, acting as a vehicle to build pride and excitement in the community work taking place in Scarborough. By the conclusion of the project the digital legacy of Take it to The Streets included 39 digital media stories, showcasing phenomenal community and student leaders and their impactful initiatives. These videos can now be shared broadly to encourage community building from within and telling a uniquely different story of Scarborough.



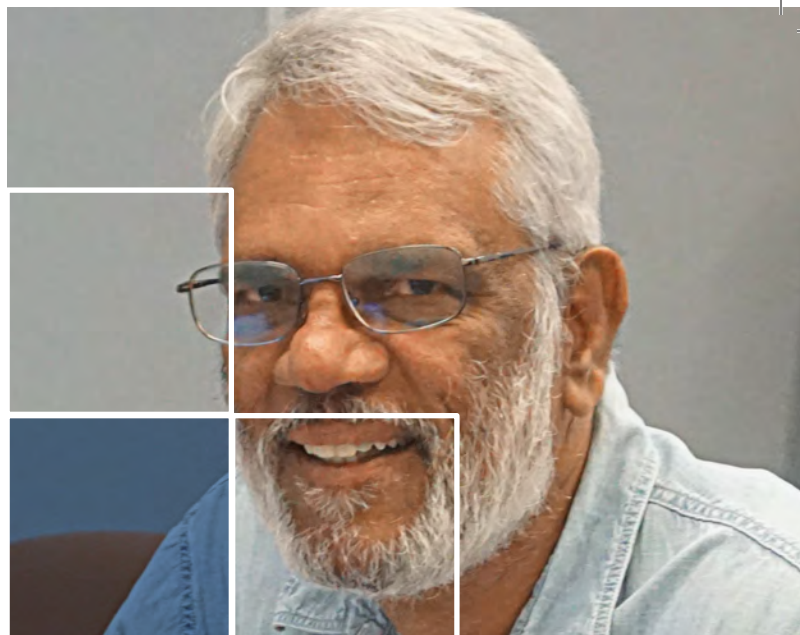
## Partners:

- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Malvern Family Resource Centre
- TAIBU Community Health Centre
- East Scarborough Storefront
- Canadian South Asian Growth and Support Services
- Scarborough Arts
- Steeles L'Amoreaux Strength in Partnerships
- Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership
- U of T Scarborough Department of Student Life
- Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough
- Highland Creek Community Association
- U of T Scarborough Department of Arts, Culture and Media
- Digital Storytelling Toronto
- Free Geeks

- Investment into the community - **\$19,000, \$2000** of which supported **4** student initiatives
- **\$12,430** – Digital Media Storytelling facilitation
- **6** U of T Scarborough students participated
- **10** community organizations across the **10** wards of Scarborough
- **40** digital media workshop participants
- **39** digital media stories

“ I was happy to participate in the project. It was more work than I anticipated . . . but was valuable. It was helpful that I was familiar with the software used ”

Karen B.



“ What I enjoyed about the program was that we were first given a chance to learn about how to navigate the editing programs & some of the techniques of storytelling. I found the process helpful and would recommend it to other youth groups looking for ways to have support in communicating the work they’re doing within their communities ”

Onsia A.

## Photo-Documentary Online Exhibit

The online photo-documentary series aimed to carry on the theme of unique storytelling — profiling 153 online profiles over 150 days, resulting in a deep, intricate thread of stories that speak to the richness of the various people and communities of Scarborough. Each profile connected readers to personal testimonies, offering a new lens into the multifaceted, complex social history of Scarborough. The reach of each individual story has touched thousands of people with over 60,000 online views! These stories were also shared regularly on social media channels, in the Highland Creek Villager and prominently featured in the Scarborough Mirror. Whether online or as part of the one of many digital media storytelling workshops, the contributions from the people of Scarborough have come alive to tell the Scarborough story as we marked the occasion of Canada's sesquicentennial.

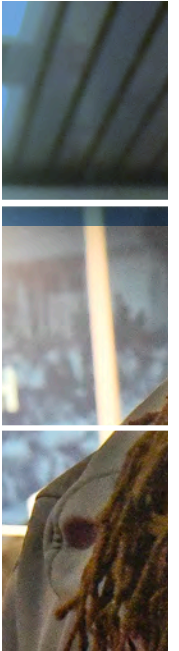
- **153** online profiles
- Over **60,000** online views

“ I owe so much to Scarborough. I love Scarborough with all my heart. There are so many talented people — artists, activists, athletes... ”

Andrea Moffat

“ I see my future here in Scarborough, a community where individuality prevails. An opportunity for the little voices to be heard. ”

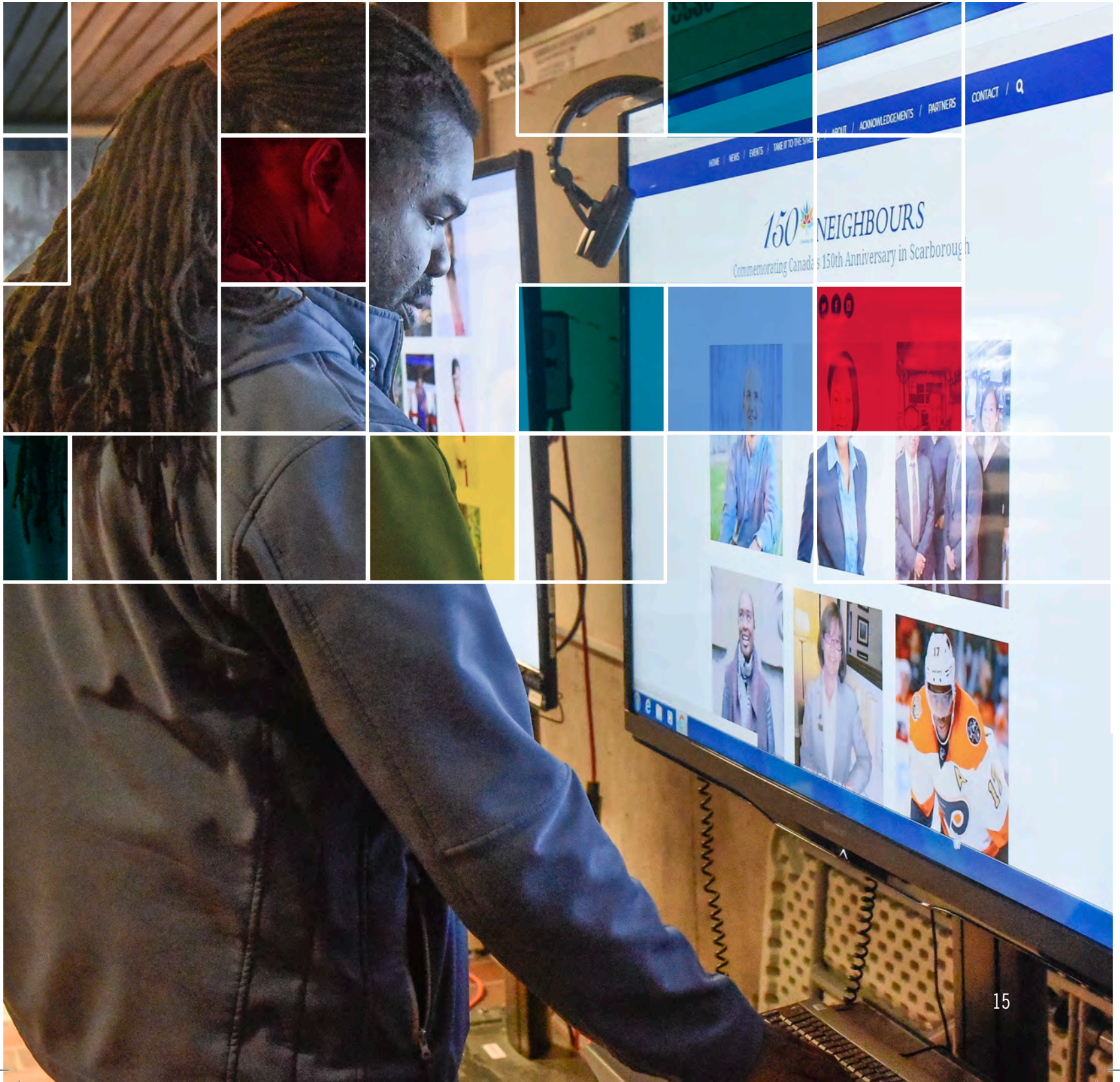
Niloja Jalandhiran





“ We are proud members of the Scarborough community and want the best for Scarborough. There is so much that makes Scarborough special. ”

Raffy Chouljian





## Celebrate Your Neighbours

Strengthening communities and building better relationships with your neighbours creates safer, healthier and more vibrant communities. Celebrate Your Neighbours aimed to break down relational barriers within communities by encouraging people to have conversations and engage with those whom they would not normally have discourse.

U of T Scarborough, in partnership with community agencies, co-hosted community events in Scarborough that celebrated the contributions of the Scarborough people to their communities and their continued acts of goodwill. The events included:

- Malvern Family Resource Centre - CommUNITY Walk-a-thon & BBQ
- Scarborough Arts - Local Heroes Night
- Highland Creek Community Association - Highland Creek Heritage Festival
- Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership - Immigrant Employment T.O. Day Recognition Awards
- Canadian South Asian Growth & Support Services - Mornelle-FEST
- Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough - Back 2 Books
- Agincourt Community Services Association - Chester Le Mural
- East Scarborough Storefront - Hanging at the Hub
- TAIBU Community Health Centre - Ubuntu Village 150 Canadian Celebration

These events were organized along celebratory themes that recognized community members and volunteers in different ways. It was an opportunity for the community to come together, share in oral storytelling, celebrate each other's contributions, and recognize those who have touched lives through their service and kindness. 150 Neighbours highlighted the importance of listening to each other's stories, building community, understanding truths and history and documenting change — leading us into shaping the future while also addressing the past and present.

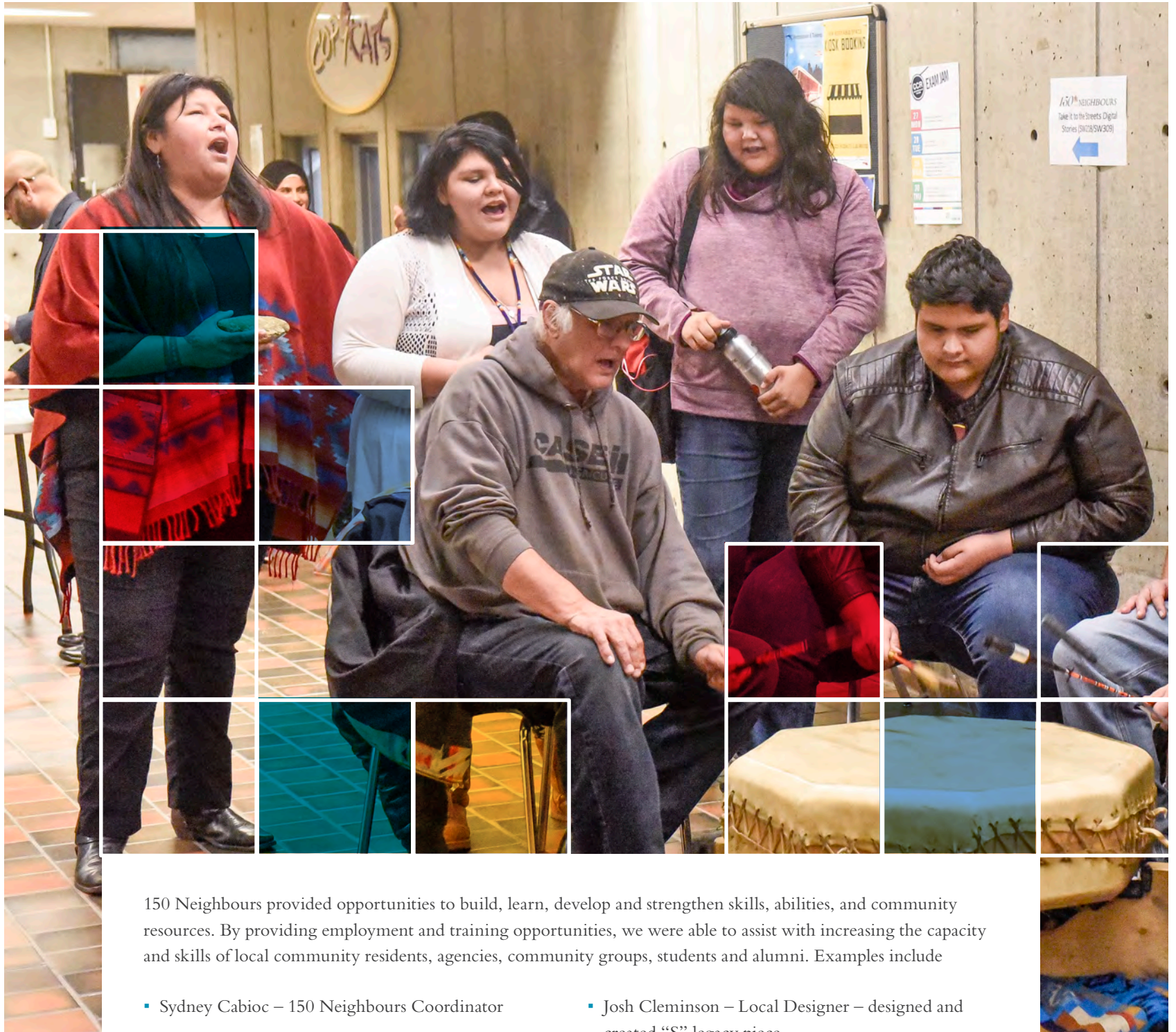




“ By telling personal stories as a community, residents will be part of something bigger. And by engaging our community members in the creative process, everyone involved has ownership. That amplifies the narrative of this uniquely Canadian location. ”

Professor Bruce Kidd  
Principal, University of Toronto Scarborough

- **\$13,000** reinvested into community and employment opportunities
- **3952** people were engaged through events and programs
- **131** volunteers
- **971** volunteer hours



150 Neighbours provided opportunities to build, learn, develop and strengthen skills, abilities, and community resources. By providing employment and training opportunities, we were able to assist with increasing the capacity and skills of local community residents, agencies, community groups, students and alumni. Examples include

- Sydney Cabioc – 150 Neighbours Coordinator
- Cheryl Duggan - Resident, photojournalist
- Eric Slyfield - U of T Scarborough Department of Arts, Culture and Media student, Scarborough resident - Leading Our Legacy video
- Josh Cleminson – Local Designer – designed and created “S” legacy piece
- Berton Woodward, Mary Thring, Sayada Nabi, Nicole Royle, and Helen Stratigos – Freelance Writers/Interviewers – online profile writers from Scarborough
- Digital media workshops



## Leading Our Legacy

From its inception, the 150 Neighbours project intended to leave a lasting legacy. The project provided a unique opportunity to recognize the people and events that contributed to its success and simultaneously encourage the reflection upon our country's history with an eye to a better future.

The Leading Our Legacy finale event commenced with the recognition of the Indigenous community through a drumming circle and smudging ceremony facilitated by Elder Wendy Phillips. The event showcased and reflected on 150 Neighbours in its entirety — the inspiring community video stories, vibrant community events, diverse online photo series and the Red Feather Project (remembering the more than 1200 missing or murdered Indigenous girls and women in Canada). Community members Randell Adjei and Niloja Jalandhiran shared their thoughts on 150 and 151 through spoken word performance art and speech, respectively.

The event also provided interactive spaces for reflective dialogue through sharing circles, recipe card discussions examining our history and stories through food pathways, and an audio-recorded examination of the meaning of 150 and where to go next. Over 200 guests participated in the signing of the wooden letter “S” legacy piece, that will tour Scarborough throughout 2018 and then be installed on campus as continued legacy of the project – representing that the community is here!

Leading Our Legacy was the launching point for 151, an initiative that continues the conversation and actions started in Canada 150 and examines the lessons and learnings from Canada 150 through themes of acknowledgement, awakening, affirmation and authenticity. We are looking forward to collectively curating a legacy that utilizes and mobilizes the voices of our community and reshapes Canada as we know it.

As part of Leading Our Legacy, the campus hired U of T Scarborough student Eric Slyfield, through an Equity and Diversity in the Arts Grant from the Department of Arts, Culture and Media.



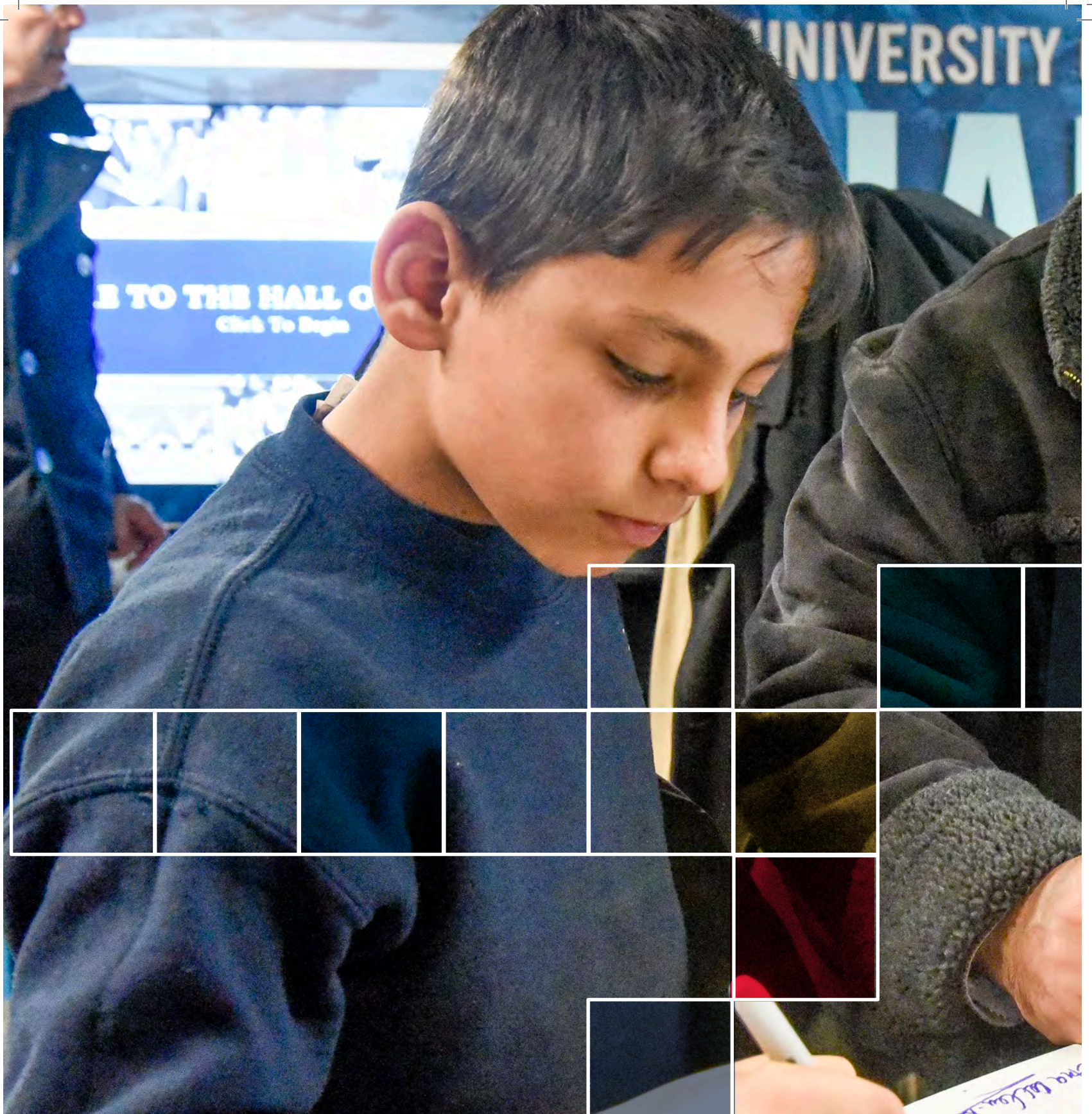
### U of T Scarborough student experiential learning:

- Had a co-curricular, work integrated learning opportunity that provided direct hands-on experience in capturing people's stories and the activities that took place at Leading Our Legacy
- Recorded footage of Leading Our Legacy and incorporated photos taken of the Celebrate Your Neighbour events to create a narrative on the importance of collecting the stories/histories of diverse bodies and of Scarborough
- Worked from an anti-oppression and equity approach with a hands-on opportunity to learn and apply to their professional development
- Understood the importance of the project being co-created and co-designed with partners and the acknowledgement that there was a need to make this project accessible to the Scarborough community
- Had an appreciation of the lived experience and knowledge of the people of Scarborough
- Applied theory gained in the classroom to relevant matters outside of the classroom; understood that there are theories that live in the community as well – thereby debunking traditional ideas of university and community relationships.

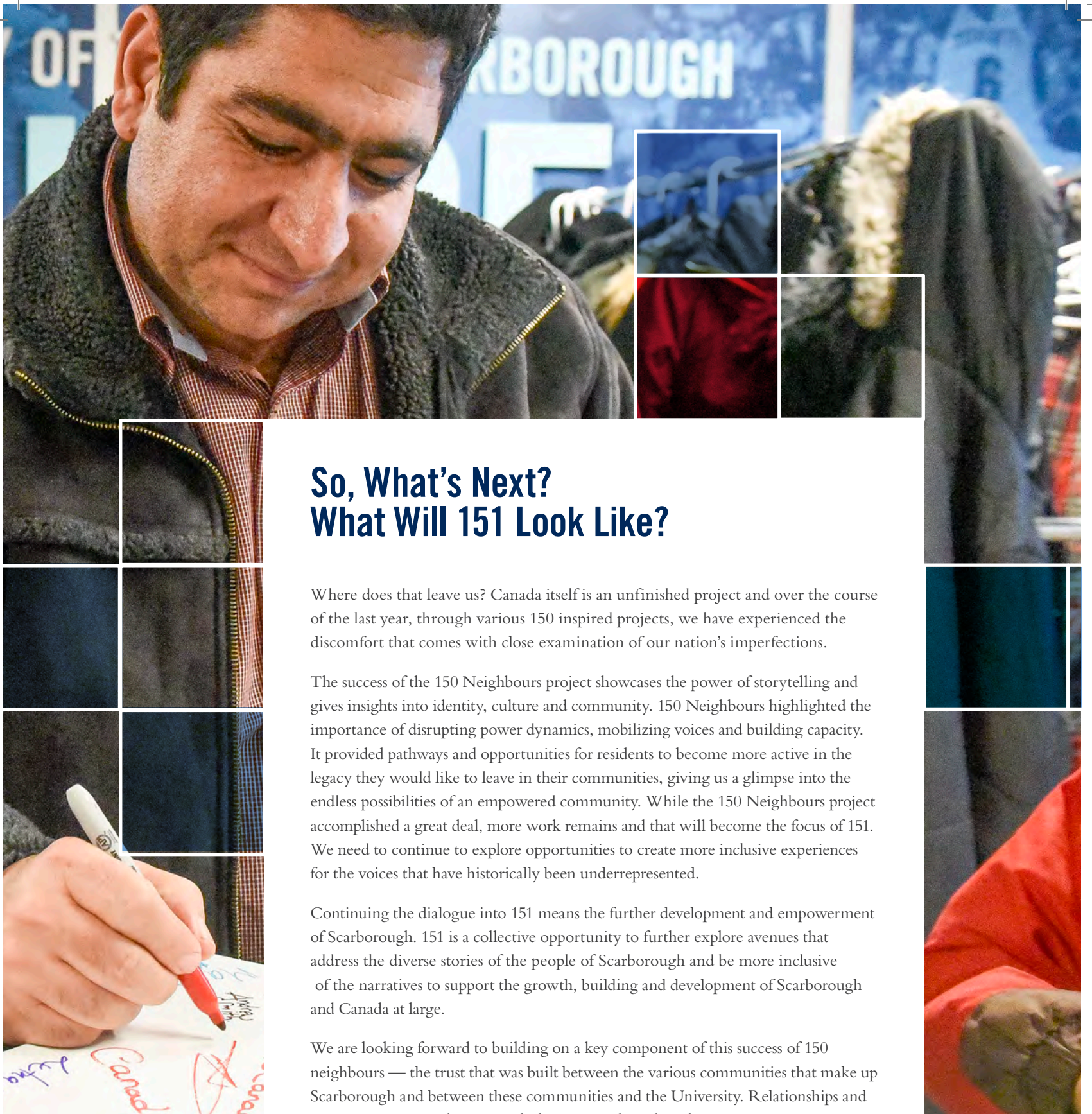


- **200** guests attended
- **1** facilitated Storytelling Through Recipes session by Professor Daniel Bender, Director, Culinaria Research Centre, Historical and Cultural Studies
- **1** Indigenous Sharing Circle facilitated by Elder Wendy Williams
- **1** Capturing Your Voice audio recording session facilitated by Chris Dela Cruz, U of T Scarborough Arts, Culture and Media student
- **10** Part Photo Series exhibit by Cheryl Duggan, community resident, photojournalist









## So, What's Next? What Will 151 Look Like?

Where does that leave us? Canada itself is an unfinished project and over the course of the last year, through various 150 inspired projects, we have experienced the discomfort that comes with close examination of our nation's imperfections.

The success of the 150 Neighbours project showcases the power of storytelling and gives insights into identity, culture and community. 150 Neighbours highlighted the importance of disrupting power dynamics, mobilizing voices and building capacity. It provided pathways and opportunities for residents to become more active in the legacy they would like to leave in their communities, giving us a glimpse into the endless possibilities of an empowered community. While the 150 Neighbours project accomplished a great deal, more work remains and that will become the focus of 151. We need to continue to explore opportunities to create more inclusive experiences for the voices that have historically been underrepresented.

Continuing the dialogue into 151 means the further development and empowerment of Scarborough. 151 is a collective opportunity to further explore avenues that address the diverse stories of the people of Scarborough and be more inclusive of the narratives to support the growth, building and development of Scarborough and Canada at large.

We are looking forward to building on a key component of this success of 150 neighbours — the trust that was built between the various communities that make up Scarborough and between these communities and the University. Relationships and community partnership networks have strengthened, as the University, community partners and residents are seeing the benefit of collaboration to meet common goals. Partnership opportunities have increased as a result of 150 Neighbours, and cross-sector connections and more collaborative projects have emerged.



**CANADA 150**

**CANADA**

**CANADA**

**CANADA**

**CANADA**

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UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
SCARBOROUGH



To find out how you or your organization can get involved please visit  
[www.utsc.utoronto.ca/partnerships](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/partnerships)



Photography by: Ken Jones and Cheryl Duggan