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NEWS RELEASE

To: Assignment Editors, Reporters and Producers

Ottawa celebrates the 3rd annual Welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW), with 50 fun-filled, entertaining and informative events across the city: June 23-28, 2015

OTTAWA (June 22, 2015) – The [Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership \(OLIP\)](#) and the City of Ottawa kick off the 2015 [Welcoming Ottawa Week \(WOW\)](#), at the [3rd Ottawa Immigration Forum](#), to be held on June 22, at 8 a.m., at the Marriott Hotel on Kent Street. Over 200 delegates will discuss Ottawa's progress as a welcoming city and will recognize the everyday champions who personify this welcoming spirit.

The 3rd Ottawa Immigration Forum, jointly hosted by OLIP and the City of Ottawa, will feature prominent speakers, including Deputy Mayor Mark Taylor, senior federal and provincial officials, and academic experts.

Ever since its inception three years ago, WOW has proved to be a resounding success, engaging Ottawa residents - both old and new - in a variety of entertaining and exciting activities. By bringing together immigrants and long-time residents to take part in activities that foster understanding and dialogue, WOW aims to enhance community connections and to strengthen Ottawa's capacity to attract and integrate newcomers from around the globe.

"It is so good to see good ideas like this take root so fast" said Mayor of Ottawa, Jim Watson, who first proclaimed Welcoming Ottawa Week in June 2013. *"WOW has grown from only eight events in its inaugural year to the 50 events taking place across the City during 2015 WOW"* continued the Mayor.

Several popular events from last year's WOW are returning to the [2015 WOW Calendar of Events](#): photo and arts exhibits, guided walking tours to uncover the unique history of Ottawa communities, documentary screenings, food tastings, dance workshops and sporting events. The WOW Calendar also includes opportunities for the public to learn about Ottawa's immigrant population and Canada's immigration policy, as well as offering newcomers informative workshops on housing, health, employment, voting, building credit history, entrepreneurship, and understanding Canadian political structures.

"The return of so many of the activities that were most appreciated by the public last year is a testament to OLIP partners' commitment to make immigrants feel at home in our city", remarked Hindia Mohamoud, director of OLIP.

An outstanding feature of WOW is an exhibit called *Faces and Stories of a Welcoming City*, a special photo presentation featuring welcoming Ottawa residents and the immigrants they helped. Residents of Ottawa who demonstrated this welcoming spirit were selected by [Louisa Taylor and Sarah Onyango, WOW Co-Chairs](#), and were photographed by [J. David Andrews](#). The Exhibit will be unveiled during the 3rd Ottawa Immigration Forum.



Featured new this year, under WOW, are a number of activities designed to celebrate the [400th anniversary of the francophonie Ontarienne](#). These include a guided walking tour of the Vanier neighborhood by the Vanier Muséoparc, an online connection with [Semaine canadienne à Paris](#), and a breakfast reception in honor of francophone WOW Ambassadors, hosted by [L'Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa \(L'ACFO\)](#)

Welcoming Ottawa Week 2015 will conclude with a ceremony at the Community Cup Event on Sunday, June 28 at Brewer Park. More than 2,000 guests are expected to gather and enjoy this event. Centered around a recreational soccer tournament; the Community Cup also showcases community services to support newcomers, features international dance, music, and food, and is filled with a great many activities for kids and families. As well, participants will witness an official citizenship ceremony involving 40 new immigrants.

Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership

The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) was founded in October 2009 by the City of Ottawa and LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants). The partnership is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada with the mandate of improving local capacity to attract, settle and integrate immigrants. Visit the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership online at www.olip-plio.ca

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