

Upcoming Events

Inaugural Conference of Canada's first Lusophone Studies Association

Portuguese is one of the world's 10 most ubiquitous languages, and is spoken by approximately 3% of the world's population.¹ It is the national language of nations in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa, the so-called "Lusophone nations" (Luso being a term that designates a Portuguese cultural and/or linguistic influence). Immigrants from these nations are also scattered in large communities throughout the world, with major concentrations in the United States, Canada, France and other European destinations. Despite this fact, relatively little attention has been paid by Canadian academics to the Portuguese-speaking world. This is now about to change, with the creation of Canada's first *Lusophone Studies Association* (LSA).

In October of 2011, a group of academics and community members met at York University and voted to initiate the process of the creation of this Association. An international *Working Group* was tasked with the responsibility of implementing the first steps. This *Working Group* is now organizing the Inaugural Conference of the *Lusophone Studies Association*, which will be held from October 29 to November 1, 2013, at York University (see the conference website: <http://lsa.apps01.yorku.ca/2012/11/lsa-inaugural-conference/>).

The LSA will serve to promote the scholarly study of the Lusophone world, as well as networking opportunities in support of academics working in related areas. Lusophone studies (the study of this Portuguese-speaking world) is a broad interdisciplinary area that includes the many crossroads, perspectives and contexts that have contributed to this diaspora. This will include the integration of Lusophone youth (ex. Portuguese, Brazilian, Angolan, etc.) to their diverse nations of migration and within Canadian society.

Membership in the LSA will be open to academics, students and interested members of the Lusophone communities at large. Prospective participants may register for this conference, through a combined conference registration and LSA membership fee of CDN\$50. Interested readers can visit the LSA website at <http://lsa.apps01.yorku.ca/> or send a cheque, or International Money Order, in the name of the "Lusophone Studies Association", C/A Robert A. Kenedy, 124 Winters College, York University, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3, CANADA.

Contact:

INYI member, Dr. Fernando Nunes,
Associate Professor
Department of Child & Youth Study
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, Nova Scotia,
B3M 2J6, Canada
fernando.nunes@msvu.ca

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica online www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/329791/language/292862/Mostwidely-spoken-languages

Recent Events

Mothers Speaking Up: Pertinent Study from York University Takes a Closer Look at Mom's of Children with Disabilities.

By: Wajma Soroor

What are the barriers and facilitators to social support for immigrant mom's of children with disabilities? How do the health, education and social services sectors respond to the need for social supports for families who are caring for a child with health challenges? Nazilla Khanlou, Principal Investigator of the Mothers Project looks at these questions. The study aims to understand the barriers and facilitators of social support of immigrant mom's of children with disabilities, and includes interviews with mothers and stakeholders from health, education and social services sectors. This study becomes especially pertinent as Dr. Khanlou and team have found a dearth of both research and policy supports in this area. With study interviews now complete, the team is compiling data and hoping the results will contribute to positive changes in the social supports of moms who parent and care for their children with disabilities.

To these ends, on May 6, 2013 the Office of Echo Chair in Women's Mental Health Research hosted a CIHR funded **Café Scientifique** entitled, "**Mothers Speak Up! On Parenting Children with Disabilities: Implications for Moms wellbeing and support**" at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

This forum included open dialogue and discussion related to moms' access to social supports as well as stories of the lived experiences of two mothers and service providers. Dr. Khanlou and team hope the shared discussion served as a starting point to a larger dialogue with the broader community about serving the needs of all moms of children with disabilities.