

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Reaching In project helps service agencies work more effectively *Workshop topics include attracting volunteers and working with local government*

For Immediate Release

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WATERLOO – Employees and volunteers with local social service agencies will learn how to run more effective organizations during a series of workshops. Reaching In, described as a community capacity building project, will offer eight weekly workshops at the Victoria School Centre, beginning on January 12.

The topics covered will include creating successful proposals and presentations, working with local governments and attracting people to an agency. The seminars consist of lectures, educational activities and case studies that are centered on meeting the needs of the community.

“The program helps increase the capacity of the community at the grassroots level,” says Marnie Morrow, co-ordinator of continuing education in the faculty of social work at Wilfrid Laurier University. “The organizations are not only developing useful skills, but they’re also gaining access to a whole network of people in the region. They have the opportunity to interact with the people taking part in the workshops as well as the presenters.”

“The program proved to be an invaluable tool for the work I do at the board level and, in particular, with specific projects that I’ve initiated,” said Brian Barlett, a board member with the Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre who completed the program last year. “The workshops really helped me learn things like how to activate people, identify gaps and understand how our community works.”

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While the faculty of social work has been organizing the workshops for five years, the program is very much a collaborative effort. The workshops were originally developed in collaboration with local organizations and the Region of Waterloo.

Partnerships also help keep program costs low and allow Laurier to focus on delivering the workshops. Presenters include community volunteers, local educators and municipal employees. The Region of Waterloo helps promote Reaching In and the City of Kitchener donates space for the workshops.

To learn more, please visit www.wlu.ca/fsw/programs/cenew/capacity.shtml.