

## COMMUNICATION & COUNSEL

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**Subject:** Human Library Event 2013

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Saturday January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 will mark the second annual Human Library event at OPL. Detailed planning is underway to ensure a repeat of last year's successful event.

### Aim

The Human Library is an event that provides an exciting opportunity for the public to personally connect with individuals with a diverse set of life experiences, stories, and knowledge. Through positive, personal dialogue, the program's goals are:

- To provide the opportunity for people to speak to a diverse range of people they wouldn't otherwise have an opportunity to talk to;
- To provide people a fresh view into different parts of the community and build understanding of the people who live in the community;
- To encourage new ideas and ways of thinking;
- To celebrate differences; and
- To promote tolerance.

### History

Launched in Denmark in 2000, the Human Library movement has built momentum with hundreds of events held across the world in 2011. More information on the history of the events can be found at the Human Library website at: <http://humanlibrary.org/index.html>.

The concept is that the library brings in a diverse set of individuals who act as "books", who get "checked out" for approximately twenty minutes by a patron. The Ottawa Human Library will allow patrons to reserve "books" the day of the

event at the different locations, on a first come first serve basis. Staff and volunteers will support the “books” and coordinate the event at each location.

### **Partnership**

CBC Ottawa is partnering with OPL to bring this event to the city, and to promote the event through CBC’s local and national television and radio shows and through its website. OPL and CBC will share costs and development work for this event. CBC is also taking on the role of recruiting “books” for the event. Several meetings have been held to brainstorm a diverse set of individuals that would provide an interesting balance of high interest life stories to share.

Building on the success of last year’s event in Ottawa, this year CBC is working nationally to promote human library events from coast to coast in local public libraries on the same date as the Ottawa event. To date the Human Library events have been confirmed in cities across Canada including Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Yellowknife, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Sudbury, Montreal, Halifax and St John’s.

### **OPL Locations**

This year’s Human Library event will be held at five OPL locations. The locations were chosen to be geographically dispersed and large enough to accommodate the event. The local event will be held at the Main Library, and North Gloucester, Alta Vista, Ruth E. Dickinson and Hazeldean branches.

In response to the outcomes of last year’s event it has been determined that each of the locations outside of Main will accommodate 6 books with Main scheduling 12 for a total number of 36 books.

Branch staff will be on hand to manage registration, welcome customers and offer additional activities to actively engage event participants and actively promote library services and programs. Teen volunteers will be recruited for each location to provide additional support.