



Centre communautaire  
**Tyndale St-Georges**  
Community Centre

CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE  
COMMUNITY CENTRE



Spring 2019

## A sense of belonging: an Early Childhood experience



*Afsaneh and her son Iliya have signed up to be part of the spring session!*

The most reassuring feeling is knowing you are not alone.

The Early Childhood Department at Tyndale St-Georges is a safe space where parents and children can learn and grow together. From sharing personal anecdotes to singing songs, members can create memorable relationships while integrating in the community.

Thanks to Tyndale St-Georges, two mothers from different parts of the world have had an easier time adapting to their new way of life.

As an immigrant from Iran, Neda Edalajavit, with her ten-month-old son Borna, has been able to connect with other parents at the Centre. “You can understand the meaning of family,” Neda says. “You see that you don’t feel alone here at Tyndale. In my case, my husband, my daughter, my son, and I are alone in Montreal. We know that we need to put more effort to find our new community.”

Miao, mother of three-year-old Kailin, has also found a solution to her isolation. When she first moved here from China in October 2017, she and her family did not know anyone. The loneliness and language barrier caused her to stay at home with her daughter for two straight months while her husband worked. Subsequently, she signed up at Tyndale St-Georges and was instantly able to bond with

the other parents. “I can communicate with them with many problems,” Miao says. “This is my first baby and she wakes up during the night and she doesn’t like to drink milk, so I asked them and they all share their experience with me. Sometimes I complain, and they also complain.”

A workshop called “Nobody is Perfect” is a great way for parents to communicate the challenges of childrearing. “We talk about the difficulties of parenting and difficulties we encounter with our children,” Neda says. “We receive ideas to help diminish our problems.”

The confidence felt by the parents has influenced the children as well. Over the course of one year, Kailin has learned ten English songs by heart, made friends and developed a strong independence. “Every Thursday, every child can stand up on the stage to sing a song,” Miao says. “My daughter now can stand up by herself and sing in front of everyone.”

Neda instills the same kind of independence in her children. At Tyndale St-Georges, she exposes Borna to the English language as much as she can. She sings songs with her two children, Borna and Nava, that she picked up from the Early Childhood program. “My daughter, Nava, now sings “The Wheels on the Bus” at home all the time,” says Neda.

Afsaneh’s experience coming from Iran to Montreal is quite different. She does not feel comfortable with the English language therefore she has been having trouble adapting. Coming to Tyndale St-Georges was a relief. Her three-year-old son Iliya, really enjoys being with the other children and now knows a few English words. “His nutrition has gotten better and he can follow the rules,” Afsaneh says. Although her English is weak, she tries as best as she can to socialize.

For Neda, Miao, and Afsaneh, Tyndale St-Georges will always have a special place in their hearts. They have made friends for life, shared concerns, developed their parenting skills, and found support.

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## Message from the Executive Director

### Membership & Saturday Programming

I am happy to announce a new membership program at Tyndale St-Georges. The mission of the Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre is to empower, to help develop, and to be a presence in the community of Little Burgundy. With the creation of the membership program, we aim to better serve the residents of Little Burgundy by focusing on flexibility and ease of accessibility for all. Benefits of the membership include reduced rate for facility rentals and opportunities to receive free tickets to events. One of the major incentive to the membership is access to Saturday programs that are free of charge to all members. We currently offer, Early Childhood Family Open Gym, Children's Open Gym, and Adult Basketball. For the schedule, please check our website or social media.



### Get to know your Tyndale St-Georges staff

My name is Rupender Kaur and I'm a 37-year-old mother of two young daughters. I am originally from India and moved to Canada in 2011 with beautiful dreams. I have been a resident of Little Burgundy since 2015.

Up until the moment I moved to the neighborhood, I was feeling depressed and isolated. I was struggling with personal and health issues. I suffered from heart disease and went through heart surgery. Given these challenges, I needed help to take care of my children. In May 2016, I called Tyndale St-Georges to inquire about their services. I met with Jennifer who gave me a warm welcome and I was able to register my eldest daughter for the summer camp. My daughter enjoyed her experience so much that she has since participated in all other programs available to her. She also always encourages her younger sister to participate. The staff made all the difference with their warmth, hard work and willingness to devote extra time to help me and my family when the situation called for it.

Once I started feeling better, there was one thing missing: finding work in order to give my children a better life. I felt overwhelmed by the task of looking for work and had no idea where to begin. I heard that Tyndale offers a job search program and I decided to register in January 2018. I learned so much from the program. I developed my skills and received influential guidance. I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the mentoring I received and all the help that Chrissy offered me. I was pleasantly surprised and grateful to be offered a job in the Adult Department as a lunchtime receptionist and then as the computer instructor. I sincerely appreciate working in such a positive environment where I can now give back to others. I often find myself very enthusiastic to come to work in the morning. In fact, I often enjoy weekdays more than weekends!

I am confident in saying that the hopes and dreams I had before coming to Canada have now come true!



### Follow us @tyndalestgeorge



#### A special Thank You to our volunteers!

Whether it is the Special Events Committee members helping with our fundraising events, or our volunteer tutors and cooks, we wouldn't be able to do it without them.

## Bullied at school, “comfort zone” at Tyndale St-Georges helped build

### Nayem Alam's confidence

When Nayem Alam failed math in Secondary IV, he quickly sought tutoring from educators at Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre. “They treat you like their own there,” he said. “I got consistent help from them, and finished the year with a good mark.” Now, he's a third-year engineering student at McGill University. And he loves math.

Just twenty-two, Nayem's blend of energetic enthusiasm and smarts already plays out in an eclectic array of activities. When he's not studying or doing lab work for his electrical and software engineering courses, he is designing websites for clients of his recently-launched startup, Emreld.

Nayem's web consultancy is already attracting interest from local businesses wanting to upgrade their digital presence. He's also helping with the revamp of the Centre's new website, which is to be rolled out in the near future.

A self-described math geek, Nayem is also a slam poet, with two TEDx talks behind him, in which he delivers an inspirational rap narrative based on his own life growing up in Montreal's Little Burgundy neighborhood.

Born into a family of immigrants from Bangladesh, Nayem is the middle child, with an older brother—also an engineer—and a younger sister in high school. His dad, who delivers pizza six nights a week, and his mom, who puts food on the table every day, are his role-models: “All our lives, they've worked very hard, leaving their comfort space back home, and sacrificing their own freedom for their kids.”

With his father at work and his homemaker mother unfamiliar with Canadian studies, Nayem found himself struggling alone to master his schoolwork. When he was eleven, a classmate at Westmount Park School told him about Tyndale St-Georg-

es Community Centre, and its after-school program quickly became part of his life.

“I felt insecure at the time,” he said, “and Tyndale was like a comfort zone for me. I didn't feel judged, and I was able to build my confidence.” He highlights ways that Tyndale St-Georges' approach makes kids feel welcome right away.

“The first thing that happens when the bus drops you off,” he recalled, “is that you get something to eat. Easy to overlook, but it's important. After the snack, it's time to do homework. For that, the educators and tutors invest hours and hours of their time with us, and that really helps kids learn.”

#### Sports and public speaking

As Nayem continued from elementary to secondary school at Marymount Academy, he kept going to Tyndale St-Georges, where he joined the Burgundy Bombers basketball team and participated in the Youth Co-op community service team. At school, he won acclaim for public speaking, where his focus was leaving a mark in this world.

Nayem's childhood left a mark on him. “I was bullied because I was overweight,” he said. “I decided to prove to myself and my bullies that I am more than that, by running and

playing basketball, and through public speaking.”

He also worked on his studies, and watched his marks climb. He launched Speak Up Montreal, a public speaking contest at Marymount. Competing there himself, he excited the audience with a poetic riff on education, delivered while pacing with mic in hand.

The event was telecast, and staff at Vanier College learned of the concept two years later, at which time they liked it so much that they expanded it to a spoken-poetry competition for English-language CEGEPs across Montreal. Nayem's role was recognized too, with a Governor General's medal for leadership, and his inclusion among Plan Canada's “Top 20 Under 20” for making an impact, along with his advocacy against bullying.

Nayem hasn't forgotten his roots, though. He returned to Tyndale St-Georges as a tutor himself for three years, suspending that role only to concentrate, as he must, on a demanding study program and starting his new business. He still lives with his family in the Little Burgundy ‘hood’ where he drops by Tyndale St-Georges frequently to stay in touch. “It's my home away from home,” he said.



Nayem Alam helping Dylan Normandin build his website.



## Want to make a difference? You can support Tyndale St-Georges by donating items to the Community Bazaar.

Three times a year, the Tyndale St-Georges staff and volunteers organize a Community Bazaar in the gym. This season, the Bazaar will be held on Saturday, May 4th. If you have household items in good condition you wish to donate, you are welcome to bring them to reception at 870 Richmond Square.

For more information, we invite you to call Aishah at 514 931 6265.

**PASSEPORT**  
 Tyndale St-Georges  
 vous invite à une  
**Soirée à Paris**  
 16 mai 2019  
 Théâtre St-James

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### Annual Dinner-Auction

Our annual Dinner-Auction is back! You are invited to join us **Thursday, May 16 at 6:30 pm** at the très chic St-James Theatre in Old Montreal for a **Soirée à Paris!**

For more information on the event and to purchase tickets or a table of 10, please visit our website: [www.tyndalestgeorges.com/events](http://www.tyndalestgeorges.com/events).



### Annual Community BBQ

This year's barbecue is **June 7<sup>th</sup>**, from **4 to 7 pm**. It is a time to get together and celebrate our Centre and our wonderful neighborhood.

## Do you or someone you know have a great Tyndale Story to tell?

Was Tyndale St-Georges an important part of your life? Did the Centre help you, or someone you know, to make your dreams come true? Did you meet your Special Someone at TSG? We want to know, so please share! Send us an email to [tinanaim@tyndalestgeorges.com](mailto:tinanaim@tyndalestgeorges.com) and we will take it from there!