

On August 15th, 2007 I was getting ready to go to Ottawa, not knowing it would be a life altering experience. I was to attend a 5 day seminar about conflict resolution, from August 15 to 19. The forum was organized by a group called YOUCAN, which is mainly a youth organization in Canada that helps teenagers achieve their dreams. These people had an idea to bring all of Canada's youth together from different cultures. This ended being called "**YOUCAN Youth Dialogue Forum: Resolving Conflict and Cross-Cultural Understanding.**" The key organizer of the conference was Canadian Ethnocultural Council. Going to this forum on August 15, I did not have high hopes, I thought it was going to be a boring five days where I sat around and listened to others talk. When in fact this trip was the complete opposite.

Since there were over 100 youths there YOUCAN decided to make smaller groups divided by colours, there was a red team, green team, yellow team and blue team. I was part of the red team. Each morning we sat and listened to a speaker that dealt with international conflicts and then we went into our groups. In these groups we discussed; the problems in societies, the racism that each culture deals with and ways to improve this. In these groups we each began to realize that although we are young we can all improve this world if we just work together. We also looked at ways to resolve these issues and how to get a better understanding of different cultures.

YOUCAN also asked each of the cultural communities to come up with an action plan. In a strategy building session, Adrian Kremblewski the other Polish delegate and I together with the representatives of the Canadian Polish Congress and the President of the Polish Canadian Women's Federation decided the best way we can help the youth of the Polish society is do our own Polish youth forum in Canada. Where we can discuss these issues and see if there was anyway we could fix them.

Not only did I learn so much from this trip, I made great friends from around Canada, whom I still talk to today. The friendships that were made, the bridges that were torn down and the issues that were discussed made this a very memorable experience. So I would like to thank the President of the Women's Polish Canadian society Dr. Yvonne Bogorya and Katarzyna Granwilewska for giving me the opportunity to go.

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