

# FPCBP Portuguese Heritage Essay Contest Ceremony

Thursday, June 15, 2023

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A Message From  
**FPCBP** **Philip Arruda**  
FPCBP President

Dear members, sponsors, students, and volunteers, I would like to thank you for participating in the 2023 FPCBP Portuguese Heritage Essay Contest Awards. On behalf of the Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business & Professionals,

I would like to congratulate this year's FPCBP Portuguese Heritage Essay Contest winners to all the student recipients who are being honoured for their appreciation of their LUSO Heritage.

The FPCBP seeks to inspire students on their academics while encouraging our youth to become future leaders of our community. We would like to wish all the students all the best in their endeavours and hope their participation in the Portuguese community extends beyond this competition.

The FPCBP would like to thank our Corporate and Awards Sponsors for their unwavering support and for sponsoring a student. Thank you to the 2023 Portuguese Heritage Essay Committee, who volunteered their time and expertise which was necessary to make this event successful.

I personally would like to thank the FPCBP Board of Directors, committee members & volunteers, especially the Committee Chair Ana Maria Kapralos.

With Gratitude,

*Philip Arruda*  
**Philip Arruda**

FPCBP Acting President & Vice-President



A Message From

**Ana Maria Kapralos**  
Chair

This year is a special one as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first Portuguese immigration to Canada and take this time in June to celebrate Portuguese History and Heritage Month. The FPCBP proudly puts on the annual Portuguese Heritage Essay & Multimedia Contest with the goal to recognize student academic achievements, the promotion of education, and most notably to celebrate Luso-Canadian youth.

With the thankful sponsorship of Royal Bank of Canada, the FPCBP is proud to announce this year's winners. This year, we are making awards to twenty students. On behalf of the FPCBP, we wish to congratulate students on writing and reflecting on their heritage, history, culture, and shared experiences. We wish you well in your future endeavors and want you to continue to be proud of your heritage!

We couldn't make this event happen without our hosts, the Consulate General of Portugal in Toronto and we thank Dr. Joaquim do Rosário, Consulate of Portugal in Toronto, José Pedro Ferreira, Coordinator for Portuguese Language Programs – Canada, for their collaboration and support.

The FPCBP would like to especially thank the selection committee for their time evaluating and ranking the essay submissions. Without their valuable insight and expertise, this would not be possible, and we thank you immensely for your assistance. The selection committee included: Anthony Da Silva, Krystal Dos Santos, Brian Henriques, Carla Pereira, and Carlos Sousa. I would like to personally thank the members on this committee who worked hard to move this initiative forward, and they are Melanie Melo and Susy C. Henriques.

The FPCBP would also like to thank our sponsors: Royal Bank of Canada, Viana Roofing, Carpenters Union, Local 27, LIUNA Local 183, Cardinal Funeral Homes, IC Savings, LIUNA OPDC, The Regional Insurance Services Inc., Scotiabank, Ferma Foods, and Vieira & Associates Insurance Brokers Ltd. for their generous support and commitment. Without you, we could not carry out this important initiative to support Luso Canadian students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ana Maria Kapralos'. The script is fluid and cursive, with a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters.

**Ana Maria Kapralos**

Chair of the Portuguese Heritage Essay & Multimedia Contest





FPCBP Essay Contest 2023

## **Selection Committee**

### **Mr. Anthony Da Silva**

Former School Trustee, PCDSB

### **Ms. Carla Pereira**

Communications Director, PDSB

### **Mr. Carlos Sousa**

Education Officer- Ontario Ministry of Education

### **Ms. Krystal H. Dos Santos**

Masters in Teaching

### **Mr. Brian Henriques**

Special Education Resource Teacher, York Region  
District School Board



FPCBP Essay Contest 2023

## **Organizing Committee**

### **Ms. Ana Maria Kapralos**

Chair, Essay Contest 2023

### **Ms. Melanie Melo**

Co-Chair, Essay Contest 2023

### **Ms. Susy C. Henriques**

Board Director

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A Message From

## Joaquim do Rosário

Consul de Portugal em Toronto

É com enorme satisfação que o Consulado-Geral de Portugal em Toronto se associa a esta iniciativa da Federação de Empresários e Profissionais Luso-Canadianos e, enquanto titular do Consulado, é para mim uma grande honra poder, ainda que de forma modesta, dar esta contribuição.

Refletir sobre a herança cultural, neste caso a portuguesa, comum a todos os concorrentes, é uma tarefa que, para além de aliciante, se reveste de uma importância cuja real dimensão só mais tarde será cabalmente compreendida. Quero, pois, felicitar todos os jovens estudantes concorrentes por se terem dedicado a fazê-lo, e estou certo de que muitos deles, ao confrontarem-se com a nossa vastíssima herança cultural, ter-se-ão deparado com evidências que muito positivamente os surpreenderam.

Portugal é um país cuja dimensão cultural em muito ultrapassa a sua extensão territorial e as suas Comunidades, espalhadas pelo mundo, muito contribuíram e contribuem para isso.

Refletir sobre a herança cultural portuguesa é também mergulhar no mundo da lusofonia e perceber a importância do nosso idioma - o mais falado no hemisfério sul e um dos mais falados no mundo - que é, cada vez mais, uma valiosa ferramenta de alargamento de horizontes profissionais e de relacionamentos sociais.

Se mais não houvera - e há - estas seriam razões bastantes para felicitar também a Federação de Empresários e Profissionais Luso-Canadianos pela iniciativa, assim como todas as empresas que a ela se associaram. As lideranças empresariais modernas bem percebem que o sucesso passa também por uma relação muito próxima entre a empresa e a escola, tal como a escola muito proveito tira deste relacionamento, na medida em que pode adequar melhor a preparação dos seus alunos às necessidades do mercado de trabalho. Trata-se, pois, de uma parceria em que todos ganham: empresas, escolas e alunos.

A todos quero felicitar, desejar o maior sucesso e agradecer a excelente iniciativa.

**Joaquim do Rosário**

Consul de Portugal em Toronto



**CONSULADO-GERAL DE PORTUGAL  
EM TORONTO**

A Message From  
**José Pedro Ferreira**  
Camões I.P./Coordenador de Ensino  
Português no Estrangeiro - Canadá



É com enorme satisfação que saúdo a Federação de Empresários e Profissionais Luso-Canadianos, pelo seu incansável trabalho de promoção da educação entre a comunidade portuguesa no Ontário, por ocasião da realização do concurso de Ensaio e Multimédia para celebrar a Herança Cultural Portuguesa, em 2023.

Dirigido aos estudantes do 7º ao 12º ano de escolaridade, o concurso proporcionou-lhes uma oportunidade única de refletirem sobre a sua identidade e o papel que a herança cultural portuguesa tem nas suas histórias pessoais e familiares. Nelas, a língua portuguesa ocupa um lugar especial, pois é uma língua de de laços emocionais, recebida no berço familiar e que os acompanhará ao longo da sua vida pessoal e profissional, como língua de afetos, mas também de negócios e de cultura científica.

Saúdo tod@s @s estudantes concorrentes, particularmente @s vencedor@s! Mas envio uma palavra muito especial àqueles que partilharam connosco, na sua língua portuguesa de afetos, aprendida em família ou na escola, as suas visões do mundo comunitário.

As línguas são espaços de partilha e de construção do mundo e a língua portuguesa faz já parte do futuro comunitário que estes estudantes estão a construir no Ontário. São eles os depositários desta nossa língua portuguesa, que faz de nós uma comunidade única, com uma identidade forte. E é através de iniciativas como as da Federação e de associações congéneres, que valorizam o português que falamos, e através do ensino dessa língua nas escolas públicas e comunitárias, que continuaremos a celebrar o mês de junho como mês da herança cultural portuguesa no Ontário, também em português.

**José Pedro Ferreira**

Camões I.P./Coordenador de Ensino Português no Estrangeiro - Canadá

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Catarina Rosado

Grade 8 – Lambton Park Community School

Sponsored by Ferma Foods



### Como atrair os jovens para participar em eventos da cultura portuguesa no Canadá?

O meu nome é Catarina Rosado e tenho 13 anos. Nasci em Lisboa, Portugal e pertenço a uma família de Imigrantes Portugueses no Canadá. Os meus pais imigraram para o Canadá em 2016 e sempre fizeram questão que eu me envolvesse em eventos de cultura portuguesa.

Com o objetivo de aumentar a participação dos jovens nas iniciativas culturais e sociais da comunidade portuguesa no Canadá, é necessário adotar uma série de estratégias para tornar essas atividades mais atraentes e relevantes para essa faixa etária.

Em primeiro lugar, é fundamental que os organizadores dessas iniciativas reconheçam a importância da presença dos jovens e os convidem a participar ativamente das atividades. Além disso, é importante que os jovens tenham voz e possam contribuir com ideias e sugestões para a organização das atividades.

Em segundo lugar, outra estratégia importante é oferecer atividades que sejam atraentes para os jovens. Por exemplo, em vez de simplesmente promover eventos tradicionais, como festivais de comida ou dança, é possível incluir elementos modernos, como apresentações de música pop ou hiphop, ou atividades desportivas. Além disso, é importante que as atividades sejam realizadas em locais que sejam acessíveis aos jovens, como parques ou espaços culturais modernos. Também é importante que as atividades sejam divulgadas nas redes sociais e outros meios digitais que sejam populares entre os jovens, como snapchat, tik tok, instagram and youtube.

Incentivar a participação dos jovens nas atividades culturais e sociais da comunidade portuguesa no Canadá não é suficiente. É igualmente importante reconhecer e valorizar as contribuições dos jovens que desempenham um papel fundamental na continuidade da cultura e das tradições portuguesas.

Uma das maneiras mais eficazes de fazer isso é por meio de premiações ou de outras formas de reconhecimento. Por exemplo, a comunidade portuguesa pode criar prêmios para jovens que se destacam em áreas como música, dança, artes, literatura, história ou desporto, ou que contribuem significativamente para a promoção da cultura e das tradições portuguesas.

Além disso, é importante que os líderes da comunidade portuguesa no Canadá ouçam e valorizem as opiniões dos jovens, levando em conta suas ideias e sugestões em relação à organização e promoção das atividades culturais e sociais. Dessa forma, os jovens sentirão que fazem parte de um movimento maior e que suas vozes são ouvidas e valorizadas.

Por fim, para atrair os jovens para as iniciativas culturais e sociais da comunidade portuguesa no Canadá, é necessário adotar uma abordagem moderna e inovadora, oferecendo atividades atraentes e relevantes e valorizando a participação dos jovens. Com essas estratégias, é possível garantir a continuidade e o fortalecimento da cultura portuguesa no Canadá.





FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Goncalo Rosado

Grade 11 – Bloor Collegiate Institute

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### Como é que a minha herança portuguesa tem influenciado a minha vida?

O meu nome é Goncalo Rosado e a minha herança portuguesa tem sido uma influência significativa na minha vida desde que nasci. Cresci numa família de imigrantes portugueses e, desde pequeno, fui envolvido nas tradições e valores portugueses. Os meus pais emigraram para o Canadá em 2016 na procura de uma vida melhor, e apesar das diferenças culturais entre os dois países, sempre fizeram questão de me transmitir a cultura portuguesa.

Uma das maiores influências da minha herança portuguesa é a importância da família. Na cultura portuguesa, a família é o centro de tudo, e embora os meus avós ainda estejam em Portugal, a minha família aqui no Canadá sempre foi muito próxima e unida. Crescer num ambiente tão familiar e acolhedor ensinou-me a importância do amor e do respeito. Aprendi que a família é a base da nossa vida e que, independentemente do que aconteça, sempre nos teremos uns aos outros.

Outra influência importante da minha herança portuguesa é a comida. A culinária portuguesa é rica e diversificada, e tive a sorte de experimentar muitos pratos preparados pela minha avó em Portugal. Desde bacalhau a pastéis de nata, a comida sempre foi uma parte importante da minha vida e, para mim, é uma forma de manter viva a minha herança portuguesa. Comer os pratos típicos portugueses que minha avó ou a minha mãe prepara faz sentir mais próximo da minha cultura e lembre-me das minhas raízes. Além disso, aprendi que a comida é uma forma de reunir a família e os amigos, e muitas das minhas melhores lembranças envolvem refeições partilhadas com esses.

A minha herança portuguesa ensinou-me a valorizar a educação e o trabalho árduo. Os meus pais vieram para o Canadá em busca de uma vida melhor, e trabalham arduamente para dar-me a mim e aos meus irmãos as oportunidades que eles não tiveram. Eles sempre nos dizem a importância da educação e encorajam-me a procurar os meus sonhos, independentemente dos obstáculos. Além disso, a história de Portugal, suas conquistas e seus heróis, sempre me fascinou. Desde os tempos dos descobrimentos portugueses, a história de Portugal tem sido repleta de eventos importantes que influenciaram a história do mundo. Aprender sobre a história de Portugal inspirou-me e ajudou-me a entender a importância da perseverança, da coragem e da determinação, qualidades essas que os portugueses demonstraram em muitos momentos históricos importantes. A história de Portugal faz-me sentir orgulhoso da minha herança e incentiva-me a buscar meus próprios objetivos com coragem e determinação. No Canadá, a comunidade portuguesa tem uma forte presença. A comunidade luso-canadiana é muito unida e mantém muitas tradições portuguesas vivas. A presença da herança portuguesa no Canadá me faz sentir conectado à minha cultura e ao mesmo tempo me permite desfrutar da experiência multicultural que o Canadá oferece.

Em resumo, minha herança portuguesa tem sido uma influência muito importante em minha vida, pois ensinou-me valores importantes, como a importância da família, do trabalho e da educação

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## David Martins

Grade 11 – Brebeuf College School  
Sponsored by Carpenters Union, Local 27



### Como é que a minha herança portuguesa tem influenciado a minha vida?

Segundo a definição da UNESCO: “Herança é o nosso legado do passado, o que vivemos hoje e o que passamos para as futuras gerações”. O facto dos meus pais e avós serem portugueses, fez com que eu fosse criado com os costumes e tradições de Portugal. Estou muito grato aos meus pais e avós pelo legado da minha herança portuguesa.

A minha herança portuguesa é uma parte muito importante de quem eu sou. Essa herança define de onde vim, quem sou e para onde irei. Sou o beneficiário das muitas tradições, da língua e dos valores que os meus antepassados portugueses mantiveram vivos e passaram de geração em geração. Conhecendo melhor a minha herança portuguesa criou em mim uma apreciação mais forte do que é ser luso-canadiano - esta é uma herança que valoriza a importância da cultura, das tradições e da família. As minhas raízes portuguesas têm me dado uma perspectiva diferente sobre o mundo em que eu vivo. Quero dizer que conhecer duas culturas diferentes, portuguesa e canadiana, me faz ser mais tolerante e receptivo a pessoas e culturas diferentes. Isto faz com que eu seja uma pessoa mais completa.

A língua é uma das coisas mais importantes em qualquer cultura. É a maneira das pessoas comunicarem, construírem relacionamentos e criarem um sentido de comunidade. Aprendi a falar português quando eu era muito jovem o que me tem ajudado a conhecer melhor a minha família aqui e em Portugal. Porque sei falar português, quando vou a Portugal posso conversar com os meus primos e tios o que me faz sentir mais ligado a eles. Falar português também me tem permitido fazer muitos amigos e conhecer muitas pessoas.

O aspecto da cultura portuguesa que mais valorizo é a importância das tradições e da família. Isso é evidente quando a minha família se junta para celebrar ocasiões importantes como aniversários, casamentos e feriados religiosos. A família está sempre no centro dessas celebrações. Estas celebrações são sempre celebradas com comidas tradicionais, música e histórias de “antigamente” onde o meu avô conta histórias de quando ele era pequeno. É fácil perceber através destas celebrações a importância de manter vivas as tradições e a importância da família.

Com cada ano que passa o meu interesse em aprender mais sobre as tradições e a história de Portugal é maior. Tenho orgulho em aprender sobre a rica história de Portugal e as suas grandes contribuições pelo mundo. Tenho orgulho do impacto que os portugueses têm tido por todo o mundo. Tenho orgulho que, de uma forma ou de outra, grande ou pequena, a herança portuguesa se espalha pelo mundo. Tenho orgulho da comunidade portuguesa no Canadá que este ano comemora 70 anos no Canadá. Tenho orgulho de fazer parte de uma herança tão rica como a portuguesa.

A minha herança portuguesa é um legado do meu passado, dos meus pais e avós. Espero contribuir para preservar a herança portuguesa, partilhando-a com outros e transmitindo-a um dia aos meus filhos e netos.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

**Auriana da Costa**

Grade 10 – Loretto College School

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## How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

Since the initial wave of Portuguese immigration to Canada in the 1950s, there has been a thriving Portuguese community here with a rich cultural legacy. Nowadays though, youth don't feel as connected to their Portuguese heritage as the older generations. To ensure that the traditions and customs of the Portuguese Canadian community are preserved and handed on to future generations, the community must engage youth in cultural and social initiatives.

First and foremost, a fundamental way to connect with the youth is through collaborating with schools. This can be accomplished through holding cultural gatherings, workshops, and lectures that emphasize the significance of Portuguese Canadian traditions and history. For example, field trips can be organized for students to visit Portuguese Canadian cultural centers to learn about what it means to be Portuguese. Together with entertainment like Fado and folklore acts, a typical Portuguese meal, a panel of guest speakers, interactive activities, and prizes, would make an amazing day and is a great way to attract youth. Making Portuguese Canadian cultural and social efforts more reachable and appealing is another strategy to entice young people to engage. This can be achieved by leveraging social media. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok can be used to advertise events and keep the community abreast of new information. As well, youth can be encouraged to help in promoting events. They can use technology to produce digital content, such as podcasts and films, that highlight what is going on in the community.

Moreover, belonging and inclusivity is critical in boosting participation. If someone doesn't feel included, they will not be enticed to partake. To promote a sense of belonging and inclusivity, youth should be given a voice in community projects and included in decision-making processes. In order to offer youth a sense of ownership and responsibility, leadership roles within the community might also be fostered. The community may make sure that young people's interests and viewpoints are represented, and that they feel valued and appreciated, by including them in important decisions. Last but not least, the Portuguese Canadian community can reward and recognise young people who take part in cultural and social projects. Awards and scholarships can be offered in order to honor youth for their contributions to the community. This strategy will develop a culture of appreciation and recognition within the community while also encouraging youth participation in cultural initiatives.

In conclusion, it is essential for the preservation and development of the Portuguese Canadian community's cultural legacy to engage young people in cultural and social projects. The community can entice youth to participate in cultural and social initiatives by working with schools, improving accessibility and appeal of initiatives, cultivating a sense of inclusion and belonging, and offering rewards and recognition. Through this strategy, the Portuguese Canadian community's traditions and customs will be passed down to succeeding generations, assuring the continuation of the community's cultural legacy.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Emma Gomes

Grade 10 – St. Mary Catholic Academy  
Sponsored by Cardinal Funeral Homes



### Como é que a minha herança portuguesa tem influenciado a minha vida?

Vim para o Canadá quando tinha 5 anos, tinha tudo para não ter uma ligação tão forte a Portugal, mas se há coisa que a minha família fez foi que a cultura portuguesa sempre estivesse presente na nossa vida, na nossa casa!

Aqui em casa falamos em português, a comida que fazemos tem sempre a base em Portugal, nem que seja os temperos, nas épocas festivas, como no natal ou na Páscoa, tentamos sempre comer o que é tradicional em Portugal para essa altura, na semanas antes da Páscoa todas as sextas feira tentamos não comer nada derivado de carne, pois mesmo já não tendo tanta ligação religiosa foi sempre isso que os nossos avós nos ensinaram, tentamos sempre manter as tradições, para que mesmo longe nos sintamos um pouco em casa.

Por falar em comida é uma das coisas que mais sinto falta, apesar de nós aqui termos muitos supermercados e restaurantes portugueses, nunca sabe ao mesmo! Sendo eu da zona de Peniche o que mais nós temos é peixe fresco todos os dias e é desse sabor do peixe fresco que sinto falta, o peixe congelado apesar de nos trazer algumas lembranças nunca tem o mesmo sabor. Uma das coisas que acho engraçado, e que adoro é quando levo, uma canja, ou o patê de sardinha para o meu almoço na escola e os meus amigos ficam todos a perguntar o que é, e a querem experimentar, claro que partilho sempre, como não dar a conhecer uma das melhores coisas que temos aos outros?

Outras das coisas que também mais sinto saudades é o mar, sendo eu de uma zona que tem muitas praias e mar, sinto muitas saudades daquele cheiro a maresia, da calma que o mar nos traz! Nós tentamos ir todos os anos a Portugal, para matarmos as saudades que temos ou para podermos trazer um pouco de Portugal connosco, fazemos sempre questão de trazer algo de lá para cá, como por exemplo um dos bonitos galos de Barcelos, que eu penso que já tenho um de cada cor e digo desde já que faz uma boa decoração! Ou algum tipo de comida que não é tão fácil de encontrar aqui, como uma belas de umas natas!

Acho que temos que manter sempre o belo que há no nosso país, manter as nossas tradições vivas e podermos mostrar o que há de tão bom no nosso país, pois neste momento é um dos países no top 3 para viver e cada vez mais temos pessoas de fora a querer ir para lá viver!

Apesar de haver ainda muitas coisas portuguesas a acontecer no Canadá, penso que se podia fazer alguma coisa também mais para os jovens, como trazer jovens cantores portugueses, ou fazer um festival de comida típica de Portugal, em que cada um podia levar aquilo que mais gosta, pois são estes jovens que mesmo já nascendo no Canadá vão mantendo a tradição viva! Posso dizer que tenho muito orgulho em dizer que sou portuguesa!



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Nicolas Isabel

Grade 12 – Central Toronto Academy Public High School  
Sponsored by Vieira & Associates Insurance Brokers Ltd.



### How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

My Portuguese heritage means many things to me. I was born to two Portuguese parents and four Portuguese grandparents. I am the grandson of Portuguese immigrants who all moved to Canada from the mainland of Portugal. I carry this with me everyday. I often hear stories from my Avó, Lusía Pereira Rodrigues, of her immigration story. How she moved to Toronto from Alcobaça, Portugal at the age 25 not knowing anyone here except her husband, my Avô Jouquim Rodrigues, who I get my middle names from.

The stories I have heard from her include how she had to learn both English and Italian when she moved to Toronto in order to work in pasta factories. She is now 74 and she still works to this day as a cleaning lady. My Avó is my best friend in the world and her stories are what give me strength and passion to keep working hard to make my family and community proud.

Moving on, my family is the most important thing to me. I attend my high school, in Little Portugal, with one of my younger brothers and many of my cousins. I live within a two minute walk of both my fathers dad, my Avô José Isabel, and my madrinha/tia Ofelia Isabel. I am proud to be born and live in the original Portuguese community in Toronto, Little Portugal on Dundas, and I make that known. I often include my heritage into my schoolwork, one example being in my grade 12 urban geography class where I took my entire class on a tour of my neighborhood, which is Little Portugal on Dundas.

On this tour I highlighted some of the major landmarks of our community including, the Amalia Rodrigues Mural, the Galo de Barcelos, and the recently instilled mural done by Vhils which honors the Portuguese women that fought for better pay for cleaning people in the 70s(My Avó is a cleaning lady, so this mural means a lot to me and my family). I'm proud to say that my teacher ended up publishing my project onto the internet for the public to view, along with printing out posters from my project and posting them along the school walls.

Overall, the blood that runs through my veins is Portuguese, all four of my names are Portuguese, my family attract youth as it provides opportunities to fund our education, but they can also be expanded to provide opportunities for other sectors of youth to be included, including an athletic or artistic award for youth.

Finally, another example would be hosting Portuguese language or cultural classes(such as cooking or dance classes) in the effort to attract Portuguese Canadian youth to connect with their heritage. Overall, us Portuguese Canadian youth are the future of our community and it's very important that we know where we come from and our heritage, and I hope I provided some ways to achieve that.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

**Sara Gomes**

Grade 8 – De La Salle Collage

Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business  
& Professionals



## **How can our community attract youth to participate in Portuguese Canadian cultural and social initiatives?**

There are many ways that our Portuguese community can attract youth to participate in Portuguese Canadian cultural and social initiatives. In this entry, I will highlight three of my ideas.

One way we can attract Portuguese youth to partake in cultural initiatives is to organize a trip to Portugal. Students can submit an application stating why they should be considered to go on the trip. During the trip, Portuguese youth will learn more about their culture, through visiting famous monuments such as Torre de Belem, Benagil Cave, and Fatima, as well as participating in native Portuguese customs. Youth would benefit greatly from seeing their heritage from its place of origin. This would truly be an unforgettable experience.

The next way youth can interact with their culture is through culinary art. A YouTube channel hosted by youth could teach the audience how to make famous Portuguese dishes from different regions of Portugal. Throughout the video the students would share facts about that region of Portugal and the dish. The student hosts could invite special guests to the cooking show - Portuguese chefs from Toronto, grandparents, and even budding teen foodies.

This initiative is a great way to involve youth in the Portuguese community, while also making tasty food to share with family! To continue with the theme of technology to engage youth with their culture we could create a youth lead Instagram account specific to the Luso-Canadian youth. On this account, youth could inform others about their culture.

The Instagram account could have pictures and videos about Portugal and youth run events. The account could share information about Portuguese traditions, food, and youth lead traditions. This account would be a great way for youth to connect with their culture through their devices.

To conclude, we can attract youth to their Portuguese Canadian heritage through cultural and social initiatives, including a youth group trip to Portugal, connecting youth to their culture through a youth lead Youtube cooking class, and creating a youth lead Instagram account to showcase Portugal's unique and beautiful heritage.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

**Clara Marques**

Grade 9 – Immaculata High School

Sponsored by IC Savings



## **How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?**

My Portuguese heritage has had a big influence on my life. It helps me have a better understanding of who I am and where I am going. It does this in several important ways. First, my Portuguese heritage makes me appreciate what my grandparents had to adapt to when they first came to Canada.

Second, appreciating my heritage and learning the Portuguese language connects me with friends and family in Portugal and Canada, and will give me many employment opportunities in future. Lastly, my heritage teaches me about Canada, and how I can be proudly Portuguese-Canadian.

When my grandparents first moved to Canada in the early 1970s, they could barely speak the language. They were young and had no family here, and had to find jobs and learn how to adapt. I often think about how difficult that would be, compared to my life now. My grandmother worked cleaning houses, and my grandfather worked in construction and then eventually in real estate. They made many friends both inside and outside the Portuguese-Canadian community, and have had an influence on their community. This inspires me so much because they have become so successful even though they traveled to a new country with very little. I want to continue to learn about our culture, because it makes me appreciate how hard my family worked to get to where they are now.

Secondly, thinking about my heritage inspires me to improve my Portuguese language skills, which helps me understand my family history and talk to my relatives in Portugal. I've gone to a Portuguese school for many years and I have met many friends. Learning a language connects you to a community of people who have similar backgrounds and can share experiences. Being able to communicate in Portuguese will have many advantages for me in the future, as it will make traveling so much more interesting and easy. Also, it will allow me to work in Portugal when I'm an adult.

Lastly, my Portuguese heritage makes me appreciate how fortunate I am to live in Canada. Here, I am able to celebrate being Canadian and Portuguese without having to pick between the two cultures. I think Canada is very unique in that way. Canada is a great country today because of many immigrant groups, like the Portuguese, who moved here and built communities. There are around a half a million Portuguese people in Canada and you can see how Portuguese culture contributes to Canada, through food and music, but most importantly its communities. You can really see this in cities like Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. I am so grateful for what my Portuguese heritage has been able to teach me and all the experiences I will get to have because of it.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

**Bianca Da Silva**

Grade 12 – St. Joan of Arc CSS

Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business & Professionals



## **How can our community attract youth to participate in Portuguese Canadian cultural and social initiatives?**

My Portuguese heritage has had a profound influence on my life, shaping who I am today and guiding me in many ways. As a child growing up in a Portuguese-Canadian household, I was raised with a strong sense of family, community, and tradition that has stayed with me throughout my life.

One of the most significant ways that my Portuguese heritage has influenced me is through my family. Like many Portuguese families, mine is close-knit and deeply connected, with a strong emphasis on family gatherings and traditions. From an early age, I was taught the importance of family and the value of maintaining close relationships with my relatives. This has had a profound impact on me, shaping my own approach to family and helping me to prioritize my relationships with loved ones.

In addition to my family, my Portuguese heritage has also influenced my connection to my community. Growing up, I was involved in various Portuguese cultural organizations and events, such as the annual Holy Spirit festa, that my grandparents host each year. These experiences taught me about the rich history and traditions of Portuguese culture, and instilled in me a sense of pride and connection to my heritage. Beyond my personal connections to family and community, my Portuguese heritage has also influenced my worldview and values. In particular, Portuguese culture places a strong emphasis on hard work, perseverance, and resilience. These values have been instilled in me from a young age, and have helped me to overcome challenges and pursue my goals with determination. My Portuguese heritage has had a profound influence on my life, shaping who I am today and guiding me in many ways. As a child growing up in a Portuguese-Canadian household, I was raised with a strong sense of family, community, and tradition that has stayed with me throughout my life.

One of the most significant ways that my Portuguese heritage has influenced me is through my family. Like many Portuguese families, mine is close-knit and deeply connected, with a strong emphasis on family gatherings and traditions. From an early age, I was taught the importance of family and the value of maintaining close relationships with my relatives. This has had a profound impact on me, shaping my own approach to family and helping me to prioritize my relationships with loved ones.

In addition to my family, my Portuguese heritage has also influenced my connection to my community. Growing up, I was involved in various Portuguese cultural organizations and events, such as the annual Holy Spirit festa, that my grandparents host each year. These experiences taught me about the rich history and traditions of Portuguese culture, and instilled in me a sense of pride and connection to my heritage. Beyond my personal connections to family and community, my Portuguese heritage has also influenced my worldview and values. In particular, Portuguese culture places a strong emphasis on hard work, perseverance, and resilience. These values have been instilled in me from a young age, and have helped me to overcome challenges and pursue my goals with determination.





FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Pietra Melo

Grade 10 – Bishop Allen Academy  
Sponsored by Royal Bank Canada



### How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

What does it mean to be Portuguese? My name is Pietra, and I was born in Brazil. My grandmother, “Gogó” Fatima, was born in Portugal. After leaving Porto at the age of thirteen, Gogó stayed close to her native roots. She has always embraced Portuguese culture, and shared stories of what life was like under the European sun. Though Gogó is a long way from home, her way of life has traveled overseas and been planted in her descendants. The Portuguese influence in my life is most evident in my native language.

My parents and I immigrated to Canada when I was two years old, and at school I learned English. As I grew, however, I found that Canadian culture was becoming more prominent in my life than Portuguese. At home, we speak, read, and write only in our native tongue. My Gogó is very religious, and inspires my strong faith; each night, I recite my prayers in Portuguese. Today, whether I am speaking to my relatives or reading a short book, I make sure that my Portuguese roots are present when I express my emotions to the world. My Gogó grew up in the city center of Porto. At the age of four, she was sent to stay at her godmother’s farm in Alquerubim.

Today, Gogó remembers that year as the happiest of her childhood. She tells stories of the green summers, when she and her godfather would step in a bucket of fresh grapes to make homemade wine. Recently, I came upon some old postcards from Porto, each with stunning landscapes. Such beauty takes my mind to Gogó’s apartment. Whenever I visit, I see little bits and pieces of Portugal. To me, the most significant symbol is the “Galo de Barcelos.” Here in Toronto, the Galo de Barcelos is sewed onto my apron, for when I make “bacalhau à gomes de sá,” a family recipe.

My Portuguese roots thrive when it comes to fresh starts. In 1961, my Gogó and her family left everything behind to start a new life in Brazil. In 2009, my parents left everything behind to start fresh in Canada. I believe that my father’s Portuguese blood allowed him to have the ambition to move forward.

After hearing my Gogó’s tale of immigration and connecting it to my own, I believe only in possibility. In life, my Portuguese heritage calls me to act, go after my dreams, and start new chapters. In all that I do, my Portuguese roots are present and embraced. I owe this to my Gogó, Fatima, who has always dressed me in “roupa de portuguesa,” and taught me about my ancestry and origin. The culture lives within me, and thrives in all that I am and love. I aspire to do great things some day, and have the courage to chase my dreams. I hope that I, like my Portuguese grandmother, father, and the great explorers, can travel the world, experience the glories of life, and love.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

**Mariza Zenha**

Grade 11 – Saint Oscar Romero CSS  
Sponsored by Scotiabank



## How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

Family. Love. Heritage. One could argue that someone cannot have one without the other especially since they can all intertwine to become one. With both my parents being immigrants from Portugal, it is easy for me to say that Portuguese culture has always been a part of my sixteen years of life. My family has incorporated Portuguese heritage into my everyday life making it a grand influence on my day-to-day decisions, shaping me into who I am today.

Starting off with lifeline and tradition, something that my mom's side of the family is especially proud of. My mom's family is from Viana do Castelo, home of the Vianence. From generation to generation, there has been a line of Vianence's in my family. When my mom was younger she partook in folk dance lessons, following after her aunt who was once crowned the bride in her group. Growing up, I have always admired the lively music accompanied by the wonderful dancing, the vibrant costumes, the unique wooden shoes, and the sparkling family heirlooms.

Next is Portuguese cuisine, one of Portugal's most famous trademarks. My dad's side of the family is from Espinho, a city/municipality near the famous city of Porto. Although not founded directly in Portugal but in France and then brought to Porto, francesinha's have become one of Portugal's signature dishes. I first saw this dish on one of my trips to Portugal and later fell in love with it when my family and I returned home and my mom made it for us. Following these is language, one of the most important things in the world. When I was younger, I primarily spoke Portuguese seeing as though that is both my parents' mother tongue.

When watching videos from my childhood, I can be heard speaking only Portuguese. That was until I started kindergarten. Going to an only English and French-speaking elementary school meant becoming more accustomed to speaking English the majority of the time. As the years passed, I became more used to speaking English than I did with speaking Portuguese although I would still speak more Portuguese at home. I even attended Portuguese learning classes on Saturday to strengthen my speaking and writing skills.

Now, as a teenager who knows what she does now can seriously impact her future I have taken into account how important language is to me and how much I want it to be present in my life always—spending so much time with my family helped me see that. The love I have for my family is what I believe made my Portuguese heritage so influential in my life. Having them make my culture present in my day-to-day made me see how important this is to me and how much I want to keep it present in my future. Having this influence affected the decision I make and the person I want to be. Every day I am thankful for my Portuguese roots.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## **Makayla Alexandre-Barros**

Grade 8 – St. Helen Catholic School

Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian  
Business & Professionals



### **“To me, being Portuguese means...”**

Quando me perguntas “O que significa para ti seres Portuguesa?” A primeira coisa que vem à minha cabeça é só ser portuguesa. Mas depois de pensar um pouco, mais ideias dão voltas na minha cabeça. Sim, antes de outra coisa, tu precisas nascer em Portugal ou ser de portuguesa decente. Mas muitas pessoas portuguesas, no entanto, não mantêm contacto com as suas raízes portuguesas.

Na minha opinião, para ser portuguesa, tu precisas de entender e continuar com as tuas raízes. Para mim, eu danço com o Rancho dos Camponeses. Isso é uma maneira que eu fico em contato com as minhas raízes portuguesas. Eu comecei a dançar quando eu tinha quatro anos. Eu comecei a dançar com o Ranch Ribatejo. A minha família apresentou-me para músicas portuguesas e rancho quando eu era pequenina. A minha mãe e o meu avô levaram-me para uma dos ensaios quando eu tinha quatro anos e foi a primeira vez que eu dancei com um rancho. Mesmo assim apaixonei-me pela música e pelas roupas. E eu ainda danço para este rancho.

Mais uma coisa que é muito importante para ser portuguesa e para participar nas tradições e para saber sobre a cultura. A cultura de Portugal é muito importante em tudo que aconteceu na história de Portugal e nas tradições. Muitas pessoas portuguesas não sabem mais sobre a cultura simplesmente porque eles não querem. Está tudo bem com isso e tu ainda vais ser portuguesa mas tu não vais ter esse fundo relação com a tua cultura e raízes. Isso é porque a cultura e a maneira de viver para as pessoas portuguesas.

Para aprender mais sobre minha cultura eu gosto de fazer comidas e pratos tradicionais. Eu vejo a minha mãe, ou a minha avó fazer alguns pratos tradicionais e eu aprendi a fazer sozinha depois. Eu sei fazer arroz doce, com um pouco de ajuda da minha mãe. Eu também gosto de comer caldo verde, arroz doce, carne alentejana, cozido, natas, cavacas, natas do ceu, bolas de Berlim e pudim flan.

Também quando eu aprendo a fazer os pratos, eu também gosto de aprender sobre a história por trás dos pratos. Isso traz a minha relação com a minha cultura para novos fundos todas as vezes que eu aprendi uma coisa nova. Eu já visitei Portugal, e adorei de ver e aprender sobre os castelos, as praias e a história que pretence a alguns sítios e as lendas do país.

Para mim ser portuguesa é para se manter ativo em sua cultura e se manter conectado com suas raízes. Para participar nas coisas que acontecem na sua comunidade e conhecer ativamente e aprender mais sobre sua cultura. Mas principalmente para continuar a legado português.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Noah Prospero

Grade 7– St Helen Catholic School

Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business  
& Professionals



### How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

What country are you from? What's your background? These are some of the questions that some people ask when they want to know more about your heritage. For me, I was born here in Canada. My mom was born in Portugal while my dad is Canadian with an Italian and Scottish background. My avós (grandparents) have told me so many amazing stories about Portugal. It's an amazing culture. Even though I haven't been there, it's a huge part of who I am. My Portuguese heritage has shaped my appreciation for soccer, the way holiday traditions are celebrated, and the food that I like.

My background has created my love for soccer or futebol. One of my earliest memories was watching Portugal win the UEFA 2016 Euro Championship. I remember me cheering for Portugal and Cristiano Ronaldo. In 2019, Portugal won the very first UEFA Nations League, that moment made me proud to be Portuguese. Ever since then, soccer has become my favourite sport. I love watching it on TV, playing it in real life, and trying out for my school soccer team. It's a tradition to watch all the national team games.

In my family, we have many different holiday customs. Some of them are eating cod and seafood on Christmas Eve. Another one is, while some kids open presents Christmas morning from Santa, I stayed up until midnight on Christmas Eve, and waited for Baby Jesus to bring me mine. At Easter time, many kids want to eat chocolate, while I want a Folar de Páscoa. Some people may eat turkey at Easter while we eat lamb. The food that I ate during these holidays, started my enjoyment for Portuguese cuisine.

A lot of my favourite foods are connected to my Portuguese culture. For breakfast, many kids eat Cheerios or waffles, while I usually eat chocolate Pensal cereal. Maria cookies and pão com manteiga make the best after school snacks. I love seafood, especially shrimp, octopus, and squid. The way my avó makes them, it's the best! She also makes the best chicken livers. They're almost better than pizza. Everyone should try Portuguese food, it's very enjoyable.

My Portuguese background has produced my passion for soccer, my fun family traditions, and some of the best food you'll ever try. Portugal is in my blood. My first word as a baby was chucha, it was never called a soother or a pacifier. I hope to one day visit Portugal and see where I came from. To see my culture and customs with my own eyes. Maybe one day, I'll be telling my grandchildren stories about their heritage.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Alexia Moutinho Conde

Grade 8 – Regina Mundi

Sponsored by Viana Roofing & Sheetmetal Ltd.



### How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

As a 13-year-old second-generation Canadian-Portuguese girl, my cultural identity is a significant part of who I am. My parents were both born in Portugal and immigrated to Canada before I was born. As a result, my upbringing was heavily influenced by Portuguese traditions, customs, and values.

Firstly, I feel in order to experience an authentic portuguese culture I would love to one day travel more to different regions in Portugal. Such as the South, North, the Azores, and Madeira. And also in other Luso-speaking countries such as Brazil, Cabo Verde, and East Timor, Indonisa. In those countries I would be able to experience the portuguese culture through the language, the traditions, food, the citizens express. In the Luso-speaking countries you would be able to experience a different version of Portuguese being spoken as well as seeing traditions and food being different from Portuguese cultures however, I would be able to see how they were highly influenced by Portuguese culture and food.

Secondly, growing up in a Canadian-Portuguese household meant that I was exposed to the Portuguese language, music, and food. My parents would speak Portuguese with me at home, and I would often hear traditional Portuguese music, such as Fado and popular Portuguese singers like Roberto Leal. I also developed a love for Portuguese cuisine, and my favorite dishes include bacalhau (salt cod), cozido (meat stew), and pastéis de nata (custard tarts). During Easter we also make folar with meat inside, although sometimes we also try different kinds of folar from different places in Portugal.

Thirdly, despite being born in Canada, I feel a strong connection to Portugal and its culture. As I am surrounded by the majority of Portuguese people. I am fascinated by the country's history, architecture, and art. I also appreciate the importance of family, faith, and community in Portuguese culture. These values have been instilled in me by my parents and grandparents, and I hope to pass them on to future generations.

In conclusion, being a second-generation Canadian-Portuguese girl is an important part of my identity. It has shaped the way I see the world and has given me a unique perspective on life. I am proud of my heritage and culture, and I hope to continue learning about Portugal and its traditions. I believe that my cultural background has given me a strong sense of identity and has taught me to appreciate the diversity and richness of the world around me.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Brianna Esteves

Grade 10 – St. Joseph's College School  
Sponsored by Royal Bank Canada



### How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?

Thanks to both my paternal and maternal grandparents who left their country and immigrated to Canada for better opportunities, I can say that I am a proud 3rd generation luso-Canadian who was born and raised in Canada. I am a registered Portuguese citizen with the help of my parents and I am honored to be one. This connection to Portugal has really impacted my life because not only does it let me be a part of a greater community, but be a part of an inclusive one. I have never felt excluded by the Portuguese community nor discriminated against for my various mental disabilities which include my learning disability, as well as my physical disabilities such as VSD/ASD in my heart and others as well. I have been proudly enriched in the Portuguese cultural community for several years to this day.

My parents were a part of the Associação Migrante de Barcelos Community Center presidency, and eight of my family members were a part of this folklore group. I have volunteered many hours during cultural events held by this group such as Galas, and I participated and performed in ACAPO Portugal Week. I started dancing at a very young age and I am always so happy whenever I performed in front of people because I am able to show my culture through song and dance. This experience made me so proud of my culture, and how beautiful our traditional clothing used to look like. It is such a welcoming and fun environment for everyone regardless of their age.

I was immersed into my culture at a young age, by attending weekly Portuguese school classes to improve my understanding of the language and to speak it fluently. This not only helped me communicate with my grandparents that don't know how to speak much English, but it also led me to receiving the Portuguese award in grade 8. I continue to have pride in my culture, and I'm thinking of starting a Portuguese club in my high school. Knowing the language well helped when I had my yearly trip to Portugal because it allowed me to communicate with my family that didn't know much English.

In all these years, of being part of a cultural center representing my Portuguese heritage and enjoying the many different opportunities that were given while volunteering I have become connected with the country. When I went to Portugal and saw the many different historical landmarks and learned about their origin stories, I found that these experiences deeply impacted my life. While I was in Portugal, I realized that I loved the country so much that I would love to buy a home there and live in Portugal with the rest of my family. I feel like the only way for me to fully experience and connect with my family history is to live in the country where it all began. I hope to one day get the opportunity to live out this dream of mine.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Aurora Reis

Grade 9 – St. André Besette catholic high school  
Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian  
Business & Professionals



### **“To me, being Portuguese means...”**

Being Portuguese means being part of a rich culture and a fascinating history, but it is much more than that. Being Portuguese is the stories of our ancestors, of struggles, hardships, and joy. My story starts with my vovos, who travelled thousands of miles across the ocean to an unknown land with nothing but the clothes on their backs and a newborn baby.

Being Portuguese means courage. My grandparents chose to leave behind everything they knew for a better life and move to the foreign land of London, Ontario. They knew nobody, did not speak the language, and had no idea of the obstacles that would face them here. It was a difficult decision, but it was one they made for their family’s future. They wanted to provide a better life for their children and give them the opportunities they never had.

Being Portuguese means community. My grandparents were not alone as they anticipated. They had a large Portuguese community ready to welcome them with open arms. Whether it was the kind older woman who lived down the street and watched the children as my grandmother worked, the man at their church who found my grandfather a job, or the Portuguese family ready to accustom them to a new way of life, they had an incredible support system there for them. Still today, these individuals are some of their closest friends. While they did as much as they could for them, there was still challenges in living in a new place.

Being Portuguese means perseverance. Adjusting to Canadian life was not always easy. They were ill-prepared for the harsh winters and the rough new language they had to learn. They had a Portugal-sized hole in their heart, one that could only be filled by the smell of the ocean and a warm embrace from their family. But a daughter to feed and another on the way, they could do nothing except carry on. They worked long days and long nights to provide everything they could for their daughters, giving them the lives they wished they could have had.

Being Portuguese means pride. It is more than just what we do, it is who we are. It means looking back on our history and being proud to be Portuguese. It is the stories told at a family dinner. It means remembering our roots and passing on the traditions that make us who we are. It means honouring our ancestors who went through so much to bring us here today.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient  
**Briana Moutinho Conde**

Grade 8 – Regina Mundi  
Sponsored by LIUNA OPDC



## **How has my Portuguese heritage been an influence in my life?**

My Portuguese heritage has had an impact on my life since it reveals the essence of my character. The three most significant reasons why my Portuguese ethnicity has influenced me will be addressed in this essay. This includes; the things that I do daily that connect to my Portuguese heritage, the language in communicating with my family, and through the Portuguese food in my life.

To begin, my Portuguese origin reveals the foundation of my personality and the things I do on a daily basis. One of my favourite hobbies is playing the Portuguese card game “Sueca.” This is an essential and enjoyable card game that is played across Portugal. In this card game, the numbers 8, 9, 10, and Joker are not utilized, and there are four players. The aim is to accumulate as many points as possible in order to defeat the other side. As is common in the Portuguese heritage, we like to ask who will receive a “Bandarea,” which indicates who will take home the flag after gaining four points in total. I am an extremely skilled player who usually surpasses my opponents. Another thing I do is constantly listen to Portuguese music. I enjoy listening to it in the car, at home, and so on. “O vira” is the title of my favourite song. I also watch Portuguese TV shows and movies that reflect the significance of my personality. I have a favourite game show called “Preso e certo,” which is simply the price is correct and has a sense of humour thanks to the show’s entertaining presenter. All of these are examples of activities I do on a daily basis are related to my Portuguese background.

Secondly, talking with my family will help me reconnect with my Portuguese culture. Most of my family lives in Portugal, so I visit them frequently. But, they rarely know English, so I must converse in Portuguese with them. Having to communicate with them in Portuguese allows me to practice the language and keep in touch with my family. It’s not always simple, and it’s often difficult to interact and communicate with them, but I keep practising and studying to stay connected to my Portuguese origin. At home, I also speak Portuguese with my family, and my parents practice with me and my sister. Speaking Portuguese with my family is important to both of us.

Finally, the traditional Portuguese food that I consume and prepare contributes to the essence of my personality and Portuguese background. “Bacalhau com Natas” is one of my favourite Portuguese foods since it tastes great and is well-known for this specific cuisine. It’s a dish composed of codfish and potatoes that I usually eat for supper. To understand more about my Portuguese culture, I like to help my parents cook this for dinner. Another favourite meal of mine is Portuguese potatoes and rice. This is something I eat with my family and also in Portugal for lunch. I appreciate learning about my Portuguese background through cuisine which helps create the importance of my identity. In conclusion, this is how my Portuguese background has influenced my life, and these are the explanations given. My Portuguese background is a huge part of my life and highly significant to me, as seen by the reasons I’ve given.





FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Victoria Ferreira

Grade 10 – Bloor Collegiate Institute

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Business & Professionals



### **“To me, being Portuguese means...”**

What does being Portuguese mean to me? Being Portuguese means having pride in talking, and representing Portugal. There are so many beauties in what we know as Portugal, such as food, history, arts/folklore and language. I could go on and on about the delicious food in Portugal. It has a mixture of everything from seafood to meat, fish and vegetables.

One of my all-time favourite meals, which my grandma makes every year for Christmas is “Cabrito assado no forno”. There is not one point where I think the food is bland, and that’s what I love about Portugal’s food. I mean, what other countries put eggs on steak, pizza and inside of desserts? Portugal has such an immense amount of history. It’s so beautiful how far back in history we can go with all the churches, castles and stunning architecture. I love going to Portugal for those reasons. Visiting the castles and realizing that the kings and queens of Portugal used to live in these large stone structures, I don’t even know how to explain it.

Though another large part of Portugal’s history is folklore. Folklore teaches the younger generations, like mine, the beauty of their heritage and culture. I love to dance “Rancho.” It is my source of therapy every Friday. Where I go meet some of my closest friends and learn even more about where my family comes from. I love the songs and music, the stories that are told. Everything about it, I can not wait for my future children to have the same love and passion I have while dancing “Rancho.”

I am also extremely proud to say that the beauty of Portugal, has helped me a lot in school. When I took french in my first year of high school, I used Portuguese to help me understand the language more. Not only did it help with french, but the culture of Portugal has helped me a lot in art. In school, while working on my art assignments, I would always try to find ways to connect them to my culture. For example, I painted the “Coração de Viana.” I also drew “Os Lenços dos Namorados” and made clay “Azulejos” as my final assignment.

In conclusion, my favourite part about being Portuguese is that there are so many beautiful parts of our culture. I love how we have and encourage such strong traditions, tasty food, sensational music, astounding history and a powerful language. I can not say that Portugal has been my home, but it’s certainly a place where I feel as if I belong. I will always be proud of my Portuguese heritage.

FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

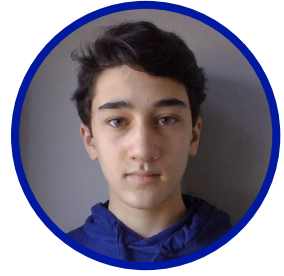
## Cristiano Galego

Grade 9 – De La Salle College (Oaklands)

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### **“To me, being Portuguese means...”**

To me, being Portuguese means much more than just “futebol, fado e Fatima.” Being Portuguese is being a part of a community, a family, a nation with a great culture and history. I lived in Faro, Portugal for 7 months in 2019 and attending Dr. Joaquim Magalhaes and played for SC Farense. I was quickly accepted as one of their own. I also visit Faro and Trofa each summer, which is where my grandparents were born. My paternal great-grandfather was one of the first Portuguese immigrants to Canada. His arrival was in 1955. He later opened Galego’s Furniture and Appliance on Dundas St. with my grandfather and my great-uncle.

Furthermore, I am incredibly proud as many worldwide leaders in exploration, soccer and culture are Portuguese. After living and attending Portuguese public school in Faro for 7 months in 2019, I felt welcome and part of the community. I was made to feel at home, which was where I was, home. I quickly felt integrated into society. To this day, I still have relationships with several classmates and teammates that make my life richer.

I am fluent in Portuguese, and it was the first language taught to me by my father. I visit the hometowns of my ancestors in Portugal, which are Trofa, and the countryside just outside Faro. When I visit each summer, I visit family, landmarks, and the graves of my ancestors. I am truly fortunate as over the years, I have been able to visit much of Portugal. I have been to places like Sao Miguel, Fatima, Evora, Lisboa, and Porto to name a few.

Additionally, I am extremely proud of being Portuguese since our people have been worldwide leaders in exploration, soccer, and culture. Explorers like Fernando Magalhaes and Vasco Da Gama are people who I am extremely proud of, as they were the first Europeans to reach Asia by maritime route. In terms of soccer or futebol, as it is said in Portugal, I am proud our country has developed such players as Cristiano Ronaldo, Luis Figo, Rui Costa, Nani, to name a few of internationally list of players. In musical terms, Amalia Rodrigues, or “A Rainha Do Fado” is also a Portuguese singer who I respect deeply, as she is the best Portuguese fado singer ever. She performed throughout the world on great stages in places such as New York and Paris.

Being Portuguese means having pride in our great heritage. I am proud when I look at my old classmates and teammates and realize that I am one of them. I also feel proud when I look back at my ancestors and think about how they were such brave people, leaving Portugal for Canada. Finally, I am extremely fortunate and proud to be of the same heritage as Fernando Magalhaes, Vasco Da Gama, Cristiano Ronaldo, Amalia Rodrigues, and many more important Portuguese figures. I am privileged and extremely grateful to have roots in such a great nation as Portugal.



FPCBP Essay Contest Recipient

## Isabella Rainho

Grade 12 – All Saints Catholic Secondary School  
Sponsored by Federation of Portuguese Canadian  
Business & Professionals



### How can our community attract youth to participate in Portuguese Canadian cultural and social initiatives?

Between the late 1950s and early 1960s, a considerable number of Portuguese immigrants arrived here in Ontario. Portuguese Canadians have made and continue to make significant contributions to Canada's social, political, economic, and cultural life. Thus, helping our country to be a more wealthy, diverse, and inclusive society.

By being such a substantial part of the community Portuguese culture has influenced many other individuals, especially our youth. Ways I have seen our community attract new members has been through music and dance, inclusiveness, and by providing new opportunities. As communities come together with different cultures and traditions, the similarities tend to blend into something we can celebrate as one. Music and dance can be found in nearly every country's culture worldwide. It has been shown to enhance cultural awareness, as well as reduce stress. With this, people are exposed to cultures they may not have otherwise encountered or experienced. Through the multiple Portuguese instrumental, vocal, and dance groups throughout different regions and communities, youth and other individuals have been attracted to become part of our culture and social initiatives. By simply, participating in these groups we allow them to continue to take place and be influential.

Additionally, by promoting them to people we know, we have the ability to inspire others to join. Especially youth who are extremely curious to learn new things in all aspects. Allowing youth and outside members to join in our customs and organized events, immediately allows for more attraction. Different cultures coming as one enables us to learn from one another and appreciate our differences to a further extent. Growing up, I've always seen and been aware of how my Portuguese community was exceedingly inclusive. For example, at the Northern Portugal Oshawa Cultural Centre we have always allowed individuals of other cultures to join our social initiatives.

As a child, and into my teenage years, I would always bring a friend with me to my Portuguese dancing performances and other events, no matter what they celebrated. This shows the youth that we promote equal opportunities for everyone and appreciate them joining. Us as a group, accepting and inspiring new youth to participate and actively engage, gives them the opportunity to learn new life skills, acquire awareness of citizenship, and play a crucial role in the community as a whole. As mentioned, we always allow outside members to join us, and we can be open to teaching them our way of living, to further advance their knowledge.

As stated in various ways throughout this essay, we as Portuguese Canadians can influence youth to participate in our culture and social initiatives. As someone who is just reaching adulthood, I have seen how the older members of my Portuguese family have spread their wisdom, heritage, and the beautiful way of life that comes from the country. We can all do this through the common tradition of music and dance, being open to new members, and allowing them to the opportunities Portuguese culture has provided us.

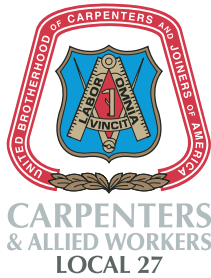
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