

# Thunder Bay Multicultural Association



*The Fabric of our Community*

*In partnership with*



**North Superior**  
Workforce Planning Board

## **Thunder Bay Immigration Forum** **November 10, 2009 \* Valhalla Inn \* Thunder Bay**



Ontario

**The Chronicle-Journal**  
THE NEWSPAPER OF THE NORTHWEST



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada



***“Thunder Bay and the region will be a culturally diverse and welcoming community, a destination of choice for immigrants who will contribute to, and benefit from, both social and economic development.”***

(Thunder Bay Community Immigration Strategic Plan 2009 Vision)

Dear Immigration Forum Delegate,

On behalf of the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association and the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, thank you for attending the Immigration Forum “*Filling the Gaps*” held on November 10, 2009, in Thunder Bay! Our goal was to convene a one-day conference with a focus on assisting employers with attracting, hiring, retaining and integrating immigrants into the workplace and how to create welcoming communities across our region. Ninety-five attendees came prepared to learn about cultural diversity in the workplace, settlement, and retention of internationally trained immigrants from their perspective, and how to leverage immigrant talent to strengthen Canadian business. Workshops and keynote speakers received great reviews with comments from delegates including the following:

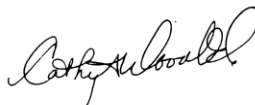
- “Dr. Laroche’s presentation will be extremely helpful in the workplace.”
- “Gained some valuable tools and insights (different perspective) that will help me when helping immigrants find employment opportunities.”
- “Walked away with concrete, specific strategies that can be applied to welcoming, recruiting, and creating a diverse community.”
- “I gained a greater insight into the barriers that new immigrants face when coming to a new city/country.”

*Filling the Gaps* provided much needed information upon which to implement worker and attraction strategies, and on how to expand and collaborate on integration strategies to retain immigrants.

Over the coming year we will be developing workshops and training based on the topics suggested in the evaluations from the forum. Anti-racism and anti-oppression sessions, as well as training for employers, are on the top of our list. We will keep you informed.



Marg Scott  
Executive Director  
North Superior Workforce Planning Board



Cathy Woodbeck  
Executive Director  
Thunder Bay Multicultural Association

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## Introduction

The Local Immigration Partnership initiative is focused on improving access to, and the coordination of, effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration. The community needs to be united and knowledgeable of what currently exists and of what is needed.

With *Building Bridges* we touched on what could be accomplished, employers learned the different methods to attain a skilled immigrant workforce and what that will bring to the economy and to their business. In *Filling the Gaps* we touched on the issues that needed work in order to fulfill the ultimate goal of ensuring successful retention and subsequently promote Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario as the place immigrants want to invest in and raise their families.

Our morning Keynote Presenter, Dr. Lionel Laroche of MultiCultural Business Solutions, set the tone for the day with his presentation entitled, "Reaping the Benefits of Cultural Diversity in your Organization" with an upfront discussion of skilled immigrants in the context of employability, soft skills, and environmental variables.

Following this, the delegates had the option of three workshops: Session A with Dr. Laroche continued from his keynote on the topic of "Achieving Diversity in the Workplace: Strategies that Work"; Steven Baileys facilitated Session B: "Steps in Becoming a Welcoming Community"; and Michelle Lander and Don Curry facilitated Session C: "LIP: What can Local Immigration Partnership do for employers?" which was mainly an update on where LIP is in achieving the set goals and what is needed to move ahead.

Throughout the day we had two ten minute presentations: an update on the Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal presented by Walter Bilyk of WaltMar Systems Group, and a beautiful lunchtime dance presentation from 5 year old Harleen Dhillon, whose lively performance rebuilt the energy and gave participants a push to proceed with the full day of information.

The afternoon saw delegates choose from three additional workshops. Steven Baileys facilitated Session D: "Creating a Northwestern Ontario Immigration Strategy." This was a great working workshop for the northern representatives, giving them some strategies to take back to their communities. Session E, facilitated by Gillian Wan and Benilda Silkowska-Masior, "Identify and Attract: Updates to the PNP and How it Will Benefit Your Business," and also, "Access and Resources for the Internationally Trained" was very informative. Although the immigrant stories occurred in the first five minutes of each session, we felt it was fitting to have a session just for immigrants which was our Session F: "Settlement & Retention: The Internationally Skilled Immigrants' Perspective," getting the full stories of the skilled immigrants themselves and being able to ask direct questions on the issues they face when immigrating.

The one day forum was focused on updating and adding more stakeholders from the business community and different government ministries. It also focused on using the opportunity to work on attaining workable strategies that can be undertaken by the LIP that will ensure successful attraction and retention of skilled immigrants.

# Thunder Bay Immigration Forum Schedule

November 10, 2009 · Valhalla Inn · Thunder Bay



## PROGRAM

- 7:45 a.m. – 8:30a.m. Registration and Refreshments**  
*Scandia Lobby*
- 8:30a.m. – 8:50a.m. Opening Remarks and Greetings**  
*Scandia Room 1&2*
- Michelle Lander – LIP Coordinator  
*Thunder Bay Multicultural Association*
- Cathy Woodbeck, Executive Director  
*Thunder Bay Multicultural Association*
- Marg Scott, Executive Director  
*North Superior Workforce Planning Board*
- Marg Scott brought greetings on behalf of  
Hon. Michael Gravelle  
*Minister of Northern Development, Mines & Forestry*
- Mayor Lynn Peterson  
*City of Thunder Bay*
- Cathy Woodbeck acknowledged  
Charlene Shattock- Settlement Officer  
*Citizenship & Immigration*
- 8:50a.m. – 9:50a.m. Keynote Address**  
***Reaping the benefits of cultural diversity in your organization***  
*Scandia Room1&2*
- Dr. Lionel Laroche, President  
*MultiCultural Business Solutions*
- This keynote address examines some of the key challenges and benefits that Canadian businesses and organizations face when recruiting and integrating culturally different employees (Internationally Educated Professionals and Aboriginal people) and provides concrete tips and suggestions on how to make cultural diversity a strategic advantage of your organization.
- 9:50a.m. – 10:00a.m. Refreshment Break and Presentation**  
***Sneak Peak at the Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal***  
*Scandia Room 1&2*  
*Walter Bilyk - WaltMar Systems Group*

**10:05 a.m. – 11:30a.m. Concurrent Sessions**

**Session A**

***Achieving Diversity in the Workplace: Strategies that Work***  
*Icelandic Room*

Dr. Lionel Laroche, President  
*MultiCultural Business Solutions*

**Session B**

***Steps to becoming a Welcoming Community***  
*Scandia Room 3*

Steven Baileys - Coordinator-Multicultural Programs  
*Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria*

Immigrant Stories - Bruno Niederer – Performance Kia

**Session C**

***LIP - What the Local Immigration Partnership does for Employers***  
*Odin Room*

Don Curry - Executive Director  
*North Bay & District Multicultural Centre*

Michelle Lander - LIP Coordinator  
*Thunder Bay Multicultural Association*

Immigrant Stories - Dr. Bharat Shrestha – Lakehead University

**11:30a.m. – 11:45a.m. Networking**  
*Scandia Lobby*

**11:50a.m. – 12:30p.m. Lunch**  
*Scandia Room 1&2*

**12:30p.m. – 1:30p.m. Presentation**  
*Scandia Room 1&2*

**Session E**

***Identifying and Attracting Immigrants Updating the PNP (Provincial Nominee Program) and Reviewing How it will Benefit your Business. Also Making Global Experience Count in Ontario***

Gillian Wan - Manager, Opportunities Ontario  
*Provincial Nominee Program*  
*Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration*

Benilda Silkowska-Masior  
*Manager - Global Experience Ontario*  
*Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration*

*Dance Presentation by 5 year old Harleen Dhillon*

**1:35p.m. – 3:00p.m. Concurrent Sessions**

**Session D**

***Creating a Northwestern Ontario Immigration Strategy***  
*Scandia Room 3*

Steven Baileys - Coordinator-Multicultural Programs  
*Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria*

Cathy Woodbeck – Executive Director  
*Thunder Bay Multicultural Association*

Immigrant Stories - Ludit Villegas - Investors Group Financial Services

**Session F**

***Settlement & Retention – Internationally Trained Immigrants’ Perspectives***  
*Odin Room*

Panel: Mozi Ndlangamandla - Investors Group Financial Services,  
Dr. Crescentia Dakubo - FedNor, Dr.Oleg Rubel - Thunder Bay Regional  
Research Institute, Ludit Villegas - Investors Group Financial Services

**3:00p.m. – 3:15p.m. Refreshment Break and Presentation**

*Scandia 1&2*

Presented by John DeGiacomo  
***“Leveraging Immigrant Talent to Strengthen Canadian Business” is a free, interactive, computer-based training program for small- and medium-sized enterprises.***

**3:20p.m. – 4:20p.m. Plenary Sessions**

***Filling the Gap (Tools / Material / Manpower)***  
*Scandia Room 1&2*

Facilitator: Cathy Woodbeck

**4:20p.m. – 4:30p.m. Wrap Up**



## **Morning Keynote: *Reaping the Benefits of Cultural Diversity in Your Organization***

**Presenter:** Dr. Lionel Laroche, President - MultiCultural Business Solutions

### **Compare Canada and India:**

	GDP/capital (average yearly income in the country)	SSP (Starting Salary of a Professional)
Canada	\$40,000	\$1,000
India	\$30,000 – \$70,000*	\$8,000 – \$15,000*

\* Depending on the profession and education level that the individual has.

- An SSP in India has a different social standing e.g. Maids etc., come to Canada and lose their social standing.
- There is no equivalent in Canadian society to what a professional experiences in India.

### **Compare Technical skills versus Soft Skills:**

- Technical skills include education, job experience, achievements (e.g. a Bachelors or PhD).
- Soft skills refer to how people interact and communicate with others verbally, as well as visually (i.e. shaking hands is the norm in Canada, bowing is the norm in Japan)
- Most immigrants coming to Canada have high technical skills and low soft skills.

### **Compare immigration in Canada versus other countries like the United States:**

- When the average Canadian meets the average immigrant in Canada one generally assume 2 things:
  - They are here legally.
  - They have some level of technical skills.
- When the average US citizen meets the average immigrant they assume:
  - They are there illegally.
  - They have no technical skills.

### **Relating this to finding work:**

- When looking at professional experience in Canada, the average weight is 50% technical skills and 50% soft skills. In India, Philippines, Pakistan and other countries, the average weight is 90% technical skills and 10% soft skills.
- So when an immigrant with 90% technical skills and 10% soft skills competes for a job with a Canadian who has 60% technical skills and 40% soft skills, the Canadian will usually end up with the job because he is better at interacting with others. When this happens the immigrant thinks that this is unfair and will blame it on nepotism but will still want the job. He will think that the only way he can get the job is by going back to school to work on his technical skills rather than working on his soft skills. This is



because he does not understand the root of the problem being his lack of soft skills. In his home country, this is how they interact with each other. Thus, the cultural norms are not communicated.

### **Compare Progress versus Time:**

- Some immigrants move to Canada and start with a high paying job (in comparison to their home country), have a hard time and end up plummeting. At this point very few move home (most do not return out of pride). Some will get back on track getting a job of lower standards (i.e. an accountant in India becomes a cab driver), others will eventually learn how Canadian society works with the emphasis placed on soft skills and do very well, doing better than they would have in their home country. This usually takes 6-15 years. Demand for the skills that the immigrant possesses will be a factor in how long this actually takes.
- When immigrating to Canada, the average immigrant thinks/expects it to only take 6-18 MONTHS to recover and adjust to Canadian life.
- The immigrants who do eventually “make it” are the ones who own up to the problem. They understand that it is different in Canada than it is in their country. The ones that “stay the cab driver” are the ones that take no responsibility and blame everyone (advisors, the government, etc.) instead of owning the problem and learning to adapt.

### **Questions and Answers:**

**Question** - Is the Internet changing the problem in landing in the wrong place?

**Answer** – The short answer is no. People who immigrate generally do not use the Internet as a source when moving to Canada. They use family, people they know, and television. The problem with the Internet is that you have to know what information you need to look for and when you make the decision to immigrate you kind of put mental blinders on and mentally select the information that is absorbed.

**Question** - You can do your work on the Internet?

**Answer** - Before you can do your work on the Internet you have to sell it. So yes you can do your work on the Internet but before that can be done you have to sell what is it you are going to be doing.

**Comment** - The issue for most immigrants is not the technical skills it is the ability to communicate that they have these technical skills.

**Example:** A man from Iran, who is a civil engineer, arrived in Canada and had been unemployed for 2 years. Dr. Laroche asked him what kind of engineer he was. The man said, “I can build everything.” So he then asked him to make a list of everything he has built in his career and how long he had spent on each project. The engineer wrote the list of structures he had built: he had spent 1 year on high-rise buildings, 1 year building tunnels, 1 year on road construction, 2 years on bridges and 20 years building dams. Rather than “I can build everything,” he should have started off by saying, “I am a dam engineer with

experience in these other areas...” In the end, the man was able to get a job with Manitoba Hydro but not before learning how to present his skill set appropriately.

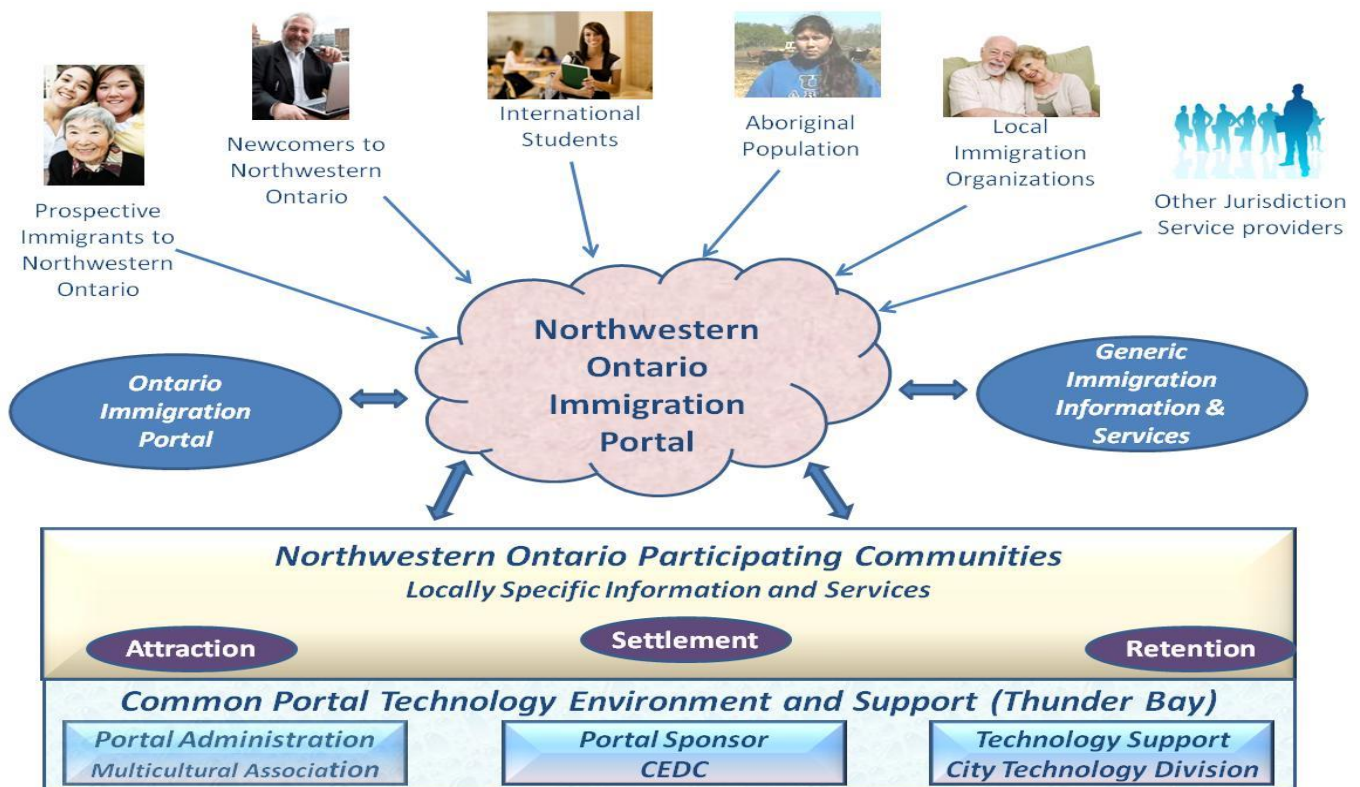
## Presentation: *Sneak Peak at the Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal*

**Presenter:** Walter Bilyk - WaltMar Systems Group

*“The Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal is an online doorway for potential immigrants, newcomers, and individuals considering relocation back to the region to easily access all of the information relevant to living, working, learning, and doing business in Northwestern Ontario”*

The Portal will connect users to the information they need to:

- Make an informed decision in choosing NWO
- Prepare themselves before arriving in NWO
- Access the services and supports after they arrive



### Thanks to the following:

Project Sponsor - Karen Honan (CEDC)

Advisory Committee – Karen Honan (Chair), Cathy Woodbeck (TBMA), Jeannette Belluz (CI&T), Rebecca Johnson (CEDC Board), Ron Humphreys (CEDC)

Partner Committee – Participating Communities

Project Manager – Walter Bilyk (WaltMar Systems Group)

Content/IA Lead – Stephanie Ash (Firedog Resources)  
Portal Design – John Barnes (Procom Resources)

Targeting completion at the end of March 2010

## **Workshop A: *Achieving Diversity: Strategies that Work***

**Presenter:** *Dr. Lionel Laroche, President - MultiCultural Business Solutions*

What happens when you try to bring the immigrant into the workplace and then what do you do with them once you have them there?

### **Slide 1:**

#### **What is your goal?**

1. **Fill a skill shortage** - not enough employees to fill a job
2. **Access a culturally different market** – there are 2 kinds of organizations; one is on the government side, reflecting diversity of the community by the government. This is a very large organization that deals with the public. It is important to reflect diversity in the employee bank. The other organization is the one that is trying to export their service to another country, to create innovation: by having different people with different views you create innovation.
3. **Create synergy and innovation**

What would be the interest in your organization around the room?

- Community college – applicants apply to the college and the college assists them with the transition (i.e. they were a dentist in their country and they applied to the college as a dental hygienist).
- Business standpoint, if you were an import/export company.

### **Slide 2**

#### **What are the issues?**

1. **Rejection of candidates who are technically qualified for the job for reasons that are not related to their performance on the job** – i.e. Avoid eye contact, behavior
2. **Mismatch between the marketing and sales plans of the organization and the expectations of their targeted customers** – Trying to sell things because you think that is what people will buy, but people use other criteria to decide how to buy, i.e. in Canada platform with options. Example: If you go to a restaurant and buy a steak, you get the choice of potatoes, vegetables, gravy, ketchup, how you want the steak cooked, etc. If you go to France you get what's on the plate and that's it - there are no substitutions. So what does that mean? If you try to sell Canada the way of France it is ineffective, they won't buy it. Same thing if you were to try to sell to France the Canadian way, it will not happen.
3. **Performance management.** – Feedback: there is negative feedback and positive feedback. Neutral feedback (Somebody says something but you have no idea if it's positive or negative (e.g. "it's interesting", "it's fine", "you look different"). When a Canadian manager gives slightly negative feedback to somebody from one of these countries, they are not going to get the message. So when giving feedback the manager needs to make sure that the employee understands the message that is

being sent. Example: in school in France they grade by subtracting points from perfect for every mistake made. In Canada we grade by starting with an average. In France student report cards are what would be considered very negative in Canada. In Canada student report cards are very positive when compared with France. The other major challenge when we work with people who are culturally different is impact versus intent. Example: When a man greets a lady in a professional setting in France, they kiss. In Canada, the reaction would have been “Oh my God! What is this guy trying to do?” The man never intended for the lady to be offended, but the woman was very offended.

**Question** - Do the same kinds of principle/problems arise when dealing with a 20-year-old versus a 40-year old?

**Answer** – Yes, this has to do with culture not age.

### **Slide 3:**

#### **The impact of culture in recruiting**

- The recruiting process brings in contact people who do not know one another
- Therefore, they rely on cultural norms to try to have productive interactions
- Interviewers from a specific cultural group ask questions that are meant to prompt candidates to provide a specific kind of information
- Candidates who come from the same cultural group know what kind of information they are expected to provide – Example: if a recruiter is trying to figure out if the candidate is assertive, he would ask questions related to scenarios and question their credentials.

### **Slide 4**

- Candidates coming from different cultural groups than the interviewer often misinterpret the questions they are asked or answer them in a way that does not match the interviewer’s expectations. –Canadians see themselves as qualified specifically while immigrants think of themselves as generalists.
- As a result, candidates who come from different cultural groups are often rejected for reasons that are not related to their ability to do the job for which they are interviewed.

Example of cultural differences – A question was given to a candidate: “What would you do if you arrived to do a presentation and your memory stick broke, you didn’t have paper, and everything went wrong, how would you get through this?” The lady interviewed a Pakistani man who simply answered, “This would not happen, I would never prepare for a presentation so silly, I would have an extra memory stick.” and so on and so forth. He could not compute that this could happen, or answer how he would handle the situation if it did. So he did not get the job.

### **Slide 5:**

#### **Bridging the gap**

- **Look for transferable skills and experience** – Example: A man said he had made missiles in his own country. His employer did not look favourably on that skill as Canada does not make missiles and establishing clearance would be difficult. As

they conversed, the employer figured out that at his old job he would take pieces of steel, roll them up, and weld them together. So he was, in fact, a welding engineer.

- Keep promoting résumés that only describe responsibilities
- Focus on candidates' progression in Canada and the job they had in their home country, not on the level they are at right now

### **Slide 6**

- Short-list culturally different candidates who are slightly over-qualified
- Overlook frequent changes of position after and immediately before the time of immigration
- Look for assessment of academic credentials by accredited organizations

### **Slide 7**

#### **Interviewing candidates:**

- Include HR/diverse people in the recruiting team
- Learn to look past communication style differences
- Focus on transferable skills
- Determine candidate-ranking criteria upfront
- Use-behavioral/situational interview style
- Give benefit of doubt during phone interviews

#### **Exercise:**

**In partners, explain what you did this morning by saying all of the verbs twice with a synonym. I.e. took/brought, fed/gave the dog food. And write down how they felt afterwards.**

How did it feel?

- Totally distracted, no eye contact, and all of a sudden the story isn't interesting
- As a listener, you want to speed them up and put words in their mouth
- "Found myself leaving out details" – So if you were in a job interview you would be leaving out important details and it would sound like you are under qualified or incapable.

### **Slide 8**

#### **Interviewing candidates:**

- Create situations that test candidates in real-life conditions
- Hire diverse candidates who need to learn more about the Canadian system at the low end of the pay scales and put them in developmental positions with managers who know how to develop people
- Include sample interview Q&A on your website.
- Use short term contracts to test candidates
- Use internships and/or volunteer positions or shadow positions to build skills.

## Side 9

### Probation period:

- Provide extensive orientations to culturally diverse new hires – 1 day upfront is often insufficient. Spread orientation over 6 months
- Provide coaching and/or mentoring to culturally diverse new hires – many organizations will set up programs. When setting up a program, ensure that the mentor and the mentee do not come from the same culture, it is like the blind leading the blind.
- Prepare and support the managers of culturally diverse new hires.

Encourage new employees to ask questions and give them references so that they can find the information themselves.

## Slide 10:

### Targeting specific marks

- Need people who understand the targeted marker and can explain it to others
- Need to train people involved in your efforts on understanding the expectations of targeting clients
- Mental flexibility and adaptability are more important to success than marketing and sales techniques

### Driving innovation

- Giving feedback to and receiving feedback from culturally different people
- Cultural differences are a double-edge sword:
  - They create challenges and opportunities
  - The challenges come first
  - The opportunities come when everyone has learned how to communicate and work effectively together.

## Workshop B: *Steps to Becoming a Welcoming Community*

*Immigrant Story: Bruno Niederer – President & CEO, Marsol Dominican S.A.*

Bruno apprenticed in Zurich, Switzerland where he received his Chefs papers at the age of seventeen. He was employed in various large and small hotels/restaurants in Switzerland, including the famous Movenpick chain, until 1969. At that time, he moved to England to advance his career. Bruno left Europe to come to Thunder Bay in April of 1972, where he took a position as Executive Chef at the Airline Hotel.

In the position of Executive Chef, Bruno brought honour to the Airline Hotel and the City of Thunder Bay, through his procurement of many enviable culinary, dining, menu, and ice carving awards. Bruno also helped initiate the Chef's Apprenticeship program in the province of Ontario between 1974 and 1976.

After twelve years as Executive Chef with the Airline Hotel, Bruno was promoted to the position of Food and Beverage Manager, overseeing a staff of 200+ employees. In this

capacity, he coordinated the preparation and service of over 1200 meals per day, spanning throughout the hotel's three dining rooms, and fifteen meeting and banquet rooms. He managed the Airlane's successful Flight Catering Kitchen, where at its peak time catered up to 11 flights, delivering over 700 meals daily to the various airlines. In 1992, Bruno obtained the food and beverage contract with historic Old Fort William, and managed the daily operations. In the early 1990s, Bruno was also responsible for the total operation of 698 Arthur's Nightclub, at that time one of Thunder Bay's busiest nightspots.

Under his guidance, the Airlane Hotel continued to gain national and international recognition for its dining excellence. On March 1st, 1989, Bruno achieved his long time goal of becoming a major owner of the Airlane Hotel. Along with business partner, William French, the property was purchased from fellow Shareholders, and they became the sole owners of the Airlane Hotel.

In the position of Owner and Director of Operations, Bruno believed in working alongside his staff to ensure that his high standards of cuisine and outstanding service were maintained at all times. Bruno invented the first ever 24 hour fully automated cafeteria at the Avenor Paper Mill to serve their 1500 employees. With fellow owner William French, Bruno was involved in every phase of the hotel's ongoing renovation program.

In 1998, Bruno was approached to sell the Airlane Hotel. Although this came as a surprise to both William and Bruno, it was an offer they could not refuse. After much thought, he guided the sale of the Airlane Hotel to Royal Host Investment Trust, which was the first Thunder Bay hotel in decades to be sold in good standing. Bruno stayed on in an "advisory capacity" for an additional three years to help with a smooth transition.

Since 1995, Bruno has been a partner with John Trevisanutto in Half Way Motors Nissan. In 1998, they purchased the Volvo Dealership from the receiver and were then successful in acquiring the KIA franchise in March of 2000.

In the summer of 2001, Bruno decided to hang his hat at Performance KIA/Volvo in the capacity as Dealer Principal and General Manager. In this role he was able to work with his partner, John Trevisanutto, in managing the fastest growing dealership in Northern Ontario. Today, Performance KIA is a major competitor in both new and used car sales with over 1900 new KIA's on the road and a fast growing Parts and Service Department. Performance KIA now employs over 20 hard working staff, and has seen sales grow from \$1 to \$18 million dollars per year in five years.

In 2005, Bruno started another KIA Franchise in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and in 2007 he started another brand new venture by opening the Formula Suzuki Super Center.

At the present time, Bruno is also coordinating the affairs of Marsol Dominica S.A. in the capacity of Chief Executive Officer and President, in which he has been involved in since the year 2000. Bruno is also involved as an investor in several public companies and in real estate in his home country, Switzerland.

Bruno has been a Leader of The United Way Fundraising Team for eight years, and has been a Director for three years. Since 2003, as Chair of the Leaders of The United Way,

Bruno coordinated the Leaders of The Way Fundraising Campaign, and was successful in raising 100% more in three years. He is the Chairman of the national KIA Performance Group, and Chairman of the Dealer Communication Group, representing all 154 KIA Dealers in Canada. He is a Director of the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium. He is also a member of the Skal Club, Chamber of Commerce, and has a lifetime achievement award membership for the Thunder Bay Association of Chefs De Cuisine.

In his hotelier days, Bruno was a member of the Canadian and Thunder Bay Federation of Chefs de Cuisine, a member of the Nordic World Championship Bid Committee for 6 years, Chair of the Accommodation and Athletes Village Committee for the 1995 Nordic World Ski Championships, a member of the Lakehead Occupational Skills Development Inc. Committee, past Chairman of the Culinary Management Program at Confederation College, and was a member of several task force committees for the Ministry of Skills Development Hospitality Program.

When time allows, Bruno likes to spend time with his wife Ann, and daughters Tanya and Heidi. He enjoys skiing in the Swiss Alps, entertaining friends, cruising Lake Superior in his boat, and traveling the world.

Bruno's biography demonstrates the value in choosing Thunder Bay as the place to begin one's business pursuits.

**Presenter:** Steven Baileys, Coordinator-Multicultural Programs Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

## **PATH Planning Tool**

Developing an Awareness Campaign to Promote a Welcoming Community

*What can small communities such as Thunder Bay do to bring immigrants to our community in order to continue growth and prosperity? How can we create a plan to use as a tool that will assist in laying out fundamental steps to become a welcoming community?*

- Stand up if you, your parents, or grandparents came to Canada from another country.
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  of the people stood up.
  - This suggests that all of the people in the room are 1 or 2 generations away from the connection of immigration.
  - If you go back more and more generations, than you would find more people standing up. If you are of First Nations background then you would not stand up, as you originate in Canada.
  - Most people forget their families' battles with immigration and that they had to go through the same challenges as those who are immigrating do today. The challenges they went through are the same ones that we are trying to learn how to deal with today.



- In Canada, approximately 70-80% of our heritages are tied to Western Europe, depending on where you go, you will see shifts in that. Baileys has been in Canada since 1972 and has seen tremendous changes already in Victoria. If he had done this exercise in 1972, 90% of the folks would have been from Western European countries. We are seeing more and more people from nontraditional countries and this adds to the challenge that we are trying to find solutions to.
- How do we negotiate with people's trade skills versus soft skills, as we are seeing greater variation? How do organizations interface with the shift of populations that are coming from different countries?

About Steven Baileys: Grandparents from father's side were from Mexico, his grandparents from his mother side are from the Ukraine.

- Stand up if the community that you are representing has a strategy for accepting immigrants.
  - Response: A few people said that they are working on one.

How many of you have heard of the PATH planning tool or graphing?

- 1) What is Path?
  - a. PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope)
  - b. Systematic 7 step process to define strategies
  - c. Powerful, creative & colorful tool
- 2) Who uses PATH?
  - a. People who want to create their own future
  - b. Families who want to work together
  - c. Friends who want to make a difference in someone else's life
  - d. Individuals who dream or desire to move forward

The PATH tool was started about 10 years ago as a way of helping people with disabilities. It was intended to help them and their families and community members develop more control over their lives and some of the decisions. It's a systematic 7-step process, which has some key pieces in it, about how an organization can plan out some strategies to welcome diversity.

Members of Thunder Bay Immigration Committee (TBIC) developed a strategic plan in 2009. TBIC identified 3 key strategies to pursue in the coming year:

- 1) Identify and attract immigrants to Thunder Bay
  - a. Identify the target source countries
  - b. Identify the skills needed
  - c. Develop and implement a marketing strategy to promote the community to potential immigrants.
- 2) Foster a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive community through education, promotion and participation.
- 3) Ensure that coordinated services are available to fulfill newcomers' needs.

## ACTIVITY - Creating an example of a PATH plan

What does a welcoming committee look like, taste like, and act like? Tell me what your vision of a northwest welcoming community looks like:

- Positive energy
- Clean (community, well manicured/landscaped, welcoming)
- Safe (newcomers are comfortable walking the streets, law enforcement is part of the balance of your community, free from discrimination/harassment)
- Celebration of different cultures
- Openness
- Place where people will greet one another, acknowledge one another
- Leave room for different faiths
- Easily accessible public resources

What is something we can do in 1 year and achieve?

Develop an awareness campaign, have the City Council on board to help create a campaign in which you are educating your community on diversity.

- 1) Where are we now?
  - a. hopeful, beginning, starting the education process (who is our community?), ideas but no action, looking for consistency, uncertainty about leadership
- 2) Enroll – Who are the people we need on board?
  - a. City of Thunder Bay, Rebecca Johnson
  - b. Multicultural Associations, Italian Association, Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, individuals that have experienced immigration, Lakehead University, Public and Catholic school boards (John De Faveri, Cathy Siemieniuk), media, Chamber of Commerce.
- 3) Blocks – What are some road blocks?
  - a. Funding
  - b. Lack of participation/involvement from partners
  - c. Doubts/attitudes/preconceptions
  - d. Common self interest (e.g. What's in it for me? The immigrants are going to take my job.)
  - e. Institutional status quo
  - f. Time, the same people usually volunteer, will they have the time?
- 4) In 6 months where will we be?
  - a. Identified key partners
  - b. Audit-table of Gaps & Strengths and Weaknesses
  - c. Identifying who has done one
  - d. Media release, media campaign, marketing plan
- 5) What are our first steps?
  - a. Form an awareness committee; phone calls, letters, and emails to people we want to invite. Who will make these calls/emails/letters?
  - b. Need to identify people to invite. Take the first two weeks to do this.
  - c. Look for funding. Who will take the responsibility? This is where people are held accountable after making the commitment.

The plan will always move and change but you also want to keep it contained so that it doesn't get too large and out of control. Is there a way to bring together the geographical stake holders to make this plan easier on smaller communities?

## **Workshop C: *What the Local Immigration Partnership does for Employers***

***Immigrant story: Dr Bharat Shrestha- Lakehead University***

Walking in Our Own Shoes: Where to Put the Next Step?

I am a new skilled immigrant to Canada from Nepal, the land of Mt. Everest and the birth place of Lord Buddha. Nepal is a small landlocked South Asian country situated between India and China, covering an area of 147,181 square kilometers (1/7<sup>th</sup> of Ontario). It is a Himalayan country which houses eight of the ten highest peaks in the world including Mt. Everest (8,850 m). It is the second richest country in the world in terms of water resources. Politically, it is a new republic with a multi-party democratic system. Religiously, Nepalese society is dominated by Hindus, though there is a harmonious blending of Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and other religions. The population of Nepal was 29 million in July 2008 with an annual population growth rate of 2.27%. Nepali is the official and English is the second language. The latter is the medium of instruction in major schools and colleges and the majority of Nepalese understand and speak English. However there are more than 100 different local languages across the country. Nepal is a popular tourist destination due to its natural beauty and cultural diversity. People used to say "NEPAL stands for "Never Ending Peace And Love." Unfortunately, there was an eruption of civil war in 1996 that has killed more than 15,000 people to date. This political instability caused severe impacts in almost every sector of the country and many sectors have been paralyzed. It caused a rapid increase in internal and international migration of people in search of a peaceful place to live. Today, although the country is in the peace process under UN involvement, the "ripple effect" of civil war is still there.

My family is a small nuclear family – my wife and I have two boys aged 6 and 11 years. I completed my MSc in 2002 and graduated with a PhD in soil science in 2007 from Norway. My research for my MSc and PhD theses was to explore the relationships between land use, land use changes and carbon sequestration as an option to trap and store atmospheric carbon in the soil to mitigate global climate change. I have published eight research articles in international referred journals. My wife also has two MSc degrees – in Chemistry and in Aquaculture – from Nepal and Norway, respectively. Back home in Nepal, we both were university teachers and both were ambitious to gain higher education abroad.

After graduating with my PhD, I was looking for a job opportunity globally and was also looking for a safe place to immigrate. I found Canada's immigration policy to attract international skilled manpower and found it was a popular destination for many scholars. So we started the immigration process and started to apply for relevant jobs. Fortunately, I was offered a postdoctoral fellow position at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay in September 2008. That is why we came to Thunder Bay and in February 2009, our immigration process was completed. This has opened several doors of opportunity for us -

we are eligible to apply for full-time work, we can get government benefits including health insurance, study chances, etc.

Of course, there are also several new challenges in this new place for us. The major challenge, which is keeping us nervous, is the low job opportunity. They want to have candidates with Canadian degrees and experiences. We have sufficient knowledge and education, may require only a few orientations to work in the new setting. But employers are not giving us a chance to enter into their workforce. At this point, we feel there is a major gap between the Government's policy to bring international skilled immigrants and employer's policy to give priority to candidates with Canadian degrees/experiences. So we are forced to rethink if we made the right decision to immigrate to Canada. Another challenge we are facing is how to cope with the severe weather conditions of Thunder Bay - the scary thunder and extreme cold weather!

Despite these few challenges, we have a light of hope from our inner corner. I have completed writing manuscripts of two scientific articles, which will provide proof of Canadian experience for me. I hope it will open more doors of opportunity in the future. The recession is over, job opportunity may begin to boom in Thunder Bay and across Canada. If such factors give a positive direction to our life, we may think to make Thunder Bay our permanent home. However, people want to grab the better chances and we can't be the exception. We are looking for job opportunities in other cities as well as within Thunder Bay. Many other factors play a role in influencing our decision to make Thunder Bay our permanent home.

Based on our one year experience, I have some suggestions to the concerned authorities to bring immigrants to Thunder Bay and retain them here.

1. Launch a special package-program to attract new immigrants to Thunder Bay that includes direct benefits compared to other cities such as housing, day care facilities, and job quotas to new skilled immigrants.
2. Keep provision of free language trainings, On-The-Job trainings and job placement immediate to completion of the training.
3. Coordinate the government bodies regarding the required references and security checks as the new immigrants do not have history here and their history back home is checked by the government during the immigrant visa process.
4. Governments (Federal and Provincial) should give orientation training to employers regarding the skills of skilled immigrants in Canada so that they can be motivated to hire immigrants in their workforce.

In conclusion I would like to mention that immigrants are the future of Canadian society. Skilled immigrants are well educated and provide trained manpower to Canada, like "Free Ripe Fruits" - utilize their skills and knowledge to benefit the socio-economy of Canada. There is no need of Government's investment in their education and training - only a small orientation can make them quite productive. Their appearance may not reflect their inner skill and capacity, judge them wisely. Respect their skill and sentiment to create a win-win situation for both immigrants and Canadian society.

Question and Answer

Q. From your wife's perspective, is she seeing barriers from being offered a job, or are the jobs just not there?

A. My wife has received a call for an interview, but was then told that she does not have enough experience. The job market currently does not have that many jobs to offer.

Presenter: Don Curry – Executive Director - *North Bay & District Multicultural Centre*

Immigration has become a priority for the mayor and city council in North Bay. We had a settlement agency operating in the city in the 1980s and the early 1990s, I know this because I chaired the board for 6 years. We had 1 part-time worker, we are part of the provincial OCASI network, and we were getting a few immigrants each year.

Due to the city's new interest in immigration, under our current mayor Vic Fedeli, the North Bay & District Multicultural Center now has Citizenship and Immigration Canada funding with 6-full-time employees, jumping to 8 in January and possibly 10 shortly after that.

Immigration is very much on the radar screen in North Bay. We modeled our new agency on the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, whose executive director Cathy Woodbeck and staff generously provided training for us during the startup period.

The North Bay Newcomer Network (NNN) now has 27 member organizations, including the City and North Bay & District Multicultural Centre as co-chairs, all the employment agencies, Chamber of Commerce, Social Services Administration Board, Canadore College and Nipissing University, a school board and all relevant government ministries.

The first thing NNN did was organize a symposium on immigration strategy. That was in April of 2006 and more than 80 people attended, most of them immigrants. The top recommendation coming from the day-long discussions was that a settlement agency was required as a central location for support services. Participants said it was necessary to help newcomers adjust to North Bay and feel welcome.

In December 2006, funding was provided by FedNor to hire a researcher to develop and implement a study of the needs and experiences of area newcomers and to give NNN a better understanding of the true number of newcomers residing in North Bay. This year long study provided much needed information about the specific settlement issues and needs that face newcomers in this region as well as information regarding the make-up of North Bay's newcomer population (for example the percentage of temporary foreign workers, international students, permanent residents, etc). This data facilitated the identification of properties to meet the needs of immigrants relocating and residing in North Bay and also provided the data necessary to pursue funding for settlement services.

Multi-year funding has since been approved by CIC for both the ISAP and Host programs and the Multicultural Centre is the primary point of contact for immigrants seeking

settlement services in the area. The organization later received funding from the province of Ontario's community builder fund for marketing and promotion of its services and from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation to hire interns. We are also the lead agency for our local immigration partnership project, funded by CIC.

The City of North Bay adopted its official immigration attraction and retention strategy in late 2007. Many of the properties identified in the strategy have since been adopted or are currently in the development stages.

NNN has an executive and 3 subcommittees, the Welcoming Community Committee, the Settlement Committee, and the Employment Committee, all of which develop and implement projects on an annual basis with a focus on the overall NNN mandate of attraction and retention on newcomers to the area.

In 2008, the City was successful in securing significant funds from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration for the development of an immigration portal. This content management based website will serve as the primary marketing tool for recruitment of newcomers and will also provide much needed one-stop information on the various services available in the area. This project involves content development based on input from area residents as well as input from local agencies, service organizations and employers. The soft launch for this all-encompassing immigration portal is slated for later this month, with the official launch taking place in January. The Multicultural Centre, under a contract with the City, will be responsible for keeping the site current.

In 2008, the City partnered with other community stake holders to undertake a labour market information study to identify and project the future labour market needs of the community. As part of the process, area employers identified the skill sets required for their sustainability and growth in both the short and long term. This data is now serving as baseline information for the city's immigrant attraction efforts. The data shows there will be 5000 job openings in the next 5 years in the city, as baby-boomers begin to retire in large numbers. Our new regional health centre, which will open in January of 2011, will be hiring 350 people over the next year.

Employment is now our top priority and NNN's latest initiative is working on the creation of the North Bay Immigrant Employers Council. In June of this year 4 NNN members, including Marla Tremblay and me, were invited by the Maytree Foundation to attend the ALLIES conference in Vancouver, where immigrant employers' councils were showcased. We studied the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network models and are now in the first stages of setting up our own.

Employers' councils are led by employers and their role is not to offer résumé writing workshops but to put the mechanisms in place, such as paid internships and networking mechanisms, which will help newcomers succeed in the job market. An example is the Connector program, created in Halifax. We were impressed when we heard about it in Vancouver and are now launching our own version.

We are partnering with the North Bay Rotary Club on this initiative. I'll use a newcomer who happens to have banking experience as an example. That experience will be noted at the initial assessment at the Multicultural Centre and a call will be made to our Rotary Club contact person. That person happens to be the head of our District Social Services Administration Board and a member of the NNN. He arranges to have the person attend a Rotary Club meeting, where he is introduced to 3 people who are bankers. Those 3 people are then obligated to introduce the newcomer to 3 more bankers and this continues until the person has a network of 27 or so. We all know the power of networking when it comes to finding a job and this format has been successful in Halifax.

I mentioned networking being important for newcomers and it's also important for those of us in the immigration field. We have a Northern Ontario network of settlement agencies, Settlement North, created by Cathy Woodbeck of Thunder Bay. We are also all part of the OCASI province wide network and Cathy represents the North on the Board of Directors. The cities in the North are part of Ontario's North Economic Development Corporation (ONEDC). This organization is an incorporated non-profit body made up of senior representatives from each of the City Economic Development Corporations from North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and Thunder Bay, and was established to create and implement pan-northern Ontario economic development initiatives.

The City of North Bay is the lead in an immigration partnership project being developed with the other 4 cities. The project consists of an attraction strategy targeting immigrants in the business, entrepreneur and skilled labor classes. With limited financial and human resources, the cities are not in a position to promote their respective communities abroad. By pooling money and efforts, the goal is to leverage provincial and federal funding for assistance with both domestic and international recruitment.

This strategy is comprised of numerous elements, including the development of pan-northern immigration attraction collateral materials, content development and management on the ONEDC pan northern investment attraction website, attendance at large job fairs, participation in provincially hosted and coordinated domestic and international investment attraction events, strategic promotional campaigns in ethnic media and familiarization tours for media, entrepreneurs and investors. The strategy includes the development of a business plan to create a northern-based centre for employment referrals, accreditation, licensing for regulated professions, mentorship, job shadowing, and internship programs.

Our partnership with the City of North Bay has been a very productive one and it demonstrates how programs can be successfully developed and implemented when stakeholders work together to reach a mutual goal. We are optimistic that our colleagues at City Hall and other Northern Ontario cities can bring the same immigration successes on a pan-Northern Ontario basis.

North Bay is one of three smaller communities, with Brockville and Chatham-Kent, named as part of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Community Immigration Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO) project. The project will provide tools and best practices for smaller Ontario communities to attract and retain immigrants.

**Presenter:** *Michelle Lander – Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator*

Back in 2007, the North Superior Training Board's TOP (Trends, Opportunities and Priorities) Report regional consultation process pointed to the lack of immigration into Northern Ontario as a key barrier to economic development. In response, the Board, in partnership with the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, organized a one day forum.

The focus was to review existing programs and service gaps, examine strategies to attract and retain immigrants for our workforce, look at ways to retain immigrants in the work setting and the transitions into Canadian work culture. The intent was to attract employers and to make them aware of the process involved in creating employment opportunities in Thunder Bay for immigrants. Others invited to the forum were government, education, healthcare, literacy agencies, youth, and the financial sector.

The Forum was successful. The outcome brought together a core group willing to take on the task and continue to further explore strategies in fulfilling the ultimate goal of attracting immigrants into Northern Ontario. The Immigration Committee continues to achieve their goals under the supervision of the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)

The LIP recently had a strategic planning session and produced a working document of strategies to undertake and define into attainable recommendations, short term and long term goals. The strategies were divided into 3 headings:

**STRATEGY #1 – IDENTIFY AND ATTRACT IMMIGRANTS**

**STRATEGY #2 – FOSTER A WELCOMING, SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND PARTICIPATION**

**STRATEGY #3 - ENSURE THAT COORDINATED SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO FULFILL NEWCOMER'S NEEDS**

Sub Committees were struck to further develop the strategies

- My Role:
  - As the Coordinator of the LIP project, one of my roles is to be a facilitator to the Local Immigration Partnership Committees to connect with partners to ensure all aspects of the project is being communicated - preparing agendas and minutes for meetings, as well as some research and documentation
- Your Role as **Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs):**
  - Being part of the Local Immigration Partnership will provide a collaborative framework for, and facilitate the development and implementation of, sustainable local and regional solutions for successful integration of immigrants to Thunder Bay. The objective of LIPs is to identify groups that will coordinate and enhance the current services delivery network while avoiding duplication. Building the capacity of the community to attract,



retain and welcome newcomers to the city, therefore embarking on the development of strategic partnerships between service providers and organizations.

The broader need for Thunder Bay is to improve access to the labour market for immigrants. This is why the employer and business partners as well as the Chamber of Commerce, City, and employment agencies are critical partners in the network. The need to develop a strong employment network with co-op placements, job shadowing, and mentoring will be critical in bringing together all interested participants from a broad range of city groups and disciplines, connecting with the community and encouraging participation from a variety of stakeholders in the welcoming and integration of newcomers from settlement to employment. Building the capacity of the community to attract, retain and welcome newcomers to the city and coordinate the effective meeting together and information sharing of partners. Coordinate the creation of an action plan that is both short and long term and that has the ability to strengthen local and regional awareness about who is immigrating to the city as well as build greater capacity to integrate immigrants into Thunder Bay. The city as a whole has to go through a learning process and then develop a strategy to become a more welcoming community to newcomers.

Benefits would be to enhance the participation of newcomers in the social and economic activity of the community and also benefit the community by helping them to understand who is in Thunder Bay (cultural mapping) as well as how newcomers contribute to the community. It would have meaningful impact on the fabric of the community by creating awareness for all involved. Business, administration, settlement agencies, training boards, financial institutions, educational institutions, employment partners (both agencies and employers), and volunteer organizations would all participate and also benefit from a well developed and planned process. Timing is perfect for Thunder Bay at this time with the recent Immigration Forum and the follow up ad hoc committee that has been developed. The process of moving toward an integrated and multi-dimensional network is now in place and the project management framework and governance structure have been developed. The next step is a detailed action plan to project the growth and development campaign to make Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario the place immigrants want to invest in and raise their families.

## **LIP (Local Immigration Partnership)**

*Michelle Lander -Coordinator*

### Question and Answer Period

Q. To what extent do the provincial and federal governments have with immigration?

A. They supply funding, but we do not want to rely on only the funding. We want the community as a whole to take action and be willing to make the effort along with the help of the local government. The government has no control of where the immigrants go (as in what area of the country they move to)

Q. When working with immigrants, what could Thunder Bay provide for overseas governments?

A. The provincial government has provided immigration portals to attract immigrants into the northern part of Canada. We should also get material over to the countries in an effort to promote moving to the northern part of Ontario.

## **Workshop D: *Creating a Northwestern Ontario Immigration Strategy***

**Presenter:** *Steven Baileys, Coordinator – Multicultural Programs – Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria*

### Tool Box Ideas for Smaller Centres

What is the Tool Box?

Created in NWG Small Centre Strategies and funded by Citizenship & Immigration Welcoming and Working with Diversity

Words Associated with Diversity

- Multi
- different ethnicities
- inclusion
- different experiences
- salad (can put many different things in a salad and it turns out wonderful)
- colors
- community
- food/language/experiences
- sexual orientation

Definition of Diversity: An understanding that each individual is unique and recognizes our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

Effective Immigration Strategy: an active immigration strategy is a community that welcomes and values the diversity of new immigrants.

- Between 2001-2006 approximately how many immigrants arrived in Ontario?  
580,000

What factors attract newcomers to live in our community? Before developing a community strategy we must first understand and identify the factors that will attract newcomers to your community.

What makes Immigrants feel welcome in their new community?

- Welcoming
- Employment
- Education
- Safe feeling
- Clean

- Respect

What are some barriers?

- Language
- Knowledge and information
- Healthcare
- Access to students
- Having to work two jobs

What are some key factors that attract immigrant newcomers?

- Family and friends
- Ethnic community
- Employment opportunities
- Housing
- Educational opportunities
- English language training
- Health care
- Safety and security

How can we feel sure that they will feel welcome?

- Have a welcoming committee
- Ensure that all coordinated services are readily available
- Have funding programs that aid in housing starts
- Job search and mentoring services

Develop Community's Cultural Competency:

Competency is: behaviors, attributes, policies, agency or individuals to ensure cross-cultural interactions.

Layers of Diversity

- 1) Internal Dimensions – race, age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender
- 2) External Dimensions – geographic location, income, personal habits, sexual orientation, recreational habits, religion, educational background, work experience, appearance

A Culturally Welcoming Community is:

- A welcoming population that wants the newcomers
- Responsibility and commitment at the local level to meeting the needs of newcomers
- Strategic partnerships that bring together diverse groups and coordinate information and actions
- Widely-available language training and a welcoming linguistic environment
- Facilitating employment and creating welcoming environments for workers and clients
- Support for housing (appropriate and affordable) and transportation options

- Political support for the idea of immigration, publicity about the value of immigration, and integration of immigrants into the political and social life of the community
- A holistic approach that integrates the multiple elements of society and multiple aspects of immigrant services and service providers into a supportive network
- A long-term vision of community integration which drives transformational changes in service provision, social relations and community dynamics

When talking with people, use clean language, easy to understand words, visual aids, speak slower, and utilize multilingual websites and services. It's too easy to just focus on the internal dimensions. What we need to focus on is the external dimensions, like work location, sexual orientation, and ethnicity; we must be flexible and accommodating to make them feel welcome in our environment.

A culturally competent organization is experienced by others as culturally welcoming. What do you see, hear, smell and feel in your community/organization?

How to become a welcoming community/ how to build a strategy for bringing newcomers to Northwestern Ontario?

Question asked to the audience: "What immigrant ethnicities populate your communities?"

- Schreiber has a very large population of Italians
- Sudbury has various ethnicities from Europe and increasingly many immigrants coming from Africa.
- Thunder Bay includes a lot of immigrants from Yemen, Jordan, and Dominican Republic. We have an annual Folklore Festival in Thunder Bay that educates others of immigrants and cultures in our community.

STATSCAN – you can get updated information

Find out what your immigration ratios are, so that you can tell your associates and work with those people.

Question asked to the audience: "What do you think when you hear the word "Diversity"?"

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| • Different ethnicities  | • Salad              |
| • Young and old          | • Different colors   |
| • Different abilities    | • Interest           |
| • Life experiences       | • Likes and dislikes |
| • Differences in harmony | • Community          |

- Food
- Language
- Social fabric
- Sexual orientation

Effective immigrant strategies include a community that welcomes and values the diversity of immigrants. Any effective immigration strategy will need to attract, welcome and retain.

### **What factors attract newcomers to live in our community?**

**Before developing a community strategy we first must understand and identify the factors that attract newcomers to your community.**

### **Let's listen to what a newcomer has to say:**

Most immigrants that come here strive to have a better life for themselves, and for their children.

The group watched a movie and the following questions were asked to the audience afterwards

“What was she looking for in a community?”

- Welcoming / respectful
- Clean, quiet and safe
- Friendly neighbors
- Future children
- Integrated schools
- Daycare services
- Education

“What were some of the barriers she had to overcome?”

- Language
- Getting the knowledge and information before moving
- Health care
- Access to services because of the language.
- She had to have 2 jobs rather than 1 job that paid well.

“What do you think are some of the key factors that attract immigrant newcomers?”

- Family and friends
- Ethnic communities
- Employment opportunities
- Housing
- Education opportunities
- English language training
- Health care

## **Workshop E: Provincial Nominee Program**

*Identifying and Attracting Immigrants, Updating the PNP (Provincial Nominee Program) and reviewing how it will benefit your business. Also: Making Global Experience Count in Ontario*

**Presenter:** Gillian Wan - Manager, Opportunities Ontario - Provincial Nominee Program - Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Opportunities Ontario: Provincial Nominee Program is Ontario's immigration program. This program was introduced as a pilot program in May 2007 and was re-launched with a new program design on February 20, 2009 as Opportunities Ontario.

Opportunities Ontario helps employers hire the skilled workers they need—but are having difficulty finding—by assisting with the immigration of foreign workers and international students. By using this program, skilled foreign workers and international students may be nominated for permanent resident status in Canada.

This is an employer-driven program with the Ontario employer initiating the process in step one, and the prospective nominee applying in step two. All applications will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis.

Opportunities Ontario also helps companies and individuals invest and create jobs in Ontario by facilitating the immigration process for key employees needed for the long term success of their investment.

Once approved, nominated individuals must then apply to the federal government – Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) – for permanent resident status. CIC will perform important admissibility checks for health and security before granting permanent resident status to applicants.

Opportunities Ontario will target 1,000 nominations this year. During the presentation, you will learn more about the new program. We will also discuss eligibility criteria, the application process, and how you may be able to use this program.

[ONTARIOIMMIGRATION.CA](http://ONTARIOIMMIGRATION.CA)

### **What can the employer do?**

*An Ontario employer has bought cutting-edge equipment from France. The employer is having difficulty finding someone locally with the technical skills to operate and service this equipment full-time. As this technology is more common in Europe, the employer believes she can find someone in Europe to meet her needs.*

### **The employer can use Opportunities Ontario**

### Opportunities Ontario: Provincial Nominee Program

- Helps employers hire the skilled workers they need—but are having difficulty finding—by assisting with the immigration of foreign workers and international students.
- Attracts investment to the province by assisting with the immigration of key employees recruited by investors.
- Nominates foreign nationals with an approved job offer for permanent residence.
- Ontario aims to nominate 1,000 individuals through Opportunities Ontario.
- Program was re-launched on February 20, 2009.

#### Opportunities Ontario

- 1) Apply to Opportunities Ontario (2 step process)
- 2) Opportunities Ontario Nominates (selects)
- 3) CIC Checks Admissibility
- 4) Permanent Resident Visa

#### CIC

- 1) Apply to CIC (1 step process)
- 2) CIC selects (CEC, Point System etc.)
- 3) CIC checks admissibility
- 4) Permanent Resident Visa

#### Program Categories

**General Category:** for employers and investors seeking to hire foreign workers in any skilled occupation.

**International Student Category:** for employers seeking to hire international students in any skilled occupation.

Employers can request positions for foreign workers and international students in the same application.

#### National Occupational Classification (NOC)

The following NOC codes are eligible:

- O: Management occupations
- A: Generally, occupations requiring University Education
- B: Generally, occupations requiring College Education or Apprenticeship Training

#### To be eligible, an employer must:

- 1) Have been in active business for 3 years (corporations, limited partnerships, and sole proprietorships)
- 2) Have at least 3 full-time permanent employees (5 for employers in the GTA)
- 3) Meet the minimum gross revenue criteria of \$500,000 (\$1,000,000 for employers in the GTA)
- 4) Have business premises in Ontario where the prospective nominee will work

#### To be eligible, nominee position must:

- 1) Be permanent, full-time position in a skilled occupation (NOC O,A,B)
- 2) Meet market wage levels
- 3) Not affect the settlement of any labour dispute or affect the employment of a person involved in such a dispute
- 4) Not adversely affect employment or training opportunities for Canadian citizens or

permanent residents of Ontario  
5) Be necessary for the company's operations

### **What Can The Employer Do?**

*An Ontario employer has engaged the same temporary foreign worker for several years. The worker has become an essential part of the team and a valued employee. Her/his temporary work permit will expire in a few months. The worker has indicated that she/he is not planning to renew it because he/she does not want to continue with "temporary status" in Canada and will return home to reunite with her/his family.*

### **The employer can use Opportunities Ontario**

#### Position Request

Employers can request multiple positions; one position for every 5 full-time permanent employees employed, if inside the GTA, or one position for every 3 full-time permanent employees, if outside the GTA; inside or outside the GTA, the maximum number of positions which can be requested is 20 positions (no limit for the number of positions in the health and education sectors).

#### Foreign Workers

Employees can recruit foreign workers in any skilled occupation (NOC O, A, B); they may be from abroad or already here in Canada; must demonstrate at least 2 years of recent work experience in the occupations or have appropriate registration in Ontario, if applying for a position in a regulated occupation in Ontario; must have an approved permanent full-time job offer.

### **What Can The Employer Do?**

*An Ontario employer has hired the same student for a second co-op term. He is very happy with her performance and would to hire her on permanently after she graduates. She is an international student and in the last year of her program of studies at a publicly-funded post-secondary institution in Canada.*

### **The employer can use Opportunities Ontario**

#### International Students

Employers can recruit international students in any skilled occupation (NOC O, A, B), apply within 2 years of graduation or are enrolled in their last semester at a publicly funded Canadian college or university, completed at least half of their studies in Canada on a full-time basis, must have an approved permanent full-time offer.

#### Priority Processing

Employers will receive priority processing if they have tried to recruit Canadian citizens or permanent residents located in Ontario, before applying to Opportunities Ontario. This only applies to positions requested for individuals living abroad or visiting Canada, this does not apply to positions requested for temporary foreign workers and international students.



### **What Can The Investor Do?**

*A foreign company had bought an existing company in Ontario, creating jobs. In order to modernize that company, they wish to relocate permanently some of the senior management team from their home office.*

### **The investor can use Opportunities Ontario**

#### Investment Eligibility Guidelines

To qualify, investments must be of significant importance to Ontario and must create jobs for Ontarians. New investments and expansions to current operations are eligible. Investments need to meet the following eligibility guidelines:

- Receive endorsement by another Ontario ministry at the Deputy Minister level
- The investment should be \$3 million or more
- The investment should create at least 5 net permanent full-time jobs
- The investment cannot be an immigration-linked investment scheme

### **What Can The Investor Do?**

*An individual foreign investor is interested in a business opportunity in Ontario. He wishes to move permanently to Ontario in order to protect and grow that business.*

### **The investor can use Opportunities Ontario**

#### Additional Eligibility Criteria for Individual Investors

Although the investment component of Opportunities Ontario: Provincial Nominee Program is geared towards companies making an investment in the province, individual investors seeking nomination can also qualify.

However, they must meet all of the following four additional eligibility criteria specified by federal law:

- Be actively involved, on an ongoing basis, in the management of the business
- Control, or will control, at least 33.334% of the equity in the business, or make a minimum \$1 million investment in the business
- No option of redeeming the investment after a specified period
- Not invest the capital in the business for the primary purpose of deriving interest, dividends or capital gains

#### Application Process for Investment Component

The application process has three parts:

- Referral (prospective investor contacts MCI for a referral)
- Investment Assessment (investing company applies to Ontario ministry for endorsement)
- Nominee Application (recruits of investing companies apply for nomination to MCI)

#### Temporary Work Permits

Nominees can apply for a temporary work permit (TWP) while their permanent residence application is being processed. A provincial nomination does not guarantee approval of a TWP application. A TWP will allow a nominee to travel to Ontario to begin working for his/her employer sooner. Nominees and their employers are exempt from

the Labor Market Opinion (LMO) process. Opportunities Ontario will support temporary work permit applications of nominees.

### Benefits for Employers

Facilitates the quick arrival of needed employees, a free and fast pre-screen application process, allows employers to attract and retain skilled immigrants to meet the skills needs that they are unable to find locally, and allows employers to hire foreign nationals on a permanent basis.

### Benefits for Nominees

A pathway to permanent resident status that is based on a permanent, full-time job offer in Ontario with a market wage.

- It is not based on a point system that requires language testing.
- It exempts international students from the one year of work experience requirement that federal immigration programs require.
- It gets priority processing from CIC.

### Service Standards

Opportunities Ontario has the following three processing targets:

- Complete employer application packages will be processed within 90 days, on a first-come-first-served basis
- Complete nominee application packages will be processed within 90 days, on a first-come-first-served basis
- Refer prospective investors to the appropriate Ontario ministry within 15 business days of receiving the completed investment referral form.

**Presenter:** *Benilda Silkowska-Masior, Manager – Global Experience Ontario – Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration*

Global Experience Ontario (GEO) is a unit within the Immigration Programs Branch of Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Global Experience Ontario can help internationally trained and educated individuals find out how to qualify for professional practice in Ontario. This one-stop centre offers a range of services for internationally educated individuals.

### Why do we exist?

Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006 (FARPA) established an Access Centre for internationally trained Individuals (ITIs). As a result, Global Experience Ontario opened its doors to the public on December 18, 2006. FARPA also established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner to ensure that Ontario's regulated professions have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

### What is our mandate?

GEO is mandated to provide information and assistance to ITIs interested in applying to

non-health regulatory bodies (under FARPA) for licensure and registration. GEO conducts research, analyzes trends and identifies issues related to FARPA. They provide information and assistance to ministries, government agencies, community agencies, educational institutions, trade/occupational associations, employers and regulatory bodies dealing with ITIs.

#### Whom do we serve?

Internationally trained/educated individuals who are interested in professional accreditation in the 14 non-health regulated professions covered under FARPA, as well as ministries, government and community agencies, school boards, colleges/universities, occupational/trade associations and employers.

#### Ontario's 14 Non-Health Related Professions (under FARPA)

- Architecture
- Certified engineering technicians<sup>2</sup> and technology
- Certified general accounting
- Certified management accounting
- Chartered accounting
- Early childhood educators
- Forestry
- Land surveying
- Law (including paralegal)
- Professional Engineering
- Social work and social service work
- Teaching
- Veterinary Medicine

#### What Services Do We Offer?

- Information on non-health regulated professions
- Referrals to regulatory bodies
- Information and referral to:
  - Language training
  - Bridge training
  - Mentorship and internship programs
  - Paths to employment
  - Financial assistance
- Internship opportunities
  - The Ontario Public Service Internship Program for ITIs provides an opportunity for newcomers to gain Canadian work experience within the OPS and Crown Agencies.
  - MCI/GEO delivered the first 3 rounds of this program (2006/07-2008/09) in partnership with the Career Edge Organization, and placed 221 interns.
  - As of April 2009, this program has been transferred to the Ministry of Government Services (MGS).
  - The next round of the program has begun in November 2009 and any changes to the program application process are available through the MGS in the coming months.

#### Ontario Initiatives/Programs for ITIs

##### Systemic Change Initiatives:

- Fair access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006

- Regional Newcomer Employer Networks
- Local Immigration Partnerships
- Bridging Projects

Helping Newcomers Obtain Licensure and Employment:

- Bridging Projects
- Global Experience Ontario
- Career Maps and E-Career Maps
- Foreign-trained Professionals Loans Program
- Ontario Public Service Internship Program
- Employment Ontario (MTCU)
- Health Force Ontario's Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals

Language Training:

- Specialized language training pilot projects
- Adult non-credit ESL/FSL
- Bridging Projects

Helping Employers Address Human Resource Needs:

- Opportunities Ontario Provincial Nominee Program

Settlement Services:

- Newcomer settlement program
- Language interpreter services
- Ontario community builders

On-line Resources: [www.OntarioImmigration.ca](http://www.OntarioImmigration.ca)

Questions and Answers

Q: You mentioned with one program that people were creating jobs? What about retaining jobs?

A: What they do is take investors who want to create.

Q: What do you mean by LMO being more difficult?

A: The process takes much longer than that of GEO.

Q: Can I get more information on the internship program?

A: *The person asking the question was referred to the website.*

Q: Could you elaborate more on the bridge program?

A: Bridge training programs help qualified internationally trained individuals move quickly into the labour market in Ontario. They assess your existing skills and competencies, compared to Ontario employer expectations. They provide training and Canadian workplace experience without duplicating what you have already learned. Some bridge training programs offer mentoring opportunities with established professionals to help you become certified or registered in your field.

## **Workshop F: *Settlement & Retention – Internationally Trained Immigrants’ Perspectives***

The afternoon session of this workshop consisted of 4 immigrant stories, each sharing their stories and what they had to overcome, or how they felt about the immigration process.

**Presenter:** *Mozi Ndlangamandla – Investors Group Financial Services*

Mozi was born in Swaziland, Southern Africa. He attended a United World College, and graduated with his IB (International Baccalaureate) diploma. Before he graduated he applied to different universities all over the world, except for the United States. Each university that he applied to was to earn a different degree. One by one he eliminated the universities to which he had applied, in the end choosing to come to Canada, and by the end he had decided to attend Lakehead University (which was his fallback to earn a degree in economics).

Mozi considers himself to be a Citizen of the World (meaning that wherever he is or may be going, is his home). Since he attended a United World College, where many different ethnic groups (over 55) were represented, there was not much of a cultural shock when he arrived in Thunder Bay, although the climate change was a bit of a shock.

Mozi came to Thunder Bay in 2003, and graduated from Lakehead University which is where he met his wife. He is now a financial consultant and is settled in Thunder Bay. The immigration process for him was one that was easy and well worth it. He is very satisfied with the way Canada is run and the opportunities that they provide for immigrants and Canadians.

Not only having a full time job and family, Mozi also volunteers at the Red Cross, and is a Rotarian (a member of a rotary club, a major national and international service club), just as his father was.

### **Question and Answer Period**

Q. Once you graduated and were looking for a job, were there any immigration barriers that prevented you from finding a job here?

A. I had thought that there would have been some barriers, but when it came down to it there were no barriers that prevented me from achieving employment. It was fairly smooth.

Q. You say you flipped a coin, but what ultimately made you stay here in Thunder Bay?

A. I got a job before I graduated, my wife was still in school and this is where I started my family, but like I said, I am a Citizen of the World and wherever I may go in the future it will be my home.

**Presenter:** *Ludit Villegas - Investors Group Financial Services*

I emigrated with my husband and two daughters from Venezuela, South America, 5 years ago.

We had to emigrate because we were the target of political persecution and discrimination and we understood that we had no other choice but leave the country.

Why immigrate to Canada? For the same reason that many immigrants do: to look for freedom, safety, quality of life, and hope, the basic needs that all humans seek and treasure the most.

We moved to Thunder Bay because my husband found a job opportunity here with DST Consulting Engineers and so far he is doing really well.

I find that the school where we send our children has also played an important role during the immigration process. At the school they taught my children about Canada, and that they too belong, just as anyone else does.

I have a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree, and before coming to Canada I worked for 12 years at a Venezuelan oil industry holding company, where I mainly dealt with contracts and project management.

A year after we arrived in Thunder Bay, and once my daughters were settled, I started looking for a job. The Thunder Bay Multicultural Association put me in contact with the program "Job Connect." The support and guidance of Christine Schiller, one of their employment advisors, helped me to get through my first interview. For almost three years since then, I have held the position of Administrative Assistant for three consultants at Investors Group.

Emigrating is not an easy thing to do. You are not only leaving behind a piece of land, but a piece of yourself. Being separated from your family and friends also means leaving behind the kind of love that you usually take for granted, and it also means overcoming unexpected challenges.

When you emigrate, many different feelings are always with you: Fear for the new things to come, loneliness during every test that has to be endured and a sense of responsibility to have to succeed because there is no going back; only a desperate need to belong here.

We thank God for the wonderful people that helped us during our first year in this country. They were there to assist us through a difficult time, and to provide us with guidance and support. Their friendship helped us to understand this new culture.

We thank God for the Principal and teachers at Our Lady of Charity School for teaching our daughters about Canada and most importantly, for making them feel that they belong, and that they are important to this country.

We thank God for our employers (DST Consulting Engineers for my husband and Investors Group for myself), who gave us the opportunity to start a life here in Thunder Bay, and also for our co-workers whose support and encouragement has made easier our day-to-day survival.

We thank God for our new friends in Canada who have become our family. They help to fill the void in our hearts.

When you welcome an immigrant you demonstrate your kindness and generosity of spirit, as well as your greatness as human beings. All the wonderful people that have helped us are what really makes this country special because the sacrifices, the sadness and the doubts that we have experienced and overcome during these four years seem worthwhile. We believe that they have come into our life for a reason, and that has helped us rebuild it with a solid foundation. We are truly blessed by God because they are now part of our lives.

We feel indebted to the Canadian community and we think that it would take a lifetime to pay back the generosity we have been shown. There is no doubt that our prayers were answered and that now we have moved on and started a new chapter in our lives.

We became Canadian citizens on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. It was a very important day in our lives.

We understand that to become Canadian citizens implies a commitment to this beautiful country for the rest of our lives but it also means freedom, generosity and new found friendship.

We just want to show that we are now part of this community, part of this society, and part of Canada.

Canada is now our country. It's in our hearts and it is what we now call "our home."

Thank you,

Ludit Villegas and Family.

### **Question and Answer Period**

Q. Your specialty is in Civil Engineering, now you are an Administrative Assistant, they don't seem to be the same?

A. The company underwent new management, and found that all the administrative parts of the company were "lazy." They decided to try her and a few others to overtake the administrative part and it "was a huge success." This was also my choice to no longer work as a civil engineer. My job started as a part-time job because at the time my children needed me more, and that was more important to me. Now we are settling and I can take on more work responsibility and still have time for my family.

Q. Since becoming Canadian citizens, do you have a social support network of some sort from other countries, like your native country?

A. There are 5 families from Venezuela now living here in Thunder Bay, we are all in contact and support each other as needed. As for our family, they are still in Venezuela; we give them economical support.

**Presenter:** *Dr. Oleg Rubel - Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute*

Oleg Rubel was born in the Ukraine and emigrated from Germany in October 2008. Oleg and his wife moved to Germany because they saw it as a paradise, and had a job there. In Germany he

was a research associate at the Material Science Centre of the Phillips University. His wife, however, was not so lucky and could not find a job in Germany; even though she had her Master's in Economics.

Oleg was offered a job here in Thunder Bay and saw it as a chance to improve his family's life as it was not going very well in Germany. The family went to the Canadian Embassy in Berlin (which was their first interaction with Canada). Oleg and his wife had to obtain a work permit in order to come to Canada. This process usually takes weeks, but in Berlin it only took a matter of hours (3 to be exact).

The Multicultural Association offered assistance in helping Oleg and his family get settled in Thunder Bay. Their new neighbours were very helpful with everyday duties and also very helpful in helping choose their son's school. Oleg and his wife also found the school very helpful in the courses that they offered. This school in particular was a Catholic school, and although they were not Catholic the children were still accepted into this school.

The Multicultural Association also helped Oleg's wife to get a certificate so that she could get help with her speech and start to learn English. She also utilized the Job Connect program, which helped her find a job. Her first interview was not successful, because her English was not as "perfect" as the employer thought that it should be, and also because her Master's was not a Canadian certified document.

The immigration process that Oleg chose to use was the Provincial Nomination Program. Since Oleg was already offered a job here in Thunder Bay, his employer contacted this program, filled out the proper forms, demonstrating that they needed to hire Oleg for employment. Through nominating him, further papers were filled out and when everything was finalized, Oleg and his family moved to Thunder Bay.

### **Question and Answer Period**

Q. Is the Provincial Nomination Program through the Provincial Opportunities Program?

A. For the Provincial Nomination Program the employer should be the one to fill out all the proper documentation, you will then receive a package that must be filled out as well. This way is much easier and you will get approval in a shorter time period.

Q. Are you able to work while you are waiting for the documentation?

A. Yes, you just need to get a work permit while you wait for your citizenship.

**Presenter:** *Crescentia Dakubo, PhD*

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story with you as a skilled immigrant living in Thunder Bay. My name is Crescentia Dakubo. I was born in Ghana, West Africa. In 1995, I came to Canada on a scholarship to pursue a Masters degree in Forestry at Lakehead University.

I would like to start off by sharing some cultural attributes of Ghanaians. Ghanaians are known to be very warm-hearted, full of life and always happy. We like to laugh a lot, sometimes at



ourselves. In terms of governance, Ghana is a beacon in Africa and doing relatively well economically.

Imagine the culture shock I encountered upon my arrival in Thunder Bay. Forget the low temperatures and snow, those are anomalies and an indication that the world is coming to an end.

Just as you might find some aspects of the African culture shocking, so did I find some of the Canadian culture shocking. I will share a few with you. On my first day of school, on my way to class, I smiled and said “Hello!” and “Good morning!” to almost everyone I met, but never once received a single response back. I found this really interesting as Ghanaians like to greet and chat as we go about our daily activities. I was also struck by the quick pace at which people walked and I wondered what was at stake. In Ghana, we take our time when we walk. Upon arrival at the classroom, I found all the students seated in isolation with no socialization or conversation whatsoever. I found that really interesting, since in Ghana we have lots to catch up on. I also found it slightly rude when the students addressed the Professor by his first name and not preceded by “Dr.” or “Professor.”

Another event that surprised me was when I was invited to my Professor’s house for dinner, and saw him in the kitchen cooking and doing dishes, whilst his kids stayed with me in the family room. In Ghana, not only is it rare for men to cook, but a man of his stature, a professor, doing dishes? An individual of his stature in Ghana usually has too many helpers at his disposal, including cooks, garden boys, cleaners and sometimes a chauffeur. Right then, I knew I was in a completely different world.

Now, back to my story. During my graduate program at Lakehead, my husband, who is an internationally trained physician decided to join me. Little did he know about the obstacles that face some internationally trained physicians who attempt to practice in Canada. Later, he secured a job as a sessional lecturer at Lakehead University, where he taught several courses.

During my graduate program I took courses in different departments and was encouraged to sub-specialize in forest economics as it had better career prospects. That meant doing a second Masters in a different department if I wanted to stay in Thunder Bay. Given that my husband was still teaching at Lakehead, I accepted the opportunity. But when I went to register, I was denied the opportunity and told I had to return to Ghana as per my contract. So I agreed and went back, leaving my husband behind, still teaching at Lakehead University. Whilst in Ghana, my husband, with the support of his department, completed the permanent residence papers for me and our four-year old son who had stayed behind with my mother to enable me to pursue my graduate program.

Upon our return to Thunder Bay, with no tangible job prospects in hand, my husband and I decided to pursue further education and got accepted into two institutions in Ottawa. He was accepted as a postdoctoral fellow in Molecular Medicine at the Ottawa Health Research Institute, whilst I was accepted to Carleton University to pursue a Ph.D in Health Geography. Upon completing our programs, my husband was invited back to Thunder Bay to accept a position as a research scientist with a biotechnology company. This was a very difficult decision for me to relocate to Thunder Bay, since I was gainfully employed in Ottawa. But we both decided the calling

in Thunder Bay was an important one and we have since made Thunder Bay our home. In the midst of all this turmoil, we managed to increase the family size to six!

My recommendation for Thunder Bay as you take these baby steps to becoming a welcoming community is to realize that, in an era of a knowledge-based economy, communities that are truly welcoming do not have the luxury to choose between immigrants or separate spouses, all sectors must work in tandem to make life and transition for newcomers as bearable as possible. A resident from Thunder Bay visiting Ghana will be treated like royalty and you'll truly feel welcome! I challenge you to give it a trial and share the lessons.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity.

Crescentia Dakubo, Ph.D

### Question and Answer Period

Q. What do you do for the company that you work for?

A. I am an Economic and Policy Advisor.

## **Presentation: *Leveraging Immigrant Talent to Strengthen Canadian Business***

**Presenter:** *John DeGiacomo, Consultant*

Leveraging Immigrant Talent to Strengthen Canadian Business

Linda M. Manning, PhD, Director Email: [manning@leadershipdiversity.ca](mailto:manning@leadershipdiversity.ca)

- ❖ Objective: to maximize organizational capacity in Canadian small businesses through retention and advancement of highly skilled immigrant employees
  - Goals include:
    - Identify workplace practices that may
      - ✓ lead to employer turnover and disengagement
      - ✓ reduce employee productivity and retention
    - Identify practices to enhance engagement, leveraging of talent, and retention
    - Create learning model for managers
    - Create a free, e-learning experience for managers who want to engage and retain skilled immigrants in their workplace
- ❖ Project funded in part by HRSDC (30% of costs donated in time, expertise, space, and equipment by individuals and organizations)
- ❖ Focus group interviews with key stakeholders—identify learning objectives
- ❖ TalentNet, the talent management e-learning experience for managers in today's workforce

- ❖ Free and ready to play!
- ❖ Visit [www.leadershipdiversity.ca](http://www.leadershipdiversity.ca) to try it.
- ❖ Recognition of talent
  - competencies and credentials—formal/informal
- ❖ Social capital
  - reach goals more effectively through exchange
- ❖ Unintended bias in policies and practices
- ❖ Communication channels and style
- ❖ Unwritten/unspoken rules

Website: [www.leadershipdiversity.ca](http://www.leadershipdiversity.ca)

- ❖ Content and learning objectives are research driven;
- ❖ Learning is experiential and based on sound pedagogy;
- ❖ Learning assessment on observable, measurable game actions
- ❖ Evaluation results tell us how users learn from the game and if there has been an impact on workplace practices
- ❖ Starting out—best as blended learning tool

**TalentNet**

## Mission Selection

There are three missions for you to complete in this game. Each mission has objectives that are designed to help you become a great talent manager for your in-game team. At the start of the game only Mission 1 is available for you to play. As you complete each mission, the next one is unlocked for you.

After a mission is completed, you will receive feedback on your performance. Remember, if you leave a mission before completing it, your progress will not be saved and you won't be able to receive any feedback.

You can replay a mission or review your mission feedback from this screen.

To leave the game, click on the 'EXIT GAME' button.  
To get started, click on 'PLAY MISSION 1'.  
GOOD LUCK!

**Mission 1: Build Trust with Your Team**  
Mission Objective: Build enough trust with each of your team members to move all of them into the optimal zone on the performance dashboard.

**Mission 2: Manage and Appraise Performance**  
Mission Objective 1: Keep your project teams performing in the optimal zone  
Mission Objective 2: Conduct Performance Appraisals for members of your work group

**Mission 3: Identify your High Potentials**  
Mission Objective: Select and nominate the best candidates for the corporate leadership program

EXIT GAME

REPLAY MISSION FEEDBACK

REPLAY MISSION FEEDBACK

REPLAY MISSION FEEDBACK

REPLAY MISSION FEEDBACK

## **Closing Plenary Session:**

Because of the tightly scheduled day there was a lot of information to absorb so in lieu of a full plenary we took a few questions and asked each participant let us know about the day and what their view was by filling out the evaluations.

## **Next Steps**

Based on the evaluations, the subcommittees have conducted strategic planning toward setting goals and actions for next steps to be taken.

### *Subcommittee #1: Identification and Attraction*

The Business Immigration Attraction Committee (BIAC) has agreed to work with Subcommittee #1 in achieving the next steps.

- The Chamber of Commerce has agreed to work on a Business Succession Survey and will share its findings with the BIAC. Results of this survey expect to be available in the Spring of 2010 and will provide a list of businesses in Thunder Bay (and potentially Northwestern Ontario) that are open to foreign investments.
- As part of attraction, the BIAC and Subcommittee #1 is seeking to participate in the national job fair held in Toronto in October 2010. The expectation of this endeavour is to attract skilled-immigrants that have already landed in Canada and are seeking employment.

### *Subcommittee #2: Welcoming Community*

- Subcommittee #2 has revisited their list of goals, moving forward with a pro-immigration campaign. From this pro-immigration campaign, a community will be able to establish an idea of what a welcoming community looks like.

The Immigration Committee has committed to several other endeavours. Since the Forum in November, the committee has hosted various anti-racism/anti-oppression training sessions for employers throughout the region. Also, Dr. Lionel Laroche, has been invited to come back to Thunder Bay and present a workshop for employers in April 2010.

## Our Thanks

From “Building Bridges” to “Filling the Gaps,” it takes a dedicated team to achieve such a level of organizational dedication in moving this initiative along. With this in mind, we should take this time to thank our present stakeholders, a group of dedicated individuals covering organization and government departments and ministries:

Doris Rossi, North Superior Workforce Planning Board  
Chantal Bohémier, Association des Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l’Ontario  
Gina La Force, Thunder Bay Public Library  
Rebecca Johnson, Thunder Bay City Councilor  
Moffatt Makuto, Regional Multicultural Youth Council  
Tanka Awosika, Lakehead University International Student Advisor  
Tanya Niederer, Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute  
Mary Kozorys, John Rafferty’s Office  
Cathy Woodbeck, Thunder Bay Multicultural Association  
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Karen Honan, Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission  
Dave Farrell, North Superior Workforce Planning Board  
Gwen Wojda, Lakehead University  
Maritta Polowick, Confederation College  
Sandra Rejall, Service Canada

The volunteer staff: Steven Bill, Lisa Owens, Nikolas Fiorito, Rebecca Lamoureux, Sue Taniwa, Herman Hanschke

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Dr. Lionel Laroche, President - MultiCultural Business Solutions  
Walter Bilyk - WaltMar Systems Group  
Steven Baileys, Coordinator-Multicultural Programs - Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria  
Bruno Niederer – Performance Kia  
Don Curry - Executive Director - North Bay & District Multicultural Centre  
Michelle Lander – LIP Coordinator - Thunder Bay Multicultural Association  
Dr. Bharat Shrestha – Lakehead University  
Gillian Wan - Manager, Opportunities Ontario - Provincial Nominee Program - Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Benilda Silkowska-Masior - Manager- Global Experience Ontario - Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Dance Presentation by 5 year old Harleen Dhillon  
Ludit Villegas - Investors Group Financial Services  
Mozi Ndlangamandla - Investors Group Financial Services  
Dr.Crescentia Dakubo – FedNor  
Dr.Oleg Rubel - Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute

John DeGiacomo – Consultant  
Cathy Woodbeck, Executive Director - Thunder Bay Multicultural Association  
Marg Scott, Executive Director - North Superior Workforce Planning Board

We also must give our thanks to our Forum sponsors, who made this event possible.

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North Superior Workforce Planning Board

Thunder Bay Economic Development  
Commission  
The Entrepreneur Centre

Finally, we would like to extend a sincere “thank you” to all of our Forum delegates, for your rave reviews, positive comments, and the many commitments to the LIP Project.