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WELCOMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

ebulletin

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Conference Presentations

We are introducing a new section in the WCI website and e-bulletin that will showcase conference and meeting presentations delivered by our members. Our goal is to promote connections between researchers and community partners, and to increase awareness of the activities being undertaken by all members. To achieve this, we are asking all WCI members to send in a list of recent (last 4 months) and upcoming presentations to wci@uwo.ca. Wherever possible, please also include links or copies of the presentations that appear on the list. For this information to be included in the e-bulletin for a particular month, it will need to be submitted by the 7th of that month. The inclusion of presentations will be an ongoing feature on the WCI website.

Update in WCI Communica- tions: A New Website

The WCI website will be undergoing an extensive redesign aimed at modernizing the site, giving it a more professional appearance, and facilitating the addition of new content. The redesign will open up new capabilities, including the use of new media, such as audio and video technology, to communicate better with diverse audiences. The company we have chosen to work with –

after an extensive review process – is OAK Computing. We were impressed by OAK's conceptual approach to site design and organization, their technical prowess, their emphasis on user experience, and the work they have done for other organizations.

To help with the redesign, we are soliciting input from our network, including researchers, community members, and other stakeholders. In particular, we are looking for ideas about how to generate more content, how to better configure the site to support members, and how to build interest in our products. If you have ideas or suggestions for site redevelopment – including other sites that you think have interesting features, applications or content examples – please email your suggestions to wci@uwo.ca. Formal development will begin later this month with a projected launch date of mid-May.

New Communications Intern

In November, the WCI was approached by Krysten Connely, a fourth year student in the honours Bachelor of Arts program at the University of Ottawa, with an offer to serve a four-month apprenticeship with the project. Krysten is currently specializing in communication and will be pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication in the fall. What led

Krysten to choose the WCI was her interest in how diversity and identity influence communication. The apprenticeship aims to provide students with an opportunity to put into practice various communication skills and theories learned in the classroom.

During her apprenticeship, Krysten will be assisting the WCI in various communication-related tasks, chief among them, the redesign of the WCI's website. In this capacity, she will be conducting an analysis of how networks and organizations with similar missions to the WCI are employing new information and communication technologies. Based on this work, she will provide advice on how the use of new media might improve the WCI's ability to reach and influence multiple audiences including practitioners in the public and non-profit sectors, policymakers, academic researchers and the media. Finding strategies to cater to these diverse communities and suggesting how the WCI might reach valuable new audiences through the innovative use of new media will be a focal point of Krysten's work.

Ontario's Local Immigration Partnership Councils: Renewing Multiculturalism from Below?

In a recent presentation to the Collaborative Graduate Program in Migrant and Ethnic Relations at the University of Western Ontario, WCI researcher Professor Neil Bradford discussed the opportunities and challenges facing Ontario's Local Immigration Partnership Councils (LIPs). Offering a broad perspective, Bradford proposed that the LIPs be regarded as an innovative experiment in "renewing Canadian multiculturalism from below". Working with the ideas of noted diversity scholar, Will Kymlicka, Bradford suggested that the LIPs are building a "local interculturalism" that both

strengthens and operationalizes the policy foundations of Canadian multiculturalism.

While Canada has long been seen as a leader in immigration policy, both in welcoming and settling newcomers, the past two decades have revealed several worrying trends. Bradford's presentation (posted on the WCI website) takes stock of the challenges confronting Canada's "diversity model" and calls for a more community-driven public policy approach to tackle increasingly complex, local problems of newcomer economic and social exclusion. He argues that "hybrid institutions" such as the LIPs, by bridging traditional divides among governments and across sectors, will produce more integrated and relevant supports for immigrants regardless of where they live.

Crucial to the success of the LIPs, Bradford insisted, will be their capacity to induce "mainstreaming" – mobilizing local knowledge and experience to improve the diversity policies and programming of a wide swath of organizations, including government, business, and the community sector. In closing, Bradford identified a number of important transitions that the LIPs will need to address as they move from strategic planning to implementation, including recruitment of 'project champions', monitoring and measuring progress, and securing core funding.

Bradford's presentation was the fourth in a Fall series of talks about Canadian diversity and multiculturalism sponsored by the UWO's MER program. His presentation can be downloaded here: <http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/MER/MERprogram/presentations.asp>

“Taking Stock of a Turbulent Decade and Looking Ahead: Immigration to North America in 2000-2010”

An inter-disciplinary conference sponsored by the Western Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations and the Canada-U.S. Institute, The University of Western Ontario

April 28-30, 2011 London, Ontario

Conference Announcement:

This conference is the first of the Western Migration Conference series, created and run by the Western Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations at The University of Western Ontario, London, ON. “Taking Stock of a Turbulent Decade and Looking Ahead” is co-sponsored by the Canada-U.S. Institute and is an inter-disciplinary event with Canadian and American expert panelists speaking on five related themes, poster presentations showcasing recent findings in the area, and two keynote addresses sponsored by the Harold Crabtree Foundation Award in Public Policy. We are pleased to announce that the two keynote speakers will be Catrina Tapley, Citizenship and Immigration Canada; and Philip Martin, Comparative Immigration and Integration Program at the University of California, Davis. “Taking Stock of a Turbulent Decade and Looking Ahead” will explore the multifaceted and dynamic nature of immigration to Canada and the United States, providing a forum to discuss the future of immigration to North America.

Questions regarding the conference should be directed to Julianna Beaudoin at WMCSeries@gmail.com.

Information about the conference will be posted as it is available at: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/wmc/>, including registration opening soon.

Call for Poster Presentations:

The Western Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations, in partnership with the Canada-U.S. Institute, invites submissions for posters for the upcoming conference on **“Taking Stock of a Turbulent Decade and Looking Ahead: Immigration to North America in 2000-2010.”** The conference will take place in London, Ontario on April 28-30, 2011.

Guidelines for poster submissions:

- ◆ Poster proposals should include (a) a title of no more than 12 words, (b) a list of authors and their full affiliations and contact information, (c) a summary of 250 words, and (d) an abstract of 50 words
- ◆ Deadline for submissions is February 21, 2011
- ◆ Send submissions to WMCSeries@gmail.com
- ◆ Results will be announced by March 7, 2011

Questions regarding conference poster submissions should be directed to Julianna Beaudoin at WMCSeries@gmail.com

The Western Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations was established in 2008 in order to facilitate research and training that draws on academic knowledge to inform public policy and practice on migration and ethnic relations in Canada and internationally. The Centre includes the Collaborative Graduate Program in Migration and Ethnic Relations, in which students receive a graduate degree in a discipline-specific graduate program, as well as in the interdisciplinary program in Migration and Ethnic Relations. For more information, visit <http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/MER/MERcentre/>

The Canada-U.S. Institute, established in 2010, is the first interdisciplinary think tank in Canada devoted exclusively to studying the relationship between Canada and the United States. It focuses on the political, economic, legal, cultural, and historical dimensions of the Canada-U.S. relationship by undertaking research, policy development, and education. For more information, visit <http://thecanadausinstitute.uwo.ca>

Result of the WCI-LIP Survey on Measuring Outcomes

In March 2010, a report entitled "Characteristics of a Welcoming Community" was prepared by the WCI. The main aim of the study was to establish the contours of a welcoming community, resulting in the identification of 17 indicators. In a small follow up survey, LIPs were then asked to rank these indicators in terms of their usefulness to the LIPs and to the community generally. We received 34 responses, which have been compiled in the table below. The table shows the average score for each characteristic on a scale of 1-7 (1 = not at all useful; 7 = extremely useful).

The results are, by and large, intuitive but still interesting. As expected, employment tops the list, confirming the widely held perception that employment prospects play a critical role in newcomers' destination choices. Housing and Education tie for second place, reflecting their salience and lending additional weight to the importance of the interconnections between affordable and suitable housing, newcomers' ability to access education, and the proximity of housing to jobs and other important services. The fact that Housing can be found close to the top of the list is especially noteworthy as housing does not receive a great deal of attention in federal and provincial settlement programs. Housing issues are mostly dealt with by municipalities. Education is considered important for newcomer satisfaction and is frequently cited by newcomers as a main reason for wanting to remain in Canada.

Rank	Community Characteristic	Average (Scale of 1-7)
1	Employment	6.85
2	Housing	6.06
3	Education	6.06
4	Social Capital	6.05
5	Social Engagement Opportunities	6.05
6	Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community	5.90
7	Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers	5.84
8	Health and Healthcare	5.74
9	Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Meet the Needs of Newcomers	5.71
10	Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities	5.68
11	Media Coverage and Representation	5.32
12	Public Transit	5.29
13	Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities	5.27
14	Relationship with the Police and the Justice System	5.18
15	Political Participation	5.00
16	Safety	4.95
17	Diversity of Religious Organizations	4.79

The survey results, together with the information on geographic boundaries provided by the LIPs, will help guide the WCI/LIP Measuring Outcomes Team in gathering and collating data for the LIPs.

A New Framework for Multi-level Governance: Working Together to Improve Outcomes for Newcomers in Communities across Canada – an Important Message from the Community Connections Team in the Integration Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in Ottawa

Since the mid-1990s, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has increasingly recognized the importance of engagement at the local level. Municipalities play a central role in delivering many services that impact the settlement and integration experiences and outcomes of newcomers. Tremendous capacity and expertise exist at the local level as municipalities and communities take a greater role in planning and coordination.

For the first time, with the signing of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) in 2005, municipal engagement was explicitly included in a formal federal-provincial agreement. COIA established the Municipal Immigration Committee (MIC), which is co-chaired by CIC, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). Through the MIC, municipalities identified key priorities: attraction, retention, settlement and integration. COIA helped to generate the right conditions to create the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs).

LIPs represent a new form of multi-level governance for settlement and integration – involving municipal, provincial and federal partners – and a new form of community collaboration. LIPs actively engage many stakeholders to encourage a locally-driven strategic planning process to assess needs, coordinate services and improve outcomes. In March 2010, the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration released the Best Practices in Settlement Services Report, which recognized LIPs as a best practice and recommended that this model be expanded.

The Local Immigration Partnerships represent CIC's first institutionalized approach to offer funding at the community level. There are currently 35 LIPs in Ontario. In 2005, CIC began to fund the Toolbox of Ideas for Smaller Centres, which has provided valuable resources to communities across Canada. However, the LIPs model goes farther in building local capacity to meet the needs of newcomers.

Although the LIPs are currently based in Ontario, British Columbia has implemented a comparable strategy. With funding provided by the federal government under the Canada-BC Immigration Agreement, Welcome BC has created the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program (WICWP). This initiative has four community-level program elements: community partnership development; knowledge development and exchange; public education; and demonstration projects. There are also comparable efforts in other regions across Canada that engage mainstream institutions and collaborate with a range of stakeholders in the development of strategic community plans for the settlement of newcomers. Much like the LIPs, these initiatives are currently at various stages of development.

CIC and provincial counterparts at Manitoba Labour and Immigration have funded four rural case studies in Manitoba (Parkland Region, Portage la Prairie, Steinbach and Winkler) to assist communities developing strategies for immigrant attraction, settlement and retention. The cities of Edmonton and Calgary have both passed settlement policies,

as of May 2007 and January 2011, respectively. With funding from three levels of government, the City of Saskatoon has established an immigration action plan with funding from three levels of government. Quebec's Conférences régionales des élus are creating strategic plans, such as Limoilou Pluriel in the ward of Limoilou in Quebec City. In Atlantic Canada, the Atlantic Mayor's Congress held an immigration conference in 2005, and the Halifax Regional Municipality Immigration Action Plan followed. In addition, the francophone minority communities in New Brunswick are focused on attraction and retention of newcomers.

It is becoming evident that everyone has a role to play in building welcoming communities. Building on this momentum, there is demonstrated interest, capacity, and support for LIPs. In October 2010, Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, stated: "LIPs are the future of settlement services in Canada". In the Response to the Standing Committee's Best Practices in Settlement Services Report, CIC committed to: (1) support and expand LIPs in Ontario; and (2) explore the potential of pilot projects in other regions. As part of this response, CIC is currently developing a policy framework in consultation with key stakeholders to guide the future of LIPs.

Further information is available at the following websites:

Toolbox of Ideas for Smaller Centres

<http://www.icavictoria.org/community/community-partnership-resources/toolbox-ideas>

British Columbia

http://www.welcomebc.ca/wbc/service_providers/programs/welcome_program/index.page?WT.svl=LeftNav

Alberta

<http://www.healthyalberta.com/HealthyPlaces/759.htm>

www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/C529.doc

www.agendaminutes.calgary.ca/sirepub/view.aspx?cabinetEQUALSIGNpublishedmmmfileidEQUALSIGN22205

Saskatchewan

www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/CommunityPERCENTSIGN20Services/Communitydevelopment/Documents/ImmigrationActionPlan.pdf

Manitoba

<http://www2.immigratemanitoba.com/browse/regionalcommunities/communities-resources.html>

www.brandonu.ca/rdi

Quebec

<http://www.uquebec.ca/ptc/adsm/node/130>

Atlantic

http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/ActionPlanSept05_WebRes.pdf

Spotlight on Student Research

This month's spotlight on student research within the WCI is on PhD candidate and Trudeau Scholar Erin Tolley at Queen's University in Kingston. Erin can be reached at erin.tolley@queensu.ca.

Most Canadians are not directly involved in the electoral arena, nor are they personally acquainted with elected officials or candidates. They learn about politics and politicians through the media. As such, the quality, accuracy and tone of media coverage all have important implications. This is where Erin's dissertation begins, with an examination of the relationship between media coverage and candidate characteristics. It focuses, in particular, on race.

The project is motivated by research on women and politics, which suggests that the media cover female politicians differently than male politicians, tending to highlight their femininity, roles as wives and mothers, and interest in so-called women's issues. Similarly, research on the United States finds that the media's coverage of Black politicians typically focuses on their race and status as novelties or political outsiders, while disproportionately emphasizing their interest in so-called minority issues. These portrayals are often not consistent with candidates' own self-presentation. Drawing on this research, the dissertation proposes a theory of racial mediation, which is applied to the 2008 Canadian federal election.

The study compares the media coverage received by visible minority and non-minority candidates, as well as the electoral and communication strategies employed by both. It seeks to determine whether differences in coverage are correlated with candidates' personal characteristics and whether the media's portrayal is consistent with candidates' own self-presentation. Erin expects to find the coverage of visible minority candidates to be more racialized and not wholly consistent with candidates' self-presentation. This would suggest that race remains an important dividing line in Canadian politics and one that has the potential to distort the quality of information that voters receive. There are implications for democracy, electoral politics, and civic and political engagement in Canada.

Update on the Inventory Study

The City Inventory Study was launched at the inception of the WCI with a view to:

- i. Gathering information about WCI communities in order to establish a baseline against which to measure the success of discrete interventions within cities, including new projects, additional expenditures and new institutional structures.
- ii. Providing information that would permit meaningful comparisons across cities and could be used to evaluate progress by WCI communities towards becoming more welcoming.

With these objectives in mind, the Inventory Study sought to compile data about service availability, service gaps and the existence of special organizational structures to assist integration. The organizations from which data were sought included settlement service providers, municipal governments, educational organizations, health service providers, multicultural and ethnic NGOs and mainstream organizations (such as the United Way, Community Foundations).

To date, six communities have finished their inventories (Hamilton, Kingston, London, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Waterloo) and three others are nearing completion (Durham, North Bay and Ottawa). This will allow the Study to move into its second phase. The decision by the WCI to work closely with individual LIP organizations resulted in the major emphasis being placed on the first objective, that is, collecting data to assess the existing situation in each of the cities listed above. The next phase of analysis will attempt to redress the balance by focusing on the second objective, namely indicators and data that permit comparisons across cities. This will involve selecting a sub-set of crucial services, identifying related baseline measures, and ensuring that comparable data exist across the communities that have participated in the exercise. The research that follows should provide policymakers and practitioners with important insights into the 'machinery' of welcoming communities.

Thank You

We would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ontario Region for their continued financial support.