

2012 October



WELCOMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

ebulletin

In This Issue

- ◆ *Pathways to Prosperity Grant Application*
- ◆ *Annual Governing Council and Research Meeting*
- ◆ *Rounding Out the WCI Governing Council*
- ◆ *WCI Website*
- ◆ *Immigration Historical Society*
- ◆ *Connecting Communities Project*
- ◆ *Smiths Falls welcomes Local Immigration Partnership*
- ◆ *North Bay Agency Wins Prestigious Northern Ontario Business Award*
- ◆ *Conference Presentations*

Pathways to Prosperity Grant Application

In the August-September e-Bulletin, we reported our ambitious plans to hold consultations across the country and to widen the Project's scope, extending the partnership into a pan-Canadian enterprise. We are happy to report success on all fronts. Face-to-face meetings with academic researchers, immigrant service provider representatives and government officials have taken place in Halifax, St. John's and Regina. The Halifax meeting included stakeholders from the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec, while the Regina meeting included Prairie and British Columbia stakeholders. These sessions were supplemented by teleconferences with participants from British Columbia who could not attend the Regina meeting and from Ontario. All three provinces that were absent at the Letter of Intent stage – Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia – have now formally signaled their willingness to support the Pathways to Prosperity Initiative and to commit resources to the partnership. In total, some 150 people participated in the consultations. In a subsequent e-Bulletin, we will report key features of the application along with ideas that would be useful for the WCI to adopt regardless of how the Partnership Grant application fares.

The expansion of the Pathways to Prosperity Initiative to embrace three additional provinces means that the Project now consists of five regional nodes: a British Columbia Node; a Prairie Node; an Ontario Node (the Welcoming Communities Initiative will serve as the Ontario Node); a Quebec Node; and an Atlantic Node. Principle Investigators have been identified for each Node: two Investigators for each of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec; and at least one Investigator for each province in the Prairies and the Atlantic.

With the November 1st submission deadline looming – SSHRC's website features a count-down clock – work is in full swing to finalize the application along with a partner MOU. At the same time, a major effort is underway to continue partner and collaborator recruitment. We are hopeful that our application will be successful; if this does not prove to be the case, however, it will not be for want of effort or enthusiasm.

Annual Governing Council and Research Meeting

On November 17th, the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa will be host to a meeting of the WCI's Governing Council. Linked to this meeting will be a small workshop intended to put the spotlight on current WCI research. The original plan had been to convene our annual WCI-LIP conference at this time; however, government budgetary cutbacks would have severely constrained our ability to subsidize the attendance of LIP representatives and service provider organizations leading us to postpone that event until February, 2012.

The November Governing Council meeting will take stock of progress and accomplishments by the WCI at the mid-point of its five-year CURA Grant. Members will be asked to express their views on where the Initiative should direct its efforts in the time that remains. The research workshop following the Council meeting will showcase reports by WCI researchers on some of the more interesting studies that are currently underway. Reactions will be sought from invited stakeholders, including government officials.

Rounding Out the WCI Governing Council



Bruce Jamieson

In the August-September edition of the e-Bulletin, we reported that representatives of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Intergovernmental Affairs Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC-Ontario Region), and the Immigration Policy Branch of Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration had joined the WCI's Governing Council.

In this edition, we are pleased to announce that John Biles, Special Advisor at CIC National Headquarters Integration Branch, and Bruce Jamieson, Director of Research Knowledge Transfer in CIC's Research and Evaluation Branch will share a seat on the Governing Council. Having both policy and research representation will contribute to the WCI's understanding of policy and program issues and contribute to the twin goals of co-creating and disseminating knowledge.



John Biles

WCI Website

We are pleased to announce that the WCI's new website [welcomingcommunities.ca] is now up and running. Most, though not all, of the planned features are available. Final touches are still being put on the specialized search functions that will allow users to locate expertise and experts in our Find an Expert repository; and to search for articles that describe ways to measure and to combat racism and discrimination. Several other functions, such as a keyword system for tagging videos, also need to be tweaked. Once this is done, the WCI will concentrate on readying the French language site and building content. We would be very interested in your reactions to the new site and welcome your suggestions for further improvements and functions. OAK Consulting has done a fabulous job in working with the WCI in designing and implementing the website.

Immigration Historical Society

On September 14th, a very convivial meeting was held at the new Ottawa Convention Centre involving representatives from the WCI and a six-member group from the Immigration Historical Society. The aim of the meeting was to explore possible collaboration between the two organizations. A number of interesting joint projects and areas for shared development were identified, and participants from both groups were enthusiastic about the prospects and benefits of working together. The following ideas were felt to have 'legs':

- ◆ A series of workshops that would attempt to bring historical experience to bear on current issues. One possible topic involved contrasting the current paper-based selection system with the greater discretion and face-to-face contact that prevailed in the 80's. The workshop would examine such issues as fairness, cultural factors in selection, the value of interviews to assess labour market and integration readiness, as well as the opportunities afforded by interviews to impart information, to exert influence and to extend a welcome. Current policy interest and efforts to convey information to applicants prior to arrival can be viewed as attempts to redress drawbacks in paper-based procedures. Another aspect of this examination concerns the ability to influence destination decisions by immigrants, a topic that is a priority for the WCI.

- ◆ An oral history project. This would take the form of recorded video interviews with former officials who had been involved in important policy and program decisions as well as taking part in some of the more important and dramatic humanitarian interventions that defined Canada's immigration stance. Meeting participants agreed that a successful interview series would require careful preparation and background research, along with a script and interview guidelines. The recorded interviews would be made available on the WCI's website as well any venues decided by the Immigration Historical Society.



**Mr. Michael Molloy, President,
Canadian Immigration Historical
Society**

- ◆ A series of thematic documentaries that would draw on interview footage and the workshops, along with additional interviews and discussions. The WCI and the Historical Society would jointly identify the subject matter and develop the narrative line for the documentaries.

In addition to these project-based ideas, the discussion focused on the desirability of creating a university-based archive for material passed on by members of the Historical Society; also, discussed was the possibility that the WCI could host videos and articles produced by the Historical Society, providing technical assistance, especially around web-based technologies and web-related production, and ensuring a large and interested research, practice and policy audience for the Society's offerings.

Moving this initiative ahead will begin with an announcement at the Annual General Meeting of the Immigration Historical Society, an event that, this year, features an address by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. In November, the WCI has agreed to prepare a formal proposal to the Immigration Historical Society for implementing the ideas described above.

Connecting Communities Project

The Connecting Communities project would like to connect with and offer opportunities for collaboration to those involved in Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario. The driving force behind Connecting Communities is recognition of the destructive impact that lack of knowledge of legal and human rights can have on individuals and families. The project was created to support and facilitate legal information and referral training for front line, grass roots workers so that they can better support the communities they work with.

We know that people who do not speak English or French face additional obstacles in obtaining legal information – information that can be crucial to their livelihood and immigration status. As well, rural and remote communities experience unique challenges in accessing legal information and services. The mandate of our initiative is to work with immigrant, rural and remote communities to correct this situation. The Local Immigration Partnerships offer an excellent vehicle for promotion of and involvement in Connecting Communities.

Through Connecting Communities agencies can:

1. Develop and apply to carry out innovative, inter-agency legal information training projects for front line service providers and community leaders. A LIP Council or LIP subcommittee would be a great vehicle for this kind of inter-agency partnership.
2. Participate in our public legal education network and learning exchange, which will serve as a vehicle for service providers from a range of community agencies to increase their skills and knowledge related to public legal education.

For further information about Connecting Communities, including how to get involved, how to develop a Connecting Project or how to participate in the provincial learning exchange, please contact Vivien Green, Project Manager atgreenv@lao.on.ca (416-408-4420 ext 835). You can also find more information about us on the CLEO website www.cleo.on.ca

Connecting Communities is a project of CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario/ Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario) and is funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario.

Smiths Falls welcomes Local Immigration Partnership

On July 16th, the Smiths Falls Memorial Community Centre hosted a kickoff event to celebrate the new Smiths Falls Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), a partnership between newcomers, local business owners and government representatives. "This event helped generate awareness and excitement about our partnership," said Nicole Sullivan, the LIP coordinator in Smiths Falls.



The celebrations included a speech from newcomer Ming Shan Gu (right) about settling in Smiths Falls and a musical performance by local youth, Jason Yang, who played the Chinese harp. To participate in community consultations in the fall of 2011, please contact Nicole Sullivan at 613-283-4124 ext. 1164 or nsullivan@smithsfalls.ca.

North Bay Agency Wins Prestigious Northern Ontario Business Award

The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre (NBDMC) was one of ten Northern Ontario Business Awards recipients at the 25th anniversary celebration gala in Sudbury on September 27th. Approximately 500 people, including business leaders and politicians from across Northern Ontario, attended the event. They viewed a video depicting the agency, and Executive Director Don Curry gave a brief talk on the need for attracting, retaining and integrating internationally trained individuals in Northern Ontario.

He also discussed these issues with North Bay Mayor Al McDonald and Timmins Mayor Tom Laughren who attended the event. Sudbury Mayor Marianne Matichuk was a host and co-MC for the evening.

The North Bay and District Multicultural Centre was nominated by the North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce in the Entrepreneurial Community of the Year category. Curry said that the NBDMC was singled out because it has successfully leveraged core funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to attract other funders and create a range of programs to attract and retain newcomers. As examples, he referred to the North Bay Newcomer Network Immigrant Employers' Council, a Connector program; a new human resources support venture for small and medium-sized enterprises from North Bay to Timmins called HR North; and the Agency's expansion this year with an office in Timmins. Earlier this year, the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre hosted an immigration conference in North Bay, in conjunction with the Welcoming Communities Initiative, the Conference Board of Canada and the City of North Bay. Don Curry is a member of the WCI's Governing Council.

"What has made us successful is our excellent and dedicated staff, an equally dedicated group of volunteers, and the dynamic partnerships we have with the City of North Bay, WCI, Professions North, ALLIES, Timmins Economic Development Corporation, and the more than 50 members of the North Bay Newcomer Network, our LIP project," Curry said. "I think we do a pretty good job of telling the story, too. We are in the media a lot and we use our own newsletters to get the word out that immigration is important and the entire community needs to get behind it so that Northern Ontario cities and towns truly become welcoming communities."

An article on the agency appeared in a glossy magazine handed out at the awards gala and sent to 25,000 businesses and individuals. The video and article can be seen by following this link:

http://www.noba.ca/2011/winners/entrepren_comm.aspx#video

Conference Presentations

Casagrande, M. (2011, September). *Fostering Welcoming Communities through Local Immigration Partnerships in Ontario – A Capabilities Approach to Understanding Local Innovation and Integration*. Workshop Presentation at 16th International Metropolis, Conference. Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal.

Chow, Henry P.H. (2011, September). *Bringing the World to Saskatchewan: Effects of National Feelings, Citizenship, and Socio-political Orientation on Young Canadian Adults' Receptiveness to Immigration and Understanding of Multiculturalism*. Paper presented at the Joint Annual Conference of the Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Fleras, Augie (2011, September). *Rethinking Multicultural Governance in Canada: A Case for a Multiversal Multiculturalism*. Paper Presentation to the Multiculturalism Turns 40 Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Fleras, Augie (2011, September). *Ethnic Media in a Multicultural Canada: Partners or Paradox?* Paper Presentation to the Multiculturalism Turns 40 Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Gilkinson, Tara & Geneviève Sauvé (2011, September). *Recent Immigrants, Earlier Immigrants and the Canadian-Born: Personal and Social Trust*. Paper Presentation to the Multiculturalism Turns 40 Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Mulholland, Mary-Lee (2011, November), *Secularizing the Other: Religiously Affiliated Immigrant Settlement Agencies in Western Canada*, American Anthropology Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Sattler, P. & Peters, J. (2011, October). *Immigrant and visible minority applicants to postsecondary education*. Paper presented at the Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

Spitzer, D. L. (2011, September). *All in the Family: Chain Migration, Global Care Chains and the LCP*. Paper presentation. 16th International Metropolis Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal.

Spitzer, D. L. and Torres, S. (2011, September). *Transnational Families: Challenges and Change*. Workshop. 16th International Metropolis Conference. Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal.

Spitzer, D. L. (2011, September). *Lives in Transition: Filipino Youth in Canada*. 16th International Metropolis Conference. Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal.

Spitzer, D. L. (2011, November). *Who Cares? Immigration, Gender and Canada's Live-In Caregiver Program*. Invited presentation. Sally Weaver Memorial Lecture, University of Waterloo. Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

Türegün, A. (2011, April). *Immigrant Professionals in Ontario: Rebuilding Professional Lives as Settlement Workers*. Paper presented at the CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Seminar Series, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, .

Webber, G., Spitzer, D. L., Somrongsong, R., Dat, T., Kounnavongsa, S. and P. Bunnak, P. (2011, December). *Assessing Reproductive Health Services for Migrant Women in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Study of the Facilitators and Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care for Beer Promoters in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam*. Poster. Health System Reform in Asia. Hong Kong.

Thank You

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

