

OLIP Council Opening Remarks: Salimatou Diallo, Vice-Chair
First Annual Ottawa Immigration Forum, October 1, 2012



[Dick's Speech]

Merci Dick.

Several other promising initiatives have been possible thanks to the collaboration and commitment of the various partners of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership.

We firmly believe that the key to success is the integration of immigrants into their host communities, and influences their ability to integrate well into their immediate environment, namely their neighborhood.

- A new collaborative initiative by nine OLIP partners to build organizational capacity for being more welcoming to immigrants. This work is just now beginning and no doubt, you will learn more about it over the coming months.
 - Empowerment of immigrant civic actors through a series of workshops to expose how our systems of government, education, housing, health care work;
 - Plans to address the neighborhood dimension of immigrant integration by designing joint action initiatives in three areas: 1) research and planning for a more cohesive social development in neighborhoods; 2) greater access to community health care services for immigrants; and 3) civic engagement of immigrants, with specific focus on greater voter turnout by immigrants and greater participation and empowerment of immigrant civic actors.
- These are only selected examples on the results of Ottawa's action on the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. The full description of emerging collaboratives will soon be available on the new website.
 - Building a prosperous and vibrant city requires many activities. Yes they certainly include things like light rail, good physical infrastructure, green spaces, community meeting places and much more.
 - In our opinion the work of OLIP and its approach to building solutions that span across sectors is truly essential to building our city. This work is focused on what we believe to be the most important element of city building - the people dimension.

OLIP Council Opening Remarks: Salimatou Diallo, Vice-Chair
First Annual Ottawa Immigration Forum, October 1, 2012



-
- Cities are primarily about people. And considering that, according to the 2006 census, immigration is responsible for 80 percent of our city’s population growth and 100 percent of net labour force growth – we can conclude that our city’s economic and social development prospects are in lock-step with our success in attracting, welcoming and integrating immigrants.
 - There is ample evidence showing that corporate investment is closely aligned with the ability of companies to access the best and the brightest. This means access to an international pool of talent; but it also means attracting diverse domestic workers who want to live in a cosmopolitan city that is diverse, interesting and fun.
 - Moreover, being the national capital city, we the OLIP Council are determined to show leadership in upholding and strengthening the Canadian policy of valuing diversity and bilingualism.
 - We are certainly off to a good start. We have a common vision and priorities; we have the commitment and leadership of the OLIP partners and our stakeholders; and with only one year of effort, we have proven that our community is up to the task of implementing the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.
 - Today, at the 1st Annual Ottawa Immigration Forum, we, the OLIP Council, are pleased to bring the attention of our community to the many, often un-named contributions of immigrants to our city’s prosperity and vitality. In our journey towards our shared goals, we think it is wise to start by appreciating the assets we have in our midst.
 - Through the full day of the 2012 Forum, you will experience selected aspects of immigrants’ contributions in job creation, innovation, and literature, health and wellbeing..;
 - We will have an opportunity to celebrate together through a selection of fun and reflective engagements: music, songs, food, and the viewing of short documentaries to helps us reflect together on the experiences of immigrants
 - And you will be engaged to imagine new ways to better leverage the multiple contributions of immigrants.

Merci!