

PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTEGRATION

ISSUE 1 • SEPTEMBER 2012

Newsletter of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership

Message to Community Members

Welcome to the first issue of the *Partnerships for Integration* newsletter!

We are grateful to the Community Foundation of Ottawa for its generous grant to build the communications capacity of OLIP. Without this grant, the *Partnerships for Integration* newsletter would not be possible.

We are very excited about our newsletter, but most of all we are very appreciative of the expertise and hard work of Heather Chew and her colleagues at Blueprint Public Relations, and the brilliant skills and dedication of our Knowledge and Partner Relations Officer, Hasmik Minasyan. Thanks also to the OAK Computing team – Manu Sharma, Sonia Riahi, Tyler Pearce, Dave Hunt and Obaid Ahmed – for the magic they do with web technologies, which made the distribution of this newsletter and its dynamic features achievable. We fully recognize that without this confluence of resources, expertise and hard work, we would not have the *Partnership for Integration* newsletter.

The first issue is rich in content and will no doubt allow you access to a wide range of topical information – research and knowledge perspectives on the work of OLIP, community action on the Ottawa

Immigration Strategy, and on what is creating a buzz in the field of immigrant integration. You will also get news here to stay current on various happenings that are relevant to the work of OLIP partners and their clients.

The Tips and Tools section will allow our partners to share insights on how to facilitate our work. Working in partnership will most certainly yield great results, but it requires new types of expertise and new tools. The *Partnerships for Integration* newsletter will become a vehicle for disseminating successful approaches to enhancing collaboration for the pursuit of a collective community impact in the attraction, settlement and integration of immigrants.

The Honour Roll section will bring the spotlight to local successes. In this issue, we recognize our community at large. Not many people know that Ottawa is home to innovation in the field of immigrant integration. Great work is taking place in our community. Often, as good Canadians, we are hesitant to sing our praises. In each issue, Honour Roll will profile a story on a good practice in our community.

Finally, we wish to thank the many contributors who have provided outstanding content for all the sections of the newsletter. Keep them coming! You can address your ideas for content to Hasmik Minasyan at Hasmik@olip-plio.ca

Happy reading!



Dick Steward
Chair, OLIP Council



Salimatu Diallo
Vice Chair, OLIP Council



Caroline Andrew
Chair, OLIP Steering Committee



Hindia Mohamoud
Director, OLIP

Masthead Photo: Marc-André Cossette

in this issue

2 Perspectives on Immigrant Integration

3 Featured Action on the Ottawa Immigration Strategy

5 Community Buzz

6 Tips and Tools

7 Honour Roll

8 Newsflash

Immigrant Integration: It Happens in Communities

When we talk about immigrant integration, we tend to focus on economic integration. While very important, economic integration efforts will not be successful without strategies for social and cultural integration.

Not only are social and cultural integration just as important as economic integration, they tend to be more complex and, most importantly, they help pave the ground for economic integration. Economic integration is about integrating in the workforce. Social/cultural integration is about becoming part of a community. It requires shared experiences, mutual understanding and appreciation between the local community and newcomers.

We always hear about social capital and cultural intelligence – your networks, friends, how you relate to each other, common points of reference such as sports, music, books, etc. This is what connects people. We often hear

hiring managers talk about assessing the ‘fit’ of a job candidate, in addition to education and experience. How do you define fit in the corporate setting? This is intangible yet very important. In order to succeed at work, it’s not just about what you know, but who you know and who knows you.

Integration is a two-way street. We tend to focus on supporting newcomers adapting to local communities; we also need to help local communities adapt to newcomers. Living parallel is not integration. Like a stir-fry, before putting all ingredients together, you first need to heat up the wok, and later add some sauce to allow all ingredients to mingle – you get a fusion of all cultures. Integration begins with respecting all cultures, but goes further. Multiculturalism means valuing contributions of all cultures to the common Canadian heritage and

embracing differences.

We have good policies in Canada: multiculturalism, employment equity, bilingualism, etc. We should be proud of these policies. However, policy can only go so far. It takes a community effort to turn a city into a welcoming community. Integration happens on the ground, and not simply because Canada has a policy on integration. It happens at work, in school yards and classrooms, at the hospital, in the neighborhood. It does not happen in a framework, but in places where people live, work and play together.

To succeed, we need to constantly facilitate quality interactions between Canadians and newcomers, and build capacity on each way of the street, and in the middle. We need to keep the pot hot so that the flavour of all the ingredients come together and enhance each other.



Dr. Jean Lock Kunz is a director with Policy Horizons Canada (formerly Policy Research Initiative). She leads projects on social innovation, social media, network governance, and multicultural diversity. Her other areas of work include policy research on economic reform and migrant integration in China. An immigrant to Canada, Dr. Kunz began her career in policy research at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. She obtained her Master's degree at the University of Toronto, and her doctorate at the University of Waterloo.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Participate and Pass the Word

OLIP Council invites you to the First Annual Ottawa Immigration Forum: Valuing & Leveraging Immigrants' Contributions

Monday, October 1, 2012 • 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m

Jean Pigott Place, first floor, Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario

LEARN about action on the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. CELEBRATE our collective success

CONTRIBUTE your ideas in our collective effort to deal with challenges

To confirm your registration please contact Sherri Anderson, OLIP administration officer at 613-232-9634 ext. 385 or sherri@olip-plio.ca.

Valuing and Leveraging Immigrants' Entrepreneurial Spirit

The City of Ottawa will present its first annual Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards at the first annual Ottawa Immigration Forum on October 1, 2012. The new annual tradition is an important milestone in the community's collective action to achieve the OIS goals of making Ottawa a leader in valuing and leveraging immigrants' entrepreneurship, and for providing effective support for immigrants engaged as entrepreneurs and small business owners.

The economic benefits brought by immigrant entrepreneurs have been largely recognized. Immigrant owned businesses create jobs, help Ottawa access global markets, and also are vehicles for meeting the evolving consumer demand as our tastes change with increasing diversity. The Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards are an opportunity to celebrate the valuable contributions made by immigrant business people to Ottawa's economic prosperity.

Immigrants, by their nature, are risk takers and entrepreneurs, demonstrated by the fact they ventured to a new country to build a new life in their adopted homeland. According to a new study funded by the Maytree and Metcalf foundations, immigrant self-employment rates slightly exceed that of the Canadian-born population. "Among the self-employed, immigrants on the whole earned higher incomes than their Canadian-born counterparts particularly among the most successful entrepreneurs," writes Sarah V. Wayland, author of the study (2011, p. ii).

The unique challenges and systemic barriers, however, persist to prevent a large segment of immigrants, particularly less advantaged groups, to start their own business. Financing is the key challenge, compounded by language difficulties, lack of familiarity with local business culture, lack of social networks, and discrimination. "General supports exist, but they are not designed to consider the needs of immigrant entrepreneurs,"

writes Wayland (2011, p.ii).

The OLIP Economic Sector Table is working to remove these barriers by improving the accessibility and utility of existing business supports, including access to loans for immigrants interested in self-employment. Stay tuned for upcoming stories on action in the subsequent issues of the OLIP newsletter.

The "Immigrant Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship in the GTA: Literature, Data, and Program Review" (2011) study by Sarah V. Wayland is available on Maytree Foundation's website, Policy Papers section.

YMCA / YWCA Centralized Language Assessment and Referral System Project

A new approach to language assessment and referrals is about to come to town. The Centralized Language Assessment and Referral System (CLARS) is the result of federal and provincial cooperation in the establishment of common assessment of language competency and a common referral of clients.

Ottawa is one of four pilot sites to test the smooth running of this new approach. Ottawa was chosen as it will experience the implementation of CLARS in a unique way because the city attracts a large Francophone population and because of the presence of the largest French school boards in Ontario.

CLARS is the result of a vocalized need by the language training community for creating unified and consistent language testing and referral system, bringing the provincial and federal funded programs together for the first time in this capacity. As was revealed by the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, "language training for newcomers in Ontario is funded by both the federal and provincial governments. However, lack of coordination programs leads to inconsistencies in language training, including differing standards, eligibility requirements, and factors affecting accessibility such as childcare and flexibility of hours."

The new CLARS will help solve some of these challenges.

CLARS provides the ability to refer newcomers to the language training that best meets their needs, regardless of whether the course is funded by the federal or provincial government. For example, clients will now be made aware of service access locations so that they may choose the classes that are closest to their homes or workplace. In addition, with clear benchmarking of the level of language competency of individual immigrants, the program will be especially useful for newcomers looking for employment. And, with some further efforts, the new program may also enable Ottawa to assist employers to develop a greater understanding about language benchmarks.

Another important shift in the new approach is that, thanks to the cooperation of federal and provincial governments, the CLARS model will serve all newcomers regardless of immigration status and ensure they have access to a high quality and professional language assessment in English and/or French, conducted by a certified CCLB language assessor. The one-stop approach will also allow both governments and the

community at large to gain a better sense of the demographic, gender, age and other defining descriptors of learners accessing language training in Ontario.

The next steps for CLARS are to convene the major players, especially the four school boards in Ottawa, to ensure implementation is carried out smoothly. CLARS should be implemented and working by September 2013, and be fully operational and evaluated by September 2014.

For more information, contact Tanya Mendes-Gagnon, senior director of Newcomer Services, YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region, tanya.mendes@nationalcapitalregionymca-ywca.ca, 613-238-5462 ext. 20.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Participate and Pass the Word

OLIP Open House: Connecting with Immigrant Communities

December 13, 2012

The OLIP Open House intends to connect with immigrant communities to facilitate their engagement with the OLIP process.

Save the Date!

Addressing Diabetes in High Risk Ethnic Minority Populations

Some ethnic minority communities in Ottawa, especially South Asian, Latin American, and African-Caribbean immigrants, have the highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes and poorer health outcomes. Factors leading to these poorer outcomes include low health literacy, barriers to accessing health services, detrimental diet and exercise, changes in the new environment, combined with genetic risk and financial and time limitations that restrict diet and exercise opportunities.

Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health, the "Addressing Diabetes in High Risk Minority Communities" project is a community engagement and education initiative. It is conducted as a partnership between the Elizabeth Bruyère Research Institute and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa, the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), C.T. Lamont Centre for Primary Health Care Research at the University of Ottawa, the Diabetes

Regional Coordinating Centre housed at the Centretown Community Health Centre, the Canadian Diabetes Education Program of Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health, the Canadian Diabetes Association, OLIP, and leaders of high risk immigrant communities of Punjabi, Nepalese, Somali, and Latin American background.

The main thrust of the program is to understand how to engage with high risk communities so as to enable prevention and greater access to diabetes care services. Over 18 months, the project team held consultations with 35 community leaders to develop greater understanding of risk factors. This research phase led to important findings and recommendations, which are outlined in the final report "Addressing Diabetes in High Risk Ethnic Minority Populations." Among the findings are important insights on how to improve immigrant community capacity around

type 2 diabetes awareness, education and care, as well as how to develop outreach strategies to high risk immigrant communities.

Renewed funding, allowed for phase II of the project, which is to implement some of the findings in phase I.

The current phase of the project is called the Champlain Diabetes SCREEN Project.

The SCREEN project is currently scaling up capacity to reach the affected communities to improve access to diabetes prevention and control services. The project is ongoing and is being pursued as a promising practice. If there is concrete evidence that it is an effective strategy, it may be scaled up to other cities through other LHINs. This will most likely become another home-grown good practice.

For more information, contact Kevin Pottie, kpottie@uottawa.ca, 613-866-0609.

Health Skills, Health Smarts Program

In 2007, the Canadian Council on Learning reported that 60 per cent of adults in Canada lack the capacity to obtain, understand and act upon health information and services and to make appropriate health decisions. These populations possess low health literacy and are particularly vulnerable to poor health outcomes. Within these at-risk populations, immigrants and refugees stand out as some of the most vulnerable as they often lack language skills and are in a new health, exercise and nutrition environment.

In 2010, the City of Ottawa developed a program that would improve the health literacy of newcomers to the region. Health Skills, Health Smarts is an Ottawa Public Health literacy program that trains settlement workers to provide key health information to newcomers. Through training on topics such as nutrition, physical activity, grocery

shopping, when and how to see a medical practitioner, and when to go to the hospital or call emergency services, the program trains settlement and frontline workers to improve the health literacy of newcomers to Ottawa. Overall, the program promotes health literacy by providing simple and practical health knowledge to assist immigrants and refugees in making appropriate decisions to keep themselves and their family healthy. It provides appropriate information to inform them about available health services in the community and how to access them.

The next phase will involve the recruitment and training of additional settlement workers from community health and resource centers and settlement agencies to reach the program's goal of training 100 workers in the Health Skills, Health Smarts program. By the end of 2013,

the project will be fully implemented and evaluated.

The OLIP process facilitated engagement of agencies and organizations which serve immigrants and refugees to be part of HSHS project. It has also provided an opportunity to work with the target communities because it is composed of many organizations and individuals who are already working to improve health and other outcomes for newcomers. This collaborative approach to action makes the success of this program possible.

For more information, contact Abebe Engdasaw, Equal Access and Diversity Specialist, Ottawa Public Health, City of Ottawa, abebe.engdasaw@ottawa.ca, 613-580-6744 ext 23730.

Ottawa is a member of the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination

In 2004, UNESCO launched the International Coalition of Cities against Racism which consists of cities interested in sharing their experiences to improve their policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance. One year later, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO launched the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD) aimed at broadening and strengthening our society's ability to protect and promote human rights through coordination and shared responsibility among local governments, civil society organizations and other democratic institutions. Currently, 54 municipalities in nine provinces and one territory are members of CCMARD. The City of Ottawa joined CCMARD in April of 2011.

By joining the Coalition, the City of Ottawa reiterates its commitment to ending racism and discrimination, and ensuring equitable and inclusive services for all its residents. The City of Ottawa's participation is especially important as the capital city of a country that has adopted values of multiculturalism and diversity.

CCMARD has developed the "Toolkit for Municipalities, Organizations and Citizens" providing practical information to support the work of municipalities and their partners in strengthening their local initiatives and policies against racism and discrimination.

For more information: www.unesco.ca/en/home-accueil/ccmard-cmrdr.aspx

UPCOMING EVENTS: Participate and Pass the Word

Mayor's Youth Summit 2012 Employment and Civic Engagement as Central Themes

**Friday, October 12, 2012
8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Host: Mayor Jim Watson
Target participants:
Youth ages 16 to 25

Register at ottawa.ca or by calling 311. Registration is first come, first served. For additional information, go to ottawa.ca/youth or e-mail youth@ottawa.ca.

Can't attend the summit in person?
Follow along online on
October 12 at ottawa.ca/youth.

OLIP's new website to be virtual community hub

Thanks to generous funding by the Community Foundation of Ottawa, OLIP is excited to announce the launch of its new website in November 2012.

Upgrades to the site include features to allow better engagement by community partners, and promote leadership and community-wide action on the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. The website aims to become a virtual hub for the broad OLIP community easing the flow of information to build awareness and cross-pollination of each other's work.

Through the Knowledge and Best Practices section, the website will encourage practical use of current research on immigration, and build shared understanding and learning from innovative practices across the sectors.

An ongoing forum will be created for ideas exchange and collaboration among partners and those sharing the common vision of an inclusive and prosperous Ottawa. Contribution from all will be welcome.

We'll still be located at www.olip-plio.ca, and we invite you to visit often! Together, we can make it a truly effective engine to



promote OLIP's mission of community-wide collaboration.

OLIP extends its sincere appreciation for the work of the OAK Computing team whose creative ideas and enthusiasm for OLIP's work made the new website possible.

Did you know?

- **Ottawa has the second highest number of refugees of the top five cities for immigration in Canada with an annual average share of 17.9%.**
- **Between 1996 and 2001, 21% of new immigrants in Ottawa were refugees.**

Did you know?

- **17.7% of immigrants who arrived to Canada between 2001-2006 were bilingual in French and English.**
- **16.3% of Francophones living in Ottawa are immigrants.**

The lived experiences of Chinese head tax: A Canadian tale

The Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre (OCCSC) is a community-based charitable organization committed to advancing the full social and economic integration and participation of newcomers, immigrants and people of Chinese descent in Ottawa. Some of its founders are children of head tax payers.

Among the first children of Chinese immigrants to be born in the Ottawa area, these children grew up in the shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act. In small towns, families like theirs often ran the lone Chinese-owned cafe. Their stories, from the era of the head tax through to the repeal of the Exclusion Act, remained largely untold – even within families.

For that reason, in 2011 and 2012, the OCCSC applied for and received a grant

from the federal government's Community Historical Recognition Program to create a website to discover, share and preserve stories from that time to safeguard a place for Ottawa area pioneers in the historical record and to provide an educational resource for future generations and researchers.

The OCCSC will launch the website www.livesofthefamily.com in September 2012. The site tells the stories of 20 families, features 17 video clips, and is illustrated with 200 photographs. These stories are rooted in a familiar tale of immigration, of leaving a homeland to start anew and because of exclusion, and of occupying the traditional occupational niche of laundries and cafes. However, these stories also tell of adaptation to a society that was far from

any large Chinatown, as well as of individuals using their talents and seizing opportunity as Canada itself was transformed by war and a growing economy. In the telling of such stories is a Canadian tale.

The website chronicles the research and interviews conducted by award-winning writer Denise Chong, whom the OCCSC contracted for this project. Ms. Chong is a third-generation Canadian of Chinese descent. She earned a BA in Economics at the University of British Columbia (1975) and an MA in Economics and Public Policy at the University of Toronto (1978). She is renowned as a writer and commentator on Canadian history and on the family. She is the author of *The Concubine's Children* (1994), *The Girl in the Picture* (2000) and *Egg on Mao* (2009).

TIPS AND TOOLS

Web Design for Non-Profits: How to raise the bar

By Manu Sharma, managing partner with OAK Computing in Ottawa. OAK is currently redesigning and re-developing the new OLIP website which will be launched in mid-November.

As a technology professional who has closely worked with non-profits and social enterprises for a greater part of the past decade, I've reflected on how these organizations can be better interfaced with the potential of technology – specifically the power and outreach of the modern day web that has created unlimited potential for citizen engagement through the advent of social media and collaborative cloud technologies.

One specific issue that is limiting the outreach and engagement potential of non-profit websites is design and layout. A case can be made that a non-profit website needs to offer more than an average corporate site because the mandate is often more inclusive and the targeted audience often not as well defined. A non-profit's website design has to appeal to the organization's targeted clientele while also creating a sense of excitement around

engagement for any potential donors and/or volunteers. A website with carefully selected fonts, colors and other graphical elements enhances the user experience by creating easy navigation, promoting interaction, highlighting the cause, and pushing calls to action. For organizations that are often counting on high public awareness to create and drive change, bad web design is no longer an option.

Here are our top five recommendations for effective website design:

1. **Make sure your mission and your content stand out.** Your web design should first and foremost highlight the cause of your organization, and the change you are driving in that field.
2. **Cater to your audience.** Your web design should present the content in a way that it is intuitive and easy for your audience to consume. A good design has a proper balance of simplicity and functionality. Also, your design should not take the knowledge of your visitors for granted.
3. **Make your site donor/volunteer friendly.** The design should present a simple and intuitive process for potential donors and volunteers to engage with your organization. Clear and simple calls to action should be used.
4. **Make your site media friendly.** Design should highlight key information items such as key organizational personnel, quotes from clients, images for publication, strategic summaries etc. This should be aimed at anyone with an audience, and not just the typical media professionals and journalists. Modern day social web presents powerful opportunities with influential bloggers who can create immense exposure for your cause.
5. **Leverage the strength of dynamic content.** Your web design should create options for presenting constantly refreshed content whether it is developed in-house or syndicated from other content creators. Dynamic content keeps your cause and your organization prevalent.

Ottawa Home to Integration Innovations

Ottawa is a destination of choice for immigrants and refugees. We know that the settlement and integration path of our city's new residents and citizens is mired with many complex challenges. Collectively, we have developed the Ottawa Immigration Strategy to respond to these challenges.

What is perhaps less known is that the Ottawa Immigration Strategy builds on some tremendous successes Ottawa has achieved in the integration of immigrants. Few people know that many innovative ideas in the field of immigrant integration were born in Ottawa and initiated by OLIP partners. These ideas have been replicated in other communities and some have engendered new national practices. The following are three best practices that were initiated by Ottawa. For other home-grown best practices, please visit the OLIP website: www.olip-plio.ca.

Community Cup: Learn, Play, Connect and Celebrate

Started in 2005 and run by the Catholic Centre for Immigrants, the Community Cup is an annual outdoor family day and soccer tournament. The event is free and brings together more than 2,000 participants annually. The day includes soccer games, a citizenship ceremony, community tent (information on services in the city), food services, live music and performances, and a kids' zone. It also provides for intercultural dialogue through very diverse groups sharing activities and sharing reactions, attitudes and hopes. The planning of the event engages a large number of volunteers, most of whom are new immigrants themselves. Immigrant volunteers work with event planning professionals and participate in many small events leading up to the Community Cup day.

The model is currently being replicated in four Ontario cities. "Thanks to funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, we can continue to offer a great celebration each June, help other communities host a Community Cup, and expand on what we have seen work for a newcomer's integration in Ottawa," said Dan Dubeau, Community Cup program manager.

Health Advocacy for Refugees Program (HARP)

The Health Advocacy for Refugees Program (HARP) began in 2005 to train medical



students to work with newly arriving refugees, to foster competence in dealing with different cultures, raise awareness of global health, and engage medical students in work with under-served populations in primary care. The innovation lies in finding a new way of responding to an important need of mending the cultural gap between medical professionals and new immigrants and refugees. Canadian family physicians serve a patient population that is increasingly diverse both culturally and linguistically.

HARP offers medical students and future physicians an opportunity to work with at least one refugee family and be guided by a family physician mentor. The students are also offered debriefing workshops to consolidate their learning. In addition, HARP offers an internet-based training module, a self-assessment workbook on global and refugee health, and a workshop on competency in inter-cultural matters. Students who complete this program are eligible for further electives at a refugee health clinic.

The program has now been replicated in five cities and nine universities across Canada and has influenced medical schools and health service delivery for refugees in Newfoundland and Saskatchewan.

Multicultural Liaison Officer (MLO) program

Developed in the early 1990s, the MLO program works with local school boards to facilitate the integration of immigrant students in Ottawa's schools. The program was conceived as a response to a rapid rise in the number of immigrant students in schools and the emergence of frequent intercultural tensions and challenges. As the name

suggests, multicultural liaison officers act as bridges between students, parents and school staff, promote the transfer of information between families and schools, and support through referrals the settlement process of the parents. The work is done in 20 languages and is delivered in 63 local schools.

Since its inception, the program has received many awards, including one from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and the Phi Delta Kappa University of Ottawa Chapter. In addition it is replicated in cities across Canada. The well-known Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program is modelled after Ottawa's Multicultural Liaison Officer program.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Participate and Pass the Word

Internationally Educated Professionals' Conference

Tuesday, October 16, 2012
All-day event, starting at 8:30 a.m.

Ottawa Convention Centre
55 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa ON

Lead organizing agency:
Algonquin College
In partnership with: La Cite
Collégiale and LASI World Skills

To register, contact one of the
organizing agencies.

Space is limited!

Farms for Lease

Immigrants who are qualified farmers are eligible to be considered by the National Capital Commission (NCC) to farm available farmland in Ottawa's Greenbelt on a long term basis. This initiative is in support of the NCC's Sustainable Agriculture Vision.

Farms are between five and 45 hectares (12 to 111 acres). Soil types range from Class 1 to Class 5. Most farms include a house and out-buildings. The lease does not include farming equipment (tractors, tools).

Successful applicants will demonstrate the feasibility of their project by describing their proposed short- and long-term plans, land management practices, and marketing plan.

Successful applicants must also demonstrate proof of financial means and consent to a verification of their credit rating.

The NCC will be posting a request for proposals this fall.

For more information:
Patricia Talbot, (613) 239-5574
www.canadacapital.gc.ca/places-to-visit/greenbelt/news/2012-05-28/farms-lease-greenbelt

Learn to Camp Program

Discovering the land and environment of your new country is a significant aspect of successful integration into a community. Many newcomers haven't had the opportunity to venture into the multitude of parks that dot the Ontario landscape, nor have they experienced the joy of camping, Canadian-style. Furthermore, 74 per cent of new Canadians said they need a hands-on course about camping before they would get out and camp.

In response, Ontario Parks developed the Learn to Camp program for those who lack the skills and confidence to try a vacation in a provincial park. The program offers participants three choices to learn about camping: exploring online for information to help plan a camping trip; participating in a free community-based session; or staying overnight in one of the six provincial parks that are part of the pilot program.

There is a small registration fee for the overnight camping program, which includes: a campsite for up to six participants; use of camping equipment during the stay; training by Ontario Parks staff through a series of fun and interactive sessions; use of park facilities throughout the stay; one free bag of ice and firewood; and parking for one vehicle at the campsite.

The number of participants has more than doubled since 2011. The program has served 500 groups involving approx. 2,000 people participating in overnight camping. Approximately 70 per cent of participants are newcomers who have either done camping in their home country and wanted to expand that experience in Canada, or who wanted to explore their new country.

For more information on this program, visit www.parkreports.com/parksblog/?p=1782.



Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneurship Awards: Call for Nominations

The City of Ottawa seeks nominations for its first annual Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards.

Deadline for submitting nominations: September 14, 2012

E-mail submission to: entrepreneur@ottawa.ca

Nomination applications must include: nominee's contact information; year of immigration to Canada; current number of employees; a description of business products or services; a concise summary of no more than 500 words of contribution to business development and the local economy and two references with contact information.

Submissions will be evaluated in five entrepreneur business categories:

1. Youth business entrepreneurs (under 35 years of age)
2. Women entrepreneurs
3. Innovation-oriented entrepreneurs
4. Social enterprises (with social, environmental or cultural mandate as the primary concern of the business)
5. Fast-growth enterprises.

For more information about the award nominations, please contact the nomination coordinator at: 613-580-2424, ext. 16663.

If you have ideas or suggestions
for this newsletter, please contact:
Hasmik Minasyan, Ottawa Local Immigration
Partnership, 613-232-9634 Ext. 318
hasmik@olip-plio.ca

Design: Pivot Point Solutions