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Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies

2009
AAISA Provincial Conference

“Enhancing Client-Centred Services in Challenging Times”

October 22nd & 23rd 2009
Coast Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre
1316 -33rd Street NE, Calgary, Alberta

2009 AAISA Provincial Conference Report

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Forward

AAISA held its biannual professional development conference for settlement practitioners on October 22nd & 23rd, in Calgary, Alberta at the Coast Plaza Hotel, located at 1316 - 33rd Street NE. The conference was entitled '**Enhancing Client Centered Services in Challenging Times.**' This was an opportunity for settlement practitioners in Alberta to convene to discuss initiatives and to collaborate on ways to improve services offered to immigrants.

The theme of the conference was client-centered services. As client needs are ever changing and increasingly diverse, it is essential that settlement practitioners be well equipped to provide high quality services. Settlement practitioners must constantly increase skill sets, knowledge and experience to ensure the successful integration of each client. To assist in this process, the conference workshop sessions focused on cultural competencies, professionalism in the sector, as well as client outcomes and resources. Speakers included the Deputy Minister Shirley Howe, Lionel Laroche speaking on Climate for Diversity in the Workplace, Percy Cummins, Executive Director from AEI, Rob Ferguson, Director of Southern Alberta, from CIC, Jean Seguin and Wally Boxhill from CIC in Ottawa speaking on Strengthening Partnerships and Modernizing Settlement Services.

AAISA Member Agencies

ASSIST Community Services Centre (Edmonton)
Immigrant Services Calgary
Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Catholic Social Services (Edmonton & Red Deer)
Central Alberta Refugee Effort Committee (Red Deer)
Centre for Newcomers (Calgary)
Changing Together: A Centre for Immigrant Women (Edmonton)
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
Global Friendship Immigration Centre (Brooks)
Immigrant Settlement Services (Grande Prairie)
Indo Canadian Women's Association (Edmonton)
Jewish Family Service Calgary
Lethbridge Family Services - Immigrant Services
SAAMIS Immigration Services Society (Medicine Hat)
Service d'Accueil et d'Etablissement (Edmonton)
YMCA – Immigrant Settlement Office (Fort McMurray)

For more information regarding AAISA, its member agencies and their events and programs, please consult: www.aaisa.ca.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009

Opening Address

Dale Taylor, AAISA Chairperson

Honourable Shirley Howe, Deputy Minister of Employment & Immigration

Plenary Session

Environmental Scan - Past, present and future; the impacts of changing client base, current demographics and financial situation on programs and service delivery.

Presenters - *Percy Cummins, Executive Director, Immigration Policy & Programs Branch, Ministry of Employment and Immigration; Robert Vineberg, Senior Fellow, Canada West Foundation; Caroline Fairbrother, Regional Director Calgary Region, Alberta Employment and Immigration; Fariborz Birjandian Executive Director, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*

Evaluation: 62% of respondents felt that this presentation provided insight into their current environment and its effect on program and service delivery.

Concurrent Sessions

Tools and Ideas to Support Settlement Practice

Insights and methods to help practitioners deal with the emotional, psychological and economic issues of clients as well as tools to promote practitioners' own health and well-being.

Presenter - *Dr. Dave Este, University of Calgary*

Evaluation: 39% of respondents found the presentation valuable to their work in the settlement sector.

Client-Centered Services & Outcomes

The theory and principles behind client-centered services with tools and methods to help practitioners deal with a changing client base.

Presenters - *Cesar Cala, United Way of Calgary and Area; Dr. Francis Boakye, University of Calgary/United Way of Calgary and Area*

Evaluation: 48% of respondents found the presentation valuable to their work in the settlement sector.

Cultural Competencies: Climate for Diversity in the Workplace

An analysis of the root causes of the challenges that immigrants face when looking for a position in Canada that makes use of their experience and expertise, including an exploration of the corporate perspective and suggestions for practical tips and approaches to provide clients.

Presenter - *Lionel Laroche, Multicultural Business Solutions Inc.*

Evaluation: 81% of respondents found the presentation valuable to their work in the settlement sector.

Professionalism in the Settlement Sector

A panel of speakers from professional organizations explore why it is important to develop a sector identity, the requirements and expectations of the professional designation, and how relationships between professionals in the sector can be enhanced.

Presenters - *Christina Nsaliwa, AAISA, Doreen Kooy, Career Development Association of Alberta, Marian Rossiter, Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language*

Evaluation: 78% of respondents found the presentation valuable to their work in the settlement sector.

Plenary Session

Strengthening Partnership & Modernizing Settlement Services

The discussion will focus on measures being taken by CIC in support of Grant and Contribution reform across the federal government, how the department is proposing to implement its modernized settlement approach and better interact with service providers and what should be expected of both parties in the relationship.

Presenters - *Jean Seguin, Director of Labour Market Access & Client Centred Program Policy, Citizenship & Immigration Canada; Wally Boxhill, Director of Integration & Resettlement Program Delivery, Citizenship & Immigration Canada*

Evaluation: 38% of respondents felt they gained a better understanding of the modernization of settlement services.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2009

Plenary Session

Funding Trends & Implications

Priorities, models and expectations for the future.

Presenters - *Robert Ferguson, Director of Southern Alberta, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Percy Cummins, Executive Director, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration. Katie Black, Manager, Family and Community Support Services; Ruth Ramsden-Wood, President, United Way of Calgary and Area*

Evaluation: 67% of respondents felt they gained a better understanding of funding priorities and expectations for the future in Alberta.

Concurrent Sessions

Power of Storytelling

Explore the power of storytelling for building trust, exploring our situations, expressing our assets and strengths. Come prepared to share stories and connect to others.

Presenters - *Lorraine Moulding, Sara Clark, and Debbie Jones from the Centre for Newcomers*

Evaluation: 83% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

Temporary Foreign Workers: Will You be Able to Stay on Worker Island?

Enter the real-life game of the Temporary Foreign Workers here in Alberta

Presenter - *Avnish Mehta, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*

Evaluation: 86% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

Enhancing Housing Support

Resources & Intake Assessments for Immigrant Serving Agencies.

Presenter - *Amy Wilson, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers*

Evaluation: 71% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

A Pan-Canadian Foreign Qualification Recognition Framework

Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments are developing a Framework to improve the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications of immigrants based on the principles of fairness, transparency, timelines and consistency.

Presenters - *Margaret Overland, Director of Integration Programs, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration; Emmy W. Mukasa, Manager Immigration Initiatives, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration*

Evaluation: 65% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

A Foreign Qualification Recognition Plan for Alberta (FQR Plan) and Progress to Date

Alberta's FQR Plan identifies collaborative and strategic actions that will help our province make significant progress towards improving the labour market success of immigrants.

Presenters - *Margaret Overland, Director of Integration Programs, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration; Emmy W. Mukasa, Manager Immigration Initiatives, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration*

Evaluation: 65% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

15-Minute Presentations and Networking

Effective Co-Parenting: Putting Kids First *Tatjana Milojevic, Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society*

Lifelong Learning in the Immigrant Sector *Carolyn Arrell, Calgary Catholic Immigrant Society*

Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying *Kelly Buckley, Children and Youth Services*

Evaluation: 66% of respondents felt they would be able to apply the tools/resources from this presentation at their agency.

APPENDIX A

Presentation Index – all listed presentations available on AAISA website or adjoining CD

Plenary: Environmental Scan

1. Immigration to Alberta - *Percy Cummins, Executive Director, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration*
2. Demographic Change - *Robert Vineberg, Senior Fellow, Canada West Foundation*
3. Alberta Economy and Labour Market - *Caroline Fairbrother, Director, Calgary Region, Alberta Employment and Immigration*
4. Measures to Manage the Change - *Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*

Concurrent Sessions

5. Cultural Competencies - *Lionel Laroche, MultiCultural Business Solutions Inc.*
6. Client-Centred Services & Outcomes - *Cesar Cala, United Way of Calgary and Area, Dr. Francis Boakye, University of Calgary/ United Way of Calgary and Area*
7. Tools and Ideas to Support Settlement Practice - *Dr. Dave Este, University of Calgary*
Professionalism in the Settlement Sector:
8. Professionalism AAISA - *Christina Nsaliwa, AAISA*
9. Professionalism handout AAISA - *Christina Nsaliwa, AAISA*
10. Professionalism ATESL - *Marian Rossiter, Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language*
11. Professionalism CDAA - *Doreen Kooy, Career Development Association of Alberta*
12. Quality Practice Within Career Development - *Doreen Kooy, CDAA*
13. Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners - *Doreen Kooy*

Plenary: Strengthening Partnership and Modernizing Settlement Services

14. Modernized Approach (English) – *Jean Seguin, Director Labour Market Access & Client Centred Program Policy, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*
15. Modernized Approach (French) – *Jean Seguin, Director Labour Market Access & Client Centred Program Policy, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*
16. Management of Grants and Contributions – *Wally Boxhill, Director Integration & Resettlement Program Delivery, Citizenship and Immigration Canada*

Plenary: Funding Trends and Implications

17. Social Sustainability Framework & Funding Priorities for FCSS - *Katie Black, Manager, Family and Community Support Services, City of Calgary*
18. Five Myths About Immigrants (Pamphlet) – *Reducing Barriers for Immigrants, United Way of Calgary and Area*

Showcase of Agency Tools and Resources

19. Pan-Canadian Foreign Qualification Recognition Framework - *Margaret Overland, Director of Integration Programs, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration and Emmy Mukasa, Manager, Immigration Initiatives, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration*
20. Foreign Qualification Recognition Plan and Implementation Update - *Margaret Overland, Director of Integration Programs, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration and Emmy Mukasa, Manager, Immigration Initiatives, Immigration Policy and Programs Branch, Alberta Employment and Immigration*
21. The Power of Storytelling - *Sharon Horne, Debbie Jones, Maria Mora, Lorraine Moulding, Centre for Newcomers*
22. Housing Resources for Newcomers – *Amy Wilson, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers*
23. Housing Resource Template - *Amy Wilson, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers*
24. Housing Assessment & Brainstorming - *Amy Wilson, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers*
25. Lifelong Learning in the Immigrant Sector – *Carolyn Arrell, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*