



**HIGHLIGHTS**

The 2011 AAISA Provincial Conference held in Edmonton in November was attended by almost 500 participants from member agencies across the province.

Mentorship programs provide newcomers the opportunity to gain the skills and connections to enter the Canadian labour market.

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**Butterfly**

***By the Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth  
 Mentoring Program***

“It was a beautiful day and everyone seemed to be having a great time enjoying the animals and their time together on a community outing at the Calgary Zoo. One group of mentors and mentees decided to head to the butterfly exhibit. They couldn’t contain their excitement upon seeing all of the diverse, vibrant and colourful butterflies soaring amongst them. It was a spectacular sight, until they spotted two butterflies on a windowsill fighting for their lives.

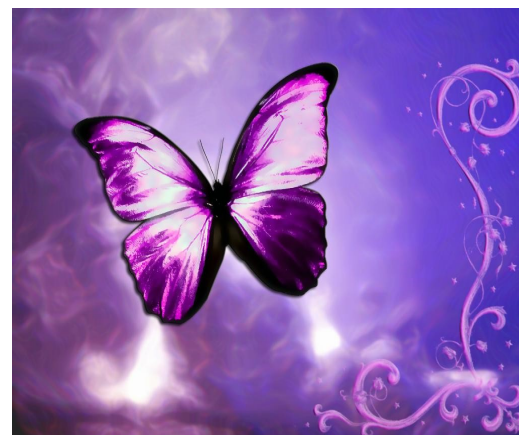
They were stuck in something sticky and wet and couldn’t seem to get loose. The whole group stood around watching these butterflies wondering what to do. Slowly and gently, two of the mentors helped the butterflies get themselves out of the sticky mess. The butterflies tried to fly away but were too weak. The mentors set them on some leaves where, after a few minutes, they found their strength again and flew off with the rest of the butterflies.”

Although this is a very simple story, it seemed to have a huge impact on the group. These mentors were seen as heroes to the rest of the group and without their simple gesture and extra attention, the butterflies might not have had a happy ending. The story articulates how the little things we do can often make a huge impact. This is indeed what our mentorship programs are all about. Doing the little things like lending

an ear, a hand, or just being a friend to a newcomer student can make a BIG difference in a person’s life in ways we may not even recognize. Through small gestures we may be the stepping stone in helping newcomer students “spread their wings” and find their way in their new home. Canada.

The “Newcomer Orientation and Welcome” (N.O.W) Program and the Culturally Diverse Youth Mentorship (Mentorship) Program both fall under the mentoring umbrella at the Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth.

The N.O.W program is located in High Schools training students, who themselves have been through the immigrant experience, to help their new peers in the transition to the Canadian school system and nuances around the Canadian way of life.



*Continues on page 6*



## Upcoming Training Sessions

- **February 2012:** Module 2I – Needs Assessment and Action Planning
- **Spring 2012:** Module 2M – Working With Youth
- **Spring 2012:** Module 2E – Working with Interpreters
- **Autumn 2012:** Module 3A – Collaborating to Provide Community Programs
- **Autumn 2012:** Module 2C – Immigration Processes

*\*The courses and schedules listed here are subject to change.*

## Latest News and Upcoming Events

- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA) is organizing the **Strong Women, Strong Leaders, Strong World** event as part of International Women's Day on March 8, 2012. There will be a community fair at Jack Singer Hall and conference at Telus Convention Centre. For more information visit: [www.ciwa-online.com](http://www.ciwa-online.com).
- Calgary Immigrant Educational Society is offering two new **Employment Skills Training** classes starting in January. Both programs are funded by CIC and they will assist students to find jobs in their field of interests. For more information, visit: [www.immigrant-education.ca](http://www.immigrant-education.ca).
- AAISA welcomes **Mr. Victor Doerksen** as Executive Director of Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.) Committee, Red Deer; and **Mr. Erik Ambtman** as Executive Director of Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN).
- **The Centre for Newcomers**, its new location is Pacific Place Mall, 1010, 999 - 36 Street NE. The Grand Opening took place in November. For more information visit: [www.centrefornewcomers.ca](http://www.centrefornewcomers.ca).
- **Paul Yuzyk Multiculturalism Award** is currently accepting nominations until March 1, 2012. The award honors people dedicated to promoting integration in Canada. For more information visit: [www.multiculturalism.gc.ca/paulyuzyk](http://www.multiculturalism.gc.ca/paulyuzyk).
- **Immigrant Services Calgary's 16th Annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards** will be on Friday, March 16, 2012, at the Westin, Calgary. This year, the gala will celebrate **Immigrant Services Calgary's 35th Anniversary**, providing an opportunity to look back on 35 years of stories and service. Tickets will be available for sale in January 2012. For more information, call 403-538-8352 or visit: [www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca/immigrants-distinction](http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca/immigrants-distinction).

## Mentoring for Internationally Trained Professional Women: Helping Talent Reach its Target

Cherwyne came to Calgary nearly four years ago from Manila in the Philippines. A very successful television producer and writer; she had worked in investigative journalism back home. Cherwyne had won awards for some of the hard hitting documentaries she had worked on, and was flourishing. When the opportunity to come to Canada presented itself, she jumped at the chance, but realized that she would have to put her career on hold, at least in the short term.

Cherwyne immigrated to Canada under the live in caregiver program, to take care of a newborn with a Calgary family. This program allows newcomers to apply for permanent residency after twenty four months of full time employment within four years - during that time caregivers cannot attend any courses, or work for another employer not named on their work permit. Cherwyne completed her employment through this program, and then decided to pursue her permanent residence. Her first step towards residency was having her language benchmarks tested at ILVARC.

Cherwyne had also done some volunteer work at the Centre for Newcomers, and was beginning to build her social network in Calgary, and found the Women's Mentorship Program at Immigrant Services Calgary by serendipity. While getting off the bus on a snowy March morning to take her language test, she happened to ask a fellow traveler how to get to Immigrant Services Calgary. That traveler worked in the Mentorship program, and invited her to visit once she had completed her test.

Cherwyne joined the mentorship program, and was partnered with a mentor in the television business in Calgary, while receiving an internship in the communication department at Immigrant Services. Cherwyne was so successful in both these areas, that she was hired as job market developer in the Mentorship program, where to date she has helped more than 30 women achieve their goal of working in their field of expertise in Calgary. She is also continuing to work in television as she has been offered contract work with OMNI television, working on their Filipino programming.



*For more information about the Integrated Women's Mentorship at Immigrant Services Calgary, please visit: [www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca](http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca) or call 403-538-8367.*

## 2011 AAISA Provincial Conference

AAISA held its biannual professional development conference for settlement practitioners on October 27-28, in Edmonton. The conference was entitled 'Settlement and Integration: Connecting Local Leadership to the Global Perspective.' 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 conference welcomed almost 500 participants from AAISA member agencies across the province.



The theme of the conference explored how the global context shapes and impacts our local leadership in settlement and integration. Settlement practitioners and other immigrant-serving personnel are leaders in connecting newcomers to services offered in the local community. This year's program was based on input from agency staff, and used an interactive and participatory format, engaging attendees in discussion about the issues pertinent to the sector.



Speakers included Hon. Laurie Hawn, (Edmonton Centre); Hon. Don Davies, Official Opposition Critic for Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism; Nazanin Afshin-Jam world activist who spoke on understanding the Global Impact on Local Integration; Michael Casasola from the United Nations High for Refugees who presented on Global Refugee Update.

Complete conference reports, including participant list, will be distributed to each agency early in the New Year. Conference presentations will be posted on our website by January 2012. Thank you to all participants for your enthusiasm, which help make this a successful conference, and your feedback, which can make our next one even better!!

## ERIEC Career Mentorship Program

Sanjeev came to Canada in 2010 with his wife and two children. In India, he had completed his Master of Commerce degree from Delhi University and earned his professional accounting designation. While Sanjeev was searching for a professional accounting job in Edmonton, he discovered the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council (ERIEC) – and applied to become a mentee with The Career Mentorship Program.

“I was very eager to join the program. I wanted to better understand the Canadian work culture and what employers expect. My expectations have been fully met.” Sanjeev attributes much of his success to his mentor, Ishpreet Lamba, Senior Financial Analyst at Exel Global Logistics Canada. “Ish understood immediately that my goal was to get a good job in accounting. He also understood the specific things I needed to learn about the Canadian workplace. He helped me fine-tune my resume and cover letter and introduced me to his network. That was very important.”

Ish also shared some very useful tips for job interviews. One tip is to show confidence. “That point needed a lot of practice, actually. Feeling and showing confidence is very, very important – and not so easy to do.” Ish also introduced Sanjeev to scenario questions. “This is not done in India and I had to practise a lot because it was new. I was not used to those types of questions.” With the support of his mentor and the program, Sanjeev secured a temporary accounting position with the Government of Alberta, then moved to the City of Edmonton as a Senior Accounting Assistant.

Sanjeev highly recommends ERIEC’s Career Mentorship Program. With its step-by-step guidance and personal interaction with mentors like Ish, the experience offered exactly the information Sanjeev needed to develop an effective job search strategy. *For more information on ERIEC’s Career Mentorship Program, contact [info@eriec.ca](mailto:info@eriec.ca), or call 780-497-8866. [www.eriec.ca](http://www.eriec.ca).*

### Greetings from AAISA



On behalf of the Board and staff of AAISA, I wish everyone the best for the season and I hope that next year is a great year for you, your family and for our whole sector. I would like to thank the AAISA board of directors and staff for all their hard work and commitment.

Best wishes from AAISA, as we look forward to another season of welcoming newcomers to Alberta.

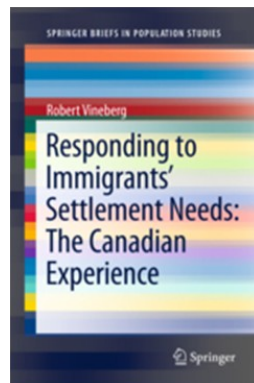
**Dale Taylor, AAISA Chair**

## *Butterfly* (continues from p. 1)

Additionally, The Mentorship Program works in cluster communities with feeder school groups, to connect culturally diverse Elementary, Junior and Senior High students to a unique community mentorship model that follows them through the acculturation process all the way through to graduation and beyond. These programs both operate from the mandate that: “To the world you may be one person but to one person you may be the world”.

*To learn more about The Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth Mentoring Programs and other settlement programs, please visit [www.calgarybridgefoundation.com](http://www.calgarybridgefoundation.com); or call 403-230-7745.*

## **Responding to Immigrants' Settlement Needs: The Canadian Experience by Robert Vineberg (Springer Briefs in Population Studies)**



Although there is a growing body of research and analysis of the settlement and integration successes and challenges, there is virtually no literature that has addressed the history

of settlement services in Canada. This book traces a fascinating history that provides an important context of today's policies and practices.

It also serves to remind us that those who preceded us did, indeed, care for immigrants and did much to make them feel welcome in Canada. The Canadian experience in integration, over the past two centuries, suggests many policy-related research themes for further exploration both in Canada and in other immigrant receiving countries.

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## AAISA Settlement Practitioner Certifications May 2011 to November 2011

Rubina Abid	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 2
Moses Bornyi	Catholic Social Services	Level 2
Wendy Deng Calgary	Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Jouhayna El-Chamy	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Robin Foreman	Lethbridge Family Services	Level 2
Olga Garcia	Catholic Social Services	Level 2
Ruth Gitaka	Catholic Social Services	Level 2
Alejandra Guzman-Suarez	Lethbridge Family Services	Level 2
Lam Med Koryom	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Yolande Lawson-Body	Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers	Level 2
Yi Chen (Nicky) Liao	Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth	Level 2
Alka Manmohan	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Fatima Mansouri	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Kudzai Ngwerume	Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth	Level 2
Dadhuda Pahlawan	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Oxana Rotaru	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 2
Hellen Tesfai	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 2
Camilo Torres	Centre for Newcomers	Level 2
Liliana Valdivieso	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 2
Astrid Velazquez	Catholic Social Services	Level 2
Adaw Wek Athian Dut	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 2
Jane Awawias	Catholic Social Services	Level 3
Jane Cheng	ASSIST Community Services Centre	Level 3
Mohammed Idriss	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Level 3
Vivien Lok	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 3
Claudia Meija	Immigrant Services Calgary	Level 3
Juma Naikyar	Catholic Social Services	Level 3
Fakhruddin Parsa	Catholic Social Services	Level 3
Sultana Assar	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society	Mentor





**The leading voice for immigration  
and integration in Alberta**

**915—33 Street NE  
Calgary, Alberta T2A 6T2**

**Phone: 403.273.2962**

**Fax: 403.273.2964**

**Email: [contact@aaisa.ca](mailto:contact@aaisa.ca)**

**Website: [www.aaisa.ca](http://www.aaisa.ca)**

**AAISA members include:**

ASSIST Community Services Centre  
Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth  
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society  
Catholic Social Services  
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society  
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association  
Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.) Committee  
Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du nord de l'Alberta  
Centre for Newcomers  
Changing Together: A Centre for Immigrant Women  
Grande Prairie Centre for Newcomers  
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association  
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers  
Immigrant Services Calgary  
Indo Canadian Women's Association  
Jewish Family Service Calgary  
Lethbridge Family Services-Immigrant Services  
Saamis Immigration Services Association  
YMCA Wood Buffalo-Immigrant Settlement Services



*The AAISA Connection newsletter is produced by the AAISA Communication Committee and staff. Its purpose is provide staff in the settlement sector with a link to current issues, resources and stories from agencies and other sources across the province. For more information on this publication: [Milton.ortega@aaisa.ca](mailto:Milton.ortega@aaisa.ca)*

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