

NOTICE

The Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch is relocating. For more information, refer to page 5.

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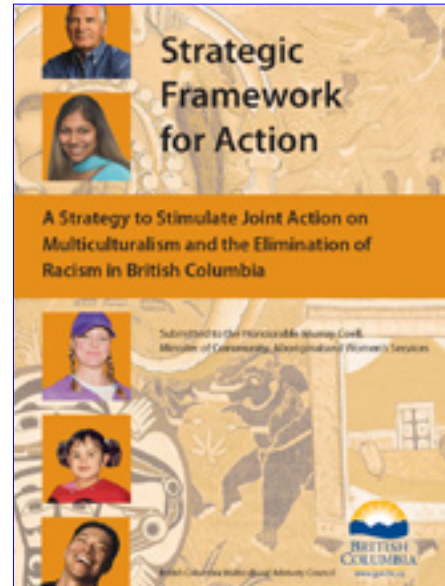
BRANCH UPDATE COMMENTS
Contact Alison Dudley, Manager,
Stakeholder Relations 604.775.0470
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Dialogue examines the future of multiculturalism in B.C.

More than 150 leaders from public, private and non-profit communities gathered at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver on February 14, 2005 to discuss the future of multiculturalism. Co-sponsored by the Ministry of Community Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) and other stakeholders, the Dialogue focused on the role that all parties play in promoting multiculturalism and anti-racism. It provided an opportunity to share success stories, challenges, emerging issues and ideas.

A summary of the Dialogue highlights is available on the Laurier Institution's web site at www.diversityvancouver.ca. On April 4th, the Laurier Institution launched an on-line chat forum to continue the discussion.

In addition to the Dialogue, the provincial government and the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) has released a "Strategic Framework for Action: A Strategy to Stimulate Joint Action on Multiculturalism and the Elimination of Racism in British Columbia," now available on-line at www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/sam/framework.htm.



The Strategic Framework for Action presents suggestions on how the government, the private sector, non-government and community organizations can support and advance multiculturalism in the province.

New branch to coordinate labour market programming for immigrants

In February, MCAWS announced the creation of the Labour Market Partnerships Branch within the Immigration Division of MCAWS. The Branch has two program areas, including the former International Qualifications Program and a newly announced "B.C. Skills Connect for Immigrants Program" aimed at improving the overall labour market integration of new immigrants.

The B.C. Skills Connect for Immigrants initiative will commit \$4.83 million annually for the next three years to support career assessment, planning and employment-bridging services for skilled professionals and trades people seeking entry into the B.C. labour market. It is anticipated that about 5,000 individuals will directly benefit from this new program. Supported services will include:

1. Career Assessment and Planning Services:

- including English language assessment, action planning, information and referral.
- 2. Pre-Employment Skill Builder Services:
 - including academic upgrading, English for work place, and skills upgrading.
- 3. Workplace Skill Builder Services:
 - including work-based English language support, technical skills enhancement, mentorship and support.

Terms and conditions for the program are currently being finalized and program delivery is expected to begin by September 2005. Third-party contractors with expertise in the provision of employment services for skilled immigrants are encouraged to apply.

More on the Immigration Division on page 5

STAFF PROFILE

PHINDER
DULAI

Branch Position:
Multiculturalism Coordinator,
Anti-Racism and
Multiculturalism Unit (AMU)

Joined the Branch: August
2003

Time in government:
Six years

Responsibilities:
Phinder assists with
strategic development,
provides program advice on
multiculturalism initiatives
and oversees seven CIRM
community files. He also
provides support to members
of the Multicultural Advisory
Council.

"I am inspired by the work we do with our CIRM communities and being on the ground with our community partners. Equally, the inner policy work in me gets very excited about building further on our multiculturalism initiatives."

BCAMP Stream A: Funded Projects in 2004/05

During the past fiscal year, the Branch awarded funding to 14 projects under the BC Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Program (BCAMP), Stream A. The projects, which seek to address racism and/or promote multiculturalism in communities

across the province, wrapped up in March 2005. The next solicitation process for BCAMP proposals is now underway. For more information, please contact Meharoona Ghani, Manager, Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Unit, at 604.660.5140.

PROJECTS 2004/05

Abbotsford Community Services (Abbotsford): *Students Taking Action Against Racism*

Capital Race Relations (Vancouver Island): *Islands Anti-Racism Services Project*

Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (Nanaimo): *Community Responders: From Principles and Protocols to Concrete Mechanisms*

College of New Caledonia Nechako Campus (Prince George): *Communities Working Towards the Elimination of Racism*

Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society (Vancouver): *Synala - The Circle is Complete: Multiculturalism Week 2005*

Cranbrook Women's Resource Society (Cranbrook): *2004-2005 Regional Youth Reaching Out*

First Nations Education Steering Committee (province wide): *Youth Anti-Racism Leadership Project*

Kamloops Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society (Kamloops): *Community Against Racism*

Little Mountain Neighbourhood House Society (Vancouver): *Promoting Community Diversity Project*

Miscellaneous Productions (Richmond): *e-race*

Mission Community Services Society (Mission): *Mission Cultural Leadership Development*

North Shore Multicultural Society (North Vancouver): *Organizational Change - Cultural Competency Project*

Philippine Women Centre of British Columbia (Vancouver): *Strengthening our Community Against Systemic Racism*

Surrey/Delta Immigrant Services Society (Surrey): *Youth Fostering Unity and Diversity*

CIRM Annual Provincial Chairs Meeting

On February 4, 2005, 11 Critical Incident Response Model (CIRM) Chairs and Project Coordinators met in Vancouver for the annual Provincial CIRM Chairs Meeting. The following communities were represented at the meeting: Dawson Creek, Williams Lake, Burns Lake, Merritt, Fernie, Vernon, Fort St. John, and Masset.

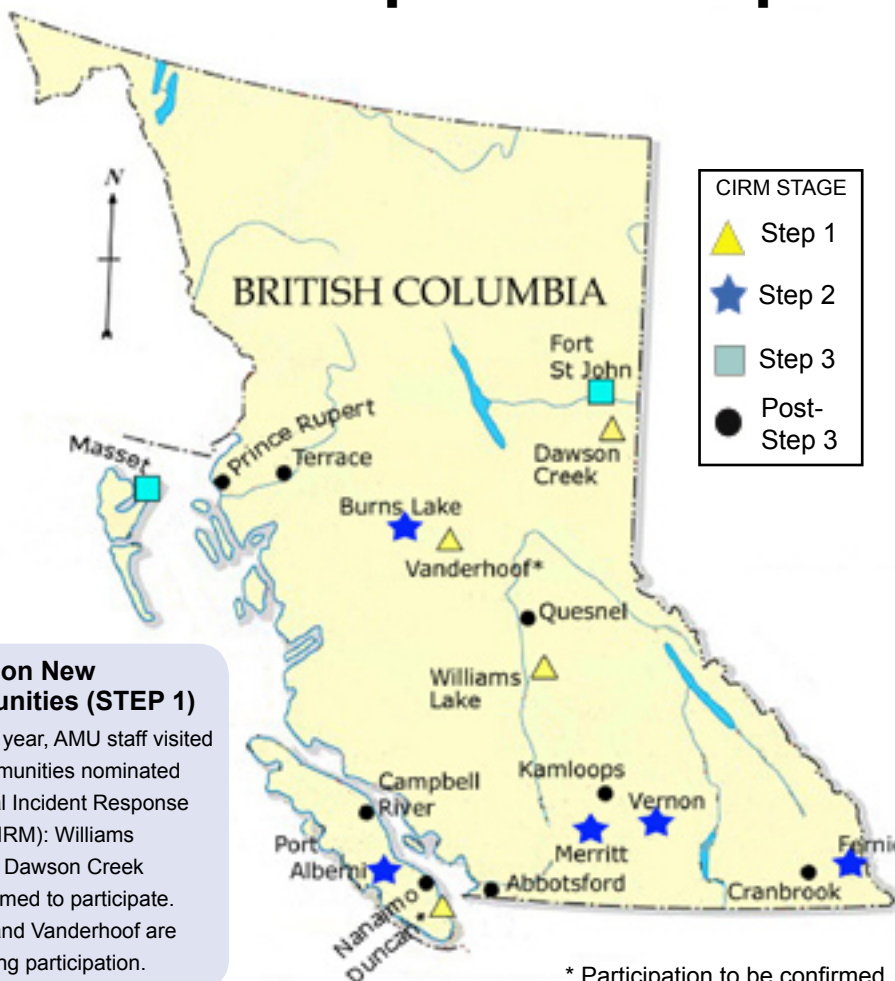
CIRM community representatives provided progress updates and offered feedback on the CIRM. AMU staff provided activity updates and facilitated workshops on youth involvement in the CIRM and holding a CIRM regional symposium. Tom Jensen, Assistant Deputy Minister of MCAWS, discussed

the importance of the CIRM and congratulated the community representatives on their work. He also stressed the need for measurements of success and encouraged community members to institutionalize the CIRM through strategic partnerships and collaboration in order to ensure sustainability of the model. Lynn Moran, Executive Director of the B.C. Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA), and Terri Kennedy, Communications Coordinator for the B.C. Human Rights Coalition (BCHRC), presented information and resources from their agencies to the group. Before the meeting adjourned, the following B.C. communities were recommended by community representatives for entry into the CIRM: Smithers, Hazelton, Chetwynd, Fraser Lake, Dease Lake, Fort Nelson, Salmon Arm, Creston, and Kelowna. These communities will be given careful consideration by AMU staff through a process of research and analysis and four new communities will be selected to enter the CIRM for 2005/2006.



CIRM is a three-year, three-step process for communities to build capacity and develop formal protocols to respond to racist and hate activity.

Critical Incident Response Model Update



Profile on New Communities (STEP 1)

- This past year, AMU staff visited new communities nominated for Critical Incident Response Model (CIRM): Williams Lake and Dawson Creek are confirmed to participate. Duncan and Vanderhoof are considering participation.

Profile on Vernon (STEP 2)

- Last spring, Vernon formed a community initiative called "Bringing Communities Together to Respond to Racism and Other Forms of Discrimination."
- Participants include the First Nations Friendship Centre, the RCMP, Teachers' Association, Okanagan University, Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society and the Social Planning Council of the Okanagan.

Profile on Nanaimo (POST STEP 3)

- Nanaimo's Partners for an Inclusive Community has developed a Safe Harbour initiative.
- 30 local businesses and offices display a Safe Harbour logo representing:
 - commitment to equitable client and customer service
 - informed and prepared employees
 - a safe place for anyone who has experienced mistreatment motivated by racism or hate.
- Nanaimo plans to expand the project by including more businesses and by implementing the Safe Harbour program in other communities.
- To view the protocol, or for more information on the Safe Harbour project, visit www.diversityteam.org.

"The protocol addresses an important social issue. It's easy as a community to hide our heads in the sand and believe discrimination is a thing of the past. These incidents can and do lead to bad feelings - feelings of violation and fear. That is not acceptable."

- Abbotsford Police Inspector John Davidson, Community Policing Branch, on the importance of the community's CIRM protocol launched in June 2004 with Abbotsford Community Services

NEW STAFF

Two new staff joined the Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Unit this past year. Maia McKinley is the unit's new Anti-Racism Coordinator. Maia previously worked as a Research Officer with the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in Ottawa and as a Multicultural Public Education Coordinator for the Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria. Len Hartley is the AMU's new Public Education Coordinator. Len has over 16 years of government experience, having worked in the Ministry of Small Business and Economic Development, and has developed web and media products for government, non-profits and aboriginal organizations. The Branch has also been pleased to work with SFU Co-op student, Sarah Chee, this year. Sarah has been working on a variety of projects with the Branch and is in her third year as a Communication major with a minor in Publishing.

NEW CIRM TOOLKIT

The AMU released a new CIRM toolkit titled "Building Safe Communities," which assists new communities entering the CIRM and serves as a guide for others involved in anti-racism work. The toolkit is on-line now on the Branch's website: www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/cirm.

For more information on CIRM and its steps, please visit www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/cirm.

NEW BCSAP RFP

In coming months, the Branch will post a second round of RFPs for BCSAP Streams 1, 2 and 3. Under the first RFP process in 2004, the Branch awarded 18-month contracts to 39 agencies. In several communities, the Branch did not expend the full service area budget and is now going back to these communities to award the remaining funds. Draft versions of the RFPs were posted on BC Bid in March to solicit input from current and potential service providers. The following communities are being targeted in this next round:

STREAM 1

• Bby/New West/Vancouver; Richmond/S. Delta; Maple Ridge/Langley; Greater Victoria; N. Vancouver Island; Vernon

STREAM 2 ("Youth/Buddy")

• Vancouver/New West/Surrey

STREAM 3

• Bby/New West/Vancouver; Tri-Cities; Greater Victoria; Vernon

FEDERAL FUNDING

In February, the federal government announced new funding for immigrant settlement programs in its budget speech. Over the next five years, the federal government intends to allot an extra \$298 million for settlement programming in provinces and territories outside Quebec. The Branch is pleased about this announcement and looks forward to sharing more information with stakeholders about B.C.'s specific allocation and programming options as information becomes available during the year.

Results from first province-wide client satisfaction and outcomes survey available

In order to measure the impact of B.C. Settlement and Adaptation Program (BCSAP) services on clients and to set baselines and future performance targets, the Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch conducted a province-wide client satisfaction and outcomes survey between May and June 2004. This was the first time BCSAP clients had been surveyed at such a broad level. The results provide the Branch and its funded agencies with critical information on how well programs are meeting client needs. The Branch worked with advisory groups from each BCSAP funding stream and a professional research company to determine the most appropriate way to implement the client survey. Paper, telephone and on-line surveys were administered to almost 3000 clients

in eight languages: English, Chinese (Cantonese/Mandarin), Farsi, French, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese. The research company reported that most clients very much appreciated being consulted about the quality of services received.

The Branch wishes to thank agency staff who assisted in administering the surveys, as well as the survey advisory group members. Summary findings are posted on the Branch web site at www.mcaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/sam/survey.htm. Individual agency results can be made available electronically to all funded service providers and sectoral organizations upon request.

The methodology and key findings from each survey are highlighted below.

STREAM 1 (Information and Support Services)

Methodology: 1,733 clients who visited a Stream 1 agency between April 28 and June 30, 2004 completed paper and on-line questionnaires.

Highlights:

- 80% of Stream 1 clients said the agency they visited had been very helpful at providing information and services to help them live in Canada
- 71% said their agency was very helpful in assisting them in setting plans and personal goals.
- 95% would recommend the agency to another person.

STREAM 2 (Community Bridging Services)

Methodology: 116 adult clients and 83 youth clients who were matched with a community volunteer between July 1 and December 31, 2003 were surveyed via telephone, mail-in and on-line questionnaires.

Highlights:

- Since participating in the program, 92% of adult clients and 78% of youth clients improved their level of integration with English speakers by attending a social group, meeting or class or starting a job/volunteering where the majority of people speak English.

STREAM 3 (English Language Services for Adults)

Methodology: 844 clients who left ELSA classes between April 1, 2003 and February 28, 2004 were surveyed by telephone or on-line questionnaires.

Highlights:

- Stream 3 clients reported that ELSA improved their English either very much (43%) or somewhat (52%).
- 77% of Stream 3 clients reported that they are better able to accomplish activities such as answering the phone, filling out forms in English, etc. since taking ELSA classes.

STREAM 1/3 Blend (Information and Support and English Language Services for Adults)

Methodology: 166 clients who attended a Stream 1/3 Blend program between September 1, 2003 and January 30, 2004 were interviewed by telephone.

Highlights:

- About 75% of clients said that they are understanding and speaking more English outside of class as a result of participating in the program.



OFFICE RELOCATION

The Labour Market Partnerships Branch and the Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch will be changing locations. The new office address will be:

**5th Floor - 605
Robson Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 5J3
Tel: 604.660.2203
Fax: 604.775.0670**

Staff telephone numbers, email addresses and fax numbers will remain unchanged.

The office will be open for business at the new location on **May 2nd, 2005**.

Co-located in this office will be the **Public Library Services Branch** and **Inner-City Partnerships Branch**.

Regional Immigration Initiative aims to entice immigrants to rural B.C.

The Immigration Division has been busy engaging communities on the *Regional Immigration Initiative*. The objective of this initiative is to facilitate the attraction and retention of immigrants to communities outside the Greater Vancouver Region, and support the economic development of rural communities within British Columbia. The first initiative of this kind within Canada.

The Division conducted a workshop last summer, at the Rural Communities Summit, which also profiled the Lower Columbia Immigration Pilot Project. This provided an opportunity to dialogue with communities on potential regional immigration opportunities and challenges. Information on the Lower Columbia Immigration Pilot Project can be accessed at www.southkootenay.com.

In August/September, the Division issued a Request for Proposal to identify and develop resources that B.C. rural communities can use to attract immigrants

who have come to Canada or those currently residing overseas with an interest in immigrating. A total of eight projects were awarded to the communities listed below.

Projects are running from October 2004 to June 2005. During February, all of the communities met in Kelowna to discuss lessons learned, challenges identified and brainstorm opportunities and solutions together. In July 2005, these resources will be made available to other interested communities to share lessons learned. The funding for these projects is a partnership between the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Western Economic Diversification.

Access further information on the Regional Immigration Initiative at www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/prgs/id_regional.htm.

Mountain Labrynth Inc. (Revelstoke) - *Rural Community Immigration Readiness Toolkit*

Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (Powell River) - *Innovative Approaches to Facilitate Attraction and Retention of Immigrants*

Vernon and District Immigrant Services (Vernon) - *Attracting and Retaining Entrepreneurial Immigrants*

Community and Environment (Prince George) - *Skilled Immigrants as a Potential Labour Market Source in Prince George*

SUCCESS (Okanagan) - *Pathways to the Okanagan*

Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (Nanaimo) - *Welcoming Immigrants to Central Vancouver Island*

RMA Consulting Services (Port Alberni, Bamfield, Tofino and Ucluelet) - *Alberni-Clayoquot Regional Immigration Initiative*

Abbotsford Community Services Society (Abbotsford) - *Abbotsford Immigration Action Plan: Welcoming Community Program*

Projects examine the labour market attachment of immigrants

Last spring and summer, the International Qualifications Program (IQP) supported 15 exploratory and developmental projects to determine the current capacity, interest and strategic opportunities/priorities related to the labour market attachment of immigrants in B.C.

Six of the projects focused on specific regions (Central Vancouver Island, Northwest, the Okanagan, Fraser Valley, Victoria, and the Lower Mainland) and nine projects were theme-specific. Common themes and

recommendations emerged addressing the following key issues and concerns: access to information; language and communication; career planning and employment services; prior learning assessment and credentialing; bridging programs; immigration and recruiting; and government programs.

Overarching priorities that should be considered by governmental agencies (including federal, provincial and municipal) and non-governmental funding

see *Labour Market* on page 6

Labour market projects recommend future priorities

continued from page 5

agencies include the following:

- develop a centralized clearing house and web portal of information for both employers and immigrants that are accessible in all regions of the province and in different languages;
- create a centralized credentialing and assessment agency;
- establish a triage centre to help skilled immigrants to assess their needs, help them to understand what level of English and skills training they require to work in their field, and direct them to the range of service options they may require;
- expand the scope and range of English programs for immigrants;
- encourage service providers to design programs;
- enhance specialized training and diversity training to settlement workers and employment counsellors so they are equipped to provide specialized employment support

services;

- improve access to language services;
- promote best practices and lessons learned gained from past workplace practice opportunities;
- support the enhancement of the *Employment Access Skills for Immigrants Leadership Council* in its mandate;
- work to strengthen linkages between Canadian Immigration Services and employers and professional associations to better coordinate between employment and immigration policies, and to ensure that new immigrants' skills are those required by the labour market;
- work to promote and raise awareness about existing centralized services and standards, and encourage ongoing evaluations of these programs.

The individual project reports, in addition to a final report synthesizing all project findings, can be accessed at www.mcaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/iqp/resources/index.htm.

Agreement ensures entrepreneur immigrants access to business resources

Entrepreneur immigrants landing in B.C. have had access to business investment counseling, and investment advice for some time. Under the renewed *Agreement for Canada-British Columbia Co-operation on Immigration*, a formal relationship has been established between the Immigration Division and CIC Vancouver International Airport to ensure that all B.C.'s newly landed entrepreneurs receive an information package that includes a: CIC welcome letter; CIC entrepreneur guide kit; B.C. welcome letter; Business Opportunities and Conditions Removal Seminar Outline; Canada / B.C. Business

Service Centre information fact sheet; Booklet on *Quick Facts about B.C.*; and the *Newcomers Guide to the City of Vancouver*.

For business programs and services information in B.C. access www.cse.gov.bc.ca/General/sitemap.htm.

For seminars and workshops available at the Canada / B.C. Business Services Society visit www.smallbusinessbc.ca or Voice Web at vweb.cbcs.org/english/forms/bc/talktous.jsp.

Provincial Nominee Program continues to expand and improve streams

The B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) is continuing to expand and enhance its two streams: *Strategic Occupations* (Skilled Workers, Health Care Professionals, International Students) and *Business Categories* (Business Skills, Projects, Regional Business).

Strategic Occupations:

- The International Student Category now recognizes the MBA program at Malaspina University College and two post-baccalaureate programs at Capilano College's McRae Institute of International Management.
- The PNP office carries out a facilitative role in the issuance and extension of work permits for nominees, without requiring the need to obtain confirmation from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Employers enjoy this added benefit because they are able to have nominees begin working sooner after nomination.

Business Categories:

- The minimum investment requirement for Business Skills

applicants was lowered from \$1 Million to \$800,000 on April 1, 2005. The Regional Business category (minimum investment: \$300,000) is beginning to attract significant numbers of entrepreneurs to B.C.'s regions. Many of these applicants are here in B.C. already as a result of the program's ability to facilitate temporary entry through a Work Permit upon approval as a Nominee Candidate.

- It was also announced recently that the BC PNP will be pursuing significantly increased targets in the coming two years. For 2005/06 the program will seek to nominate 750 applicants (plus dependents) and in 2006/07 the target will be 1000.

On May 1, 2004, a new \$550 cost-recovery, processing fee was implemented under the Skilled Worker and International Student categories. This change has not resulted in a reduction of applications. The Business Categories of the PNP continue to charge processing fees of \$3000 per application. Access additional details about the PNP at www.mcaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/pnp/.