

## Flagship Projects

### Immigrant Employers' Council

When you see a good model thoroughly check it out and adapt it to your circumstances. That's what we did with the North Bay Newcomer Network Employers' Council. The Toronto Region Immigrant Employers' Council was the first in Canada and the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network followed, so we visited both and talked to those behind the London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council as well. We took what they had, shaped it to fit the needs of North Bay employers, and started the first immigrant employers' council in Northern Ontario. We learned about them at an ALLIES conference in Vancouver in 2009 and launched ours in 2010. We disbanded the former employment committee of the North Bay Newcomer Network and replaced it with an employers' council, whose members are all employers. Employers' guide and relocation guide publications were completed by this group and are available at [www.northbayimmigration.ca](http://www.northbayimmigration.ca). For more information contact L-J Coté at [laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca](mailto:laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca).

### Connector Program

This program is another example of not trying to reinvent the wheel. Halifax has a very successful Connector Program that we learned about at an ALLIES conference in Halifax in 2010. It matches professional newcomers with a professional in the same field, who ensures that more connections are made until the newcomer has developed a professional network. A separate mentoring program is now under way, a result of the ALLIES Calgary conference in 2011. For more information contact L-J Coté at [laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca](mailto:laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca)

### Intercultural Communication for the Canadian Workplace

This Professions North program was another first for Northern Ontario. Originally titled Workplace Communication in Canada, the 150-hour course was designed for newcomers with little or no experience in a Canadian workplace. Real-life situations such as the Canadian feedback sandwich (nice comments on top and bottom with a 'but' in the middle they may not hear) are discussed. Canadian managers are more indirect than those in many other countries. This course has transitioned to Intercultural Communication for the Canadian Workplace and is offered in a combination of online and workshop format. For more information contact L-J Coté at [laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca](mailto:laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca) or the Professions North website at [www.professionsnorth.ca](http://www.professionsnorth.ca)

## **HR North**

With seed funding from ALLIES as leverage to other funders this 2012 and beyond project will create human resources services for Small and Medium Enterprises from North Bay to Timmins that wish to access internationally-trained individuals. Assistance will be provided for both recruitment and retention initiatives, with a database created of pre-qualified individuals that can be matched to vacancies. For further information contact Marla Tremblay at [marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca](mailto:marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca)

## **Pan Northern Attraction Program**

As the name implies, this project is a partnership of the five major cities in Northern Ontario: North Bay, Timmins, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay. Financial and human resources are pooled to attend employment fairs in Toronto and for targeted marketing initiatives. For further information contact Marla Tremblay at [marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca](mailto:marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca)

## **International Cooking Club**

This project is a runaway success and goes into its third year in 2012. With funding from the New Horizons for Seniors program of Service Canada it brings Canadian seniors together with newcomers once a month to create an international dish. It breaks down barriers and everyone dons a branded apron and pitches in. A cookbook of recipes from the first year was compiled and is in demand. For more information contact Vindra Sahadeo at [vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca](mailto:vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca)

## **Other Great Projects**

### **Immigration Research and Strategy Reports**

These two reports were completed in 2007 and set the stage for many initiatives to follow. Both are available on the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre website at [www.nbdmc.ca](http://www.nbdmc.ca)

### **ESL Classes**

If you live in a smaller community like North Bay, or even smaller, chances of acquiring funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes are slim. However the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration funds English as a Second Language classes. We promote the daily classes offered by the Near North District School Board on the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre website and take registrations as well. We are now working with our Timmins & District Multicultural Centre office and the Northeastern Catholic School Board to start classes in Timmins. For further information contact Deborah Robertson at [deborahrobertson@nbdmc.ca](mailto:deborahrobertson@nbdmc.ca)

### **English or French Conversation Circles**

A tried-and-true CIC staple, they are a great way to get newcomers out to meet community volunteers and other newcomers and practise their English or French. The local library is a great spot to hold them. Each evening has a theme and a volunteer leader. North Bay is about 20% French speaking and Timmins

is about 50% so we offer both. For more information contact Vindra Sahadeo at [vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca](mailto:vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca)

### **Citizenship Classes**

Most permanent residents wish to become Canadian citizens so we offer classes to make sure they pass their citizenship test with flying colours. Materials are supplied free by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. For further information contact Cindy Collins at [cindycollins@nbdmc.ca](mailto:cindycollins@nbdmc.ca)

### **Community Immigration Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO)**

This was a 2009 project involving North Bay, Brockville and Chatham-Kent that resulted in a toolkit for smaller communities on immigrant retention. The project was led by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and included the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and Forestry, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the three municipalities. The toolkit is available at [www.reddi.gov.on.ca](http://www.reddi.gov.on.ca)

### **Anti-Racism Lending Library**

This is a partnership project with the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre and the four school boards serving the district. A committee with representatives from all the partners selected materials relevant to each grade level and for adults. The resources, both English and French, are stored at the multicultural centre and are available for anyone in the community to borrow. Funding came from the Community Builders program of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. For further information contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

### **Francophone Outreach**

When the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre opened in January of 2008 none of its small staff could speak French. Since then the situation has been rectified with the hiring of bilingual staff. Through funding from FedNor (Industry Canada) we hired a newcomer from France to conduct francophone outreach activities and we are now well connected with francophone school boards and organizations. This work is expanding to Timmins and area. For further information contact Maryline Pillet at [marylinepillet@nbdmc.ca](mailto:marylinepillet@nbdmc.ca)

### **Welcoming Communities Initiative**

This is an Ontario-wide project hoping to go nation-wide in 2012. It involves university researchers and Local Immigration Partnerships across the province, excluding the Greater Toronto Area by design. The project devises strategies to create welcoming communities for newcomers. North Bay has a university and a community representative on the Governing Council. WCI partnered with the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre to organize an immigration conference in North Bay March 1-2, 2011. It was preceded by a one-day conference organized by the Conference Board of Canada and the City of North Bay. Funders were Citizenship and Immigration Canada, FedNor, Government of Ontario, WCI and the

Canada Youth Business Foundation. For further information contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca) or check the WCI website at [www.welcomingcommunities.ca](http://www.welcomingcommunities.ca)

### **Professions North**

This is a project of Laurentian University in Sudbury, with partners in each of Northern Ontario's five major cities. The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre is the point of entry into the program for internationally-educated professionals in the area. Professions North counsellors are on-site and deliver services as part of a comprehensive bridging program. Preparation programs and courses are provided to enable professionals to overcome barriers to employment in their fields of expertise. For further information contact Laura-Jane Coté at [laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca](mailto:laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca) or check the Professions North website at [www.professionsnorth.ca](http://www.professionsnorth.ca)

### **Tourism Initiatives**

A benefit of working closely with the municipal economic development department is that its staff members are involved in other initiatives apart from immigration, and sometimes there are mutual benefits. Tourism is one such initiative and the city has been recognized provincially for its work in creating tourism packages targeted at the South Asian and Asian communities in the Greater Toronto Area. Some people visiting an area as a tourist may decide it's a pretty nice place to live and relocate. For further information contact Marla Tremblay at [marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca](mailto:marla.tremblay@cityofnorthbay.ca)

### **Events**

#### **Immigration Symposium**

This was the start-up event for the North Bay Newcomer Network. Held in the spring of 2006 at Canadore College, it attracted more than 80 immigrants and NNN members for a full-day alternating round-table format of defining what was needed to create a welcoming community for newcomers. The top recommendation was to open a settlement agency. The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre opened in January of 2008, with funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. For further information contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

#### **Annual Public Events**

The International Food Festival is held each winter at Nipissing University and attracts more than 500 people wishing to sample food from around the world. The Multicultural Showcase at the Canada Day North Bay waterfront celebrations attracts hundreds of people, who learn about the multicultural reality of the city while enjoying excellent entertainment. The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination events have been running since 1989 and include the Evening of Applause, Students Who Make a Difference, anti-racism multimedia contest and the Human Rights Hall of Fame. All four school boards, Canadore College and Nipissing University participate. For further information contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

## **Sports as an Integration Strategy**

The first foray into this field was the organization of an international soccer match on Canada Day, which attracted players from all over the world and created sporting connections among the participants. The latest was a cricket demonstration event in the fall of 2011 in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of North Bay, the Ontario Cricket Association and the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre. Participants didn't want it to end there, so a high school gym was booked for every Monday night over the winter so enthusiasts could play and learn the game. A league may start in 2012. For further information please contact Deborah Robertson at [deborahrobertson@nbdmc.ca](mailto:deborahrobertson@nbdmc.ca)

## **Employers' Breakfasts**

Breakfast meetings are held periodically for employers in the region wanting to know more about immigrant attraction, retention and integration initiatives. They are normally organized by the North Bay Newcomer Network, sometimes with partners such as the Labour Market Group or City of North Bay. Early start times of 7:30 or 8 a.m. guarantee a larger crowd when you are trying to attract busy people. Guest experts on specific issues are brought in on a regular basis. For further information please contact L-J Coté at [laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca](mailto:laurajanecote@nbdmc.ca)

## **Newcomer and Volunteer Events**

We offer a wide range of group activities for newcomers, including skating, sliding, skiing, hiking, berry picking, swimming, visits to a pumpkin patch, Halloween and Christmas parties and more. These activities include volunteers as well as newcomers. Volunteers are honoured annually at an appreciation event. For further information please contact Vindra Sahadeo at [vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca](mailto:vindrasahadeo@nbdmc.ca)

## **Regular Conferences on Immigration**

Organizing immigration conferences for the region is an excellent way to educate employers and politicians about the importance of creating a welcoming community for newcomers. We have organized a number of them, ranging from a half-day, to full day and up to three days. All three levels of government are sources of financial support and you can use your network to help with the organization. They receive significant media coverage and enhance your credibility as the local authority on immigration matters. Periodic strategic planning sessions involving all the local partners are also important. For further information please contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

## **Annual Golf Tournament**

Golf tournaments are an excellent way to create community awareness and raise funds at the same time. They attract participants with little or no knowledge of local immigration initiatives that you can educate at the awards dinner and also attract significant support from the business community as sponsors or silent auction gift donors. Local politicians enjoy a round of golf and it is a good way to keep them involved with immigration concerns. For further information please contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

## Media and Branding

We put a priority on branding from the beginning. When the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre opened in January of 2008 we wanted to be seen as professional from the outset and then have our actions establish our community credibility. A communications firm was hired to create the brand and initial expenditures included large and small exterior signs, interior signs, brochure, a pop-up banner stand, stationery and business cards. Later it included a website, display table banners for North Bay and Timmins, a large banner for the Santa Claus Parade, posters, more brochures, highway billboards and a back-lit sign at the North Bay Airport. The logo is distinctive and well-recognized in the community.

We have in-house media expertise and we use it to attract maximum radio, television, print and web coverage. Earned media spreads awareness and enhances credibility. The media now calls us regularly, and in respect of their deadlines calls are returned immediately. When we see negative or distorted media coverage, such as in a letter to the editor, we respond immediately to set the record straight.

We circulate a quarterly newsletter by email to more than 300 people, plus a weekly Multicultural Minute to subscribers and monthly newsletters to clients and volunteers. We are active on Facebook, update the city's immigration portal website at [www.northbayimmigration.ca](http://www.northbayimmigration.ca) almost daily with new material and the multicultural centre's North Bay and Timmins websites as often as we can. We hosted a series of radio interview programs on immigration and they are now all available as podcasts on the immigration portal at [www.northbayimmigration.ca](http://www.northbayimmigration.ca) under the Features heading.

A strong media presence generates more and more coverage. We have been featured nationally on CTV's Canada AM and the ALLIES newsletter, provincially in the Toronto Sun, Welcoming Communities Initiative and Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Newcomers newsletters, regionally on CTV, CBC Radio, Radio Canada and Northern Ontario Business, and locally we are in the news often. For further information on media please contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)

## Awards

When asked if you will accept a nomination for an award always agree and then follow through by preparing the required materials for the judges. Awards provide public awareness and enhance credibility. We have been honoured with a 2010 Not for Profit of the Year Award from the North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce, a 2011 Northern Ontario Business Award, a 2011 Best Tourism Marketing Partnership Award, and two Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Newcomer Champion Awards, in 2009 and 2010.

## Interns

Both the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre and the City of North Bay hire interns to help move the North Bay Newcomer Network agenda forward. In Northern Ontario we are fortunate to have access to heavily-subsidized interns from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation and FedNor (Industry Canada.) They are both 12-month placements. We also accept student placements from Canadore College and Nipissing University for a few weeks to a few months. They provide valuable

experience and community connections for the participants and the interns each make a significant contribution. For further information please contact Don Curry at [doncurry@nbdmc.ca](mailto:doncurry@nbdmc.ca)