

PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada

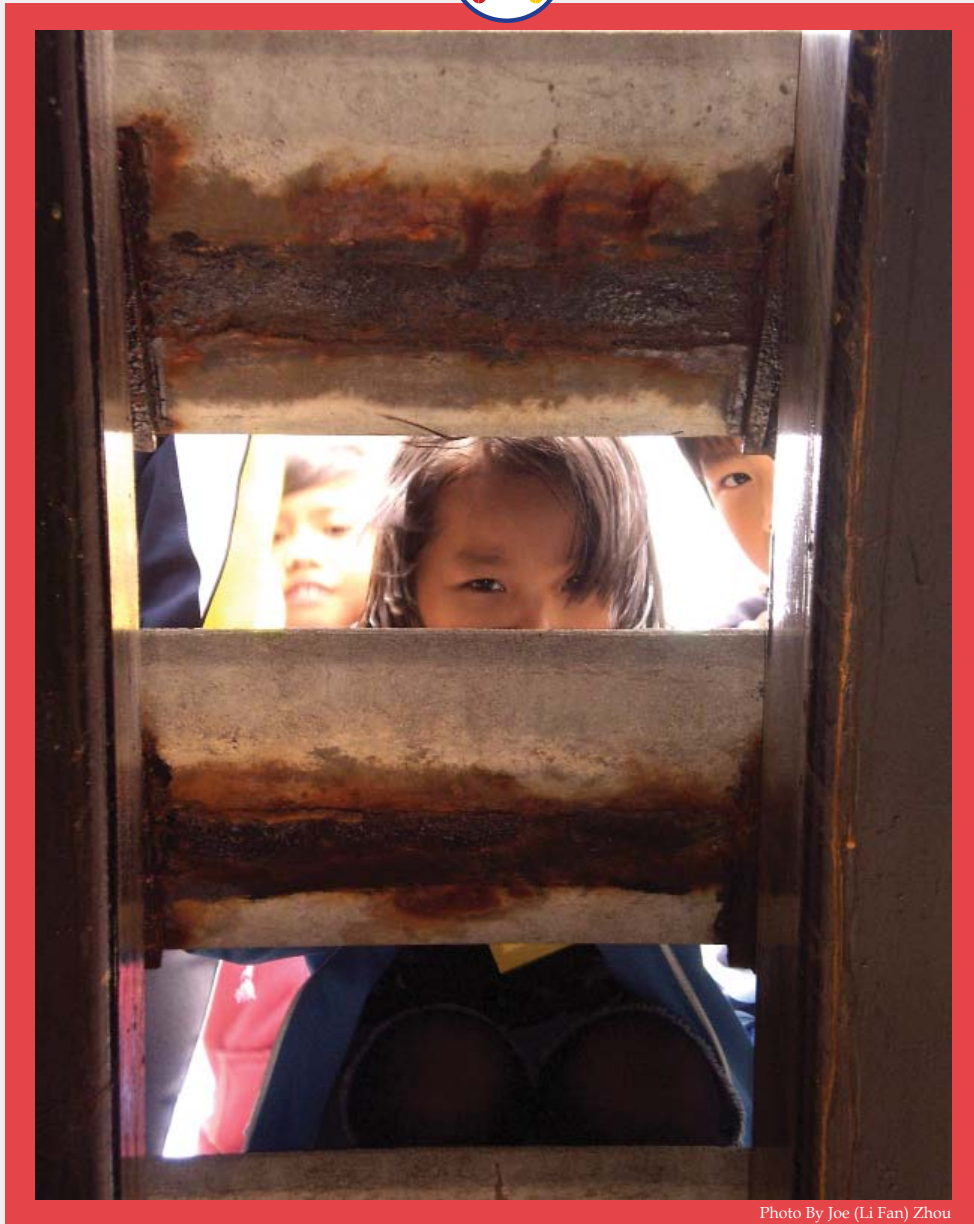


Photo By Joe (Li Fan) Zhou

Bringing People and Communities Together

2008 / 2009 Annual Report

Cover Photo by: Joe (Li Fan) Zhou - Grade 3, Spring Park Elementary School

This summer the PEI ANC's ISL team organized a photography course as part of the Summer Program for school-aged immigrant children. At the end of the Program, selected photographs shot by immigrant youth were showcased and offered for sale through an exhibition at the *Gallery at the Guild* in Charlottetown. All proceeds from the sale will be used for future immigrant youth activities.

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President's Message

Dan Doran

Recent data from Statistics Canada has put the media spotlight on Prince Edward Island as attracting a much larger number of immigrants (for its size) in comparison to the other provinces. While some of this can be directly attributed to the past success of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), I like to think that the word is out that we are becoming more proactive in recognizing immigrant needs within our communities, and responding with the proper programs and services that make our Island a more welcoming place to build a new life. The government of PEI has recognized the important role of immigration for our future, and has responded with resources required to support the best model of immigrant programs and services possible.

Thank you to the great staff at PEIANC, and a special thanks to our funding partners, who contribute the necessary expertise and resources. As well, a heartfelt thanks to the many community volunteers, along with board members, who provide time, professional advice, and guidance in this ever-expanding challenge to attract and retain more cultural and ethnic diversity to our province.

Executive Director's Report

Kevin J. Arseneault

Writing this piece for our Annual Report is a time to pause and reflect back on the changes and accomplishments of the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada. As the PEIANC has grown and increased programs and services through new and expanded partnerships it has also implemented many new technologies and integrated systems to help PEIANC board, staff, volunteers and partners to work together to improve services to immigrants and refugees coming to PEI.

Our Board

The organization now has a full slate of board members with a rich and diverse background of talent and dedication to the mission and work of the PEIANC. The current Board are as follows and all deserve our thanks for their ongoing and tireless commitment:

Dan Doran – President
 Godfrey Baldacchino – Vice-President
 Don Wagner – Treasurer
 Myra Thorkelson – Secretary
 Pwaytha Kerhtoo
 James (Jim) Hornby
 Ron Atkinson
 Doreley Coll
 Joe (Zhongyu) Zhang
 Douglas Huh
 Jane Mallard

During the past year, the Board has developed and ratified a new Board Member Policy, and plans have been made to revise and update the Personnel Policy under the guidance of a new committee with two board members and two staff. A new staff manual outlining workplace procedures and practices, computer protocols, etc. is also in the development stage and will be available to staff in coming months.

PEIANC Staff

More than anything else, the success of the PEIANC during the past year is attributable to the dedication, hard work and initiative of PEIANC's staff. There have been a number of staff changes again this past year, and we have had great response to our job postings. We have been fortunate to hire great replacements for great staff moving on to new challenges. For the most part, the transitions have been smooth, and we now have a wonderful team working together to deliver the best services to our clients possible.

- Michelle Hood was due to return to work from maternity leave in April, 2009, but decided to stay at home with her new daughter. As a result, Carrie MacLean – who was hired to replace Michelle for her one-year maternity leave was offered a permanent position with IEHP. Carrie is currently on maternity leave until the Spring of 2010. Richelle Hume was hired on a one-year contract to replace Carrie while she is on leave.
- Jill Olscamp was due to return to work from maternity leave in October, 2009, but decided to stay home with her children. As a result, Valerie Fitzpatrick – who was hired to replace Jill for her one-year maternity leave will stay on as receptionist.



- Jana DeVries decided to leave her position with the PEIANC ISAP Program in May, 2009. Erin Mahar moved from 'Intake Worker' to ISAP worker, and Lucy Zhang was hired as our new Intake Worker.
- Launa Gauthier was hired on a one-year term contract to replace Brianne Peters who went on maternity leave in February, 2009.
- Isabelle Dasylyva-Gill accepted a position as a Bilingual Strategic Planning Officer with the PEI government Academic and Francophone Affairs in June, 2009. Erin Mahar was offered the Settlement Team Coordinator position and Sharon Chuu was hired as an ISAP worker. Sharon has recently accepted a marketing position with the PEI Department of Tourism, and Andrea Wilson has been hired as an ISAP worker.

TEAMS	PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS	STAFF
ADMINISTRATION	Executive Director	Kevin Arsenault
	Assistant Executive Director	Pam Garland
	Office Manager / LINC Referrals Program Coordinator	Jennifer MacArthur
	Receptionist	Valerie Fitzpatrick
SETTLEMENT	Settlement Team Coordinator	Erin Mahar
	Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) Worker	Aggie Missaghian
	Immigrant Settlement Adaptation (ISAP) Program Worker	Andrea Wilson
	Immigrant Settlement Adaptation (ISAP) Program Worker	Alex Yin
	Canadian Life Skills and Interpreter Training Program Trainer	Melissa Coffin
	Intake Worker	Lucy Zhang
EMPLOYMENT	Employment Team Coordinator	Jennifer Jeffrey
	Employment Assistance Service (EAS) Counsellor	Lisa Hill
	Employment Assistance Service (EAS) Counsellor	Adam Doucette
	Employment Assistance Service (EAS) Counsellor	Chelsey Biggar
	Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHP) Project Counsellor	Richelle Hume
	Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHP) Project Supervisor	Melanie Bailey
IMMIGRANT YOUTH	Immigrant Student Liaison (ISL) Program Coordinator	Rocio McCallum
	Immigrant Student Liaison (ISL) Worker	Heather Lea
	Immigrant Student Liaison (ISL) Worker	Joe O'Malley
	Immigrant Student Liaison (ISL) Worker	Launa Gauthier
COMMUNITY OUTREACH	Host Program	
	Host Program Supervisor	Naomi Arron
	Host Program Worker	Marilenne Ureña-Jáquez
	Multicultural Education Program	
	Multicultural Education Program (MEP) Worker	Joey Jeffrey
	Multicultural Education Program (MEP) Worker	Lisa Duffy
	Francophone Settlement Program	
Francophone Settlement Program (FSP) Worker	Nancy Clement	

Table 1: PEIANC Teams, Programs and Staff



- Phyllis Pitre left the PEIANC Employment Team in February, 2009 and Chelsey Biggar was hired to replace her position as Employment Counsellor.
- Tasha Johnston left the PEIANC in February, 2009 and Jennifer MacArthur was hired to replace her position as Office Manager.
- Julie Houde left her position as Host Program worker in July, 2009 to begin a Masters program in International Development in Halifax. Naomi Arron was hired to replace Julie.
- Joey Seaman left his position as a Host Program worker in October, 2009. Marilenne Ureña-Jáquez was hired to replace Joey.

During the last year, there was an open competition for qualifying candidates to receive training to become certified to administer Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLBPT) by the Canadian Language Centre. Two individuals were certified and are now providing language assessments for the PEIANC: Eunice House and David Conway.

Throughout these staffing changes, we have been incredibly fortunate to receive many highly qualified applicants for each new job posting. We received nearly 80 applications for our last job posting and, as a result, have been able to replace those incredibly-talented staff who moved on to other opportunities with equally-exceptional new staff.

As of today, the PEIANC has 25 full-time employees in five teams in nine programs, as shown in Table 1.

CIC Portal Project

During the past year the PEIANC was able to access Portal Project funding from the PEI government, which received funding from CIC for initiatives and projects that enhance web-based information technologies for newcomers.

The PEIANC has been able to make significant improvements to our public website, as well as our Intranet and client database. Our dedicated tech support, Sasha and Beti Andric – GoldNet Smart Technologies, have done outstanding work for us at incredibly reasonable rates. They have built an excellent website, not to mention a translation management interface, which allowed us to administer the translation of our English website into French, Mandarin, Korean, Spanish and Arabic. We were also able to translate the PEI Driver's

Handbook into Arabic and Mandarin, and our "Orientation to the PEI School System," into French, Mandarin, Korean, Spanish and Arabic. A new online language school referral system was developed and implemented, which now gives real-time seating plans for all language levels in each school location, for both Holland College and Study Abroad Canada. Important client and program data which was previously kept in Excel spreadsheets and charts is now being integrated into our client database, with customized features which can migrate data from the database into the forms and custom charts and tables, thereby ensuring better and more accurate reporting and saving time.

In coming months, other new enhancements will be rolled out, outcomes which are based largely on a lot of work done by GoldNet and PEIANC staff during the past year. The PEIANC has been slowly building and cataloging a library of resources related to immigration, refugees, migration, multiculturalism, cultural diversity and anti-racism, immigrant settlement and integration, etc. This searchable online catalogue is almost ready to be integrated into our website, giving students, teachers, and anyone in the community who is interested in researching or learning about these subjects access to these resources.

The Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Service Agencies (ARAISA)

The PEIANC is a member of ARAISA. As such, Pam Garland, Assistant Executive Director and I serve on ARAISA's Board. Last October the PEIANC hosted the Atlantic Settlement Conference. It was a very successful conference and the final report can be accessed on the PEIANC website. Since that time, I have served on the board of ARAISA, on the 2009 Atlantic Settlement Conference regional planning committee, and I represent ARAISA as the Atlantic Canada Representative on the National RAP Working Group and an also as the ARAISA delegate to the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR).

PEIANC Programs

The details on all the amazing work staff have accomplished during the past year can be found in the separate program reports in the following pages. One general observation I would like to make regarding our program delivery is the extent to which our programs have grown, both as a result of the increasing number of clients seeking services, but also



as a result of the increased number of people involved with us as partners, contract interpreters and translators, language assessors and volunteers. Without this extensive network of collaboration and support, we would not be able to provide the range and quality of services we do.

What's ahead for the PEI ANC?

The coming year will be a period to strengthen and stabilize our operations and further fine-tune the protocols governing our many partnerships and liaisons with government departments and community organizations. The challenge to find new ways to extend our settlement services into other communities still presents itself both to our Association and to the Provincial government. We continue to receive inquiries from municipalities and employers to provide settlement services to other communities. Hopefully, the coming year will finally see new initiatives that will encourage greater dispersion of immigrants to communities across the Island, and the establishment of settlement services and supports in more communities.

I am extremely encouraged by all the support we are receiving from all our partners and funders, and I look forward to a continuation of these close working relationships. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Asifa Rahman, Sarah Joncas, and Paul Snow at *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* (CIC); Mary Kouwenburg with *Service Canada* – now with the PEI Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning; Janet Perry-Payne with the *PEI Department of Education*; Donald Arsenault and Claire Arsenault with *Canadian Heritage*; Valerie Nicholson with *Queen's Region Health*; Hon. Alan Campbell, Dr. Michael Mayne, Jim Ferguson, Jane Mallard, Kate Flanagan, Erin Docherty, and Leah Johnston with the *PEI government* and *Population Secretariat*. We have also been working closely with Neil Stewart, Phil Muise, Eric Ellsworth and Grant Sweet with the PEI government's Immigration Services division.

With the devolution of employment services from Service Canada to the PEI government effective October 5, 2009, we expect to be working very closely in the coming year with Birt MacKinnon, Director of Labour Market Development with the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning, and all his staff. My hope is that we can continue to work together to do an even better job building upon the foundation we have already established to serve newcomers settling in PEI.

Assistant Executive Director's Report

Pam Garland

The past year has seen a number of changes and new growth for the PEIANC. It's been very rewarding to be involved with the organization at such an exciting time for immigration on PEI. With the help and support of our funders and our many volunteers, the programs and services offered at PEIANC are truly aimed at meeting the varied needs of all immigrants and their families as they make a new home on PEI.

As mentioned in other reports, we've had a number of staff changes over the past year. As an organization, we've been very fortunate to continue to attract talented staff who are dedicated to helping our clients meet their own goals. In addition to staff, we've also welcomed a number of new board members over the past year who are equally dedicated to helping PEIANC make a difference in the lives of newcomers.

A number of our staff have welcomed new family members into their own families over the past year. I'd like to offer sincere congratulations and best wishes for the following additions:

- Brianne and Grant Peters on the birth of their beautiful baby girl Peyton in February 2009
- Carrie and Steven MacLean on the birth of their beautiful baby girl Brooke in July 2009
- Valerie Fitzpatrick on her recent marriage to Bradley in August 2009

Many thanks to our funders and other community partners for their continued support. I'm looking forward to contributing to the further stabilization of the organization over the coming year, and to making sure we continue to have the necessary supports in place to enable our staff to continue the great work they're doing.

Office Manager, LINC Referrals Program Coordinator

Jennifer MacArthur

Joining the PEIANC staff in early 2009 has been an exciting opportunity. An increase in client registration leads to



additional staffing requirements, which naturally leads to heightened administrative needs. My position here is largely functional in nature, but never dull. The office is a fast paced environment, which over the last six months has also had the added challenge of being an ongoing construction zone. Liaising between workers, staff, site managers, and our landlord has also created a fair amount of administrative need. As well as covering administrative functions, I have also had the opportunity to work with many clients in their quest to learn English.

The English Language Training Program waitlist is managed at the PEIANC. When Assessment Tests are completed, a language placement level is assigned to each newcomer who is actively wishing to attend language instruction school. This client is then placed on the waitlist. As the Coordinator of the English Language Referral Program, it is my daily duty to manage the waitlist. There are many guidelines and policies in place to ensure that the waitlist is managed in a fair and equitable manner. The clients on the waitlist will, as soon as possible, be placed in a government-funded seat in one of the two main language instruction providers in PEI: Holland College, and Study Abroad Canada. While waiting can be difficult and sometimes frustrating, my interaction with clients

has been a part of my job which I enjoy immensely.

The strength and courage required by our clients to relocate to a new country and to be immersed in a different culture and language continues to amaze me. I would like to thank our many clients who inspire the staff here at the PEIANC on a daily basis.

Intake Worker

Lucy Zhang

The Intake Worker position was created in January of 2007 to assist with the increasing number of newcomers coming to PEI. It is my responsibility to welcome new clients to the Association and inform them of PEIANC programs and services.

For clients with permanent residence (PR) status, I assist with applications and registration for various services and benefits, such as PEI Health Card, Child Tax Benefit, GST/HST Tax Credit, Social Insurance Number, Permanent Residence (PR) Card, Provincial Physician Registry, and Language Instruction courses. I also collect immunization records for children un-

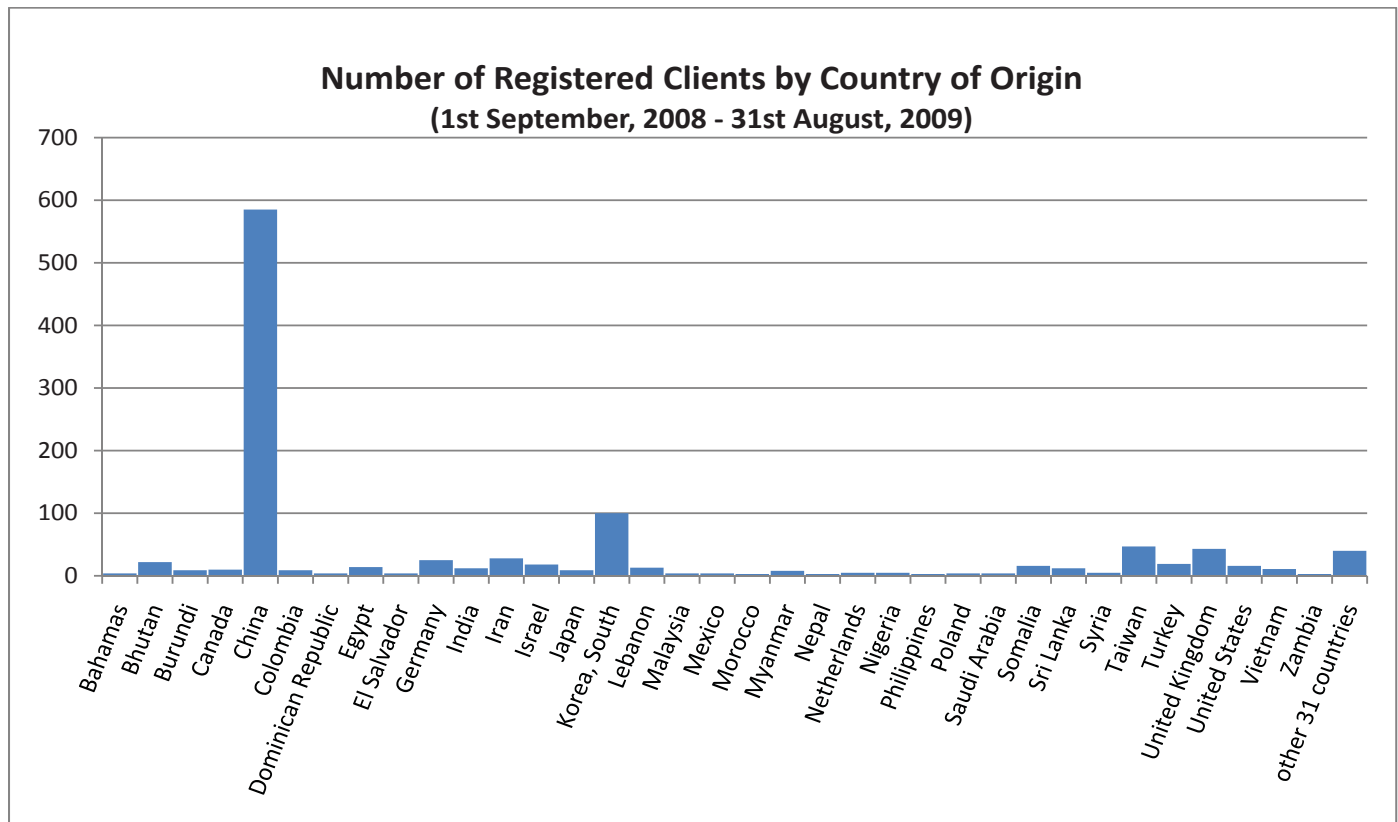


Chart 1: Number of Registered Clients by Country of Origin 2008/2009



der 18 years of age so that the information can be passed on to Public Health in Charlottetown. In addition, I collect data from clients to be used in statistics and further correspondence.

PEIANC Client Statistics

For the period of September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009, the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada welcomed 1125 new clients from 66 different countries. The majority of these new clients from the Far and Middle East, including P.R. China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Iran, came through the Provincial Nominee Program. (See Chart 1, page 5 and Chart 2, page 6).

ministered 506 language assessments.

Personally, it has been a great pleasure for me to meet so many newcomers from different countries around the world. It has been a very exciting experience for me to learn the different cultures and family values. I look forward to welcoming many more clients in the future and helping them adapt to their new life on PEI.

Resettlement Assistance Program

Agdhas (Aggie) Missaghian

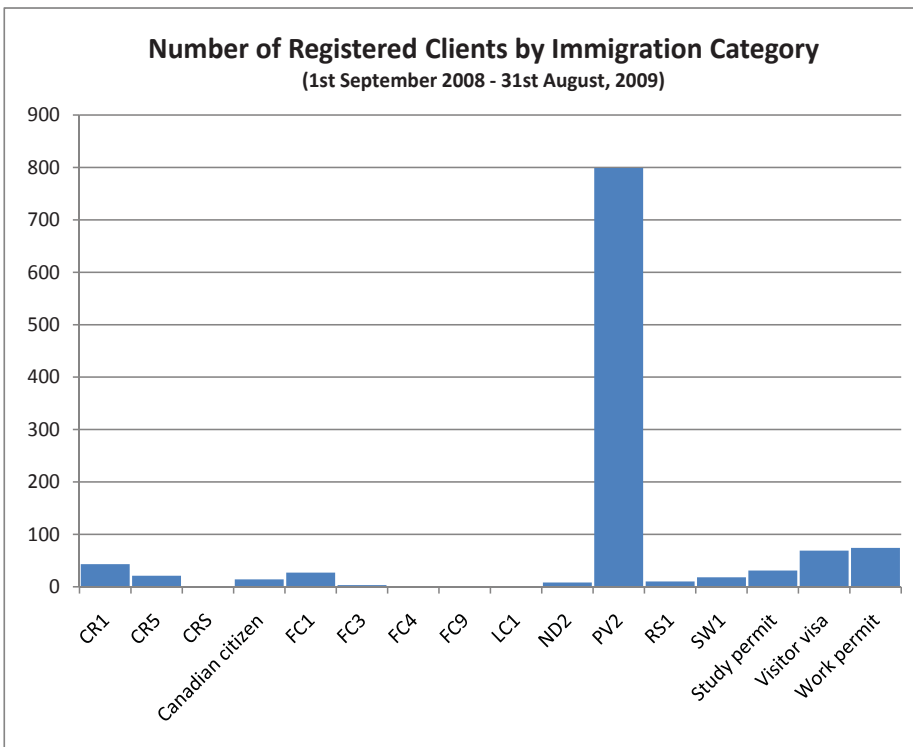


Chart 2: Number of Registered Clients by Immigration Category 2008/2009

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The RAP program received eighty-four Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) in the period September 2008-August 2009 from a variety of countries including; Burma, Bhutan, Colombia, Somalia, Congo and Afghanistan. The majority of these clients are still residing in PEI.

We also received two families with a total of 18 people that were jointly sponsored (JAS) by a Church and the Muslim community.

In addition to greeting clients at the airport upon arrival and booking hotel rooms, I also assist newly arrived refugees in locating permanent housing and purchasing household items. I assist them with all the necessary paperwork for them to obtain Social Insurance Numbers, Child Tax Benefit, Permanent Residence Cards and PEI Health Cards.

Language Eligibility Determination

As part of the settlement process, Permanent Residents are entitled to attend English classes free-of-charge. I schedule Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Tests (CLBPTs) to determine the level at which a client should be placed in an English Language Training Program. After the test, clients are placed on a waiting list to attend language training at one of two providers, Holland College or Study Abroad Canada. From September 01, 2008 to August 31, 2009, the PEIANC ad-

ministered 506 language assessments.

Most of our clients have survived tragedies in their home countries and arrive in Canada feeling emotionally drained, vulnerable, and having limited knowledge of life in Canada. I feel a great deal of compassion and respect for our clients. Once their specific needs are assessed, I make referrals and schedule appointments with Mental Health Professionals, and the Provincial Physician Registry. Also, there are a lot of



family issues such as marriage break ups, young adults moving out of their parents' home, and financial difficulties. These can be stressful situations for the clients, and I continue to work with mental health care providers and others to explore ways to enhance mental health supports for newcomers in need.



Bhutanese refugee children from Beldangi camp give the 'Namaste' greeting which means both 'hello' and 'good-bye'

This past year, I have participated in the ARAISA Atlantic Settlement Conference, and have attended various meetings dealing with newcomer's health and violence prevention. Finally, I am very happy to be working with a team of very talented settlement workers.

Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP)

Erin Mahar (Coordinator), Chunsheg (Alex) Yin, Sharon Chuu and Jana DeVries

ISAP is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Immigration Branch, which allows many immigrants to access a wide variety of services during their settlement and adaptation process.

The focus of this program is to deliver direct services to immigrants of any immigration category, as well as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) after their first year of support under the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) has elapsed. ISAP provides long-term settlement services, addressing the needs of immigrants settling in Canada and helping them in-

tegrate into the community.

We, as Settlement workers, assist many clients on a daily basis. Not only do we act as a liaison between our clients and other organizations such as; Canada Revenue Agency, Department of Health, CIC Collection Services, Public Health, Child and Family Services, Department of Education, Provincial Nominee Program office, Income Support, etc. We also assist in other areas such as; Rental agreements, Landlords, IRAC, Legal system, Police services, Accountants, etc. Clients often come to us for everyday issues, such as; finding childcare, information on driver's license/highway safety, public library, sports programs, hospitals/clinics, and bus routes/schedules, city hall, etc. We also provide assistance with translation of documents/driver's licenses.

The ISAP team has recently taken on the role of passing on client immunization records to Public Health in Charlottetown. We also assist Public Health with immunization clinics by booking client appointment times and arranging interpreters. The number of clients and interpreters who attended the immunization clinics during the past year are as follows:

Date of Immunization Clinic	Number of clients	Number of interpreters provided
March 16th, 2009	27	5
May 6th, 2009	23	7
June 30th, 2009	59	6
September 2nd, 2009	76	8

Table 2: Immunization Clinics 2008/2009

We facilitate meetings and are here to support our clients, and when required, we assist with the referral process to a professional. Our goal is to ensure the course of action implemented includes the active participation of the client who is seeking assistance.

Canadian Life Skills Program

Melissa Coffin

Information Sessions

Information sessions are an important component of the Canadian Life Skills Program and they provide our clients with a lot of information in an informal and interesting manner. There have been 15 information sessions held this year on a



wide variety of topics. In total, 193 clients have attended the information sessions this year.

1. September 10th - *Intro to Canadian Healthcare System*. There were 7 people in attendance.
2. September 18th - *What to do when your child is sick*. There were 6 people in attendance.
3. November 13th - *Finding Employment in Canada*. Adam Doucette, an employment counselor with PEIANC Employment Assistance Service, presented at the session. 12 people were in attendance.
4. December 2nd - *Getting Ready For Winter*. There were 36 people in attendance. I facilitated this workshop, and it covered a variety of tips on how to prepare yourself and your family for your first Canadian winter.
5. December 16th - *Waste Watch*. There were 2 people in attendance. A representative from Island Waste Management presented at this workshop and spoke to the clients about the history of Waste Watch, how to sort garbage, and the importance of recycling.
6. January 15th - *Winter Fun on PEI*. 10 people were in attendance.
7. January 29th - *Having a Baby in Canada*. 13 people attended.
8. March 12th - *The Mi'kmaq Culture on PEI*. 7 people attended this workshop. The guest speaker was Tammy MacDonald from the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI and she gave an overview of the Mi'kmaq history on PEI and how their culture continues today.
9. March 26th - *Family Law*. 21 people attended this workshop. Kelly Robinson from the Community Legal Information Association (CLIA) was the guest speaker and presented information on divorce and separation, child custody, and wills and estates.
10. April 15th - *Buy PEI Initiative*. 16 people attended. There were two guest speakers involved in this workshop: Scott Dingwell came in to talk about farming on PEI, and Margaret Prouse did a cooking demonstration on how to prepare PEI meat.
11. April 30th - *Personal Finances*. 3 people attended this workshop. Sherri McInnis and Phil Reid from Junior Achievement PEI provided a presentation.
12. May 14th - *Canada Games*. 14 people attended this workshop. A representative from the Canada Games gave a

presentation on the games and how people can be involved. She also helped anyone who was interested in volunteering to fill out the application form.

13. May 28th - *PEI Healthcare System*. 18 people attended this information session. I facilitated this information session and provided the clients information on how the health-care system works on PEI.
14. June 11th - *Finding Employment on PEI*. 25 people attended this workshop. Adam Doucette and Chelsey Biggar, Employment Counselors with PEIANC EAS program presented to the group. They discussed topics such as; resume building, interview skills, job search tips, and other useful information regarding finding employment on PEI.
15. June 25th - *Summer Fun on PEI*. 3 people attended this information session. I facilitated this information session and provided the clients information on different festivals and activities that are taking place in Charlottetown and on PEI throughout the summer.

Client Work

In the period from September 1st, 2008 until August 31st, 2009, I did Canadian Life Skills work with 12 newly-arrived families which came as refugees; 45 people in total. The families are from Burma (Myanmar), Bhutan and Somalia. All of these families received the RAP Orientation as well as one-on-one training in their homes. The individual training included topics such as: healthcare, budgeting, parenting norms in Canada, the law, transportation, Canadian culture and education. Information is tailored to meet each family's unique needs, while still making sure that they are receiving all of the important information.

Community Involvement and Partnerships

The community partnerships that we build and continue to work on are an invaluable resource to the PEIANC and we continue to strengthen those relationships that already exist. We are always looking to see what other agencies we could benefit from working with. The following is an outline of the partnerships and community involvement I have participated in during this period.

- We have continued to work with CHANCES Family Centre with regards to parenting support for our clients. A



worker at CHANCES was working one-on-one with one of our clients, providing her with parenting strategies and assisting her in implementing those strategies.

- Open Door Ministries has been an extremely important resource for us. We have formed a fantastic partnership with them, and they have been helping our refugee clients by ensuring that they have the proper clothing for winter. The Canadian Life Skills worker visits with the family and helps create a list of winter items that the family needs. The family then takes that list to Open Door Ministries and 'shops' for those items, free-of-charge. This is working well and it is a huge help for our families who cannot afford to buy winter clothes.
- I visited Catholic Family Services to see how their Play Therapy works and how it could benefit our clients. One of the therapists walked me through the process and explained how they work with the children.
- Canada Revenue Agency – We have paired up with CRA to administer tax clinics for our refugee clients. These clinics were by invitation only, and were conducted by a CRA volunteer. An interpreter was provided for each client as needed.
- On March 10th I presented to one of the English language classes at Holland College on Social and Cultural Norms in Canada. This class had low English levels but could benefit from the information in the presentation, so it was tailored to meet their needs and to be comprehensible.
- On April 23rd I attended a focus group on Elder Abuse and The Law. There were representatives from the RCMP, Alzheimer's PEI, Provincial Government, clergy, and a private nursing home in Charlottetown. The purpose of the group was to examine the issues facing elderly people and to discuss the different types of abuse they might be experiencing and how that can be eliminated.
- On June 4th Isabelle Dasyva-Gill and I gave a presentation to a UPEI Family Dynamics class. We talked about what the PEIANC does, who our clients are, and how we help them.
- I represent PEIANC on two committees, Victim Services Advisory Committee and Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention. The following is an overview of what has happened this period on both committees.

Victim Services Advisory Committee

- On March 27th I attended a Victim Services Advisory Committee Meeting. This committee consists of representatives from organizations who serve potential victims of crime. Along with the other topics discussed at the meeting, there was also mention of a new pamphlet coming out for Newcomers who are victims of crime.
- On April 30th I took part in the public announcement of the new Victim Services pamphlets for Newcomers. This was held at the Charlottetown Hotel and was attended by various members of community organizations such as Transition House, Community Legal Information Association, PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre, and Provincial Government representatives. The pamphlets are now available in English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin and Persian, and can be found on PEIANC's website.
- On June 19th I again attended a Victim Services Advisory Committee meeting. The guest speakers presented on the Provincial Youth Substance Abuse and Addiction Strategy.

Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention

- On April 23rd I attended a session of the Legislative Assembly where the motion for the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence was being heard. I have been appointed to sit on this committee.
- I attended the first meeting with of the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention. It started with a walk from Province House down to the Lieutenant Governor's House and then a meeting in the Cabinet Room. There are 28 people on the committee from various government and community organizations.



Employment Assistance Service

Jennifer Jeffrey (Coordinator), Adam Doucette, Lisa Hill, Chelsey Biggar



The 2008-2009 contract year has been a year of tremendous growth and change for the EAS program. We had a significant increase in client needs assessments and the number of case managed clients. The EAS team was kept busy throughout the year with the introduction of several new programs that opened doors for newcomers. Many newcomers wanted to be involved with the Canada Games and used our services to assist them with the application to become a volunteer.

The EAS team is currently preparing for the devolution of the current LMDA and LMA agreements from the Federal government to the Provincial government. Since we have received our funding from Service Canada since 1997, this will be a big change. On October 5, 2009, the province will take control of administering a large number of programs, including the PEIANC EAS Program. This new agreement will allow more freedom in the employment program by giving us the flexibility to work with visitors and youth, which was not possible under the terms and conditions of our agreement with Service Canada.

Client Contacts

This year we saw major increases in our numbers in comparison to last year, highlighted by:

- 451 needs assessments compared to 291 in 2007-2008;

an increase of 55%

- Clients case managed was 432, up from 205 in 2007-2008; an increase of 111%
- 234 clients found employment this year, compared to 202 last year; an increase of 16%
- Our biggest increase was the number of clients who found volunteer opportunities at 53 clients up from 9 clients in 2007-2008; an increase of 489%. This number was greatly influenced by the 2009 Canada Games.

Highlights of Activities

- Throughout the year we have contacted three experienced business people who have volunteered to mentor Newcomer entrepreneurs through our pilot Business Mentorship Program developed late last year. After looking at the results of these matches, we have determined that the program is worthwhile, and we will take what we have learned and continue with the program.
- On November 12th and 13th, Jennifer Jeffrey attended the Atlantic Dialogue conference in Moncton. The Dialogue's mandate was to bring together employers and organizations working in the employability of immigrants. There were some good connections made.
- On November 17th and 18th, the PEIANC partnered with the Tourism Industry Association of PEI and hosted information sessions where data was gathered focusing on shortages in tourism and immigrants' employment needs.
- From November 24th – 27th, Adam Doucette attended the Winnipeg Transition Training Centre's 4-day seminar consisting of a two-day workshop on Resume Coaching and a two-day workshop on Job Search Coaching. Adam found the workshop extremely beneficial and refreshing to hear from peers who were in similar positions, as well as from the excellent facilitator. These courses are the first





half required for Adam to obtain his Career/Employment Coach Certificate.

- On January 19th – 21st, Lisa Hill attended NATCON in Toronto. This conference focused on Career Development and Workforce Learning. She brought back new ideas and techniques to be utilized when working with clients and developing new client workshops.
- On January 28th, a new Immigrant Targeted Wage Subsidy (TWS) Pilot Program through Workplace Resources with the Provincial government began for Newcomers who are not EI eligible. This program will further enhance the possibilities for clients to secure full-time employment in their related field of study.
- On January 20th, Jennifer Jeffrey joined a new initiative called the National Assembly for the Canadian Council on Foreign Credential Recognition.
- During the last week of February, the EAS team moved offices to the 2nd floor of the Confederation Court Mall due to the new hotel addition.
- April 6th- 8th, Adam attended CANNEXUS, National Career Development Conference in Toronto. This was an excellent learning experience with so much new information learned, as well as an opportunity to meet new people in the field to discuss the profession.
- The Self-Employment Pilot-Program began on April 8th. This Provincial government pilot program is being administered by Active Communities in Montague, and will allow immigrants who are interested in starting their own business the opportunity to get one-on-one support and financial assistance.
- From May 11th to 14th, Adam Doucette and Lisa Hill attended a four-day workshop in Moncton on Career Coaching and Interview Coaching put on by the Winnipeg Transition Centre. They both found these courses to be a great opportunity to learn new skills and tools from not only the instructor, but from peers in similar working situations.
- On May 14th, Jennifer attended the Atlantic Metropolis Conference on Immigration to the Atlantic Provinces at the Delta Hotel in Charlottetown.



Li Shi (Shelly), an EAS client, poses in her new workspace

Immigrant Student Liaison Program (ISL)

Rocio McCallum (Coordinator), Joe O'Malley, Heather Lea, Launa Gauthier

The Immigrant Student Liaison Program (ISL) has completed another great year with many new initiatives being implemented, adding to the number and quality of services that the ISL Program provides to students and their families.

The 2008-2009 school year ran very successfully with Rocio McCallum, Joe O'Malley, Heather Lea, and Launa Gauthier working as ISL representatives facilitating communication between the PEI school system and the newcomer families registered with our program. Launa has proven to be a considerable asset to the ISL team and her experience living and working in both China and Korea has been invaluable. The ISL team consists of the four members named with the funding for the positions being divided between CIC (under the ISAP Contribution Agreement) and the Province of Prince Edward Island.



The ISL Program began in April 2002 with a partnership that included four Charlottetown Schools having the highest concentration of immigrant students. In the past few years, as immigration to the province has skyrocketed, the ISL Program expanded to include all thirteen schools in the greater Charlottetown area. As well as providing services to the schools, the ISL team has, over the past few years, formed strong relationships with many community organizations that have benefited our clients and their families. With many newcomer families being unaware of the support networks that exist for youth in Charlottetown, this role is essential to help make the immigration experience as smooth as possible.

As of September 3rd, 2009, the ISL Program was serving 565 newcomer students at all grade levels. This represents an increase of 128 students registered with the ISL program when compared to August 31st, 2008. This number does not reflect the total number of students participating in the International Friendship Groups as there were some students who were not registered with the ISL Program but were still welcome to attend the groups.

One of the factors leading to this numerical increase was the decision of the Province of PEI's Department of Education to incorporate kindergarten into the school system in the 2010 school year. This decision expanded the mandate of the ISL Program to include support for kindergarten-aged students and their families. There are currently 27 kindergarten-aged students and their parents receiving services through the ISL program.

The ISL workers met regularly throughout the school year with guidance counselors, principals and vice-principals, and EAL teachers to address individual needs of newcomer students, to give recommendations regarding school and academic placements at the request of administration, and to provide support to teachers requiring interventions for students. These interventions could be related to cultural, be-

havioral, or academic issues and often involved meeting with families to discuss specific situations. These meetings would usually take place with an interpreter and would address the various challenges the children were facing. Help and advocacy would also be offered to the parents who would often be interacting with school administration for the first time.

Other services provided by the ISL Program included regular cross-cultural support and para-counseling to individuals, particularly at the junior and senior high school level. This was done mainly through consultation and referrals by guidance counselors or requests from parents. Many students struggled with feelings of isolation and the challenges of fitting in and forming new friendships.

A recurring request that came from many of our newcomer parents was for us to find a way to assist them with some support with their child's homework and learning needs. This led to the implementation of a new component of the ISL Program - the ISL Homework Club. The Homework Club ran twice a week (on Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 to 4:30) throughout the school year. The program was open to all newcomer students registered with the ISL Program and provided support with homework and learning strategies. The program was such a success that it will be continued in the coming year as a core part of the ISL Program de-



Photo by a participant of the ISL Summer Program 2009

livery.

Kidsport PEI, a division of Sport PEI, have continued their relationship with the ISL Program in the past year, which reduced paperwork and simplified complicated procedures to access Kidsport funding for newcomer families struggling financially. From September 2008 to August 2009, the ISL Program helped support 52 students in their applications for Kidsport PEI funding. Due to the age and sport restrictions that exist as criteria for Kidsport, a partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart has also been utilized to ensure as many immigrant youth as possible are able to participate in physical



activity. Realizing the importance of physical exercise in helping immigrant youth live healthier lives, the ISL team applied for, and was one of only 5 groups nationwide to be approved for a one-time \$25,000 grant from the *Truesport Fund*. This money has been used to purchase equipment needed by our student athletes, and to facilitate transportation to training sessions, games, and tournaments. We sincerely appreciate the assistance we have received to help newcomer youth participate in sports in PEI.

During the past year, the ISL team organized education sessions to help parents become more familiar with the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Program within which most of the newly-arrived immigrant students take part. The ISL team arranged for representatives from the EAL unit, including Janet Perry-Payne (EAL /FAL Program Administrator) and Vicky Whitlock (EAL curriculum specialist) to come and explain the teaching approach of the EAL program and to offer suggestions as to how parents and students can maximize their English language learning potential. The Chinese and Korean communities were each provided with a session on the EAL program, and interpreters were present to ensure the message was understood effectively. The Korean Association also asked the ISL team to facilitate an education session to help clarify the University entrance process, and to help parents to understand the MacLean's ranking system for Canadian Universities. The ISL Program hopes to be able to provide more support to post secondary students in the future, as we have recognized that many newcomer youth are unaware of the various programs in place to assist them in furthering their education.

The ISL Program continued the facilitation of the International Friendship Groups (IFG) at each of the regularly-visited schools for the 2008-2009 school year. In order to make the IFGs more inclusive, it was decided that this year each immigrant student would invite a Canadian-born friend. This was very successful in that it allowed the immigrant students to showcase their culture in a supportive and caring environment, and allowed the Canadian students to understand a little more about their friends. The IFGs were, on the whole, very well attended, and the activities chosen were designed to be age-appropriate. Discussions and activities included international festivals and food; exploration of cultures; newcomer challenges; memory quilts and personalized maps; ice skating; bowling; trivia; and many other team-building games. The final IFG at most of the schools featured an international luncheon which involved students bringing a friend

and inviting their homeroom teacher to sample some of their traditional cuisine.

The ISL Program's sixth Summer Program was the most successful yet in terms of registrations and attendance. The goal of the Summer Program is to offer a place for continued learning and increased socialization for newcomer students during the summer months. The program provides opportunities to practice English, and brings groups of children together who will be of social and personal support to each other. A secondary goal is to increase the level of familiarity with Charlottetown and Prince Edward Island and the services and attractions that are offered in the summer months. One major component of the Summer Program this year was an ongoing photography art project. The students were taught various photographic techniques which culminated in the students' best work being chosen and put in a photography exhibit entitled "Our Vision" at the Charlottetown Arts Guild. Some activities and outings included library visits, Shining Waters Fun Park, the cinema, the beach, bowling, swimming at Simmons and Victoria Park pools, billiards at Dooley's, the Confederation Centre Young Company performance, Sandspit, Old Home Week's Provincial Exhibition, a Charlottetown photography scavenger hunt, and much more.

This summer, two summer students were hired to help the ISL staff with the Summer Program. The positions were filled by Nicole Li from China, and Amy Bae from South Korea. Both students worked with the Summer Program the year before, so the ISL team was delighted to have them return for their second year. With their help, and the much-needed extra assistance provided by other PEIANC staff, the program ran for an eight-week period. The program began on July 2nd 2009 and ran until August 20th 2009 for students from grades 1-12. In the elementary group, there were 72 students registered for the 50 available places, and we saw an average of 38 students attending per day. The Junior High/High school group had 77 students registered for the 50 available places with an average of 42 students attending per day. In previous years the Elementary group has had a higher average attendance than the Junior High/High School group so this year's increase in number of Junior High/High School students reflects the outreach to teenage clients by the ISL team. We recognize that immigrant youth are considered one of the most "at risk" groups in Canadian Society today and the ISL team is determined to provide more support to this group in the coming year.



We are currently preparing for and looking forward to another busy year of serving newcomer students and their families through this important and essential program.

Host Program

Joey Seaman, Julie Houde

The Host Program continues to offer a wide variety of volunteer-based services to our clients, while also providing volunteer opportunities for members of the local community. From September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009, the Host Program had consistent levels of involvement from both volunteers registered and clients served. Every newcomer client has the opportunity to register for a Host match, a volunteer tutor, social events, conversation circles, and/or the Business Mentorship Program.

One hundred and twenty-seven newcomer clients registered to receive volunteer services this period. The slight decrease in applications is a result of putting registration for the ESL program on hold from May to July to prevent the waiting list from reaching an unmanageable level. While there continues to be a high demand for ESL tutor volunteers, the waiting list for friendship volunteers has been reduced significantly. This decrease is a result of greater concentration on recruiting efforts to attract volunteers to the friendship program. The ESL tutoring program continues to be a popular volunteer opportunity, running full training sessions four times throughout the year.

Volunteers and Matches

From September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009 a total of 97 volunteers have been active in the Host Program. The breakdown is as follows:

- 18 Host Volunteers
- 75 ESL Volunteers
- 4 Business Mentorship Volunteers

Clients:

- 127 clients were added to those waiting to be matched
 - 26 for Host Program
 - 101 for ESL Tutoring

- 58 clients currently on the waiting list
 - 19 for Host Program
 - 39 for ESL Tutoring
- 104 clients were matched
 - 25 for Host Program
 - 75 for ESL Tutoring
 - 4 Business Mentorship

Volunteers:

- 81 volunteers are currently providing program support
 - 19 for Host Program
 - 62 for ESL Tutor
- 79 volunteers matched
 - 17 for Host Program
 - 59 for the ESL Tutor
 - 3 Business Mentorship



Host Event at Cavendish Beach

Host Program Events

Four Host Events were held over the twelve month period. Below is a brief outline of each activity, including the number of attendees.

- The Fall 2008 Event in October was in partnership with UPEI, which provided 120 newcomers with the opportunity to have a walking tour of the UPEI campus and to use the athletic facilities. Student athletes were on hand to assist in the event. A barbecue was also provided by UPEI, free-of-charge.
- The Winter 2009 Event in January brought 117 clients



and volunteers to the trails of Brookvale Nordic Centre for cross-country skiing, tubing and socializing in the lodge.

- *Volunteer Appreciation Night* in April 2009 was held at the PEIANC meeting space for 80 volunteers and their matches. The evening included a variety of musical and dance performances, photo slide-show, catered food and tokens of appreciation.
- The Summer 2009 Event in June was in partnership with Parks Canada. One hundred and ten participants went to Cavendish Beach for an afternoon of beach activities, a picnic, nature walks and planting dune grass. The event was also a celebration for *World Refugee Day*.

Other Activities and Partnerships

Several new partnerships were created over the twelve month period to offer a new variety of events to clients and volunteers; UPEI, Parks Canada, Confederation Centre for the Arts and the Mi'kmaq Confederacy. Each partnership offered unique opportunities for clients and volunteers to enjoy activities in the Island community. The Host Program would not be possible without the generosity of these partners.

A presentation was given at the ARAISA Atlantic Settlement Conference titled *Innovations in Host Programming*, which offered guidance on launching and operating ESL programs in the Atlantic region. Since then, three settlement agencies have requested information and direction with their efforts to establish a volunteer-based ESL tutoring program in their community.

The ESL Tutoring Program, in partnership with the Confederation Library, continues to be a success, and has become a leader for volunteer-based ESL Tutoring Programs in Atlantic Canada.

Four ESL Tutor Training Sessions were offered this year, training 59 new volunteers. There continues to be a waiting list for volunteers wishing to offer their services. Over 70 clients have benefitted from this program.

Regular *Conversation Circles* continue to be offered to newcomers with a wide range of English-speaking ability. A new professional level conversation group started in 2009, where learners with fluent English levels had a chance to fine-tune their skills.

The ESL Meeting Space, located in the Confederation Centre Library, has become the hub of multiculturalism in downtown Charlottetown. The space is used to host ESL training sessions and teaching space for volunteers. Traffic continues to increase and resources are constantly expanding. The Library will also be used as a pilot site for a new online tutor training program in partnership with the Regina Public Library in 2010.

The Host Program played a major role in developing and launching the *Women's Happiness Group* in April. The social group strives to provide immigrant women with a social network and a chance to be engaged in the local community through social events and educational activities. The program was an immediate success with approximately 50 women participating in such activities as sea kayaking, musical theatre, pot lucks, bowling, gardening and more. The program is made possible through strong partnerships with local businesses, community groups and organizations by providing in-kind donations and discounted rates.

UPEI donated season tickets for varsity sporting events to all newcomer clients and Host Program volunteers. The generous donation was made through their newly established *Heroes Program*. An event was also organized in January which provided transportation, tickets and snacks to 80 clients. Tickets will be provided to all clients again this year.

The Holiday Host Program was a popular activity for clients and new volunteers once again last Christmas. Twelve Host and immigrant families enjoyed dinner together over the holidays. The Holiday Host Program is a great opportunity to accommodate clients who are on a waiting list for a Host Match and an opportunity for first-time volunteers to become involved.

Host Program Promotion

The Host Program was promoted through media support from CBC Radio, K-Rock and Ocean Radio, the *Buzz* entertainment guide, and *The Guardian* newspaper.

Information booths and displays were set up at the Community Connector Fair, International Student Week and Launch Business Symposium at UPEI, the Volunteer Registration Expo in Stratford, as well as DiverseCity and two business mixer events hosted by the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce.



Host Program Administration

All volunteers have fulfilled the requirement of providing at least two character references, an interview for suitability, and have submitted an official police record's check before being matched with newcomer clients.

Hard files and computer files with client and volunteer information are managed and kept secure by the Host Program worker. They are continually updated to reflect the current contact information and involvement status of every volunteer and client.

The quarterly newsletter of the Host Program, the *Host Post* has been published and sent out electronically and in hard copy on schedule, with relevant information and news of interest to the PEIANC community.

Reporting requirements, such as monthly updating of CIC's national iCAMS database, and quarterly reports were fulfilled.

Multicultural Education Program (MEP)

Joey Jeffrey, Lisa Duffy



The Multicultural Education Program provides presentations and workshops on diversity, multiculturalism and immigration to schools, community organizations and businesses on PEI. The purpose of the program is to create a welcoming, inclusive environment for newcomers and to build cultural understanding for

both newcomers and Island-born residents, thereby promoting mutual respect and fostering productive communities.

The Multicultural Education Program experienced an 80 per cent growth in overall presentations from the previous year – up to 160 presentations between the period of September 2008 to August 2009. A second MEP worker, Lisa Duffy, was hired in November, 2008. To further her development as a Multicultural Educator, Lisa attended 4 days of training in July. Upon her return, much of the training was integrated into the MEP presentations.

MEP in Schools

MEP has had its most productive year in schools to date, delivering 125 presentations to Island schools and reaching approximately 2,500 students. Several of the schools requested presentation for each class in the entire school, including: Parkdale Elementary, Stonepark Intermediate, Queen Charlotte Intermediate and East Wiltshire Schools.

Foreseeing a continued demand in our service and its growing popularity within schools, we spent a great deal of the 2009 summer months on development work. We now have a presentation tailored to each grade level, including an activity for each, throughout grades one to twelve. We also updated our promotional materials to convey to our school contacts that there is new, relevant information to be learned for each consecutive grade.

One of the challenges for MEP is to increase its visibility in rural schools. As the majority of newcomers settle in urban areas, in particular Charlottetown, the school administrators in rural communities do not always realize the direct benefits of having their students exposed to MEP's presentations. Diversity education is becoming increasingly important as more newcomers begin to settle outside of cities, and students will undoubtedly be interacting to a greater extent with people who are visibly different from them. Nevertheless, we are beginning to see a slight rise in the demand for presentations to rural schools: we presented to eleven classes in three different schools in Kensington, Crapaud and Hunter River during the period of September 2008 – August 2009.

MEP Workshops

MEP has also seen a rise in demand for its *Cultural Competency* workshops. We delivered four full-day workshops and five half-day workshops to businesses and organizations. A further success in this area is that we have also been able to



offer the last two of these workshops for a fee, an indication that Island businesses are realizing the value of educating their staff on cross-cultural communication.

MEP Partnerships

MEP has developed quite a few prominent partnerships throughout the period of September 2008 to August 2009. We played an important role in the organization of Caravan in the Capital, the multicultural event of the Canada Day celebrations, as well as in the planning of events for Asian Heritage Month in May. Another achievement for MEP was its partnership with Victim Services. We assisted provincial government staff in creating a brochure to inform newcomers of victims' services. It was translated into four languages to help newcomers, even if they just arrived and speak limited English. MEP also worked with PEIANC's Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHP) Project staff and the Department of Health to create a cultural competency component to the province's *Orientation for Immigrant Health Care Providers*.

MEP plays an active role as members of PEIANC's Community Outreach Team (COT). Some of the main activities that we have an involvement in are DiverseCity, Refugee Rights Day and Volunteer Appreciation Night, as well as any other events that COT hosts throughout the year. MEP also assists the Immigrant Student Liaison team during the summer months while the youth summer program is taking place.

MEP has been responsible for managing the resources in PEIANC's library. One thousand and eight hundred resources have been catalogued, stamped and documented into a database. This work is ongoing, but has already proven to be useful for program development.

MEP and the Media

MEP has been highlighted through several media outlets between September, 2008, and August, 2009. CBC Compass covered a story on our school presentations at Stonepark Intermediate School in March, interviewing Joey Jeffrey, as well as several grade nine students who all commented positively on the information that was presented. CBC also invited MEP to participate in its roundtable discussion on how their media stories could be improved. This gave PEIANC the opportunity to provide suggestions on how the media could more equitably cover stories on diversity and newcomers. MEP was also

featured in the print publication, *The Employment Journey*, in May 2009 for participating in the PEI Career Development Association's conference. Overall, MEP has gained momentum in receiving positive exposure of its program and the services we offer.

Looking Ahead

Having acquired training, new resources and newly developed presentations, we are excited to move ahead into a new year of multicultural education across Prince Edward Island. We are well-positioned to build on the partnerships we have made, and we look forward to the year ahead.

Francophone Settlement Program

Nancy Clement

Francophone Settlement

I worked directly with Francophone clients as interpreter/liason in conjunction with the RAP, ISAP, CLS and ISL programs. Although the numbers are low, the needs of some of the refugee clients are high, so the amount of time spent in direct-client work varies according to these families' needs.

I also attended the *Colloque sur l'immigration francophone* in Truro in February and presented briefly as part of the PEI contingent. I have also answered email inquiries re: settling on PEI, which have been more frequent since our website became available in French.

Liaising with Francophone/Acadian Communities and Organisations

I have continued supporting the *Coopératif d'intégration francophone* by sitting on the *Comité du travail*, disseminating information for their events, and by assisting with contacts and information for events such as *'Autour du monde de la francophonie'* hosted by CIFIPE and École Évangeline. PEIANC also partnered with CIFIPE on the new Global Jam events, alternating between Charlottetown and various Prince County venues.



I was approached by the *Société de Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin* (the principal Acadian organisation for PEI) to help organize the official proclamation of *Célébrations de la francophonie* for 2009. This involved hosting the event in our office meeting space, and hiring musicians and caterers representing the international Francophone community on PEI. I was also approached by the *Fédération culturelle* to combine our June Global Jam event with *Fête de la musique* in Summerside.

In conjunction with an EAS staff member, I was involved in a teleconference and follow-up regarding a training program for newcomers in the Canadian workplace which is being translated into French and adapted for use in Francophone communities and workplaces.

Another issue of "*QUoi de neuf?*" was published and distributed, a newsletter aimed at informing the Francophone/Acadian communities about the PEIANC's settlement and community outreach work.

Presentations in schools

I presented the first book in the series *Je viens de loin* to all Grade 4-6 students in the French first-language schools, as well as in some French immersion classes. I will be continuing to present this book in the French immersion classes this coming year (through contacts in the Department of Education, and Canadian Parents for French), as well as presenting the second book in the series in the French-first-language schools. Also, I was invited by *École Évangéline* to present in French on Australia and Indonesia, as part of their exploration of the continents.



Community events

Event coordination continues to be an important part of my work. As a member of the Community Outreach Team, I have organized or been involved with organizing the following events from September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009:

- Women's Happiness Group events (ongoing)
- Global Jam (ongoing)
- Host events (ongoing)
- ARAISA Atlantic Settlement Conference closing dinner entertainment
- Baraka (festival celebrating PEI's connections with Africa)
- Book launch for *Je viens de loin*
- Three Food Security Network workshops (one involving speakers from Mexico)
- International Women's Day 'Leaders Among Us' (featured 2 clients as speakers and performers)
- Refugee Rights Day (film and presentation on Bhutanese refugee situation)
- *Célébrations de la francophonie* (PEIANC hosted official proclamation event)
- World Refugee Day
- DiverseCity Multicultural Street Festival
- Olympic Torch Relay Community Celebration (currently in planning stages)

I also assisted with contacts and information for:

- 'Global Village' at the PEITF Convention
- *Autours du monde de la francophonie*
- *Fête de la musique*
- Caravan in the Capital
- Canada Games World Music Concert
- Pen and Inkling writers' festival (currently in planning stages)
- *Rentrée scolaire à l'École François-Buote* (Asian theme)

The third annual DiverseCity festival was a major event which involved writing several grant applications and reports, obtaining support from community groups and businesses, arranging media coverage, coordinating performances, food vendors, and other activities in an outdoor venue. All five



members of the Community Outreach Team were involved in the organization and facilitation of this event, and by all accounts, it was the best year so far!

The Women's Happiness Group is a new initiative which I have been involved in, along with staff members from other PEIANC programs. We were able to find private funding to support ongoing biweekly events for immigrant women, with the aim of decreasing their social isolation, while giving them an opportunity to informally practice English. Childminding is provided during many of these activities to give the women a respite from childcare responsibilities. Our activities so far have included bowling, planting a garden, going to the Confederation Centre theatre, as well as pot-lucks and beach and park outings. The membership numbers approximately 50 and attendance at individual events is approximately 20.

ISL Summer Program

Besides my regular work, I also enjoyed working 2 days a week with the ISL Summer Program during July and August—this is definitely becoming a yearly highlight for me!

Canada World Youth Volunteer Placements

I supervised the Canada World Youth volunteers from the Ghana-Canada program during their 3 month work placement at PEIANC. This involved coordinating the tasks sent in by various programs and making sure that they had enough work to keep them occupied. This pair was motivated and well-suited to our workplace and we will be hosting a pair of participants from the same program beginning in September 2009.

Internationally Educated Health Professionals Project (IEHP)

Melanie Bailey, Richelle Hume, Carrie MacLean

IEHP Initiatives

Melanie Bailey

This year was marked with high levels of program development and delivery, overcoming new challenges, and enjoying some success. We have been working with a client base that has increased from 64 to 90 clients and we have assisted them in their healthcare licensure processes, registration, taking exams, securing new education, finding employment, and career development. In all of this, our primary focus has been: client support and employment counseling, delivery of two *English for the Health Professional* courses, development and delivery of an *Orientation to the Healthcare System* class, course material development, study groups and exam administration, microcredit research, and collaboration and strategic planning with our community partners.

Client Support and Employment Counseling

Over the last year, we've supported 896 client meetings and interventions, 191 program development sessions, and 60 meetings and/or presentations with community organizations. We have connected clients to new community partners, assisted them in entering new educational programs, and have been a support to them through the challenges they face in long and difficult licensing procedures. It is not a rare occurrence to see individuals come to us overwhelmed with the challenges they face; we have had the privilege of supporting these incredible individuals through their chal-



allenges and seeing the reward of job offers, university acceptance, or renewed hope. We have also witnessed the great discouragement of seeing well-educated and highly-capable professionals realize they will not be able to regain their former careers; in these situations we serve as a support in finding a new career path.

English for the Health Professional Class

“The professional way with which the lecturer handled the class was simply awesome. It made me feel like coming all the time. In fact, I always look forward to coming to class. Also, the cultural diversity of each individual is also unique and beautiful. Everyone contributed positively and happily”

“I will gladly recommend the class to someone else in my situation, and let me also say that I thank the Association for Newcomers for a class like this”

“The course was very interactive, shared a lot of interesting stories with our teacher and the rest of the newcomers... the class was enjoyable, thanks very much to our teacher Melanie”

“I enjoy the healthcare workplace culture”

“Participants committed to the course and support each other in many ways”

“Everyone in the class has been fully involved with the activity”

“I would definitely recommend the course. I have recommended it already”

“I did like everything about the classes, they were dynamic, diverse, and interesting”.

English for the Health Professional Classes

From November, 2008 – July, 2009 we taught Level I and Level II of the English for the Health Professional classes. Each class was 2 1/2 months in length. The work and development required to make these courses effective to changing audiences has been a rewarding experience. We register an average of 13 clients for each class and always have a good represen-

tation from many healthcare backgrounds and cultures.

a. English for the Health Professional, Level I

In November of 2008, we began our English for the Health Professional, Level I class - a multidisciplinary, workplace-specific ESL course focusing on patient interaction, medical terminology and work place culture. In preparation, we refined the course material, advertised, pooled potential attendees, and developed a class list. After assembling 140 page class workbooks, we developed lesson plans, prepared media, and organized class outlines and goals for each week. Due to the high level of English spoken by the participants, the class moved quickly and we were able to introduce more activities to work on their English abilities in public speaking, enunciation, and healthcare research. Then, in August of 2009, we began the process again, in preparation for the next class that was starting in September of 2009.

b. English for the Health Professional, Level II

In May of 2009, our English for the Health Professional, Level II class began. Following the same process as the Level I class, we revised and printed new workbooks for incoming students. The lessons were grouped by logical topic sequences vs. by chapter. This promoted their understanding and the ability for us to work on subject-specific learning. With the classes being held on Saturday's for 5 hours, the challenge was to keep the audience listening, learning, and interested. New games, media, and quizzes were introduced to support learning visually, in practice, in conversation, and through exams.

Orientation to the PEI and Canadian Healthcare System

One of PEIANC's goals, through the IEHP Project, was to provide a class entitled Orientation to the PEI and Canadian Healthcare System. In September this became a reality. Prior to this date, an intense period of study, research, and meetings filled our days. We had researched the health department, health trends, unions, the job market, and contemporary issues. We were also able to collaborate with others across Canada who offered similar services. By September, 2008, a book was in print, and advertising was underway.



Orientation Class 2008

"This course is very good"

"I found it was interesting to know the process and protocol of being involved with PEI health system"

"I enjoyed interacting with other people in this course"

"People behind the course have done a great job"

"Appreciated their time and effort and enthusiasm"

"I would definitely recommend this course to anyone"

"I enjoyed the dynamics that were taking place in the course"

"Our facilitators were relevant in dealing with the material, dealing with timing and the group per se"

In September, we welcomed our participants and embarked on the first Orientation class. In addition to lessons and exercises, we integrated speakers to fill a community component in what we regard as a necessary requirement in putting a face to the PEI healthcare system. The class was fast-paced with exciting speakers, and we relied on a tight schedule with lesson plans to ensure all of the material was covered.

After the initial delivery of our Orientation class, a series of meetings and collaborations occurred through 2008/2009 between the Provincial government and the PEIANC. In these meetings we shared our material and experiences in collaboration with the Province as they developed a specific Orientation to the PEI healthcare system for new Physicians. The PEIANC supported this development and is committed to hosting and facilitating all of these Orientation classes.

Study Groups

We have maintained support for our local International Medical Graduate (IMG) clients. After completing the sixth practice exam and seeing many of our IMG's complete their first two licensing exams, we are now welcoming a smaller stream of IMG's, where exams are administered on an "as-needed" basis. While our group of new IMG's was decreasing, the group of new RN's was increasing. Therefore, with a lull in IMG exam

requirements in September and October of 2008, we focused our attention on the RN group and the many needs that they were presenting. Several Canadian Registered Nurses Exam (CRNE) specific books were ordered, community partners were consulted, and practice exams were designed, using questions from all available book material. A series of exams was developed and administered by the end of 2008; after which, we placed significant priority on more material, a better process, and the development of more challenging, competency-driven exams in 2009.

RN Study Groups and Microcredit Research Project

Richelle Hume

RN Study Group

The largest and most effective RN study group series began on June 25th, 2009 and will continue until October, 2009. We meet on a regular basis every second Thursday night for two hours. There are eight new exams being administered. In preparation for the advanced study group, we advertised and posted flyers online and at both the EAS and main PEIANC office spaces. We then identified potential participants who might be writing the CRNE, and contacted them personally to invite them to join a study group.

Encouraged by the significant increases in the last set of test scores, we were confident that further investment in a focused study group would be beneficial. After investigating the best study aides, new resources were purchased. From these resources we developed new practice exams and accompanying answer books that were user-friendly and re-useable.

Each successive study group has been a learning experience for all of us; each time new areas of concentration are identified by both learners and staff, and new resources are discovered. It should be noted that this is not a static but a dynamic process that will grow and change with each new group of learners. The CRNE is a highly culturally-specific exam; so, depending on the student's country of origin, religion and culture, different learning aides and methods may be required.

It was our hope that by joining a study group, these individuals would not only share knowledge with one another, but would also provide one another with mutual support. Being

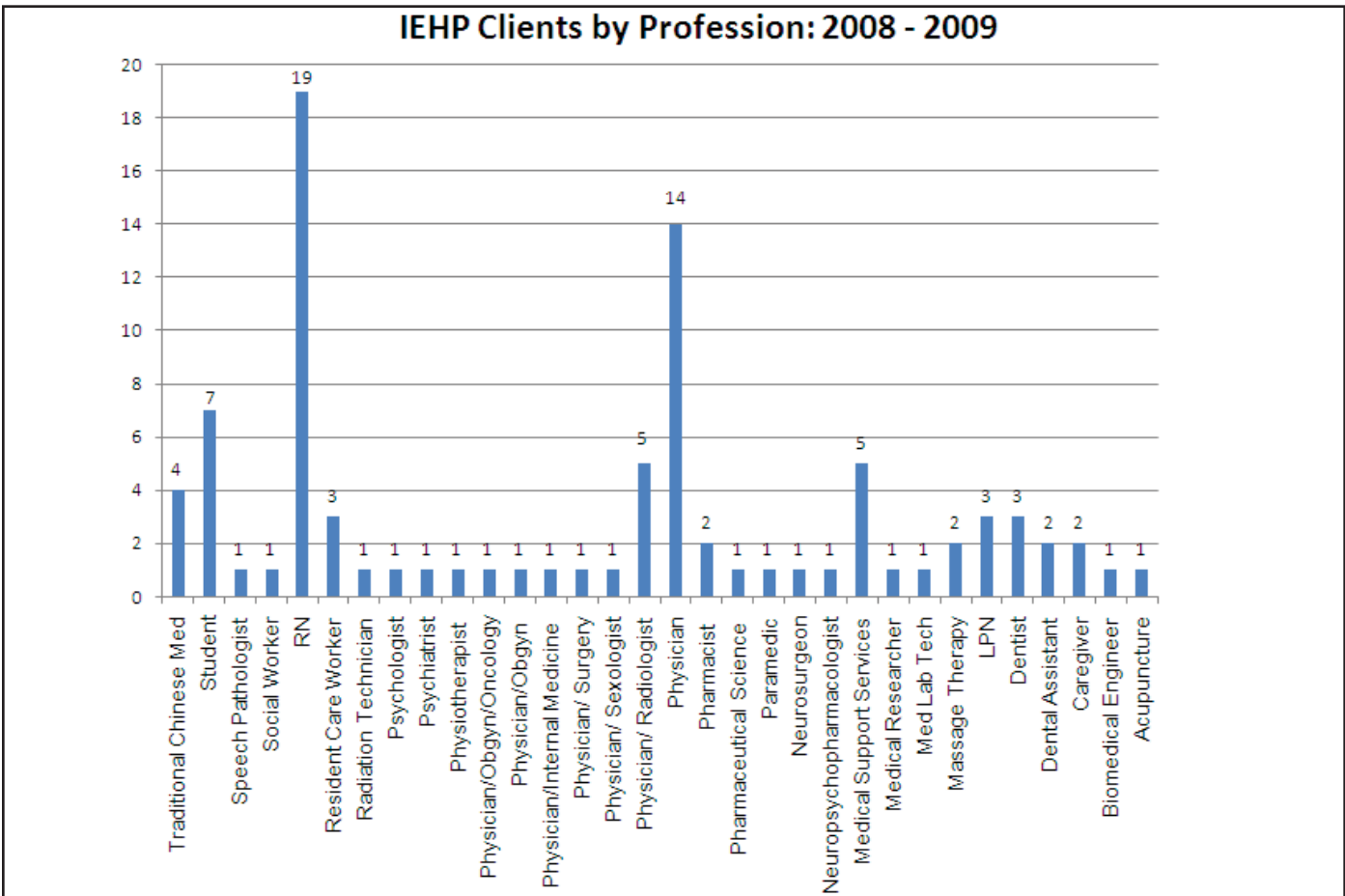


Chart 3: IEHP Clients by Profession

in a new country, often with limited financial resources, potentially being separated from your normal support network and family, and being faced with the pressure of exams can be daunting. Knowing that you are sharing the journey with others can provide a much-needed means of support, encouragement and motivation.

The internationally-trained nurses that we have met to date have a wealth of experience and expertise to offer the PEI Healthcare system. We are so very proud of all of our student’s hard work and dedication.

Microcredit Research Project

This past year has been devoted to further research, identifying success stories, and categorizing those who have ceased operations; as well, refinement of data, clarification of pressing issues, and preliminary recommendations.

Data was developed that showed, “how Microcredit for an IEHP would work with the existing Atlantic Concept of mi-

crocredit used for small business ventures” (Bailey, Annual Evaluation Summary 2008-2009, INT Project 6). This preliminary loan proposal identified and suggested a framework for a successful microcredit venture.

The IEHP Project staff felt that it was important for the voice of our clients to be heard; so, much effort has gone into learning about these immigrants as individuals, and not just as an aggregate. This has also meant learning about the struggles that these Internationally Educated Healthcare Professionals (IEHP’s) face, the “survival jobs” that many are forced to take in order to support their families, and unfortunately the under-utilization of their skills to the cost to the Canadian economy, estimated by some to be in the billions of dollars.

In addition to our regular client meetings, an email letter addressed to all of our IEHP clients was sent out asking for their input. Likewise, we have also been in contact with other Atlantic Settlement agencies to solicit their (and their clients’) opinions; we are currently in the process of collecting this data. To date, the response from other Atlantic Settlement Agencies has been very favorable. In fact, many have also



been exploring how a microcredit venture could be initiated to serve their clients.

We have tried to educate other stakeholders about the financial predicament that many IEHP's find themselves in during the period of time prior to passing through the arduous, lengthy, and usually expensive licensure process.

A presentation was prepared for the Western Hospital Board to discuss how retention issues with IMG's are often related to this lack of financial support. In essence, "if those individuals who are here and 'retainable' aren't financed, assisted, retrained, and brought into the hospital setting we will lose them to another province or to opportunities outside of healthcare" (Bailey, Annual Evaluation Summary 2008-2009, INT Project). In most cases, we lose these highly-skilled individuals to the larger provinces and larger urban centers. A presentation was also made at the ARAISA Annual Settlement Conference.

This past year has also been one of growing our community contacts, and reaching out to other interested parties to share our research findings, seek collaboration, and obtain external expertise. Meetings have been held with: PEI Business Development, Dr. Don Wagner, UPEI professor, Tom Web SFX University, Maytree / Alterna Savings, PEI Lending Agency, local Credit Unions, Atlantic Health Connection Partners, PEI government HR staff and Health Recruiters, and commu-

nity-based financial institutions.

Looking forward, we are preparing a final report for Health Canada on our microcredit research findings which will include recommendations on how we can best support the many IEHP's living here.

Clearly, the predicament that many new highly-skilled immigrants find themselves in when they arrive in Canada is not going to be solved with a 'quick fix'. We see microcredit as just one tool that needs to be adopted out of many. To successfully integrate IEHP's into the Canadian workforce and society, a concerted effort needs to be made to develop a comprehensive, strategic, and multi-dimensional plan that involves all levels of government and stakeholders. We see this not just as a social justice issue, but an issue that is vital to the economic success of our region.

Collaboration and Strategic Planning with our Community Partners

Over the last year, the IEHP Project staff has developed new partnerships, community connections, and established mediation points for various client issues. The opportunities to speak, present, advocate, and meet key contacts are essential in becoming a voice for IEHP's and also to increase knowledge of the various community services available to our cli-

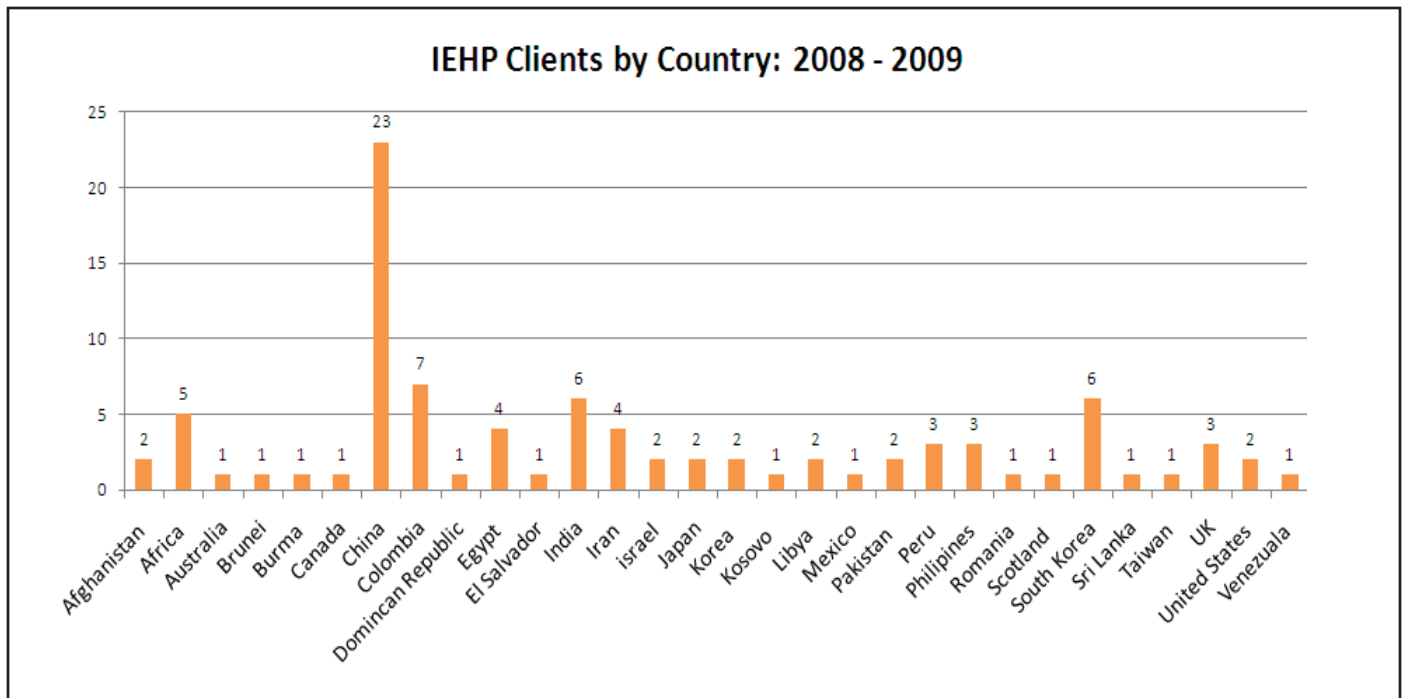


Chart 4: IEHP Clients by Profession



ents. Some of the activities with our partners include:

- Collaboration with the Secretariat of Recruitment and Retention for PEI to present and advocate on behalf of highly-qualified IEHP's.
- Meetings with PEI Provincial Physician Recruiter, regarding highly qualified physicians who have completed exams and are ready to move forward.
- Presentations to Activity Directors from Long Term Care facilities across PEI to advocate on behalf of our IEHP's who need jobs and volunteer placements.
- Worked with UPEI's nursing department to advocate for international RN applicants and facilitate meetings.
- Meeting with the College of Physicians (PEI) to clarify a number of physician barriers.
- Worked with the College of Physicians (NS) to clarify their processes in comparison to PEI.
- Worked with Royal College of Physicians and MISA to research specialist pathway and determine best course of actions for our Specialists.
- Preparing IEHP presentations to advocate for the retention of IEHP's with the Western Hospital Board, PEI.
- Began Mentorship program with UPEI nursing students.
- Attending and supporting client job interviews within the community, where language was a barrier.
- Working extensively with the PEI Provincial Health Director, Secretariat, and the Provincial HR team.
- Focused groups held with RN and LPN community groups.
- Establishing more volunteer options through community connections.
- Collaboration with the PEI Government and the Association of Registered Nurses (ARN PEI), through the shared need of increasing the number of applicants filling vacant RN positions.
- Growth of community partnerships through local businesses who welcome the caliber of our clients: The Friendly Pharmacy, The Murphy's Group, Atlantis Health Spa, MacMillan Lodge, and the Atlantic Baptist Nursing Home.
- Developing of new collaborative relationships within the QEJ hospital, leading to a hospital tour for our IEHP's.

- Collaboration with the PEI Acupuncture Association.
- Collaboration with the Association of Registered Massage Therapists.
- Continued support from UPEI Nursing in providing tutors for clients currently preparing for their CRNE.
- Networking with community contacts, where live-in caregivers are needed.



Photo by a participant in the ISL Summer Program 2009



Research and Pilot Project Collaborations

Host Program

The Host Program took part in an in-depth study led by Dr. Godfrey Baldacchino from UPEI. The study surveyed newcomers and volunteers to better understand the expectations of the program and to determine if friendships and social networks help immigrants stay in PEI. A target group of newcomers were invited to complete a comprehensive questionnaire, followed by an interview. Volunteers also participated in a focus group to offer their input and experiences in the Host Program. Results will be presented in 2010.

Employment Assistance Service and Holland College

The Employment Assistance Service worked closely with Workplace Resources, the Employment Development Agency for the Province of PEI, to develop a targeted wage subsidy pilot program that would encourage employers to hire newcomers. This program provides private sector employers with a 50% wage subsidy to hire immigrants for full-time permanent employment for up to 26 weeks. To be eligible for the program, clients must be non-EI eligible. EAS used this program on several occasions but found that a number of clients were hesitant to commit to full-time employment as many would be attending language school during the year.

A second pilot program developed by the Province of PEI is the Self Employment Pilot Program (SEPP). EAS has worked extensively to refer qualified candidates to the SEPP. This program was designed to assist Newcomers who would like to start their own business. It provides financial assistance and general support until the pilot program end date of February 19, 2010. The employment counsellors found this project extremely helpful. To date, 11 clients have registered in the program and are working toward opening their own businesses.

EAS has also partnered with Holland College to assist in the recruitment of volunteers for a research study on language acquisition. The study will involve students who are in the regular English Language Training program, a Tourism and Hospitality language specific program, a Business language specific program and a group of volunteers who are in no lan-

guage training. The employment program has been working with Holland College for several months to assist in the recruitment of volunteers for this study.

ISL Program and UPEI

In November of 2008, the PEIANC was approached by the University of Prince Edward Island to partner in a research program geared to immigrant families and the development and implementation of an English as a Second Language (ESL) family literacy program. The ISL team helped with the selection and recruitment of the families, as well as the scheduling of initial interviews. We are currently in the initial stage of this project which will take roughly one year to be completed.



Contact Information

Main office

PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada

25 University Avenue
Suite 400, Holman Building (4th floor)
Confederation Court Mall
PO Box 2846
Charlottetown, PE C1A 8C4

Phone: (902) 628-6009
Fax: (902) 894-4928

Email: info@peianc.com
Website: www.peianc.com

Management

Phone: (902) 626-7254
Fax: (902) 894-4928

Kevin J. Arsenault, Executive Director
Email: kevin@peianc.com

Pam Garland, Assistant Executive Director
Email: pam@peianc.com

Administration

Phone: (902) 628-6009
Fax: (902) 894-4928

Jennifer MacArthur, Office Manager
Email: jenniferm@peianc.com

Valerie Fitzpatrick, Receptionist
Email: valerie@peianc.com

Lucy Zhang, Intake Worker
Email: lucy@peianc.com

Settlement

Phone: (902) 628-6009
Fax: (902) 894-4928

Erin Mahar, Settlement Coordinator
Email: erin@peianc.com

Aghdas (Aggie) Missaghian, RAP Settlement Worker
Email: aggie@peianc.com

Sharon Chuu, Settlement Worker
Email: sharon@peianc.com

Alex Yin, Settlement Worker
Email: alex@peianc.com

Melissa Coffin, Canadian Life Skills Trainer
Email: melissa@peianc.com

Francophone Settlement Program

Nancy Clement, Francophone Settlement Worker
Email: nancy@peianc.com

Employment

Phone: (902) 368-3070
Fax: (902) 894-4928

Jennifer Jeffrey, Employment Program Coordinator
Email: jennifer@peianc.com

Adam Doucette, Employment Counsellor
Email: adamd@peianc.com

Lisa Hill, Employment Counsellor
Email: lisa@peianc.com

Chelsey Biggar, Employment Counsellor
Email: chelsey@peianc.com

Internationally Educated Health Professionals Project (IEHP)

Melanie Bailey, IEHP Project Supervisor
Email: melanie@peianc.com

Richelle Hume, IEHP Counsellor
Email: richelle@peianc.com

Immigrant Student Liaison Program (ISL)

Rocío McCallum, ISL Program Coordinator
Email: rocio@peianc.com

Launa Gauthier, ISL Worker
Email: launa@peianc.com

Joe O'Malley, ISL Worker
Email: joe@peianc.com

Heather Lea, ISL Worker
Email: heather@peianc.com

Community Outreach

Host Program

Naomi Arron, Host Program Worker
Email: naomi@peianc.com

Marilenne Ureña-Jáquez, Host Program Worker
Email: marilenne@peianc.com

Multicultural Education Program (MEP)

Joey Jeffrey, MEP Worker
Email: joey@peianc.com

Lisa Duffy, MEP Worker
Email: lisad@peianc.com

Board of Directors

Dan Doran, President
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