



PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada



Bringing People and Communities Together

2000 - 2001 Annual Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- PRESIDENT’S REPORT 1
- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT1
 - An Overview of Programs and Projects.....2
 - What’s Ahead for the PEI ANC.....4
- PROGRAM REPORTS.....5
 - Settlement Program.....5
 - Host Program.....5
 - Employment Assistance Service.....6
 - Program Support and Office Administration.....7
 - Language Assessments.....7
- PROJECTS.....8
 - The World Among Us.....8
 - Information Sessions for Newcomers.....8
 - Building Strategic Partnerships.....8
- FINANCIAL AUDIT.....9



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sister Marie Arsenault, CND

A highlight of the year 2000-2001 for the PEI ANC was to be presented with the coveted Citizenship Award by Citizenship and Immigration Canada for, in their words, "...outstanding contributions in assisting newcomers to Canada to make a successful transition and integration into Canadian society...". Only a handful are awarded each year for the entire country. What an Achievement!

It was a privilege as my first task as president to receive this award on behalf of the staff and board members of the PEI ANC, past and present. The recognition paid to the Association by CIC embodied the spirit of dedication, effectiveness, efficiency and compassion exemplified by the staff on behalf of our clients. The spirit which permeated the Award ceremony was one which continued to inspire the personnel throughout the year in continuing and even surpassing our efforts to provide the best possible services to the meet the varied needs of newcomers to PEI.

The past year has been a year of growth in a variety of areas. We've seen some consolidation and expansion of services. We are now beginning to reap the fruit of initiatives taken with previous planning and research, such as the *Needs Assessment* commissioned in 1999, and several strategic planning endeavours. Our annual weekend strategic planning which brings all board and staff together has been of great benefit and offers a significant opportunity for the establishment and attainment of our projected goals.

There was much effort to expand our networking locally and beyond. There was work done because of the energy spent in *Building Strategic Partnerships* project to look at providing innovative and alternate ways of servicing the needs of newcomers. An action plan has been designed to work with other community organizations for a more successful integration of services. In reality, PEI ANC has become the hub of collaboration to bring about changes in a variety of areas for a more comprehensive integrated approach to providing services to newcomers in PEI. A bold initiative of the Executive Director. Well done Kevin!

Community awareness building was also of significance this year. *The World Among Us* project offered a series of presentations to the general public over a period of 8 weeks. It featured newcomers giving presentations on their country of

origin and their culture. Thanks to our funder, Canadian Heritage, and to the Coordinator of the project, Beti Andrić for this successful venture.

As President, I look on the past year as a very positive one and the Board has every reason to be hopeful for the future. We are changing, evolving and ever trying to provide more than our share because there are so many needs we wish to meet. Once again, our ongoing efforts to secure permanent funding for the management of the organization continues to be a front burner challenge. Board members are up to the challenge and succeed we will. This year we reviewed the personnel policy and brought in needed adjustments in some areas. My hope is for a continuation of the energetic momentum that exists at this time so that every step undertaken will continue to be client-centred. With our competent staff and Executive Director, Kevin Arsenault, at the helm I foresee no less.

Voluntarism has its own gratifying moments, but commitments always come with a cost. My appreciation and gratitude goes to board members Erick, Joe, Susan, Graham and Zlatibor for all extra hours and the extra caring. Thanks also to Sadeta and Maria who had to resign because of other commitments. To the staff, Aggie, Michelle, Lorraine, Beti and Lorna I offer my profound admiration for your professionalism, your competence and your dedication beyond all expectations. Our expectation is that the *Building Strategic Partnerships* Conference in October will be a success, in part due to the excellent work of our Coordinator Jordan MacLeod who we were able to hire for a five-month contract term thanks to funding received from HRDC. Blessings upon you.

May the PEI ANC be an ever greater service provider and advocate for newcomers as well as being a catalyst in bringing people and communities together. May those who have been uprooted from home and country always find a safe, welcoming and compassionate sanctuary in Prince Edward Island.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Kevin J. Arsenault

It has been a busy and productive year here at the Association for Newcomers to Canada. You can find information about the main programs and projects in the following reports by ANC staff which summarize some of our activity and accomplishments. In my report I want to provide an overview of the scope of our programs, projects and activities, as well as



describe some of the more extraordinary activities and processes in which I have been involved during the past year.

An Overview of Programs and Projects

Work by staff and board members of the PEI ANC during the past year can be roughly categorized under the following headings, 'programs' 'projects' and 'community outreach and networking', depending on the kind of funding and contract relationship for each piece of work.

A. PEI ANC Programs: Annual and One-time Contribution Agreements

The ANC receives funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) in the form of 'contribution agreements'. Applications for these programs are submitted each year, the terms and budgets of which are subject both to change and approval. For the past number of years, the PEI ANC has submitted applications - which were subsequently approved by CIC - for the following programs: Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP); Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP); the Host Program; and the Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment Program (CLBA).

The ANC also receives funding from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) under a 'contribution agreement' applied for and renewed annually. This contract enables us to provide employment assistance services (EAS) to newcomers.

With all the above mentioned contracts, funds are received in 'installments' after expenditures are documented in reports submitted on a quarterly basis.

Along with the standard programs funded through annual contracts, the PEI ANC also, from time to time, submits applications to CIC or HRDC to do 'one-time' pieces of work. Although more like *projects* than ongoing *programs* which deliver services on a continuous basis, they require the same kind of application and accountability reporting as do annual contribution agreements. The five one-time agreements contracts for the past year were as follows:

1. **ARAISA Survey:** In November, the PEI ANC was approached by Senior CIC staff in Ottawa with an invitation to take on a contract to

administer a survey of the 14 member organizations of the Atlantic Regional Association of Immigrant Servicing Agencies (ARAISA), of which I am currently serving as President. This work involved contacting all the organizations, providing them with surveys designed by CIC, following up to have them completed and returned to the PEI ANC on deadline, then forwarding the collected surveys to Ottawa.

2. **Sponsor workshops:** In the Spring of 2000, the PEI ANC delivered a workshop for members of sponsor groups in the Charlottetown area. Another workshop was delivered in Summerside in the Fall for members of sponsor groups in communities West of Charlottetown.
3. **Special Research Project for ARAISA:** As President of ARAISA, I received funding through an application submitted to the Regional CIC office in Halifax to do an analysis of the present organizational and administrative capacity of ARAISA, and to make suggestions on the feasibility of seeking means to establish a regional office for the organization. Smith, Green and Associates were contracted to undertake this research. The study has been completed and we have reproduced 50 copies of the final report for distribution among ARAISA members.
4. **Special Research Project for PEI ANC:** Funding was also sought and obtained from CIC to undertake a research study of the current status of service delivery to recent immigrants and refugees to PEI, with an eye to discovering ways and means to address gaps or improve services, and to promote diversity education and cultural sensitivity awareness education in the schools, workplace, governments and general public. Smith, Green and Associates were also contracted to undertake this research. The final report, "Building Opportunities for Collaboration: Immigrant Settlement on PEI" has been reproduced at the ANC. Copies of this report will be included in a pre-conference package to be mailed to roughly 100 registrants who will be attending our upcoming conference: "Building Strategic Partnerships". This brings me to another 'one-time' significant amendment to our contribution agreement with HRDC to provide employment counselling to newcomers, which provided additional funding to hire a full-time Conference Coordinator for a five month contract.
5. **Hiring of a Conference Coordinator:** Over 70 people applied for the position of Conference Coordinator. I want to offer my thanks to Maureen Larkin and Michelle Jay for serving with me on the hiring committee. Six people were short-listed for interviews, and in the end, Jordan MacCleod



was hired for the position. Funding was also provided by HRDC for a new computer and phone which made it possible to set up an office for Jordan. Jordan offers an update of his work planning for the conference later in this Annual Report.

B. Grant-Funded Projects

Besides the above mentioned annual and one-time contribution agreements with CIC and HRDC, the PEI ANC also undertakes considerable work through grants received for projects. During the past year, four such applications were conceived, submitted and approved. Three were funded by Canadian Heritage: *The World Among Us*; *Information Sessions for Newcomers*; and *Building Strategic Partnerships*. Beti Andrić served as the project coordinator for the first two of these projects and gives a summary in her report which follows. The fourth project, *Introducing Newcomers to the Law* is funded by the Federal Department of Justice under terms of the Community Mobilization Program. This work will continue for the coming year, and will also be coordinated by Beti.

C. Community Outreach and Networking

A great deal of work by all staff is done in response to requests to participate in various committees, consultations, focus groups or conferences. Although extraordinary costs such as travel and accommodation are usually covered, the work itself is often done on a voluntary basis. Following are some of the key areas involving the ANC Executive Director.

1. Work on the Metropolis Project: The Metropolis Project is a collaborative effort funded by federal government agencies and departments including Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Canadian Heritage (CH), and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). The first phase of the Metropolis project saw the establishment of four 'Centres of Excellence' in Canada: in British Columbia, the Prairies, Ontario and Quebec. These university-based centres have been engaged in researching all aspects of immigration, migration and the integration of peoples into cities and communities.

The first three-year phase of Metropolis is concluding, and Phase II will likely see the establishment of a fifth 'Centre of Excellence' in Atlantic Canada. Both as the president of ARAISA, and as the Executive Director of the PEI Association for Newcomers, I have had a role to play in assisting

with the development of this important initiative during the past year, including participation in the following conferences, consultations and meetings:

- Attending the International Metropolis Conference in Vancouver in November, 2000;
- Attending 'The Metropolis Project Building Knowledge Networks' seminars in Halifax, March 15-16, 2001;
- Organizing and attending a meeting with UPEI President and other UPEI Staff, including Graham Pike (a professor in the Department of Education at UPEI and a PEI ANC Board member) to explore UPEI being a part of the Atlantic Metropolis project.

The expectation is that new research dollars will eventually materialize through the Metropolis project, and that this will give rise to a new partnership between UPEI and the PEI ANC as a result of the establishment of an Atlantic Metropolis Centre of Excellence.

2. Bill C-11: In the Spring of 2001, the federal government passed a new Immigration Act, Bill C-11. In the months leading up to implementation of this new law, I was involved in various consultations and discussions regarding changes to the Immigration Act and policies, both with colleagues in other provinces belonging to Immigrant Settlement Agencies, as well as more formally with federal personnel within the department of Citizenship and Immigration and federal MP's reviewing the draft legislation. I presented a brief which I presented on behalf of the PEI ANC and ARAISA to a Video Conference meeting in Halifax with the Standing Committee hearing input on the Bill.

3. Regional and National Conferences: I was fortunate to have been able to attend three significant Regional or National Conferences during the past year, as well as the International Metropolis Conference already mentioned. The first was the Atlantic Settlement Conference in Halifax in November, 2000. This past Spring, I was also able to attend the Spring Consultation of the Canadian Council for Refugees in Saskatoon (of which PEI ANC is a member). In June, I attended the National Settlement Conference in Kingston, Ontario, along with Lorraine Beck, our Host Coordinator and Agdhas Missaghian, our ISAP and RAP Coordinator.

4. New Accountability Requirements: ANC staff have also been engaged in considerable work during the past year as a result of increased accountability and reporting requirements with existing CIC contribution agreements. In the case of the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), monthly reports were compiled on Excel Spread sheets



documenting the number of times each RAP service was provided to each newcomer. Processes are in place to implement similar reporting procedures for all CIC programs. I have participated in conference calls with joint federal committees, both with the Refugee Branch of CIC (responsible for the RAP program) as well as the Integration Branch (responsible for the ISAP and HOST programs). ARAISA has members participating on these committees, and, as president of ARAISA, discussing these issues with other ARAISA members has been a continuous piece of work during the past year.

In the coming year, for the first time, PEI ANC will be required to submit similar information for Has is now being compiled and submitted with the RAP program. This national database system will most likely take the form of a secure Internet site; however, the details of these new reporting requirements have not yet been made known to us. What is certain is that these existing data collecting and reporting requirements will require more work from ANC staff. It will be important that additional dollars be approved in the contracts for the coming year which fairly acknowledge the financial responsibility to fund the work associated with new reporting requirements.

5. Office and Resource Room: Expansion has taken place in the PEI ANC resource room over the past year. What was mainly a meeting room has become more and more a place where resources can be accessed, and training can take place. There are now two computer stations available to newcomers, one of which offers internet access through our network at no additional cost to the ANC. Thanks to CIC for arranging to have some furniture that normally would have went to government surplus transferred directly to PEI ANC.

6. Community Outreach and Networking: Formally, the PEI ANC executive director undertook community outreach and networking activity under a renewable program funded by Canadian Heritage, which has since moved from *program* to *project* funding. Fortunately, I - and other ANC staff - have been able to continue much of this important work under terms of the Canadian Heritage funded project "Building Strategic Partnerships". In particular, since last Fall I have participated in various committee meetings, workshops or forums in a number of capacities, including: Peaceworks; Child Alliance; the Children's Coalition of PEI; the Crime Prevention Forum; PEI Transportation Coalition; and the Community Legal Information Association (CLIA). I have also organized and participated in four steering

committee meetings for the upcoming Building Strategic Partnerships Conference, attended several planning meetings with Marie Burge and Maureen Larkin with the Cooper Institute (who were contracted to facilitate the steering committee planning meetings and the Conference), and had meetings with various senior personnel in organizations and government departments, including the Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Jamie Ballem. As well, two 2-hour training sessions were provided to all ANC staff by Jordan Hill, a psychiatric social worker, on post-traumatic stress disorder.

What's Ahead for the PEI ANC?

The coming year for the PEI ANC will be a significant one to be sure. Applications have been submitted to Canadian Heritage to repeat the very successful projects, "The World Among Us" and "Information Sessions for Newcomers to Canada". A third project application will be submitted following the Building Strategic Partnership's conference, to do follow-up networking and partnerships work with other agencies, departments and organizations. It is hoped that the PEI ANC will find additional sources of sustained revenue to expand our capacity to work with others to provide enhanced and improved services. Finding adequate core funding for the organization remains the most daunting task, given the current funding climate with limited opportunities for core program funding. A considerable challenge for the ANC, and the province itself, is to implement changes that will encourage immigrants, especially government-assisted refugees, to remain on the Island on a long-term basis.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to our funders, especially the local people with whom we work: Asifa Rahman and Dan Doran at CIC; Debbie Mumurdo and Mary Gillis at HRDC; Claire Arsenault and Donald Arsenault at Canadian Heritage; and Donna White with the Community Mobilization Program. A special thanks to Gloria Hansen who up until recently worked in the Charlottetown CIC office.

I want to conclude by expressing my gratitude to all ANC volunteers, including those involved in the Host Program, and those who provided newcomers with computer training, as well as members of the Board of Directors. Board members obviously care a great deal about helping immigrants and refugees, and are very committed to contributing to positive change with refugee and immigrant service on PEI.

My final words go to the staff of PEI ANC, without



whom none of the work of the ANC would be possible. What can I say about our staff? They are definitely paid too little for the professional skills they possess, and the unique work they do. They are not simply extremely qualified and skilled in their respective capacities, but always go that extra mile to do everything possible to help newcomers. They care deeply for newcomers, sincerely desire that they settle and make a new and happy home on PEI, and work tirelessly to assist them in achieving this goal. A special expression of appreciation.

The PEI ANC Board and Staff at the annual get-together, June 2001

PROGRAM REPORTS

Settlement Program

Aghdas Missaghian



This year (September 00 to September 01) the settlement program received 94 government-assisted refugees from a variety of countries including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Croatia, Iraq, Iran, and Sudan. Sixty-one newcomers have since left the province.

Responsibilities that I undertook for newcomers included :

- Receiving newcomers at the airport
- Doing paper work for SIN numbers, child tax credits, health cards
- Arranging for language assessments
- Meeting with immigration officials
- Finding accommodation, helping with house hold items

- Making appointments and referrals to service providers
- Finding childcare providers
- Doing RAP orientations
- Arranging interpreters as required
- Registering immigrant children in schools
- Introducing newcomers to English class

As always, it has been a challenge to find family doctors for all newcomer families. We sent a mail-out to a number of family doctors in Charlottetown, asking them to accept one immigrant family per year as their patients. Unfortunately, we only got responses from a few of them, and those responses were negative.

This past year I participated in the National Settlement Conference, and Critical Link 3 (international interpreters' conference). It is also my 2nd year of representing of the PEI ANC on the Victim Services Advisory Committee. I also took part in several workshops in PEI throughout the year.

Host Program

Lorraine Beck

The Host Program is the only program of the PEI ANC which actively recruits volunteers. Many friendships are developed through this program which continue long after the official "match" is completed. The support and guidance offered during these matches continues to be a key component to successful settlement and integration of new immigrants to PEI.

The average number of matches during this year for any given period has been between 15-20. This number is calculated per family unit, and does not include each individual member of every family. The current number of matches based on this numbering system is 13, with 5 newcomer families having left PEI this summer, and 1 host volunteer family having moved.

Highlights of the Host Program for the past year include:

- Seasonal social activities such as the Andrew MacPhail Homestead Tour and apple picking at Haneveld's in Montague; the annual Host Christmas Party at the Kay Reynold's Centre; Bonshaw Sleigh Rides and party following at host volunteers' John and Shelly Todd's; International Year of the Volunteer Celebration at the Arts Guild with guest speaker, the Honorable Pat Binns, Premier of PEI; summer beach party at Tea Hill



Provincial Park.

- Information Sessions for Host Volunteers were held twice since September last year, one in November, and one in May. These informal get-togethers are very important for giving new volunteers a good introduction to the Host Program, and also for more seasoned volunteers in sharing their experiences and providing support to those who are just coming into the program.
- The Host Program continues to publish the *Host Post*, the only newsletter of the PEI ANC, which is circulated quarterly. The focus is on news relating to Host Activities but also keeps people informed regarding happenings at the PEI ANC. Approximately 100 are distributed with 70 going in the mail to host volunteers, newcomers, board members, and other interested persons. Thirty more are distributed to newcomer students in the LINC program at Holland College.
- Staff at PEI ANC attended the ARAISA conference held in Halifax from November 1-4. This annual event is a great opportunity for networking with other organizations in Atlantic Canada who provide settlement services to new immigrants. As Host Program Coordinator, I was able to get together with other Host Coordinators to share ideas and information.
- Another wonderful opportunity for information sharing came with the first National Settlement Conference held in Kingston, Ontario in June. This was a very valuable experience in sharing constructive ideas and information with staff of other service provider organizations across the country. The PEI ANC was represented at this conference by myself, Host Coordinator, Aghdas Missaghian, Settlement Coordinator, and Kevin Arsenault, Executive Director.
- A "Review of the Host Program" was commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada this year, undertaken by Irene Larkin. This was very valuable in terms of having input on how the program can be improved and identifying where current gaps exist. It was made clear in the findings of this report that there are gaps, especially in the area of meeting the needs of newcomer youth. We are hoping to extend our program offerings in the near future in order to address these specific concerns.

Thank you to all our dedicated host volunteers and newcomers for making this program work!

Respectively submitted by
Lorraine Beck, Host Program Coordinator

*Being a Host Program volunteer
is a rewarding experience*

Employment Assistance Service

Michelle Jay



The past year has been one of organizational stability, within the employment service and the ANC as a whole. There has been space to dream, to expand, to envision new programs and services that will benefit newcomers to PEI. It has also been an active and challenging year, with arrivals from the Middle East and Africa fleeing traumatic situations and adjusting to a very different culture. We, and they, are often frustrated by the inadequate orientation offered by the immigration posts overseas, in terms of what to expect from Island culture.

The EAS service has maintained an active caseload of nearly 30 clients through most of the past year, and has managed to meet the employment targets established by the HRDC contract. Statistics below represent the number of clients who began employment and/or schooling from **September 1, 2000 - August 31, 2001:**

Full-Time Positions	25
Permanent	17
Seasonal/Contract	8
Part-Time Positions	23
Permanent	19
Seasonal/Contract	4

School / Training Programs 12

There has been a decrease in the number of active newcomer clients on the EAS roster in 2000/2001. Comparing to last year, there has also been an increase in part time employment. As well, many positions have been menial, service-oriented jobs rather than adequately-paid and meaningful work. It is also disturbing to note a trend among many recent arrivals to move off-Island within a few weeks and/or months, before ever accessing employment services.



Some features of the Employment Service through the year include:

- Conducting 2 *Job Search Skills* workshops, September 2000 and April 2001;
- Attending *ARAISA Atlantic Settlement Conference*, Halifax, November 2
- *Deliberation Training* (Canadian Council for International Cooperation), November 17/18;
- Provincial *Consultation on Training & Education*, November 27;
- Participating in provincial *Employment Equity Project* - Thilak Tennekone, Project Coordinator, subsequently hired as Equity and Diversity Officer, PEI Public Service Commission;
- Attending *NATCON National Employment Conference* in Ottawa, January 22 -24;
- Establishing computer / Internet access in the Resource Room, and securing a wonderful volunteer, Renata Haddad, to assist clients;

Lastly, I want to express my appreciation to the board and staff for the 5 week leave that enabled me to travel to Zambia, Africa in March. It was a wonderful, bittersweet experience to return to a culture and place that was my childhood home from 1981 - 1984. My thanks.

Program Support and Office Administration (PS /OA)

Beti Andrić

The cross-training which I received last year with all the program coordinators paid off this year again. In March and April I replaced Michelle Jay as the Employment Counsellor for five weeks. Two newcomers got jobs at that time. Aggie was replaced as RAP and ISAP coordinator whenever she was out of the office, and I helped her when she was overwhelmed with work. Settlement work included receiving four families from Africa, and two from Iraq, and responding to daily inquires and requests for information.

Monthly electronic statistic reports on RAP were completed and sent to the national CIC headquarters, as part of the Contribution Accountability requirements.

Here are some other highlights of my work since the last AGM:

- Attended the World March of Women 2000 (a global event against violence and poverty) in New York City in front of the United Nations Building. This was a most wonderful and rewarding

experience. Women from every corner of the World were there.

- Participated in a Collaboration Workshop organized by The Coalition for Woman Abuse Policy and Protocol;
- Participated in the press conference on Petition for Public Transportation organized by Transportation Co-op, on behalf of newcomers to Canada; our story was heard, and an article was published in *The Guardian* the next day quoting what we had to say about how important this issue is for newcomers;
- Participated in two sessions of training with Jordan Hill on working with clients that experienced trauma;
- Created a new web site for the ANC - still a work in progress; we also purchased our own domain name: www.peianc.com.

Besides PS / OA duties, my work also included coordinating of three projects: *The World Among Us*, *Information Sessions for Newcomers*, and *Introducing Newcomers to the Law*.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support for my participation in the Management Development Program for Women at UPEI, I am enjoying it very much (three more modules to go).

Language Assessments

Lorraine Beck

The PEI ANC continues as the service provider of Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessments for new immigrants to PEI. This contract is funded through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. For the time period from September '00 - August '01, the number of CLBA's administered through PEIANC was 43. Of this number, 29 were Government Sponsored, 6 were Family Sponsored, 5 were Group Sponsored (including JAS), and 3 were Independent.

Respectively Submitted by:
Lorraine Beck, CLBA Assessor

PROJECTS

The World Among Us

Beti Andrić

This year a proposal was successfully submitted to Canadian Heritage to provide funding for "The World Among Us", a series of public education sessions. Before the sessions started we conducted an extensive advertising campaign: an article was featured in *The Guardian* newspaper; the PEI ANC



Executive Director and two of the presenters participated in local radio programs; a poster was created and posted in public places; public service announcements were launched regularly in the media; and e-mails were sent to community organizations to post the information on their bulletin boards. The sessions were held weekly on Tuesday evenings, at the Basilica Recreation Centre in Charlottetown, from February to April 2001.

Originally we had planned to organize eight sessions - seven on different countries, and one joint presentation of the three organizations that provide services to immigrants in PEI: the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada, the PEI Multicultural Council and Race Relations Education Association. The session on the three organizations was cancelled, due to the low attendance on the last country presentation, and scheduling conflicts with other important community events that were being held at the same time.

Six countries were presented: Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Japan, Dominican Republic, Croatia and Liberia. We had to call off the presentation on Mauritius due to the weather conditions. The attendance ranged from four participants for Liberia, to twenty-two for Kosovo and Sierra Leone.

The presentations contained information on geography, history, culture and people, nature, and the present situations in the countries presented. To make the sessions more interesting, we had a few additions to the basic settings: the presenter from Dominican Republic brought music and artifacts from her country. I brought a few items that were first invented and used by Croatians, and the girl from Japan taught the participants the basics of origami.

A thorough evaluation was conducted upon the completion of the project, as part of the MDPW Program Evaluation module. We surveyed the audience, and the feedback was extremely positive. The evaluation report is available at the PEI ANC office.

I would like to thank all newcomers - volunteers, who worked hard preparing and carrying out the presentations, and did an excellent job. Thank you Alhassan, Machiko, Aqif, Maritza, Mamta and Henry.

Information Sessions for Newcomers

Beti Andrić

Another project funded by Canadian Heritage was a series of Information Sessions for Newcomers. The

idea of the project was to expand the basic orientation on various aspects of living in Canada that newcomers receive upon their arrival in PEI.

The presentations were made by experts on each particular topic, corresponding community and government organizations, and newcomers had an opportunity to ask questions.

There were eight Information Sessions held from January to June 2001:

- Health and Wellness
- Leisure, Entertainment and Social Activities in PEI
- Preparing for Citizenship
- Taxes / Canada's Economic System
- The Social Welfare System
- financial Planning (Pensions, Investments)
- History and Culture of PEI
- The Canadian Justice System and Human Rights.

The sessions were very much appreciated by newcomers.

Building Strategic Partnerships

Jordan MacLeod

The Building Strategic Partnerships Conference will take place on October 11th and 12th at the *Delta Prince Edward*. This Conference will bring together community leaders and stakeholders from across the Island to develop an integrated planning strategy with regard to issues concerning immigrants, the ethno-cultural community, and members of visible minorities on PEI. At present, we see outstanding opportunities to develop stronger ties between the federal and provincial governments, non-profit organizations and third sector stakeholders, health care and education providers, and the business community. As a result of creating a cohesive vision and enhancing partnerships, we anticipate significant benefits not only for newcomers, but also for the Island community as a whole.

As Conference Coordinator, I have worked closely with Kevin and the Steering Committee to ensure that the various service providers and policy makers are well represented and prepared for this event. A survey was provided to Conference participants and invited persons in order to: obtain a better sense of the services which are currently being offered by organizations, agencies and government departments; gather information on the services and programs which are specifically designed and/or targeted to newcomers, or that address issues of diversity; get a sense of what participants believe are



the gaps and challenges within their own organization; and to get a preliminary sense of where participants believe opportunities exist to improve services or to create new ones.

We have received a very strong response to the survey, and have compiled the results into a pre-conference document. Also, *Smith Green and Associates* were commissioned to research issues relating to immigrant settlement and diversity on PEI, producing a final report titled "Opportunities for Collaboration: Immigrant Settlement on PEI." These documents are being sent to registrants in order to ground them in the issues, challenges and possibilities in advance of the conference, which will undoubtedly result in a more productive and successful effort during the two day event.

There are currently over 90 people registered to attend the Conference, which will be opened by Hon. Premier Binns. The keynote speaker for the conference is Hon. David MacDonald. At this point, we are extremely pleased with the very positive interest and support which has been generated and look forward to a successful event.

FINANCIAL AUDIT

Our financial audit was completed by Wendy Ripley, chartered accountant, Charlottetown. Copies are available at our office, 179 Queen Street, or by calling 628-6009.



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Revenue Canada Charitable Taxation Number:
098611125-09

