



## **PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada**



**Bringing People and Communities Together**

# **2002 - 2003 Annual Report**

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

*Susan Carruthers*

The 2002-2003 year has been another exciting and rewarding year for the Prince Edward Island Association for Newcomers. The Association continues its valuable work guided by our Executive Director, Kevin Arsenault and staff, Aghdas Missaghian, Michelle Jay, Lorraine Beck, Beti Andric, Erica Stanley, Barb Gray and Margaret Younker. On behalf of the Board I extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the staff of the Association for their dedication, commitment and hard work. Several highlights of this past year come to mind and they include:

### **Intercultural Support for Woman Project:**

Funded by the Canadian Women's Foundation and carried out by Beti Andric and Michelle Jay of the Association, together with the assistance of UPEI Nursing Preceptorship Tracy Murphy, this project developed modules and trained a group of immigrant women interpreters on family violence issues so that they will be able to work with organizations and victims of domestic violence, particularly those whose mother tongue is not English.

### **Presentation to Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration:**

Many thanks are owed to Board members, Zeke Eaton and Joe Byrne, together with Executive Director, Kevin Arsenault, who made presentations to the committee in February of 2003 in relation to such issues as identity cards, legislative changes to the *Citizenship Act* and settlement services.

### **Qualification Study:**

Thanks to the receipt of funding from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the Association was able to contract Jasmina Garic to carry out a Recognition of Foreign Credentials Project. A valuable report has been produced as a result of this project which should assist professional associations, employers and newcomers to Canada in employment issues.

### **The Prince Edward Island Association for Newcomers to Canada Christmas Open House:**

An overwhelming number of newcomers to Canada, volunteers with the Association, funding partners and interested parties gathered at the Association in December of 2002 to celebrate the goodwill of the

holiday season. Given the success of the event it is hoped that the open house will continue in years to come.

### **World Among Us:**

Funded by Canadian Heritage, the World Among Us project reached out into the community this year and many of our newcomers visited school classrooms, youth groups, and other community organizations to speak on their culture and native country. The new method of delivery of this project was very well received and reached a number of individuals who otherwise would not have participated.

### **Strategic Planning Session:**

Guided by facilitator, Paula Gallant, the Board and staff held an annual strategic planning session in February 2003. These annual strategic planning sessions provide an opportunity for staff and Board members to socialize and collaborate. They also provide an excellent means for reviewing the accomplishments of the Association and establishing new goals for the future. We are grateful for receiving a grant again this year from the Community Foundation of Prince Edward Island which covered a portion of the costs of the strategic planning session.

This year we say goodbye to Beti Andric, our former Admin Assistant, Project Co-ordinator, Host Program Co-ordinator and jack of all trades. Beti's commitment and service to the Association over the last several years is very much appreciated and we wish Beti all the best. Hand and hand with Beti's departure, we welcome Erica Stanley to the Association as our new Host Program Co-ordinator.

In closing, I wish to extend thanks to our principal funding partners, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Human Resources and Development Canada (HRDC) and Canadian Heritage. We look forward to continuing our working relationship in welcoming and assisting newcomers to Canada.

This year completes my second term as President of the Association and also brings to an end my membership on the Board of Directors. As I retire from the Board, I wish to give my heartfelt thanks to my wonderful volunteer Board members, Joe Byrne, Eric Silva, Zlatibor Momcilovic, Graham Pike, Zeke Eaton and Jane Ledwell. Their support and commitment is appreciated. I have found my time as a Board member enriching and rewarding and I wish the Association continued success in the future.



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*Kevin J. Arsenault*

It has been another very productive year for the PEI ANC, with new programs, new projects and some changes in staffing. Core programs continue to be our Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC) service contracts. These agreements enable us to provide a range of services to immigrants and refugees coming to PEI. Details of these different service programs can be found in the separate staff reports contained in this annual report.

In addition to our core programs, during the past year we also received project funding from Canadian Heritage, the Canadian Women's Foundation, the Community Foundation of PEI, and the PEI Employment Development Agency. Information on these projects is given later in the report.

In my report, I want to touch on several areas of work which do not fall directly under the scope of particular grants, agreements or contracts. As well, I want to give some sense of the direction that the PEI ANC will be taking in the coming year.

### **Metropolis Atlantic Centre of Excellence:**

During the past year, I have continued to represent PEI on a regional sub-committee which came together to establish an Atlantic Metropolis Centre. This initiative aims to establish a unique research collaboration between government, Atlantic Canadian Universities, and not-for-profit organizations which are working with issues of immigration, settlement, or some aspect of population dynamics and demographics.

If established, the Atlantic Metropolis Centre will facilitate important research in the area of immigrant, refugee and diversity population issues. My involvement, along with that of other NGO representatives from Atlantic Canada, has ensured that members of Settlement Agencies such as the ANC will play a key role in the governance structures of the Metropolis Centre, as well as in actual research. The key focus for research expressed by all participants on PEI is how to increase population diversity, appreciation of diversity, and retention of immigrants and refugees of diverse cultural backgrounds on PEI.

A formal proposal for funding has been submitted to government, and a number of funding partners have indicated support. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), a lead organization in the initiative,

has, however, been unable to commit money to the project for this year due to budget constraints. It is hoped that this project will get off the ground in earnest next year.

### **Atlantic Regional Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (ARAISA):**

The ANC is a member of ARAISA, which, as the name suggests, is a regional Association of thirteen Immigrant Serving Agencies in Atlantic Canada. Each year ARAISA hosts a Settlement Conference which affords an opportunity to the management and staff of Service Provider Organizations (SPO's) to share information and network on matters relating to the work of immigrant and refugee settlement in Atlantic Canada. The Atlantic settlement conference was held last September 25-28 in St. John's, NFLD and Labrador. Four ANC staff attended: Beti Andrić; Aggie Missaghian; Lorraine Beck and Kevin Arsenault. The Conference was an excellent chance to network, share best practices and develop strategies to attain improvements.

Since last Fall, I have participated in several Conference call meetings of the Board of ARAISA, and attended a two-day board meeting in Moncton, March 5 & 6, 2003.

Initial plans for the Atlantic Settlement Conference to have the conference hosted in Fredericton by the Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF) for this year are in limbo, due to problems in acquiring funding for the conference. It would be a great loss if we are unable to have an Atlantic Settlement Conference this year.

### **Annual Strategic Planning Weekend:**

The PEI ANC has been engaging in strategic planning weekends for the past few years. These weekend seasons are designed to chart a clearer course for the future direction and work of the ANC. During the past year, board and staff came together on the weekend of March 7-8, 2003 at UPEI. With the help of a \$500.00 community organization capacity building grant from the Community Foundation of PEI, the ANC was able to contract Paula Gallant to facilitate our planning weekend.

A couple of key outcomes emerged from this year's weekend: PEI must do a better job of attracting and keeping immigrant families to PEI; and more provincial government resources are needed for settlement services if this is to happen. Of course there was much discussion on particular needs, service gaps and required programs. Seeking



support from the provincial government was identified as the primary objective for the year.

The provincial government has become involved in attracting immigrants through a new federal-provincial agreement on immigration signed with in the Spring of 2001. The Provincial Nominee Program allows the province to sponsor up to 200 immigrants per year. With family members, this represents hundreds of additional immigrants to PEI per year. To date, additional resources to facilitate and improve settlement and integration services for these highly skilled immigrants has not been forthcoming. With this in mind, considerable work has been done during the past year to establish a good rapport and working relationship with staff within various departments of the provincial government. More recently, the PEI ANC has written to Premier Binns requesting that his government negotiate a settlement service contract with the PEI ANC.

#### **New Language Assessor:**

Lorraine Beck is responsible for administering Canadian Language Benchmark Assessments (CLBA) for newcomers to PEI. Assessments determine what level newcomers are to be placed in the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes at Holland College.

During the past year, Mary Jaeger, a LINC instructor at Holland College has, on our request, undergone training off-Island, and is in the process of becoming certified as a Language Assessor. This means that in the event that Lorraine is unavailable, we now have access to another assessor.

#### **Canadian Council for Refugees:**

At the Annual Meeting of ARAISA, I accepted to represent the Settlement Agencies in Atlantic Canada on the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR). The CCR holds two national Consultations/Conferences per year. The Fall Consultation was held from November 21-24 in Calgary, and the Spring Consultation was held from May 29-31 in Ottawa. Several hundred people involved with refugee work across Canada come together to discuss a wide range of issues including political policies and practices, settlement issues and challenges, and refugee rights and advocacy. These Consultations are very important for information sharing, networking, as well as solidarity and advocacy for needed changes.

#### **Community Outreach, Research and Networking:**

The PEI ANC also engages in community outreach and networking. Board members and staff have found many opportunities to participate and collaborate in community processes and events during the past year, some of which are mentioned by other staff members in their reports. As Executive Director, I have attended a range of meetings, events, and planning sessions during the past year, including:

- Panel presenter in a PEI Federal Council event, "Embracing Change" in Charlottetown;
- A director's meeting of community organizations receiving employment assistance counseling funding from HRDC;
- Presentation to 4<sup>th</sup> year Nursing class at UPEI;
- Public Forum on January 15 to present the final report of the *Intercultural Support for Women's Project*;
- Presentation on February to Federal Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration;
- Attendance at February 28 Citizenship Ceremony;
- Newcomer Display at the Confederation Centre's Multiculturalism Day;
- A UPEI fund-raising dinner during International Development week;
- April 23-24 *Positive Parenting* workshop at the Dutch Inn;
- Published a Public Opinion Special in the Guardian on June 20, World Refugee Day;
- Attended June 25 graduation ceremony for Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) students at Holland College;
- Attended June 26 Citizenship ceremony at the Culinary Institute;
- Participated in June 27 Multicultural Day at the Coles Bldg., hosted by the PEI Multicultural Council;
- July 3 News Conference to release *Stepping Stones to Success* to the media and public.

#### **Christmas Open House:**

On December 17, 2002, we held a very successful Open House event at the ANC office. Roughly 100 people turned out for food and socializing. We look forward to similarly successful gathering this year.

#### **Refugee Claimants:**

Although not part of our regular work, the PEI ANC was called upon to assist a number of individuals who arrived on PEI without status. Present and past members of our board of directors who speak Spanish, offered tireless hours of voluntary service to several Cubans claiming refugee status in Canada. Several young Sri Lankans also received voluntary help from staff and associates of the PEI ANC. Our experience with refugee claimants during



the past year points clearly to the need for a funded program to deal with the basic and humanitarian needs of refugee claimants on PEI.

### **What's Ahead for the PEI ANC?**

The coming year will be an exciting one for the Association for Newcomers. It is our intention to once again submit an application to Canadian Heritage to repeat the successful project, *The World Among Us*. We are especially looking forward to establishing a new working collaboration between federal, provincial and community organizations through the *Building Strategic Partnerships Phase II* project.

### **Building Strategic Partnerships Phase II:**

The BSP Phase I project culminated in a very successful conference at the Delta Hotel in October, 2001. The post-conference challenge for the PEI ANC was to find concrete ways to implement new structures, programs, and policies to address the identified problems and gaps in service. There was a relatively clear consensus among conference participants that the PEI ANC should take the initiative to follow-up with a second phase to the project. Since that time, a BSP Phase II project has been approved by Canadian Heritage, and work is well under way.

In the coming year, we expect to see new opportunities to develop stronger ties between the federal and provincial governments, non-profit organizations and third sector stakeholders, health care and education providers, policing agencies, and the business community. We also hope to negotiate a new service contract with the PEI government.

My gratitude to all ANC volunteers, including those involved in the Host Program, those who provided newcomers with computer training or language tutoring, those who assisted with the ISL summer program, as well as members of our Board of Directors.

I would like to express a special note of appreciation to Susan Carruthers, who has served as the President of the PEI ANC for the past two years. Susan is giving up a position on the Board as she pursues new challenges. Susan has done an excellent job guiding the PEI ANC through a difficult period of transition and growth. All the best!

As well, during the past year Beti Andric left the PEI ANC to work on a home-based computer business. Beti's contribution to the ANC and her many talents

can not be overstated. Beti has graciously agreed to volunteer her time to maintain our web site and is doing a spectacular job.

The PEI ANC has accepted two Canada World Youth participants under the terms of the Charlottetown/Jamaica Netcorps Program 2003/04. Welcome to Shelley Solomon and Aisha Creary. Shelley and Aisha will be in the office for 3 ½ days each week until Christmas.

I must say that I am very fortunate to work with such a talented staff., ANC staff are the only trained and experienced settlement workers on the Island. A heartfelt thank you to Michelle, Erica, Aggie, Barb and Lorraine for your hard work, good cheer and dedication to immigrants and refugees coming to PEI. Thanks also to Marg Younker, our part-time bookkeeper who works each Tuesday in the office.

Finally, I want to express my sincere appreciation to our funders, especially the local management and staff with whom we work: Asifa Rahman and Dan Doran at CIC; Debbie MacMurdo and Jodi LeBlanc at HRDC; Claire Arsenault and Donald Arsenault at Canadian Heritage; and Donna White with the Community Mobilization Program. I also want to express appreciation to the PEI government for approving Employment Development Agency grant applications for two twelve week work placements during the past year.

## **PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **OFFICE ADMINISTRATION**

*Kevin J. Arsenault*

Over the past couple of years, the PEI ANC has had a position titled 'Program Support/Office Administration' which was held by Beti Andric. Due to a lack of core administrative funding, the position had changed quite a bit from 2001 to 2002, with Beti having to do much more program and project work, and less administrative assistance and reception work. When Beti left the ANC earlier this year, we were left with no administrative support.

As an interim measure, the PEI ANC was able to secure Employment Development Grants from the PEI Government to hire Barb Gray as a full-time office administrator for two twelve (12) week periods. We have received a commitment from the PEI government for limited funds which allows Barb to continue working at the ANC until Christmas of this year. It is our sincere hope that we will secure



funding to make Barb's position full-time. As more immigrants come to PEI, we are facing increasing demands on our work, which makes the need for a full-time office administrator/receptionist essential.

**iCAMS:** The iCAMS (Immigration - Contribution Accountability Measurement System) system was introduced for our RAP program last year. This year CIC introduced their new data collection system for the LINC/CLBA, ISAP & Host programs. Lorraine Beck and I received training on December 11, 2002 for language assessment data recording on iCAMS; and Aggie, Beti and I received training in Moncton for Host and ISAP data recording on iCAMS in Moncton, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

*Aghdas Missaghian*

We received fifty two (52) government assisted refugees since last Fall, from a variety of countries including; Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Bosnia, Iraq, Sudan, Sierra Leone, China, and Colombia. Nine (9) of the 52 newcomers have since left the province.

When we look at the number of arrivals based on the calendar year (January 1, 2002 - December 31, 2002) we see that we received 67 Government Sponsored Refugees.

The settlement program comprises two separate programs funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC): the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) and the Immigrant Settlement Adaptation Program (ISAP). Each program has separate but similar objectives, i.e., addressing the needs of newcomers settling in Canada, with the RAP program focusing on initial settlement needs and basic orientation. I am responsible for both the RAP and ISAP programs at the PEI ANC.

Responsibilities that I undertook for newcomers included :

- Booking rooms in the hotel and making cheques ready for food during their time in temporary accommodation;
- Receiving newcomers at the airport;
- Doing paper work for SIN numbers, Child Tax Credits, Private Identity Cards and Health Cards;
- Meeting with immigration officials;
- Finding accommodations, helping with purchasing household items;
- Making appointments and referrals to service providers;
- Finding childcare providers;
- Doing RAP orientations;

- Registering newcomer's children in schools;
- Arranging for language assessments;
- Introducing newcomers to English class;
- Training interpreters;
- Arranging for interpreters as required.

Most of our clients still do not have family doctors. All I can do is to send their names to Health and Social Services to be placed on a waiting list, although some of them have real health problems.

This past year I participated in a number of workshops in PEI, including training in Moncton for CIC's on-line database reporting system (iCAMS). As well, this was my 4th year representing the PEI ANC on the Victim Services Advisory Committee.

## EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SERVICE

*Michelle Jay*

The past year has been challenging and hopeful. The climate seems ripe for securing the stable funding necessary to enable the PEI ANC to deliver consistent, quality services to newcomers. It is a welcome addition to have the Receptionist/Administrative skills of Barb Gray in the office, as well as Erica Stanley ably and enthusiastically filling the Host/ Project position. And we are indebted to Beti Andric, for all that she contributed to the Association, including friendship.

I am very pleased that we have launched the report, *Stepping Stones to Success: Recognizing Foreign Credentials and Qualifications in PEI*, in July of this year. It is a valuable document that contributes to, and enables us to move forward with, knowledge on this issue. And it is an area that will be increasingly in focus, as the province of PEI continues to accept Provincial Nominees partially on the basis of their qualifications. More and more newcomers are increasingly frustrated by the disjoint between what they were told to expect and what they experience in reality.

The EAS service has maintained an active caseload of roughly 30 clients for the past year, and has been able to meet the employment targets established by the HRDC contract without much difficulty - the real challenge, as always, lies in securing meaningful work with livable wages.

Below are statistics representing the number of employment and schooling positions initiated by newcomer clients from September 1, 2002 - August 31, 2003:

**Full-Time Positions**

**34**



Permanent	23
Seasonal/Contract	11
<b>Part-Time Positions</b>	<b>14</b>
Permanent	10
Seasonal/Contract	4
<b>School / Training Program</b>	<b>18</b>

Comparing to 2002 stats, the overall full-time positions are down by 5, while the number of part-time jobs remain the same. Unfortunately, permanent part-time positions are becoming entrenched in our economy. More positively, the number of clients attending school full-time has increased dramatically, from 10 in 2002, to 18 in 2003, indicating that newcomers are striving for the skills necessary to achieve meaningful employment.

Some features of the Employment Service through the past year include:

- Attending *NATCON National Employment Conference* in Ottawa, January 19 - 21;
- Contributing two interviews to the publication *Employment Journey*;
- Participating in Provincial Nominee discussions & mtgs;
- Representing the ANC at a Canadian Women's Foundation consultation, April 1;
- Attending *KAIROS Refugee Sponsorship Workshop*, April 12;
- Inaugural PEI Career Development Association employment conference June 11,
- Press launch of QR launch *Stepping Stones to Success*, July 2;
- Assisting at grand opening of *Out of Africa*, Makena Tarichia's restaurant, August 1

Special thanks to Svetlana Tenetko for bravely participating in our news conference to release "Stepping Stones" and for being so articulate. I look forward to the year ahead with two wishes: that we will be able to secure funding from the provincial government to enhance services for newcomers to PEI; and that we will have an active and committed board prepared to take the initiatives that will strengthen our organization.

## IMMIGRANT STUDENT LIAISON PROGRAM

*Lorraine Beck*

The Immigrant Student Liaison Program has now successfully completed a full school year and is beginning another as the four (4) designated schools seek to continue in this partnership of providing additional support to immigrant students. The four

main objectives of the program continue to be:

1. To assist immigrant and refugee students in adapting to their new school environment;
2. To facilitate greater involvement of families who are unfamiliar with the school system and who wish to participate in their children's education;
3. To assist school staff in meeting the special needs of immigrant students within the school system, and;
4. To refer immigrant students and their families to appropriate community services.

As of June 30, 2003, the ISL program was serving 35 student clients; 12 in Elementary school, 10 in Intermediate level, and 13 in Senior High. This number grows considerably when you take into account the total family members of each individual student. Visiting family members regarding issues of concern to newcomer students continues to be a vital part of the ISL program. Another school, Queen Charlotte Intermediate, has also accessed the services of the ISL program in facilitating the integration of a newcomer student from Africa.

During the ARAISA conference in St. John's NFLD, I was asked as the ISL program Coordinator to participate in a panel on Services for Youth. This was very beneficial in that it helped get the word out to others that this type of program is possible within our schools. It was also helpful to hear from school support workers for newcomer students in larger centres like Halifax who have been coordinating this kind of program for many years in many different schools. Inquiries were made to the PEI ANC after this conference from St. John, NB, requesting advice on how they might get a similar program started in their area.

Involvement in two (2) newcomer student groups has continued throughout the school year. The ISL program has provided leadership, and participated in the International Friendship Group of Colonel Gray High School, and the Cultural Diversity Group of Birchwood Intermediate School. The International Friendship Group involved approximately 20 students from various countries, some of whom are landed immigrants and some of whom are exchange students. The Cultural Diversity Group had 32 students, both from Canada and from other countries.

I met regularly throughout the school year with guidance counselors, principals, and vice principals,



to address individual needs of newcomer students. I gave recommendations regarding school and academic placements at the request of administration. I provided support to teachers requiring intervention for students on cultural and academic issues. This often involved visiting families of newcomer students to explain particular challenges their children are having and to encourage parents to become more involved through attendance at parent-teacher interviews, etc.

Other services provided by the ISL program included regular cross-cultural support counseling to individuals, particularly at the junior and senior high level. This was done mostly through consultation and referrals by guidance counselors. Many students struggled with feelings of isolation and the challenges of fitting-in and forming new friendships. There were also incidents of racism and bullying which were handled with the support of the administration.

Arrangements were made through the ISL program to have three (3) class presentations of the *World Among Us* series offered by the PEI ANC, and coordinated by Beti Andric. These presentations were a great success.

The *ISL Summer Program* for Newcomer Students began for the first time in the Summer of 03. This was a six week Day Program for Newcomer Students, ages 6-19, starting July 15 and running through till August 21. The schedule was every Tuesday and Thursday, with ages 6-12 on Tuesdays and ages 13-19 on Thursdays. The program ran from 9:30 am - 3:30 pm,

Goals and Objectives of the Program were to provide an avenue for continued learning and increased socialization, to practice English, and to bring a group of children together who would be a social and personal support to each other. Also to increase familiarity with Charlottetown and the services and attractions offered in the summer. The program was a great success with a total of 14 students participating and many new friendships being formed.

The greatest challenge which continues to present itself to newcomer students in the 4 designated schools of the ISL program is the lack of adequate ESL instruction. The 60 hours provided through the Dept. of Education continues to be grossly inadequate and the PEI ANC continues to lobby the government on their behalf for an increase. The PEI ANC has offered support to a proposal put forward by Evelyn MacLeod to the Staffing and Funding

Program Review recently published by the Dept. of Education. This proposal would provide for a full time Itinerant ESL instructor within designated schools where the newcomer student population is the highest.

The proposed Instructional Staffing Model submitted to the Prince Edward Island Department of Education in March, 2003 notes that the 60 hours provided is 'totally inadequate' adding that "...other jurisdictions provide additional support which lasts for years rather than hours." The model proposes that an itinerant ESL teacher be hired, so hopefully this situation will improve.

As the ISL program begins another year in the four (4) designated schools, it is obvious from their response that there is an increasing reliance on the services that provide the extra support required to newcomer students. This is a strong recommendation for the importance of continuing the program.

## **LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS**

*Lorraine Beck*

The PEI ANC continues as the only 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 '02 - September '03, the number of CLBA's administered through PEI ANC was 31. Of this number, 27 were Government Sponsored, and 3 were Family Sponsored, and 1 Independent.

## **HOST PROGRAM**

*Erica Stanley*

Over this past year, the Host Program could best be described as 'in transition' on the part of the Association, and in terms of our clients' needs. Since the last annual report, the Host Coordinator has changed twice: In September 2002, Beti Andrić succeeded Lorraine Beck as Coordinator of the Host Program. Beti decided to take her career in another direction and resigned from the PEI ANC, in June of 2003. At that point, I was hired in her place. Therefore I have been in the position for only 12 weeks, and continue to ascend a steep learning curve.

**Social Events:** An International Tea House was held in February, which was organized by Thilak Tennekone and Beti Andric. The turnout was quite good considering that the weather was extremely cold on the night of the event. Some of our clients



also participated in the program.

On a hot, sunny day in July, a host program summer social event was held at Bonshaw 500. We had a picnic, rode the go-carts and bumper cars, and played a round of mini-golf. Ten newcomers and volunteers attended, and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. It was a great opportunity for me to get to know some clients and volunteers whom I had not met.

Another social event was combined with an ISL summer program outing. Six newcomers (in addition to the children in the ISL program) came to a beach party we had at Cavendish Beach in August. The weather was beautiful and everyone had a fun, relaxing time. The next social event is scheduled for the end of September.



**Host Matches:** When I took on the position of Host Coordinator, it was indicated that there was a great need for young, single men to volunteer as host matches. In the files,

there were a number of single newcomer men who had been waiting for over a year for a host match, but none was found. Since I came on board, the needs of our client pool have somewhat shifted. Presently, the greatest need is for Canadian families to volunteer as host matches for newcomer families. There are currently no single men, women, or even couples waiting for a match. Rather, all of the clients on the waiting list are families with children ranging in age from a couple of weeks, to 22 years. Several families who were still awaiting a match have moved to other provinces, where there would be greater support from their ethnic communities. This reality of a high out-migration rate of newcomers in PEI makes me wonder if they might have stayed, had they a committed host match to offer them support. However, since I came on board, a number of new matches have been realized, while some previously made matches continue to be monitored. We are currently working with 11 host matches, some more active than others.

**Volunteers:** Our volunteer pool was mostly inaccessible over the summer months, although several past volunteers said they would like to be contacted again in this Fall. I have had more success recruiting new volunteers than in reactivating former ones. I have recruited five new volunteers since I started, and I have several other contacts which need to be followed up. The program has been promoted through the web site, through the

international student center at UPEI, and by means of some promotional posters I created and posted around Charlottetown. As already mentioned, our greatest need is for families to volunteer to be matched with newcomer families.

Starting September 9<sup>th</sup>, we will have two volunteer participants from Canada World Youth who will be working four days a week here in the PEI ANC office for three months. Their contribution to the Host Program is greatly anticipated. Furthermore, one of our host volunteers (Jody Thomas) is going to do a three month work placement with us starting in November.

**Host Post:** Quarterly newsletters have been printed and distributed at the beginning of each season. Approximately 100 copies of the Host Post are being mailed to volunteers, newcomers, other NGOs, and board members. A Host Post was mailed out in June and was posted on our website. Ideas for summer activities with host matches were included, as well as an invitation to the summer social event at Bonshaw 500. The Fall issue has just been mailed.

This year no volunteer appreciation night (VAN) was organized because of the changeover in host coordinators. The annual event will resume as usual in the Spring.

## PROJECT REPORTS

**The World Among Us (WAU):** Twelve presentations were delivered under the Canadian Heritage funded *World Among Us* project during the past year. Some presentations were given to particular groups in response to invitations the PEI ANC received from these groups, ranging from a kindergarten class to a University audience; others were open to the general public:

- History and Culture of Croatia - ATHI Languages and Cultures Class
- History and Culture of Iraq - UPEI - presentation open to general public
- History and Culture of Kenya - Glen Stewart Elementary School
- History and Culture of Kenya - Colonel Gray Highschool
- Life of Children and Youth in Kenya - Girl Guides Cornwall
- Origami Class (Japanese art of folding paper) - Vernon River School
- Impact of AIDS on the Lives of African Children -





- UPEI  
Life in Nigeria - kindergarten class, Basilica Recreation Center
- Immigrant Issues - Social Studies Classes - Colonel Gray Highschool (3 presentations)
- Conversation Circle - Immigrant Issues - Lacey House

All presenters were recent immigrants to PEI.

### ***Inter-Cultural Support for Women:***

This project was a great success. Objectives were as follows:

- To train eight (8) women on the issues of violence against women
- To engage a committee of 6-7 women to develop training resources
- To inform 50-60 attendees about project at Community Workshop
- To increase knowledge of, and communication between, the PEI ANC and women's equality-seeking organizations on PEI
- To have eight trained inter-cultural support workers available in the community to assist women with violence issues

The PEI ANC wishes to thank all those who participated in this project as members of the steering committee, as well as the Canadian Women's Foundation for funding for this project. The complete report can be found on our web site.

An application for a Phase II of this project has been submitted and the ANC expects to receive some funding in coming months to do follow-up reproduction and distribution of the training modules.

### **Introducing Newcomers to Canadian Law:**

With the many changes to federal laws and regulations during the past couple of years, it was necessary to first postpone, then revise the learning modules being developed. These modules will be used in LINC classes with new immigrants to familiarize them with all aspects of Canadian Law. As the base for the modules we are using the material developed in 1993 by the Community Legal Information Association (CLIA). This resource is now being updated, expanded and reformatted. A booklet to accompany the modules is also being developed. The booklet will be translated into several languages. We are aiming to have this project completed by Christmas of this year. Thanks to the Federal Department of Justice for funding for this project

under the *Community Mobilization Program*.

### **Recognition of Foreign Qualifications:**

This project, *Stepping Stones to Success: The Recognition of Foreign Credentials and Qualifications in Prince Edward Island*, was funded by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). The main focus of this project was research on recognition of foreign credentials and qualifications. After creation of the survey questionnaire, appointments were made with a variety of organizations and associations on PEI. The report contains the results of 21 interviews, 14 (67%) of them were done in person, 3 (14%) over the phone and 4 (19%) questionnaires.

The final report gives information on the current situation on PEI in regards to the recognition of credentials and qualifications obtained outside of Canada, what is presently being done, and what areas can or have to be improved. Hopefully, this report will help to solve one of the biggest barriers that immigrants and refugees face once they settle in Canada, particularly on PEI: securing long-term employment in their field of expertise. The PEI ANC has indicated to participants in the study that we will keep current the information posted on our website. Several updates and changes have been received since the report was first posted on the site in July.

### **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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