



MINUTES

Abbotsford Local Immigration Partnership
Abbotsford Community Services - Boardroom
Thursday January 24th, noon-2pm

Attending		Regrets
Ghizlane Laghzaoui	Manpreet Grewal	Peter Prediger (event)
Camilla Boisvert	Harold Rosen	Tammy Johnson (event)
Kanta Naik	Katerina Anastasiadis	Melissa Giles
Balbir Gill	Lia Bishop	Hillary Russell
Sue Federspiel	Sherry Wang (IAT)	John Potts (retiring)
Natalia Deros		Nicola Mooney
Alison Gutrath		Jennifer Mpungu
Dave Loewen		Seydou Keita (IAT)
Max. R Aranguiz-Peterson (IAT)		Sharath Babu (IAT)
Adlin Babantaj (IAT)		

LUNCH AND SOCIAL

PRESENTATION

Delish Catering Program: Jacqueline Luna, Coordinator

ACS's Delish Catering program provides training and employment opportunities for newcomers to Abbotsford. Operating with a staff of 10, Delish focuses on the multi-ethnic culinary skills of the program's volunteers and employees. Currently serving ACS internally, the program is looking to expand to a commercial kitchen and catering capabilities within the broader community.

MEETING OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roundtable

APPROVALS

Agenda

Minutes Sept. 20th 2018

WORKING GROUP UPDATES



Social Integration

Social Integration is continuing to research and produce factsheets with statistics on newcomers in Abbotsford. The next fact sheet is focusing on why newcomers settle in Abbotsford.

Action Item: Sue to send out possible dates for next meeting.

Labour Market Integration

Labour Market Integration partnered with Fraser Health and the Department of Family Practice to hold the first workshop of the Employment Engagement Series. Local GPs and Fraser Health representatives were invited to speak at a forum to discuss employment opportunities for newcomers with professional health backgrounds who are unable to practice in Canada due to barriers around international credentials. The response from the audience was highly positive. Two more workshops with a similar focus in different sectors are in the process of being planned.

Research, Policy & Practice

UFV Professors Nicola Mooney and Stephen Piper connected with Global Development Studies student Darien Johnsen, who is conducting a research project highlighting the work of settlement workers with newcomers in Abbotsford.

Diversity Education and the City of Abbotsford partnered on the second annual Bus Tour for Newcomers on October 31st. Stops included a tour of Abbotsford facilities like the public library, the Abbotsford Arts Council, and other important cultural and historic sites.

12:30- 1:00pm GROUP DISCUSSION –

What recent trends, barriers and/or observations have you made within your professional work in regards to newcomer needs in Abbotsford?

-An increase of Temporary Farm Workers (TFW) and International students in Abbotsford has been noticed. Both groups face many similar challenges as other newcomers, such as language barriers and basic inclusion, but also face unique challenges as they don't hold the same status as Permanent Residents, such as housing and employment. These challenges are also faced by the children of TFW's, who often have less time to adjust to a new language and home, creating extra stress on the school district due to the children's specific needs.



-UFV has conducted a working group focusing on the specific barriers facing international students, especially in regards to academic performance.

Action Item: Ghizlane Laghzaoui will update ALIP once the UFV working group publishes its recommendations.

-Other provincial agencies are also working on similar projects with refugees. The Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP) consists of 40 organizations working collaboratively to address barriers facing refugees.

Action Item: Project Management to connect with MAP.

-Newcomer and second generation LGBTQI + youth face unique, intersectional challenges in regards of their sexuality. Further research into existing programs is recommended.

-IAT member Sherry Wang gave an update around her work in organizing speakers from newcomer backgrounds to speak at Elementary school assemblies about positive self-image for students from newcomer backgrounds. A good resource is the non-profit Telecare.

Action Item: Program Management to research the work of Telecare.

- The City of Abbotsford is incorporating more diversity protocols, thus providing more networking and connections for ALIP. More information will be provided in the future.

- Newcomers with international professional credentials face inter-governmental barriers- the question was posed on how the City can bypass those, perhaps as a collective. The city of Calgary and University of Calgary have implemented programs where highly-credentialed newcomers can work within their fields in some capacity, possibly providing a template for the City of Abbotsford.

Action Item: Program Management to connect with Krista and Mary from Skills Connect and invite them to the next ALIP meeting to discuss their program and simple employment projects.

NEW BUSINESS

Project Management Team Updates

There has been a major change in staffing within ALIP Project Management. Lia is moving to other things, Gugan got married and moved to Toronto, and Eyerusalem moved to full-time employment at Run for Water.

Former DEARS coordinator, Alison Gutrath, has transferred from ACS Program "In it Together" back to the DEARS program coordinator position. Natalia Deros has joined the DEARS office as the new Community Developer.



MIIS Program Updates

ACS Pre-Arrival program in India is providing highly sought after assistance in language classes and testing, as well as immigration support.

Gang prevention program “In it Together” is waiting for updates on its federal program funding. The program is currently serving a strong need in the community in regards to services for youth at risk for gang involvement and their families.

ROUND TABLE UPDATES/ UPCOMING EVENTS

Abbotsford Community Services

Fraser Valley Cultural Diversity Awards for 2019 are being held on March 14th. Tickets are available at www.diversityawards.ca.

Abbotsford Interfaith Movement

-Harold Rosen, AIM, provided an update about the recent AIM forum, “Faith and Refugees: Building One World Together” held on January 20th. Several speakers from different faiths spoke about the intersections of faith and the lived reality of being a refugee, and explored the similarities within each faith surrounding hospitality to others. The reception from attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

Fraser Valley Regional Library - Clearbrook.

Drop-In Bhangra Classes on Tuesday nights, 6:30-7:15.

Abbotsford School District

Cooking classes with a focus on health and wellness through food are taught by newcomer mothers of elementary students on February 8th and 27th. Please email Kanta to register for the February 27th class, as space is limited.

Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce

Annual General Meeting on **March 27th, 11:30-1:00**, at the Quality Inn and Conference Centre.
Upcoming Business After Business series.
Chamber of Commerce Trade Show, April 9th.



City of Abbotsford

The Fraser Valley Housing and Homelessness Forum is on February 21st at the University of the Fraser Valley.

The City of Abbotsford is partnering with the Abbotsford Youth Commission in a project where selected youth shadow the Council and Mayor for a day.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Next ALIP meeting will be on **April 4th, 2019, 2-4 pm.** Location: Abbotsford Community Services Boardroom.

Action Item: Program Management will send a doodle to the group with possible dates for the meeting times for the next year.