



January 2012

IWIS Newsletter



- IMMIGRATING WOMEN IN SCIENCE, SOCIETY FOR CANADIAN WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY -

From the Editor...

Dear Readers:

Welcome to the latest issue of IWIS Newsletter.

During the past year 2011, we met with you in three different issues and we hope you enjoyed reading them. In these issues we addressed the challenges for immigrant women from science and technology backgrounds. Our aim has been to create a platform to share our experiences and stories, and we tried to raise your concerns. To that end, please feel free to send your stories, experiences or even anecdotes which would inspire other immigrant women in different ways.

In this issue, we introduce Annette Tushabomwe. She is a Chemistry teacher from Uganda. After coming to Canada, she has decided to change her career path and enrolled in a Master's program at the UBC. Now, she is continuing her studies and enjoying her new job: She is a Teaching Assistant at the UBC Education Faculty. Isn't it great? We congratulate Annette and wish her luck in her new job. You may find more about Annette on pages 4 and 5.

We wanted to start this issue with a quick look to the past year's IWIS Events from which we learned a lot. We would like to thank IWIS volunteers who gave their time for organizing and running these wonderful events. The events have been great opportunities to meet new immigrant women and exchange experiences.

Later on, you will find recent news concerning immigrants to Canada.

Thanks to all IWIS volunteers and board members for their contribution to IWIS.

See you in the next issue.

Ozlem Deniz

HEADLINES

*QUICK LOOK
TO IWS
EVENTS*

*STORY of AN
IMMIGRANT
WOMAN:
Annette*

*NEWS-NEWS-
NEWS*



A QUICK LOOK TO IWIS EVENTS in 2011

<http://iwisblog.wordpress.com/category/events/>

[Career search Workshop on March 9th!!! Practice communicating your values in career search](#) [XX event at Science World](#)

Posted on February 13, 2011 by itavakoli

This workshop was about successfully communicating your value in career search and was presented by Su Townsend from Centrepont Career Management. Su is a management consultant and an experienced leadership and career development coach, with a background in research and program design. There were creative exercises that will help you practice communicating your skills to the employers. The workshop was an opportunity to see the process from the employers' point of view by evaluating other participants, as well as getting feedback on your performance from others. Thanks to Su, Iran and the other members who organized this wonderful event.



Good advises from the events..

Brief notes..

Posted on March 14, 2011 by pejagomss

[XX evening](#) on March 8, 2011 at [Telus World of Science](#) was a

great success. Telus World of Science and Sandy Eix are great hosts. There were about 35 wonder women and over 100 participants.

The good advises from the event:

-If you don't know how to network, don't worry about it. It is not something you have to learn. It is something you already know how to do: get to know new friends and relax more.

-You don't have to talk only about work related things (you can talk about it in your follow-up e-mails or phone calls). At the networking event, it is important to socialize not to tell everybody your resume.

-If you are pregnant, apply for childcare immediately.

-If you need something (different work hours, resources etc.), ask for it. Your boss and colleagues want you to get the job done and will help if you ask. They cannot guess what you need.

-It is Ok to change your career. Many women went from one field to another. It is important that you enjoy what you do, whatever it is and also to accept the opportunities life puts in front of you.





- *Initiative – seek new contacts and career opportunities*
- *Communication – make your career interests known*
- *Charity – don't only benefit from your network but contribute to it.*



Networking Panel Discussion - May 10, 2011

Posted on May 25, 2011 by mayui09

To kick off a summer, Immigrating Women in Science (IWIS) hosted a panel discussion on networking on Wed, May 10. Four women with successful careers in science and technology kindly agreed to join the panel and share their experiences and mentioned about networking challenge for new immigrants: Understand the cultural norms / acceptable behaviour in Canada. Some of the networking tips from Mayu:

- Before attending a networking event, research about the event.
- If you make a contact at a networking event, ensure that you follow up as soon as possible.
- Keep in touch with your contact.
- Don't make negative comments about your job, employer or the event that you are attending.
- Don't try to be someone you are not.
- Build a relationship / trust with your contact gradually.

Three recurring themes in the panelists' stories: Initiative - Communication - Charity.

Sincere thanks to the panelists, all the attendees, Shabnam and our other IWIS volunteers who made this event a success!

Major Cultural Challenges Facing Female Minorities in engineering and Sciences

Posted on December 8, 2011 by itavakoli

On Nov 30th, 2011 IWIS held an interesting and stimulating event by Mehrnoush (Noush) Sardashti who spoke about every day challenges women are faced with in the work environment and how to overcome them.

Throughout the talk the audience was able to watch and listen to multiple interviews with successful immigrant women and see what they have been faced with in the work place and how they have handled them. However, the event took a sharp turn as people started interacting with the speaker and brought in their own personal suggestions.

The topics varied from family challenges that women are usually faced with to online resources available to them.



Annette's Going Back to School Experience



...amazing health care...

...Being away from family...



Hi Annette,

Please tell us a little about yourself.

I am currently pursuing a MA in Science Education at the University of British Columbia. I have been married 7 years and we are blessed with two lovely boys, 4 years and 19 months.

When did you move to Canada? Why did you decide to move to Vancouver? Do you think you are better off living in Vancouver than in another part of Canada?

We moved here in January 2007. We thought this was a great country to raise our kids and for our career development. Vancouver is indeed a multicultural city and we are thankful to God to be here.

What was the single biggest struggle once you first arrived?

The weather was very challenging.

What is the best thing that has happened to you since then?

The birth of our two boys and the amazing health care we were given.

What was the worst thing?

Being away from family. It took us a while to make friends and adjust to a new environment.

Did you experience any culture shock when you first arrived?

Sure, I found most people here so individualistic. In Uganda, people are more open and welcoming.

Were there any language barriers?

Not really. In Uganda, English is the main language of instruction. We were able to communicate apart from the difference in the accent.



Annette Tushabomwe

*... We found
amazing
friends...*



*... I used
craigslist at the
beginning...*

Who has helped you the most since you arrived in Canada?

We found amazing friends (names withheld because of confidentiality reasons). Our professors at the UBC have been very helpful and supportive.

How did you go about finding employment when you first arrived? Did anyone help you? How did you decide not to pursue your real career and how are you feeling about your current job?

I used craigslist after a friend recommended it. It was a great opportunity to get started. I then decided to go back to school so that I get a job in my profession. I am so excited about it.

What more do you think could be done to help new immigrants find employment?

Having a system in place to enlighten new immigrants about the services available for them. Also, connecting them to their communities in order to break the cycle of isolation.

What are your hopes for the future?

I am so excited about what the future holds for me after I complete my Master's degree.

What advice would you give to immigrating women in science and technology so that they could succeed in Canada like yourself?

Well, I believe they should look out into their fields to get acquainted with what is needed in order to practice their professions. If they need to go back to school, they should do it as soon as possible.

Annette, thanks a lot.

We wish you all the best in your new job!

More than 40 per cent of those who come to Canada today have a bachelor's degree or better...



By gender, male immigrants had a higher earnings gap than female immigrants...

Immigrants get fewer jobs, earn less

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/story/2011/12/19/rbc-immigrants-report.html>

Despite having generally higher levels of education, new Canadians earn less than their native-born peers and are less likely to have a job.

Simply paying Canadian immigrants as much as their Canadian peers with similar education levels could be worth as much as \$30.7 billion to Canada's economy, the Royal Bank of Canada said in a report Monday morning. "While Canada has done a great job of attracting foreign talent, integrating newcomers effectively has proven to be more of a challenge," the report states.

More than 40 per cent of those who come to Canada today have a bachelor's degree or better. That's risen from under 14 per cent in 1981, and it compares to 17 per cent among the Canadian-born population today.

In 2005, the entire population of immigrants working full time in Canada earned about \$45,000 on average yearly. For recent immigrants, the average salary drops to just \$28,700.

If all things were equal, immigrants employed full-time should have earned \$57,000 on average, in 2006, RBC said. That implies their actual salaries were 21 per cent below where they should have been.

By gender, male immigrants had a higher earnings gap than female immigrants (24 per cent compared to 17 per cent). In dollar terms, this is about \$16,500 for men and \$7,000 for women. Conversely, the excess in the unemployment rate for women was larger than that for men, at 2.5 percentage points, compared to a 0.7 percentage point difference for men.

Interestingly, the gap in both cases appears to be worse in Canada's three largest cities of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Immigrants in these cities had a wage gap of nearly \$15,000 or more than 26 per cent; in the rest of Canada, the gap was nearly \$3,300 or 6 per cent.

A similar story holds for unemployment, with excess unemployment of 2.8 per cent for immigrants in the largest cities, versus 1.3 per cent elsewhere in Canada.

"This report shows that we are still not recognizing the skill level and talent that newcomers bring to Canada — and it's as much the country's loss as it is our immigrants," the bank's director of Newcomer and Multicultural Markets Cameron Mak said.

"Canada was built on immigration, and that's just as true today."

From the press...

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**We are grateful for
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Canada to Accept More Foreign Students as Permanent Residents

<http://www.canadavisa.com/news/entry/canada-to-accept-more-foreign-students-as-permanent-residents-111104.html>

The Government of Canada will be accepting up to 1,000 international PhD students as permanent residents through the Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) program per year. Starting November 5, 2011, 1,000 international students who are studying at the doctoral level in Canada will be eligible to apply for permanent residency through the FSW program. To be eligible for this program, applicants must have completed at least two years of study toward the attainment of a PhD and remain in good academic standing at a provincially recognized post-secondary educational institution in Canada, or have completed a PhD in Canada within the last year.

New Sponsorship Applications for Parents and Grandparents on Hold for Two Years.

<http://www.canadavisa.com/news/entry/new-sponsorship-applications-for-parents-and-grandparents-on-hold-for-two-years-111104.html>

The Government of Canada has placed a two year moratorium on the **Family Class** program for parents and grandparents. There are currently more than 165,000 parents and grandparents who are still awaiting a decision on their permanent residence

application. To reduce wait times and backlogs, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will be introducing the Action Plan for Faster Family Reunification which includes the moratorium on parent and grandparent sponsorships.

Also, the government introduced the “Parent and Grandparent Super Visa”, which came into effect on December 1, 2011. This multiple-entry visa allows applicants to remain in Canada for up to two years at a time without having to renew their status. The visa will be valid for up to 10 years and is expected to take about eight weeks to process.

CIC Proposes Changes to the Canadian Citizenship Program

http://www.migrationexpert.com/canada/visa/canadian_immigration_news/2011/Oct/0/787/CIC_Proposes_Changes_to_the_Canadian_Citizenship_Program

Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney has announced proposed changes to the assessment of language skills (French or English) of new Canadian citizens. Under the changes, adults aged between 18 and 54 applying for Canadian citizenship will be required to provide objective evidence of their language ability.