

Celebrating **35 years** of working with immigrants in our communities

Spring 2007

“Best Workplaces in Canada”

Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC) is being recognized in *Canadian Business* magazine as one of the “Best Workplaces in Canada” for 2007. ISSofBC ranked 42nd in the April 23rd issue of *Canadian Business* magazine.



The list was developed using the same time-tested methodology used by *Fortune* in the US and the *Financial Times* in the UK. The ranking was determined through staff responses to a 57-statement survey issued by the magazine and from a cultural audit of the organization. The audit took into consideration an evaluation of human resource policies and procedures as well as data related to five trust-building dimensions: credibility, respect, fairness, pride and camaraderie.

The results offer a representation of the organization from an employee perspective, and an overall portrait of the workplace culture. “It is very exciting for ISSofBC to be recognized by staff as one of the “Best Workplaces in Canada” for 2007,” says Patricia Woroch, ED.

One aspect that was drawn to *Canadian Business* magazine’s attention was that ISSofBC’s work environment is characterized by easy levity and lively humour. “We take our work very seriously, but we don’t take ourselves too seriously,” says Patricia Woroch. Laughter and festivity will infuse everything we do this year as we celebrate ISSofBC’s 35th anniversary.

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P. Woroch, Executive Director, ISSofBC

National Recognition

At the national Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) conference held in Vancouver in February, ISSofBC received a Certificate of Appreciation signed by The Honourable Diane Finley, Minister, Citizenship and Immigration Canada for “outstanding service and dedication to helping refugees begin new lives in Canada.”

It is a testament to the work of all of the staff at ISSofBC who work with refugees in various employment, language and settlement programs, but in particular to the work of our colleagues in the RAP and Welcome House teams.



Spring finally comes to Greater Vancouver

Provincial Recognition

The International Student Safety Project (ISSP), of which ISSofBC is a contributing member, was recently recognized at the Solicitor General’s Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards Ceremony for 2006.

The project received recognition in the Community Group/Organizations category for its commitment and accomplishments in improving safety awareness of the over 50,000 international students in Vancouver. In its first year of operation, the project developed a safety video, safety wallet card and an interactive website for students. All of ISSofBC’s Language College instructional and administrative staff can take credit for the implementation of this important initiative.

Settlement Conference 2007

BC's second immigrant settlement conference is being held on May 28th and 29th in Burnaby. The theme of the conference is "Redefining Immigrant Settlement in BC," and it aims to provide settlement practitioners opportunities to network and share new initiatives in the settlement arena in response to the changing face of global migration and its impact on BC.

The conference features 40 workshops and a number of plenary and keynote speakers. ISSofBC staff have been actively participating in the conference and planning process, and the following staff are presenting workshops: Jerry Wu, Lisa Herrera and Jill Collingwood on "Learning in Action—An Innovative Tool to Promote Language Acquisition," Liza Bautista and Minakshi Bagai on "Employment Information and Referral 101," Moussa Magassa and Bonfils Mada on "Serving Francophone African Immigrants and Refugees."



The winning structure at the all-staff meeting in 2006!

(Picture: Michael Woo)

Plan for Our 35th Year

Beginning early in January 2007, each Manager and Supervisor in conjunction with their team developed budgets and narratives for their programs. The budgets were incorporated into the organizational budget that was approved by the Board of Directors on March 15, 2007.

The one-page narratives take into consideration highlights and key activities, strengths, challenges and future directions. These were presented by each of the Managers/Supervisors at a workshop on March 28, 2007.

The summary of this workshop's discussions have been synthesized to form a Plan for Our 35th Year (see the table below).

While there is continuity from last year's plan in the strength of our staff, partnerships and programs and services, we are moving in some new directions. Building on our reputational capital, we are fostering new relationships between ISSofBC departments, developing new and innovative programs in the community, and raising our profile throughout Greater Vancouver.

Our Strengths	Our Challenges	Our Opportunities & Future Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated, experienced, culturally diverse and multilingual staff and management • Collaborative initiatives both externally with community partners and internally between ISSofBC's divisions (e.g. connecting and sharing "staff" resources within ISS) • Range/continuum of programs and services that responds to client and student needs in a growing number of communities • Excellent reputation for quality, flexible and innovative programs and services—local, provincial, federal and international • Leadership in the sector • Positive responses to funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of clients, students, volunteers and employers – increased competition, labour market strength, impact of 2010 • Coordination and communication between ISSofBC's various locations • Infrastructure, administration and facilities for a rapidly expanding organization • Funding—piecemeal, shortfalls, dependence • Further devolution of federal government programs to the province • Government policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance existing programs and services and seek out new opportunities • Innovative and coordinated public relations and marketing that build on ISSofBC's and specific intervention's profiles • Strategic outreach activities with ethno-specific and geographical communities • Continue to develop external and internal partnerships (between ISSofBC's divisions) • Expand services for employers (e.g. workplace based English, ESL testing and Employer Relations Specialists) • Influence government policy through individual and organizational relationships