

## **IEC-BC Honours Champions of Skilled Immigrant Employment**

April 10, 2015, VANCOUVER, BC - Thirteen individuals and organizations making a difference in helping skilled new Canadians integrate into BC work places were honoured today at the inaugural Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) Leadership Recognition Awards held at the Terminal City Club.

The awards recognized the innovation, leadership and commitment of IEC-BC partners, employers, immigrant-serving organizations and professional member organizations in supporting and promoting the employment of skilled immigrants in BC.

“Tapping into the expertise of skilled immigrants is critical to the province’s economic growth and to the successful settlement of new Canadians who make BC their new home,” said Philip Steenkamp, IEC-BC Board Chair and Vice-President, External Relations, Simon Fraser University who announced the awards. “It takes many people and organizations to facilitate the integration of skilled immigrants into BC workplaces and the individuals and organizations we recognized today are doing that.”

Award recipients were recognized in five categories at the awards event attended by senior business executives and human resource professionals from leading BC businesses and organizations and federal and provincial government representatives.

Individual Leadership awards were presented to Peter Judd, General Manager of the City of Vancouver’s Engineering Department and Heather Oland, CEO of Initiatives Prince George for their commitment to immigrant employment integration. Judd and city staff have been mentoring skilled immigrants since 2011. Oland has led initiatives to promote Prince George as a city of opportunity for skilled immigrants.

The City of Vancouver and TELUS were both recognized with Organization Leadership awards for their commitment to MentorConnect, IEC-BC’s mentoring program for skilled immigrants. A founding partner of IEC-BC, the City of Vancouver also participates in the Connector program which helps to expand the professional networks of job-ready immigrants.

Member Association Leadership awards recognizing best practices and solutions in immigrant employment and integration were presented to the Human Resources Management Association, the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC, the Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce and the BC Construction Association.

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MOSAIC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and ISSofBC received Immigrant Serving Organization Leadership awards as founding service provider organizations and the first to connect their clients with IEC-BC's mentoring program.

For their commitment to collaborating with IEC-BC on immigrant employment programs, the Filipino Canadian Construction Society and the Iranian Engineers Association of BC received Professional Immigrant Network Leadership awards.

"I congratulate the recipients of these Leadership Recognition Awards, whose work as community leaders is at the forefront in developing skills and networks amongst our new immigrants," said Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister, Chris Alexander.

"Addressing the skills gap is in the interest of BC now and for the long-term," said Kelly Pollack, CEO of IEC-BC. "The leadership of the individuals and organizations we recognized today is making a difference in employing skilled new Canadians in BC"

Funded by the Government of Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Province of BC, IEC-BC is a provincial non-government organization that stimulates the integration of skilled immigrant talent into the province's workforce by fostering solutions, building connections and being a champion to help employers attract and retain skilled immigrant talent.

To learn more about the IEC-BC Leadership Recognition awards visit <http://iecbc.ca/2015-leadership-awards>

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