

TELUS Mentors Help New Canadians Get a Foothold in Vancouver Receives IEC-BC Leadership Recognition Award

VANCOUVER, BC - One of the biggest challenges skilled immigrants face when they arrive in a city is the lack of a network.

“Vancouver’s a big city, but in many ways it’s a big town in that networks are tight,” said Nari Rampersad. As one of 50 TELUS employees to mentor new Canadians through the IEC-BC MentorConnect program, Rampersad, who works in sales at TELUS, has been able to help guide skilled immigrants in getting a professional foothold in their new city. “It takes years to build a network and my role, as a mentor, is to help them develop their brand in the marketplace.”

IEC-BC honoured TELUS’s commitment to mentoring skilled immigrants at its inaugural leadership awards event on April 9. IEC-BC recognized the contributions of 13 individuals and organizations that are helping skilled new Canadians integrate into BC workplaces.

TELUS Human Resources Manager Fiona Easton said everyone - mentors and mentees - benefit from participation in MentorConnect.

“Employees gain valuable experience in coaching,” said Easton. “The opportunity to provide support and guidance to new Canadians and to share your experiences; you can’t put a price on that. Sharing that knowledge and wisdom becomes part of a joint legacy between mentor and mentee - building community and friendships which often outlast the mentor relationship.”

TELUS began participating with MentorConnect in 2013 to help professionally trained immigrants understand Canada’s work culture and to build leadership experience for employees. TELUS employees have embraced MentorConnect with many of the 50 volunteer mentors signing up again.

“I’ve gotten a tremendous amount out of mentoring,” said Rampersad. “I wish this program had been available when I came to Canada (in 1996). New Canadians aren’t just looking for a job, they’re often looking for the confidence that they’ve made the right decision in coming here.” He’s able to reassure them.

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>