



# Quinte Immigration Services

## Annual General Meeting

*Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:00pm*

Meeting will be held via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81588313790>



***CELEBRATING OVER 35 YEARS  
OF CULTURE & DIVERSITY IN THE QUINTE AREA  
1986-2021***

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## Board of Directors

**President** – Paul Osborne

**Vice President** – Colleen Tripp

**Treasurer** – Esthel Issa

**Secretary** – Connie Gallupe

**Board Meeting Process Leader** – Gordon Gazley

### **Directors:**

Aptie Sookoo

Karen Kitchen

Wendy Chesworth

Gregory Burns

# Our Mission

Quinte Immigration Services will assist newcomers isolated by cultural and language barriers in the Quinte region through the process of orientation and settlement while encouraging public respect for the diversity of immigrants, the promotion and recognition of the value of racial and cultural differences and the facilitation of integration and participation of newcomers into the social, economic and cultural aspects of the community.

## QUIS Staff

**Executive Director** – Orlando Ferro

**Senior Finance Manager** – Helen Rector

**Accounting Assistant** – Behnaz Azadeh

**Sr. Program & Client Services Manager** – Meghan Beatty

**Settlement Worker** – John Mark Robertson

**Settlement Worker** – Jennifer Bryant

**STEP Scheduling Coordinator** – Nallely Sanchez Martinez

**Job Developer** – Michael Cassidy

**Assessment Support Worker** – Rosa Ortega

**Assessment Support Worker** – Josh Thompson

**Pre-Employment Skills Trainer** – Dawn Connon

**Quinte Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator** – Catherine Fisher Andrews

**Marketing Coordinator** – Emily Wessels

**EDTI Program Coordinator** – Gean James

**Administrative Assistant** – Olga Filippova

# AGENDA

## Annual General Meeting Quinte Immigration Services

**Wednesday, October 27, 2021**

**Zoom Link:**

**<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81588313790>**

**Time: 6:00pm**

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Meeting called to order by Process Chair

Welcome by President of the Board

- Approval of Previous AGM Minutes
- President's Report (printed in pamphlet)
- Report from the Nominating Committee (C. Gallupe)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the QLIP

External Auditors' Report

- Questions and Answers
- Motion to approve

Appointment of External Auditors

- Motion to Appoint Welch LLP as External Auditors

Adjourn



# Message from the President and Executive Director

## Annual Report 2020/21



*Paul Osborne, President of the Board*



*Orlando Ferro, Executive Director*

### 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

As we celebrate our thirty-fifth anniversary this month, I would like to provide a brief retrospective of the highlights throughout these three decades.

The year was 1986 when Suzan Walker and a group of volunteers got together and applied for funding to the Ministry of Human Resources, which at the time had started a new immigration program to attract newcomers to Canada. The application took a few months to process. One of the conditions for eligibility for the funding was to have a formal board of directors, be incorporated, and apply for a letter patent. All this was achieved within one year and in 1987 Quinte United Immigrant Services (QUIS) was formally incorporated and obtained funds to operate as a support organization for newcomers in the Quinte region.

Eight years had passed since Canada had admitted 5,608 Vietnamese immigrants that became known as the Boat people in 1978. Many of those refugees came to Belleville and were one of the first QUIS clients to be assisted by QUIS in their relocation and settlement services. Today we have a second generation of Vietnamese business owners in Belleville and Trenton reminiscent of those days. Many other nationalities also had chosen Belleville at the time for settlement most notably originating from Toronto and natives from Italy, Ireland and even the UK.

Another highlight of the services QUIS provided happened in 1999 during the Operation Parasol.

With nearly 1 million displaced Kosovar refugees, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) sent out an international appeal for help to deal with the situation. Canada stepped forward and agreed to resettle some of the refugees who had been displaced, and asked that the Canadian Forces play a role. It was in response to this request that the CF launched Operation PARASOL.

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the CF issued a Warning Order placing CFBs Borden, Trenton, Kingston, Petawawa, and Meaford, on 72 hours notice to receive and house an expected 5000 refugees for up to six months.

From the outset, Citizenship and Immigration Canada took the lead in the operation. The Canadian Forces was heavily involved in a support role providing transportation, accommodations, meals, medical services, and with the help of volunteers, much needed support and comfort. On May 2nd 1999, the first of what were to be daily flights of chartered A310 Airbuses began arriving in Canada with refugees aboard. Alternating between CFB Trenton, Ontario, and CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia, the flights were met by volunteers from the Red Cross, local Lions and Rotary Clubs, The Salvation Army, members of the local community, and CF personnel to help the refugees move through the initial assessment process.

In Trenton, QUIS played a vital role working together with the Canadian Red Cross. Escort teams, consisting of one military person and one volunteer were assigned a group of between 7 and 14 refugees. Wherever possible, the groups consisted of whole families (including pets) to ensure they were not broken up or lost in transition. The teams were responsible for knowing the whereabouts of each group member at all times, and for their movement from station to station. This included immigration processing, medical screening, identification, showering, new clothing and a hot meal.

Fast track to 2001, the Federal Government reduced funding over the board to the resettlement of refugees. In order to reduce operational costs QUIS joined several other non-profit organizations and with the support of the City of Belleville were granted the use of an old school building to form the first community hub in the region. That project lasted several years and ended in the disbandment of the hub due to rising costs of heating, maintenance and a centralized shared management format.

In between those years, in order to become self-sufficient and independent from funding levels fluctuation, QUIS became one of the first nonprofit organizations in Ontario to create a social enterprise in 2003 providing translations and interpretation services to institutions and other non-profit groups.

This was Central Eastern Ontario, Translation and Interpretation Services (CEOTIS). Nowadays, a leader in the sector not only in Central Eastern Ontario but also other parts of the province serving not only the nonprofit sector but also the private initiative allowing QUIS to count on a sound fiscal security so much needed to plan, design and deliver new programs to fill in the eligibility gaps met in many government funding programs.

Another program launched was the Dignity for all, funded by the United Way. This program lasted for several years and assisted undocumented immigrants that lost status due to unforeseeable circumstances such as domestic violence from sponsoring partners.

Other great achievement was the foundation of the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership. (QLIP)

That council started as an advisory committee for immigration in 2006 without any government funding or support until 2012, when it was officially recognized as a driving force of support for local immigration initiatives and funded by CIC. Nowadays the council is funded through a grant by IRCC and has over 67 stakeholders including municipalities, the Provincial government, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, legal services, the police services, the health care sector and employers.

It acts as a catalyst in the strategy to attract and retain newcomers to the region while ensuring welcoming communities can foster new arrivals. It also acts as a public education forum advocating for the benefits of immigration as a key factor for social and economic development.

The next milestone for QUIS came in 2015-16 during the Syrian refugee crisis. With the original expectations that a similar operation held by Canada in 1999 during the Kosovo crisis, QUIS, through the LIP, mobilized the

community in preparation to mass arrivals. Community informational forums were organized bringing together social services, the health care sector, volunteers, community groups and members of CF Trenton.

Later on QUIS once again partnered with the Canadian Red Cross and designed a new program to support refugees to start working in the agricultural and food sectors. Farmers Feed the World was launched as a pilot project and lasted for two years assisting Syrian refugees with prior experience in agriculture.

In 2018, the Economic Development through Immigration launched- providing pre-arrival services to skilled foreign trained workers and entrepreneurs. Working directly with the municipalities and economic development groups, this project was funded by the Province of Ontario.

The Skills, Training, and Employment Program (STEP), also funded by the Province of Ontario, launched in 2020 providing training and mentoring newcomers and Canadian born citizens to access employment in the transportation, hospitality and financial sectors.

2020 was a critical time for the world. With the COVID-19 pandemic, QUIS stepped up as many other organizations to ensure that our clients would still continue to have access to our program and services. Going from face-to-face services to virtual services delivery was a challenge, but thanks to our professional staff and management we were able to implement and deliver the new services format.

As we are now reopening our offices with safety protocols in place, I would like to acknowledge the excellent leadership of our President of the Board, Paul Osborne, throughout critical times and the support of the Board of Directors without whom QUIS would not be a successful organization in the immigration and settlement sector nowadays. The Board of Directors would like to congratulate Orlando Ferro for his excellent and innovative service as the Executive Director of QUIS for the last 20 years, which has resulted in so many successes during his tenure. His open and collaborative working partnership with the President has ensured an engaged and informed Board of Directors.

Special thanks to all our volunteers throughout these 35 years and our funders, The government of Canada, The Province of Ontario, the municipalities of Belleville and Quinte West, The United Way of Quinte, The Canadian Red Cross, The Parrot Foundation all other foundations that contributed to several projects throughout the past three decades and all the private donors who did believe in immigration as a force to the social and economic development of this country.

Special acknowledgment to the territory of the Huron-Wendat, the Anishnaabeg, and the Haudenosaunee people. We acknowledge our shared obligation to respect, honour, and sustain these lands and the natural resources contained within.

Total number of clients served from October 2019 to September 2020: 615

Total number of international students from October 2019 to September 2020: 205

Main language groups from October 2019 to September 2020: English, Punjabi, Hindi, Tagalog, Spanish, Arabic, Gujarati, Malayalam, French, and Tamil

Top ten nationalities from October 2019 to September 2020: India-227, Canada-70, Philippines-43, Jamaica-34, Great Britain-31, Syria-27, U.S.A.-23, Mexico-13, Vietnam-6, and Germany-6

Paul Osborne- President of the Board of Directors

Orlando Ferro- Executive Director

## Clients' Success Stories

Amye Brooks and her husband, Sonny, first came to QUIS in 2019 to find out about spousal sponsorship. QUIS staff assisted Amye and Sonny to understand what was involved in sponsorship, gave an overview of the forms and documents required and reviewed the application in stages. Once the application had been submitted, QUIS helped Amye set up an appointment to get biometrics done as well as set up an appointment for an immigration medical exam.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, processing of applications slowed down considerably. QUIS helped Amye to track the status of her application by using the IRCC web form and connecting with the Member of Parliament's office. When Amye received her "approval in principle" letter from IRCC, QUIS provided information on how to apply for a health card. Once she received confirmation that the sponsorship was successful, and she had received permanent residence, QUIS provided information on applying for a social insurance number.

Amye was very thankful to QUIS for all their assistance and promised to spread the word in any way she can. QUIS wishes Amye all the best in her new life as a permanent resident!

\*\*\*

Jeff Stevens first came to QUIS in 2015 looking for information about sponsoring his spouse from the United States. Fortunately, Jeff and his wife, Susan Harvey, were able to visit each other regularly without one of them having to commit to moving locations. An accident that led to a permanent injury made it much harder for Jeff to travel. Susan became one of his main caregivers and she was able to stay in Canada for longer periods of time by extending her visitor status.

After a few years, it became clear that Jeff and Susan needed to move forward in applying for spousal sponsorship so that Susan could become a permanent resident. QUIS assisted them with various aspects of the process including providing an overview of the requirements, reviewing documentation, technical assistance with online processes as well as photocopying/printing to address the gaps in access to technology. QUIS also helped Susan in understanding her immigration status and connecting her to the US Embassy so that she could ensure her identity documents remained valid.

As they were finalizing their application package, the COVID-19 pandemic forced QUIS to transition to remote operations. It was a challenge to guide Jeff and Susan through the remainder of the process without being able to see them in person, but through telephone calls, emails and Skype calls they submitted their application to IRCC in May 2020. QUIS connected Susan to MP Neil Ellis' office on several occasions to assist with processing delays and confirming receipt of documents from IRCC.

In April 2021, it was much celebrated news to hear that Susan had received a notice confirming her new status as a permanent resident of Canada! Given the time she had already spent in Canada and her role as primary caregiver for Jeff, it was also great news to be able to connect Susan to important public services such as OHIP and OAS. Congratulations to Susan and Jeff on a successful sponsorship application!

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Elnicka Paul was born in Haiti but spent most of her life in the United States under the Temporary Protection program for Haitians. As a young student pursuing a nursing degree at an American college, her path in life changed dramatically when the U.S. government announced it would end all Temporary Protections and could

begin deporting people back to their countries of origin regardless of their length of time spent in the U.S. Elnicka was one of many people who made the long journey towards the US/Canada border hoping to find asylum in a new country.

She arrived in Belleville in 2019 and sought assistance from QUIS to help extend the work permit she received as a refugee claimant. Her refugee hearing had already been postponed once and like many others she had to wait for her hearing to be rescheduled. During this time, QUIS helped Elnicka with extending her work permit, changing her contact info with IRB, and extending the validity of her original refugee claim document.

Despite many setbacks and yet another postponement of her IRB hearing, Elnicka kept the faith that she would have the opportunity for permanent residence. As the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to take hold, Elnicka was completing a course to become a Personal Support Worker to reconnect her with her interest in nursing. Throughout the pandemic, she has worked as a PSW in a long-term care facility and when the pilot program for refugees working in health care was announced by IRCC in 2020, she was eager for the new opportunity. QUIS encouraged her to start the application process and sent regular updates on the new policy as they became available. It was important for her to get the most updated information as she would have to request her refugee claim be put on hold while IRCC processed her application through the new policy.

Fortunately, the risk paid off for Elnicka and she was selected to move forward in the pilot program. QUIS helped her with submitting documents and ensuring that she met all timeframes laid out. The last piece of the process, just a few weeks ago, was for her to formally withdraw her refugee claim which was a bittersweet step towards permanent status. In late October 2021, she received her confirmation notice that she was now a permanent resident of Canada! Congratulations to Elnicka on a well-deserved accomplishment and QUIS wishes her the very best for the future.



(Daniel Joseph Petty, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/canada-flag-with-mountain-range-view-756790/>)

# QUIS Client Statistics from October 2020-September 2021

In the last 12 months Quinte Immigration Services staff have helped 436 unique clients.

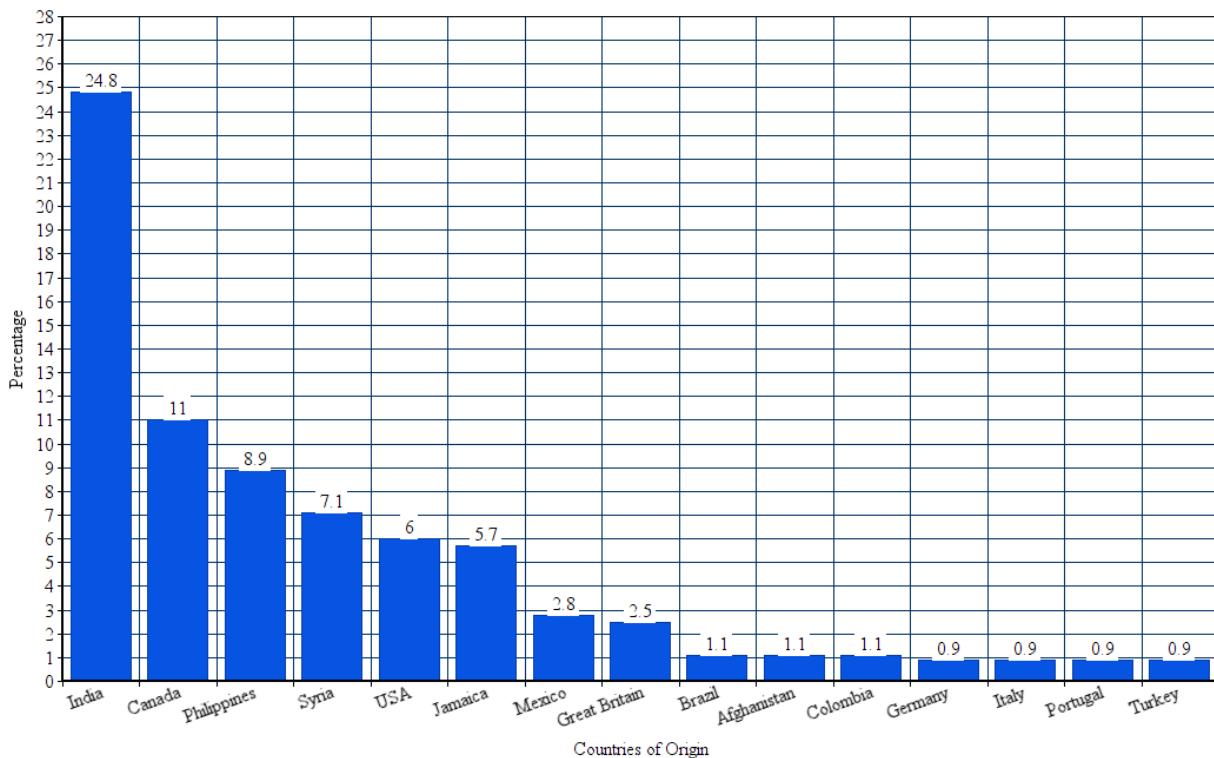
## Languages Spoken

Hindi  
Punjabi  
Gujarati  
French  
Malayalam  
English  
Spanish  
Italian  
Arabic  
Tagalog

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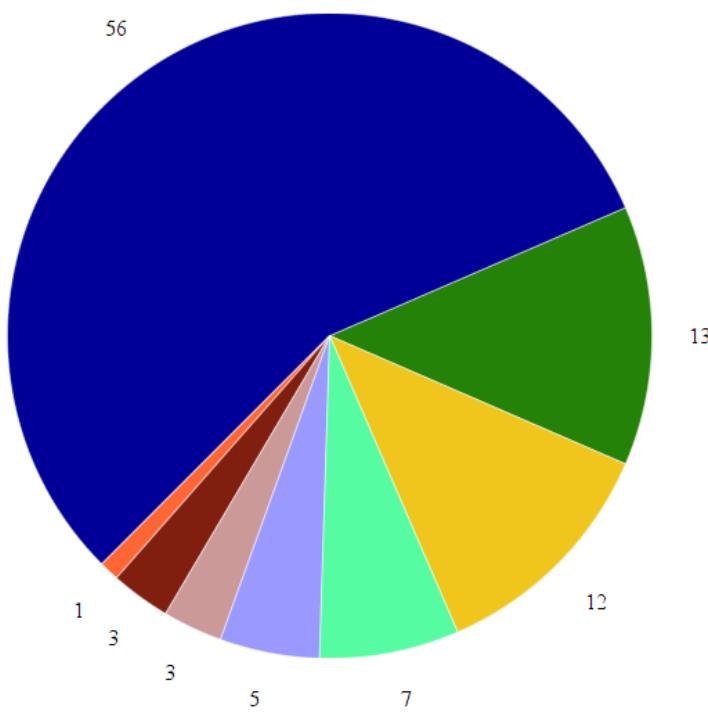
English 42.7% - Tagalog 8.3% - Hindi 7.6% - Arabic 7.6% - Punjabi 6.4%  
- Spanish 6.0% - Gujarati 3.2% - French 2.5% - Malayalam 2.1% - Italian 1.4%

## Countries of Origin (Top 15)

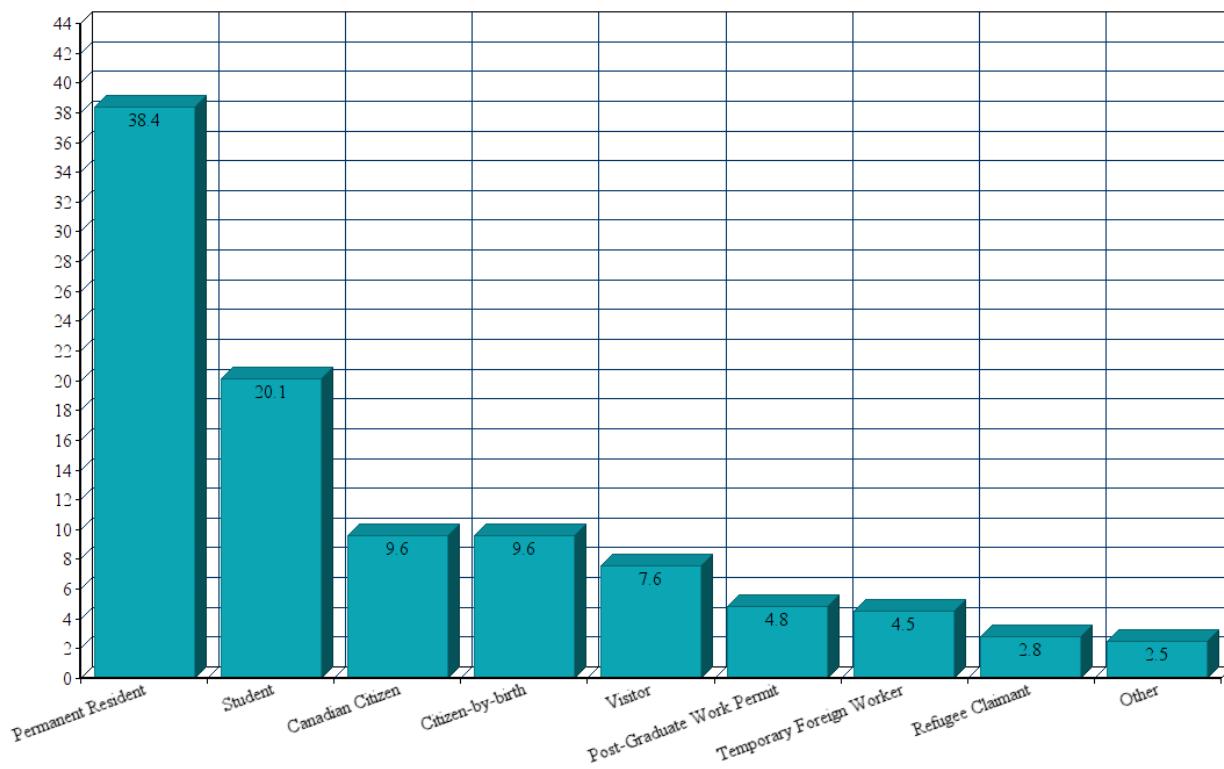


## How Did Clients Hear About QUIS?

█ Family/Friends    █ Non-governmental media/website    █ Canadian government agency    █ Internal to QUIS    █ Government publication/website  
█ Community centre/library    █ School    █ Other settlement service provider



## Immigration Status



# CEOTIS-Central Eastern Ontario Translation & Interpretation



In 2002, Quinte Immigration Services (QUIS) launched CEOTIS; Central Eastern Ontario Translation and Interpretation Services. CEOTIS offers very reasonable fee-for-service interpretation and translation services to Central Eastern Ontario covering Lindsay to Brockville, in over 125 languages. Their interpreters and translators maintain professionalism in challenging situations, are impartial, and respect confidentiality.

Interpreters can be obtained for in-person, teleconference interpretation, as well as message relays and sight translation. Translators are located in Canada and are ATIO-certified (Association of Translators and Interpreter of Ontario). As well CEOTIS -translated documents are guaranteed to be accepted by municipal, provincial and federal levels of Canadian government. Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-888-968-1065.

## Q-STEP-Quinte Skills Training Employment Program

Q U I N T E  
**STEP**  
P R O G R A M

In 2020, QUIS launched a new employment program called Q-STEP; Quinte Skills Training Employment Program. The program provides five weeks of online soft skills training and two-week paid job placement to Permanent Residents, Canadian Citizens, and Protected Persons ages 18 and up who are unemployed or working less than 20 hours per week, and not full-time students.

The program is funded by Skills Advancement Ontario and is now in its second cohort. It primarily focuses on three industries that are experiencing labour shortages in the Quinte area- Transportation, Finance, and Hospitality. After completing their online and on-the-job training, participants are connected with employment opportunities in these industries. Interested participants or employers can register by reaching out to [step@quinteimmigration.ca](mailto:step@quinteimmigration.ca) or at [quintestep.ca](http://quintestep.ca).

## EDTI-Economic Development through Immigration



The Economic Development through Immigration (EDTI) project matches skilled newcomers residing in Ontario with local industries facing labor shortages in the Quinte region. In addition, EDTI looks to connect newcomers interested in starting up a business in the Quinte Region with business opportunities or entrepreneurship organizations. All newcomers who are legally entitled to work in Canada are eligible for this program. Job-seekers are provided with information, referrals, and assistance with resumes and job-searching. Newcomer entrepreneurs are connected to local organizations that will provide entrepreneurial counselling to start a business or will facilitate the relocating of their existing business to this area.

Employers and newcomers alike are encouraged to make use of the EDTI job board to match job-seekers with paid positions. Local labour market information is also regularly updated and shared with job-seekers, which is particularly helpful for international students seeking permanent residency in Canada through the Express Entry program to assist them in settling permanently in the Quinte area.

EDTI is currently working together with Bay of Quinte region partners to coordinate the response to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) Regional Pilot Project. This OINP pilot is open to any newcomers (inside and outside Canada) who have a full-time, permanent job offer from an employer located in one of the pilot communities (Chatham-Kent, Cornwall or Quinte West/Belleville) and meet the criteria for the OINP's Employer Job Offer category. EDTI provides potential candidates with information and referral to the program as well as collecting their resumes and pertinent information in an EDTI candidate database. When requested, resumes of potential candidates will be supplied to employers involved in the project in the Quinte region.

## QLIP-Quinte Local Immigration Partnership



The Quinte Local Immigration Partnership (QLIP) is a cooperative effort involving 60 Quinte Region organizations. Their goal is to provide a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers to the Quinte Region that are local and regional in scope. The QLIP Partnership focuses on improvements in accessing services and on efforts to create a welcoming community for newcomers, close gaps in services and eliminate duplication in services, build potential for increased use of service protocols that meet the needs of newcomers, engage the Francophone newcomer community, and strengthen labour market outcomes for newcomers in the Quinte Region.

The QLIP Partnership Local Settlement Strategy and Action Plan promotes the development of new protocols within the community to improve the delivery of newcomer services. Initiatives to date include a progressive effort in employment consultation services for newcomers to improve labour market integration and a new protocol in the delivery of Quinte Health Care services for newcomers with language difficulties as medical practitioners now have access to interpreters. The QLIP Partnership seeks through collaborative efforts to strengthen local awareness and capacity to successfully integrate newcomers and foster an inclusive and welcoming community.

## Past Events

### Recycling & Hazardous Waste Information Session-April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker from Quinte Waste Solutions hosted an information session on local recycling and hazardous waste programs, waste disposal based on household needs, and COVID-19 protocols RE: waste and recycling pick-up and drop-off.

### Community Advocacy & Legal Centre Information Session-May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker from the local Community Advocacy & Legal Centre presented information about free legal services available to community members, including how to obtain services, employment law, income supports, and housing/Landlord & Tenant Board matters

### Banking Information Session-June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff and guest speakers from a local bank branch held an information session on banking in Canada, including banking options, mortgages, savings, investments, credits, and bill payments.

### Citizenship Q&A-June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff held a question and answer session about the citizenship application processing, including answering questions about necessary documents, application requirements, and other individual questions.

### Summer Storytime Event-July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff hosted a virtual children's storytime event of the picture book 'Stellaluna.'

### Belleville Public Library-July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker from the Belleville Public Library held an information session about local library resources and how to access them, including children's, teen's, and adult programs, book, audiobook, and DVD rentals, online courses, activity kit pick-ups, and art programs.

### IRCC/QUIS Information Session-August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff hosted an information session on updates to QUIS and IRCC services, current travel restrictions, current application processes, delays, and cancellations, current public health guidelines, and COVID-19 vaccination and testing updates.

### Sculpting Workshop-August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff held a sculpting workshop where participants were provided with clay and a variety of sculpting techniques were demonstrated. The workshop was attended by clients and their families.

### Hastings Housing Resource Centre Information Session-September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker from the Hastings Housing Resource Centre presented information on housing resources and tenant rights, including information on how to access rental listings, emergency housing, rental tips, and low-income supports for housing, food, and utilities.

# Upcoming Events

## Felting Workshop-October 2021

In October 2021, QUIS staff will hold a felting workshop where clients are provided with kits and Zoom-led instructions on how to create a small felted creation

## Insurance Information Session-November 2021

In November 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker will present information on how insurance works in Canada.

## Small Business Supports Information Session-December 2021

In December 2021, QUIS staff and a guest speaker will host an information session on the supports available for those looking to start or who already own a small business.

## Santa Pick-ups Event-December 2021

In December 2021, QUIS staff will be hosting an alternative to the annual Children's Holiday Party that will provide an opportunity for families to pick up gifts and treats for their children and enjoy a little holiday cheer.

## IRCC/QUIS Information Session-January 2022

In January 2022, QUIS staff will hold an information session on updates to IRCC services and QUIS programs.

## Letter Exchange Event-January 2022

In January 2022, QUIS staff will organize an anonymous exchange of encouraging letters to help reduce isolation in the winter months.

## Sewing Circle-February 2022

In February 2022, QUIS staff will organize a sewing circle and provide supplies to interested clients.

## Quinte Humane Society Information Session-February 2022

In February 2022, QUIS staff and a guest speaker will present information on the services available at the Quinte Humane Society as well as pet ownership information.

## Crochet Workshop-March 2022

In March 2022, QUIS staff will be hosting a workshop to teach clients how to crochet.

## Free Tax Clinic-March 2022

In March 2022, following an information session, eligible clients will be able to book appointments to complete their tax returns over the phone with one of QUIS' CVITP volunteers.

# **Your Help is Important!**

We greatly appreciate the generosity of our volunteers, who contribute their efforts to our activities and events. You are one of the biggest reasons for our success! We also would like to thank the individuals, organizations, and partners who have supported QUIS through their donations and time over the past year. You are what makes QUIS great!



QUIS Board of Directors 2020-2021

Canada 

Ontario 

**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**



## Contact Us

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