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## Child Care Services span three decades of early education



Vancouver's ECE supervisor Ana Delgado shares purple moon sand with a child from ISSofBC's Day Care facility.

With over 27 years of finger painting, block building, story time and snacks, ISSofBC's licensed Child Care and Child Minding services continue to enrich children's lives in the Lower Mainland.

The goal of ISSofBC's service is to help parents who otherwise would not have access to child care and child minding study English and



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### BC Immigrant Professionals Conference



Participants will learn how other professionals succeed in their careers, master tips to maximize their job searches and unlock what industry insiders really want at the third BC Immigrant Professionals Conference. The event is also an opportunity to network with other Vancouver

receive other program services while their children are well-taken care of by qualified staff.

ISSofBC's Child Care Centre at Terminal Avenue in Vancouver offers both morning and afternoon services from a team of certified Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). Currently the centre has 29 children whose ethnicities span from Ethiopian to Russian.

One unique activity at the Vancouver Child Care Centre is a scrap book for each child. ECE Supervisor **Ana Delgado** says the log books are visual memories and a glimpse of how each child spends his or her time at the centre. "The books are full of photos, paintings and other arts and crafts that children share with their parents and take home," she explains.

Meanwhile at ISSofBC's Richmond Child Minding Centre, which opened its doors last November, the number of children is steadily increasing and is nearing capacity. The centre currently has 21 children including a two-year old boy who comes from a family of opera singers. The parents delighted the staff last month with an amazing live performance.

Richmond's ECE Supervisor **Josee Lavallee** says the ISSofBC staff are just starting to get to know the families and settling into a routine. "This has been a very interesting journey. We continue to make small changes to our environment to accommodate the families that are coming to our program," Josee explains.

ISSofBC operates three Child Care or Child Minding facilities for students and clients in the 11 communities the organization serves in the Lower Mainland and BC as well as offers spaces through other licensed centres.

## Mentees mingle with Vancouver Mayor at program's end



The mentorship program is a joint initiative between the City, IEC-BC, ISSofBC, MOSAIC and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. From left to right - Mary Tecson, Assistant Manager of Skills Connect, Mayor Gregor Robertson and ISSofBC mentee Venus Rollo.

professionals.

ISSofBC, MOSAIC and DIVERSEcity are point sponsors for the event.

The keynote speaker for the conference is renowned author Lionel Laroche.

Click [here](#) for more details.

## New Westminster partners with Paragon Testing Enterprises



ISSofBC in New Westminister is now an official CELPIP-General LS Test Centre in partnership with Paragon Testing Enterprises Inc.

Paragon offers CELPIP-General LS Testing which is used as proof of listening and speaking proficiency by Citizenship and Immigration Canada for those applying for Canadian citizenship.

Test sittings started in January 2013 in New Westminister and will run up to twice per month. Upcoming test dates are:

February 22 at 1:00 and 3:00pm

## Buildex raises ISSofBC profile in industry



Staff from ISSofBC Skills Connect promoted the organization's career programs at Buildex Vancouver, one of Canada's largest tradeshows. The event, on February 14 and 15, hosted over 600 exhibits and more than 50 educational seminars.

For both days, the ISSofBC booth

ISSofBC staff and Mayor Gregor Robertson recently celebrated the successful completion of the Mentorship program launched in September 2012.

The City of Vancouver, in partnership with the Mentoring Connections Program of ISSofBC, Immigrant Employment Council of BC, MOSAIC and SUCCESS, offered a rewarding Mentorship Program for Skilled Immigrants.

Of the 28 mentees matched with mentors, 11 were ISSofBC Mentoring Connections clients. Mentees made significant steps towards their success by building new networks, gaining confidence and obtaining essential resources for their job search and career development.

At the closing ceremony, on January 23, 2013, **Manchan Sonachansingh**, President of the ISSofBC Board of Directors, spoke on behalf of service provider partners and emphasized the importance of mentoring programs and the valuable experience they provide for both mentors and mentees.

ISSofBC client and mentee Fernando Torres spoke of his career and mentorship journey. He considered himself very lucky to be matched with mentor Bill Auel, City of Vancouver General Manager.

## Let's learn Hockey 101 at ISSofBC



Learning in Action participants, volunteers and newcomers learned the ins and outs of hockey in preparation for a live game in Coquitlam.

What is an offside, a power play and the penalty box? These were some of the questions answered during a Hockey 101 class hosted by the ISSofBC Settlement and Integration Program in Coquitlam.

The lesson, conducted by Marion Shenher, Business Operation Manager

saw a steady stream of interested jobseekers, employers and building industry leaders from across Canada.

## Renovated Midtown ESC opens



ISSofBC helped its partner Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS) celebrate the open house of the new, sleek Vancouver Midtown Employment Services Centre January 30.

ISSofBC staff working in the centre include Brenda Alindogan, Ann Bo, Rebecca Lee, Sofia Lee, Lourdes Hisola and Tania Llanos.

## ISSofBC Maple Ridge Connects with Service BC agents



ISSofBC and Service BC noted collaboration as an important factor in delivering services to Maple Ridge immigrant communities during an information session February 5.

During the session, at ISSofBC Maple Ridge, staff introduced details about the organization's programs to a group of eight Service BC agents.

Service Area Manager **Robert Gabriel**; settlement workers **Henry Lu, Irina Loginova** and

of the Coquitlam Express Junior "A" hockey team, included rules of the game, an equipment check and even an in-class practice session with sticks, pucks and helmets.

The class is all part of preparations for a multicultural hockey night when the Coquitlam Express take on the Prince George Spruce Kings.

ISSofBC Learning in Action participants, volunteers and newcomers joined the lesson in anticipation of the February 22 game at the Poirier Sport & Leisure Complex. ISSofBC organizes the event two times a year. Over 75 people are expected to join the ISSofBC group for Friday's game.

## Student becomes the teacher



Olga Kanapelka teaches a level 2 class at ISSofBC in Richmond.

The cliché that hard work pays off certainly rings true in every country and culture but for newcomers to Canada the journey to build a new life takes more than a cliché. One such journey started in Eastern Europe and ended in Richmond, BC.

**Olga Kanapelka**, from Belarus, came to Canada one and a half years ago with no illusions opportunities would fall onto her lap. However, she did bring with her a strong sense of determination to build a new life. With the assistance of ISSofBC, she succeeded and now teaches English to other newcomers who are working through their own journeys to a new life in Canada.

In January 2012, Olga was introduced to ISSofBC through a friend. She quickly became a client of Skills Connect in Vancouver. This program helps new immigrants explore the Canadian labour market and offers one-to-one consultations with a career counsellor. "Last but not least, I started building my network with Skills Connect and met some good friends—a big deal for a new immigrant," Olga says.

The following month Olga joined the ISSofBC Volunteer Program and a few months after the first information session she started volunteering

**Isabel Lee**; Volunteer Connections Facilitator **Yumiko King**; and ELSA Program Assistant Manager **Eysa Alvarez** all represented ISSofBC at the event.

## Step Up & Step Out Fundraiser hits the dance floor



The TEAL Charitable Foundation is holding a fundraiser on Friday, March 15, with all proceeds going toward the Refugee Award Endowment Fund.

Step Up & Step Out with your colleagues, family and friends for a social event featuring demonstrations by various dance artists, including Argentine Tango, Flamenco, Burlesque, Belly Dance, and more.

Click [here](#) for more info

## Celebration of Life for long-time ISSofBC employee



Jim among his ISSofBC colleagues during his retirement party in October 2012.

A celebration of life will take place for long-time ISSofBC employee **Jim Siemens** on Saturday, March 9 from 2-4 pm at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House at 800 East Broadway Ave. in Vancouver.

in ISSofBC's ELSA classes. "I see it as a very important stage in terms of learning about the ELSA program and gaining Canadian work experience," she explains.

With the goal of one day teaching English as a Second Language in Canada, Olga chose to work towards a TESOL Diploma. "I knew the ISSofBC Language College had a good reputation and the program was recognized by TESL Canada. The program also allowed me to study in the evenings, as I had to keep my day job at the time. So beginning in April, and continuing for the next three months, I hurried to class after work, four evenings a week," Olga recalls.

In August, after graduating from ISSofBC Olga took the IELTS exam, an English proficiency test, and applied for and received the TESL Canada Professional Certification. However, even armed with certifications, Olga struggled to find a teaching position until she had an informational interview at ISSofBC in Richmond. "I had applied for ISSofBC job postings quite a few times, before I got a chance of an informational interview with the manager of the ELSA program in Richmond. It went well and I left the office with some good advice and strategies in my head. Later that week I was invited for a job interview," she says.

The rest is history. Olga now teaches the ELSA program in Richmond. Her students are mostly new Chinese immigrants in a level 2 English class. "ISSofBC is certainly a place which attracts great people. My co-workers are very supportive and friendly and always ready to share ideas or recommend a good textbook. There is still a lot to learn, but that is what I love about teaching," Olga explains.

She credits her success to her determination but says there are many more elements to her story including the support of her family, friends and the people she met who believed in her and gave her a chance to succeed in her new life and career in Canada.

Whether it was advocating for family reunification on behalf of a refugee woman who left her newborn child back home, spending his volunteer time helping refugee youth improve their English language skills or helping refugee newcomers find employment, Jim worked with compassion, determination and an endless amount of energy to give resettled refugees the best possible start in Canada.

Jim, retired in October 2012 after 13 years of service in the ISSofBC Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP).

He passed away on February 15.

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