

### BURNABY WORKPLACE AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

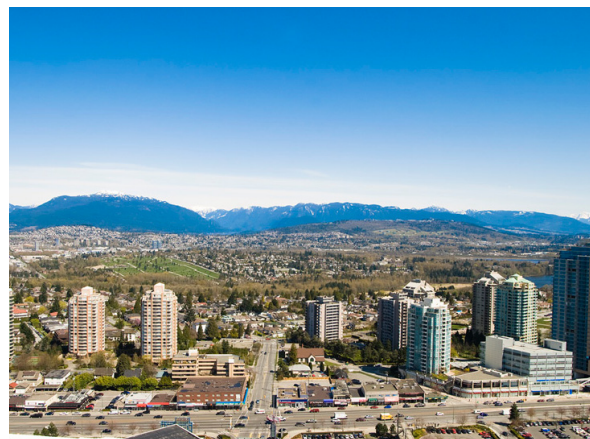
In 2012 Burnaby hosted a remarkable program aimed at identifying and addressing some of the problems that immigrants to Canada face in the employment marketplace: the **Burnaby Workplace Ambassadors Program**. The project followed from research and experience with the prior Breaking Down the Barriers program showing that both employers and new immigrants lack a clear understanding of all that's required to support immigrant workforce integration. Employers often have no easy way of assessing experience and credentials acquired in another country, and hold reservations or uncertainty when meeting new immigrants trying to enter the job market. Immigrants sometimes not only lack the networking and communication skills necessary to break into the Canadian workforce but fail to fully recognize how crucial these are.

The program sought to dig straight into problems like these with a unique "ambassadors" approach using both jobseekers and employers as active participants. Thirty five internationally trained professionals (ITPs) new to Burnaby received focussed training and supporting resources on communication and networking, and then were introduced to a professional within their field and a 45 minute meeting was set up. This professional would then introduce the ITP to two more professionals – and so on. The purpose of the meetings was twofold; first, participants exchanged information about their shared occupational field and second, they discussed some of the existing barriers to immigrant workforce integration. The intent of the project was not employment but awareness raising - some of the immigrant ambassadors met with as many as 10 local professionals and most received at least five meetings. At project end, more than 240 employers had been engaged in discussions about immigrant workforce integration, many reviewed and discussed their own recruiting and hiring practices and shared the experience with their colleagues.

Here, in their own words, a few representatives of both types of ambassadors recount their experiences with the program. They are organized into six professional sectors important to Burnaby's economy. As a result of the Burnaby Workplace Ambassador Program, the ball is definitely rolling. The challenge now is to push it as fast and far as possible.

### SECTOR OVERVIEW - FINANCIAL SERVICES

In dollar terms the financial services sector is the fastest growing in British Columbia, accounting for almost one-quarter of provincial GDP, some \$32 billion. It employs about 100,000 people, or six percent of the workforce, a proportion that has held fairly steady since 1990. The growth of financial services has been a global trend, but the stature of Canada and its institutions was enhanced by their performance during the recent recession. The country's financial sector is among the world's best-regulated and is responsible for many international best practices.



#### KEY OCCUPATIONS IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

- Certified General Accountant
- Certified Management Accountant
- Chartered Accountant
- Securities agents, investment dealers and brokers
- Brokerage, bank, credit or investment managers
- Financial planners
- Financial officers and managers
- Securities agents
- Investment dealers
- Auditors
- Financial and investment analysts
- Insurance adjusters
- Claims examiners and loan agents

Within British Columbia the sector is especially important in Metro Vancouver, which hosts the Canadian headquarters of several major banks, including HSBC, Bank of China, State Bank of India, BASF Finance and Mizuho Financial Group. Canada's two largest credit unions are based in the city, with one of them, Vancity, listed among The Banker's Top 1,000 World Banks.

The employment outlook for the sector is generally considered only moderate despite its important role. The number of front line workers will continue to drop. Meanwhile, a significant proportion of jobs are linked to real estate sales volumes, which have been weak in some parts of the province and are currently wavering in Vancouver. Finally, the province does not have a lot of head offices, so corporate finance jobs are not abundant. Within this lukewarm employment environment, there is a high demand for some specializations, however, and strong candidates will continue to find high-paying positions throughout the industry.

## THE AMBASSADORS

### *ITP Ambassador - Carlos Gonzalez*

I was CFO of a company in Argentina, and I came to Canada in late 2011 to rejoin my family, who were already here. My experience with the project was very positive. I'd had some training before I went into the program, but this training was still helpful. Three or four informational interviews were arranged through the project, and then I got a couple of referrals, for seven or eight altogether. I believe it was a good way to get involved with Canadian culture and Canadian business.

I am not working now, but I am keeping some of the relationships that I made through the project alive, and I am very happy with that. My suggestion for the project might be to stay in touch with people like me in case there is an opportunity to do something more.

### *Employer Ambassador – Joanne Stinson, Manager of Learning and Organizational Development, City of Burnaby*

My role is as the manager of organizational development. My first contact was a referral from one of the participants of a previous interview. I had a wonderful interview and meeting: I was so curious about cultural differences, about her experiences, about what it was like to practice her profession in her own country, about her experiences in Canada and British Columbia. So I felt very confident about bringing the idea of participating as an organization to the management committee here. We were asking more senior staff to take time from work for these interviews, so it was important that permission had been granted.

Once I made a match between project participants and people here I simply made an email introduction, and let them set up the interviews on their own. I heard back from a couple of the managers involved and they were very positive. There were no more matches for my own career, but I met with one individual to speak from an organizational perspective.

There were a couple of things that struck me about the experience overall. The City was very pleased to participate and managers really stepped up to make it happen. I think for the most part they really enjoyed their conversations. And the timeline worked really well. We were contacted by another program that required a much more extensive involvement, and that was a lot to ask.



**MR. CARLOS GONZALEZ**

**BEST PRACTICES OF WORKPLACE INTEGRATION - EMPLOYERS IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR**

In 2012, forty employers across Canada were recognized for their initiatives around recent immigrants as part of the Best Employers for New Canadians list by Mediacorp Canada. Promising practices of best employers in financial services sectors are summarized and listed below.

Source: <http://www.canadastop100.com/immigrants/>

**RECRUITMENT**

- Creates online recruitment website for applicants who are new to Canada with information and resources such as foreign credential assessment, language training, and mentoring opportunities (CIBC and RBC)
- Partners with service providers and provides internship opportunities to new Canadian job-seekers (CIBC and RBC)
- CIBC’s Outreach Consultant works with community organizations such as COSTI Immigrant Services, YMCA, and Skills For Change, to match resumes to vacancies within the Bank (CIBC)

**ORIENTATION**

- Manages buddy program, such as “New-to-Canada” to match international hires to volunteer buddies in order to provide them with support and resources to ease the settlement and integration process (Ernst & Young LLP, and KPMG)
- Provides employment assistance to families and spouses of employees who are new to the country (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and RBC)

**RETENTION**

- Provides counselling and support for internationally trained employees who are working to obtain licensure, such as the Chartered Accountants (CA) reciprocity exam (Deloitte & Touche LLP, Ernst & Young LLP)
- Maintains a variety of cultural inclusiveness initiatives including a tip sheet to educate managers on religion and cultural holidays and self awareness assessment tools (Ernst & Young LLP, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP)
- Participates in several language training programs including the “Talk English Cafe” e-learning initiative (RBC)

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY - BEING A GOOD COMMUNITY CITIZEN**

- Participates in community agencies’ programs to help newcomers develop networking and communication skills as well as provides opportunities to meet professionals in related fields (BMO, Ernst & Young LLP, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoppers LLP)
- Participates in program to help internationally trained professionals bridge their finance credentials - the Bank hosted students for the internship portion of the program (CIBC)



## FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR IN BURNABY

Burnaby is home to a number of notable large companies in this sector, including Pacific Blue Cross and HSBC Bank Canada, as well as a broad range of smaller firms. The culturally diverse population has been identified as an important attribute for those with international linkages.

Burnaby also has a large number of skilled workers for the sector. In 2006, 8,585 residents worked in financial services, representing about 8% of the labour force. Burnaby’s two universities supply the resident labour force with highly qualified business graduates<sup>1</sup>.

The City of Burnaby’s Economic Development Strategy 2020 identified the Financial Services industry as one of the transforming industries in Burnaby.

## NOTABLE FINANCIAL SERVICE EMPLOYERS IN BURNABY

COMPANY	WEBSITE
<b>British Columbia Automobile Association (BCAA)</b> 4567 Canada Way, Burnaby	<a href="https://www.bcaa.com/company/careers/Overview">https://www.bcaa.com/company/careers/Overview</a>
<b>Digital Payment Technologies</b> 330-4260 Still Creek Drive, Burnaby	<a href="http://www.digitalpaytech.com/about-us/careers.aspx">http://www.digitalpaytech.com/about-us/careers.aspx</a>
<b>Encorp Pacific</b> 206 – 2250 Boundary Road, Burnaby	<a href="http://www.return-it.ca/contact/">http://www.return-it.ca/contact/</a>
<b>G &amp; F Financial Group</b> 7375 Kingsway, Burnaby	<a href="https://www.gffg.com/Personal/AboutUs/Careers/">https://www.gffg.com/Personal/AboutUs/Careers/</a>
<b>HUB International Canada West ULC</b> 3875 Henning Dr., Burnaby	<a href="http://hubinternational.silkroad.com/">http://hubinternational.silkroad.com/</a>
<b>Intercity Group</b> 1847 Broadway, Burnaby	<a href="http://www.intercitygroup.com/careers.html">http://www.intercitygroup.com/careers.html</a>
<b>Pacific Blue Cross</b> 4250 Canada Way, Burnaby	<a href="http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/Corp/company/careers/">http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/Corp/company/careers/</a>
<b>Traveler Financial Group</b> 4180 Lougheed Highway #500, Burnaby	<a href="http://www.travelersfinancial.com/about-us.aspx">http://www.travelersfinancial.com/about-us.aspx</a>
<b>VanCity Credit Union</b>	<a href="http://www.vancitycareers.com/">http://www.vancitycareers.com/</a>
<b>Greater Vancouver Credit Union</b>	<a href="https://www.gvccu.com/Personal/AboutUs/Careers/">https://www.gvccu.com/Personal/AboutUs/Careers/</a>
<b>CIBC</b>	<a href="https://www.cibc.com/ca/inside-cibc/careers.html">https://www.cibc.com/ca/inside-cibc/careers.html</a>
<b>TD Bank</b>	<a href="http://www.td.com/careers/why-td/index.jsp">http://www.td.com/careers/why-td/index.jsp</a>
<b>Scotia Bank</b>	<a href="http://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/0,,178,00.html">http://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/0,,178,00.html</a>
<b>Bank of Montreal</b>	<a href="http://www.bmo.com/home/about/banking/careers/career-opportunities">http://www.bmo.com/home/about/banking/careers/career-opportunities</a>
<b>HSBC Bank Canada</b>	<a href="http://www.hsbc.ca/1/2/en/about-us/careers">http://www.hsbc.ca/1/2/en/about-us/careers</a>

<sup>1</sup>Source: <http://www.burnaby.ca/Assets/multiple+locations/EDS+-+Burnaby+EDS+2020.pdf>, page 163

## USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

### EMPLOYMENT SERVICE FOR IMMIGRANTS IN BURNABY

#### SKILLS CONNECT FOR IMMIGRANTS PROGRAM

- **Back in Motion**  
<http://www.skillsconnect.ca/>
- **Douglas College**  
<http://www.douglas.bc.ca/training-community-education/skills-connect.html>
- **Training Innovations**  
<http://www.skillsconnectbc.com/>

#### OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES AND PROFILES

- **WelcomeBC’s Occupational Guides for Immigrants**  
[http://www.welcomebc.ca/wbc/immigration/work/occupational\\_guides.page#Technology](http://www.welcomebc.ca/wbc/immigration/work/occupational_guides.page#Technology)
- **Skilled Immigrants InfoCentre – Vancouver Public Library**  
<http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>
- **WorkBC Career Profile**  
<http://www.workbc.ca/Careers/Career-Profiles/Pages/Career-Profiles.aspx>

#### REGULATORY BODIES AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- **Certified General Accountants Association of B.C.**  
[www.cga-bc.org](http://www.cga-bc.org)
- **Certified Management Accountants Society of B.C.**  
[www.cmabc.com](http://www.cmabc.com)
- **Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC**  
<http://www.ica.bc.ca/kb.php3?>
- **B.C. Securities Commission**  
[www.bcsc.bc.ca](http://www.bcsc.bc.ca)
- **Investment Industry Regulation Organization of Canada (IIROC)**  
[www.iiroc.ca](http://www.iiroc.ca)
- **Canadian Securities Institute**  
[www.csi.ca](http://www.csi.ca)
- **Mutual Funds Dealers Association – Pacific Regional Office**  
[www.mfda.ca](http://www.mfda.ca)
- **IFSE Institute**  
[www.ifse.ca](http://www.ifse.ca)
- **Trade and Invest British Columbia**  
<http://www.britishcolumbia.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>