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ALLIES National Mentoring Initiative

The National Mentoring Initiative supports urban centres in Canada to develop, implement and enhance mentoring programs for skilled immigrants in their communities. It will establish mentoring as a successful labour market strategy across Canada.

Why mentoring

Mentoring is a cost-effective way to overcome some of the barriers skilled immigrants may encounter when trying to find employment in their area of expertise, including:

- Lack of an effective professional network, so they don't have access to the hidden job market, i.e., job openings that aren't advertised;
- Lack of understanding of the Canadian workplace culture and employer expectations; and
- Lack of recognition of qualifications and experience which makes it difficult for skilled immigrants to talk about their transferrable skills.

How mentoring works

Mentoring connects skilled immigrants to established professionals in the same or related occupations or industries. Immigrants entering a mentoring program possess the education, experience and language skills needed to excel in the workforce. Mentoring opens networks and builds relationships, leading to employment.

Building on a successful model

The initiative builds on the knowledge and experience of The Mentoring Partnership, a program launched in 2004 by the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), a multi-

stakeholder council working to improve access to employment for immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The Mentoring Partnership is a collaboration of community organizations and corporate partners in the City of Toronto, and the regions of Halton, Peel, and York. It offers occupation-specific mentoring to skilled immigrants.

What the National Mentoring Initiative offers to communities

The National Mentoring Initiative supports communities to launch their own successful program through:

- **Mentoring toolkit:** This online toolkit is a “nuts and bolts” guide of a successful model and includes good practices, identifies discussion points, and provides ideas how to implement a program.
- **Coaching:** Technical assistance through coaches who have been involved in the development and delivery of successful mentoring programs in other communities.
- **Networking:** Opportunities to network with other mentoring service providers across Canada to share and learn from one another.

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Contact information

Sangeeta Subramanian, Project Leader
416-944-2627 ext. 235

ssubramanian@maytree.com | www.maytree.com