

CONNECTIONS

QUIS Newsletter



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO QUIS!

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

The Early Years

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.

Ten years had passed since Canada had admitted 5,608 Vietnamese refugees, who came to be known as the Boat people. Many of those refugees came to Belleville in a second migration and were some of the first 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 chose Belleville for their settlement outside of Toronto, most notably from Italy, Ireland and the UK.

Another major highlight for QUIS' services happened in 1999 during Operation PARASOL. Nearly 1 million Kosovar refugees were displaced as a result of ongoing conflict and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) sent out an international appeal for help to deal with the situation. Canada responded and agreed to accept thousands of refugees with the Canadian Forces taking on a lead role with Citizenship & Immigration Canada. The Canadian Forces launched the operation in April 1999 and put CF bases on notice to expect large arrivals of refugees that were being evacuated and brought to Canada.

IN THIS ISSUE...

- IRCC Updates
- Summer Safety Tips
- Vaccination Updates
- Community Spotlight
- Upcoming Events
- Back to School!

Did You Know?

In 1988, QUIS assisted over 80 government sponsored refugees settle & integrate into the Quinte region

Did You Know?

In 1997, QUIS offices were located downtown on Bridge St. East and even had a storefront to sell handmade goods

(Continued on next page)

35 YEARS OF SERVICE TO NEWCOMERS

CFB Trenton along with other local bases geared up and partnered with several community agencies to help in support roles for transportation, meals & accommodation, medical services and much needed emotional support.

Daily flights of chartered Airbuses carrying Kosovar refugees began arriving in May 1999. Whenever possible, families were kept together on the CF bases and each plane was met by a group of volunteer escorts that would help guide the families through the settlement process. In this region, QUIS played a vital role working together with the Canadian Red Cross. By the end of August, Operation PARASOL had processed a total of 5,500 Kosovar refugees spread across various communities. Once the country's situation stabilized, they were given a choice to remain in Canada permanently or return to their home country. About one third of the families chose to formally resettle and start a new life in Canada.

www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/past-operations/europe/parasol.html

Building Community & Increasing Services

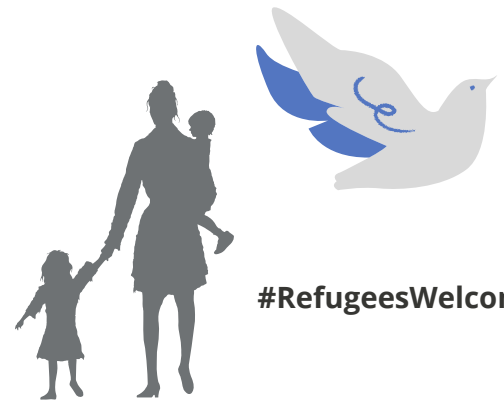
Fast track to 2001 and the Federal Government had reduced funding across the board to the resettlement of refugees. In order to reduce operational costs, QUIS joined several other non-profit organizations to form the first community hub in the region. With the support of the City of Belleville, QUIS and the other agencies were granted the use of an old school building on Octavia Street in Belleville. That project lasted several years and ended in 2018 with 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 level fluctuation, QUIS became one of the first non-profit organizations in Ontario to create a social enterprise in 2003 providing translations and interpretation services to institutions and other non-profit groups. This became Central Eastern Ontario Translation and Interpretation Services (CEOTIS). Now a leader in the sector, not only in Central Eastern Ontario but also other parts of the province, CEOTIS serves the private, public, and the non-profit sectors. The initiative allows QUIS to count on sound fiscal security that is so needed to plan, design and deliver new programs to fill in the eligibility gaps found in many government funded programs.

Syrian Refugee Crisis

The next big milestone for QUIS came in 2015-16 during the Syrian refugee crisis. QUIS, through the LIP, helped mobilize the community in preparation for mass arrivals of refugees. Strong community support for the Private Sponsorship Program for refugees was vital in helping make this region a welcoming space for newcomers. Community information forums were organized bringing together social services, the health care sector, volunteers, community groups and members of CFB Trenton.

Later on, QUIS once again partnered with the Canadian Red Cross and designed a new program to support Syrian 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 who had prior experience in agriculture. The project also earned QUIS the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence.



#RefugeesWelcome

Did You Know?

In 2010, QUIS staff hosted a number of anti-racism workshops and diversity panels to address systemic issues in our region



Did You Know?

The Belleville Intelligencer regularly covered stories of immigrant families reuniting throughout the 1980's. Some of the countries included El Salvador, Guatemala, Vietnam and Laos

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2019-2021 has been a critical time for the world. With the COVID-19 pandemic, QUIS stepped up as many other organizations did to ensure that our clients would still continue to have access to our program and services. Going from face to face services to virtual service delivery was a big challenge, but thanks to our professional staff and management we were able to implement and deliver services in a new format.

As we are now reopening our offices with safety protocols in place, I would also like to acknowledge the excellent leadership of our President of the Board, Paul Osborne, throughout these critical times as well as the support of the entire Board of Directors without whom QUIS would not be a successful organization in the immigration and settlement sector.

Special thanks to all current and previous volunteers throughout these 35 years. Thank you to our current and previous funders including: 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, and all other foundations that contributed to several projects throughout the past three decades. Sincere gratitude for all the private donors who believed in immigration as a force for the social and economic development of this country.

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

Orlando Ferro
Executive Director
Quinte Immigration Services



IRCC UPDATES

NEWS RELEASES FROM IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES & CITIZENSHIP CANADA

FLIGHT SUSPENSION FROM INDIA EXTENDED

The Government of Canada originally suspended all direct flights from India & Pakistan on April 22, 2021 as cases of COVID 19 continued to increase in both places at a significant rate. While the suspension from Pakistan was lifted on June 21, the government recently announced that the suspension from India on direct travel would be extended a third time until August 21, 2021. Travelers from India will need to find an indirect route to Canada in addition to meeting all other travel restriction requirements (ie. testing, quarantine plans, immunizations etc).

BORDER RESTRICTIONS EASING FOR FULLY IMMUNIZED TRAVELERS IN COMING MONTHS

Fully vaccinated U.S. travelers will be the first allowed to enter Canada under the new travel guidelines starting August 9, 2021. American travelers will need to show proof of vaccination only for the vaccines that are currently approved for use in Canada. The mandatory hotel quarantine period is also set to expire on the same day. For all other international travelers, the Government of Canada expects the border to reopen to fully vaccinated people on September 7, 2021. Proof of vaccination, quarantine plans, a pre-arrival negative COVID-19 test and use of the ArriveCAN app are all still expected to be required for entry into Canada. See more details here - [CIC News](#)

***As travel situations & rules change, please visit <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid> to receive the most updated information.**

GRANDPARENT & PARENT SPONSORSHIP ANNOUNCED FOR 2021

IRCC has announced that it is looking to hold a record setting lottery for the highly competitive sponsorship program. In a July press release, IRCC stated that there would be 30,000 spaces available and they would be drawing candidates from a pool of names that had previously applied in 2019/2020. For more details please see this link - [IRCC News Release](#)

PROCESSING DELAYS CONTINUE AT IRCC

Have you been waiting on a final decision from an application you made? Has it been months since you heard any updates on the progress of your case file? Immigration officials at IRCC are continuing to struggle to address the backlog created by the multiple lockdowns and remote work environment. Here are some of the processes that have been most affected:

- Spousal sponsorships
- Work Permits & Extensions of Work Permits
- Citizenship Applications
- Refugee Claim Acknowledgements & Assessment of claims to the Immigration Refugee Board
- Confirmation of Permanent Residence

Have questions??
Contact QUIS for more details and to speak with settlement workers
at 613-968-7723



SUMMER SAFETY TIPS & INFO

Summer is here (hurray!) and people are outside more often than in the colder months. We want you to make the most out of summer time. It is a very enjoyable season and some brief safety tips will help you to keep enjoying the warmer weather and outdoor activities.

REMEMBER TO:

- Drink lots of water in hot weather. Stay hydrated to avoid feeling sick or getting heat stroke.
- If it is really hot, stay in the shade as much as possible
- Wear sunscreen lotion and a wide brimmed hat in the sunshine
- Don't overexert yourself (get too tired) in very hot weather
- Wear clothes that are loose and light to help you to stay cool

WATER SAFETY TIPS

Things to think about if you are going swimming or out in a boat:

- Never swim by yourself. Always swim with a "buddy" and stay close to the shore.
- If possible, swim in places that have a lifeguard. Wear a lifejacket when in the water.
- Always wear a lifejacket when in a boat. It is the law in Canada to have lifejackets for every person in a boat.

Find more information about summer water safety here:

[Canadian Red Cross - Water Safety](#)

INSECTS & PLANTS IN ONTARIO

- Lyme disease is caused by tick bites.
- Ticks are small insects that live in grassy, wooded areas. Not all ticks carry the disease but if bitten by one that does, you can get very ill and may need medical care.

To avoid this, keep these things in mind:

- If you are going into wooded areas, stay to the centre of trails
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts if going into wooded areas
- When you get home, check your clothes for ticks. It is also important to check your body for ticks, too.

Find more information on Lyme disease here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/lyme-disease>

There are certain plants that can cause a rash (itchiness of the skin, redness, bumps on the skin). The main ones are *poison ivy*, *poison oak* and *poison sumac*. The best way to deal with these is to learn to identify the plants and avoid them.

If you are going into the woods, it is best to wear protective clothing (ie. long sleeve shirt and long pants).

If you think you have come in contact with these plants, you should wash your skin as soon as possible.

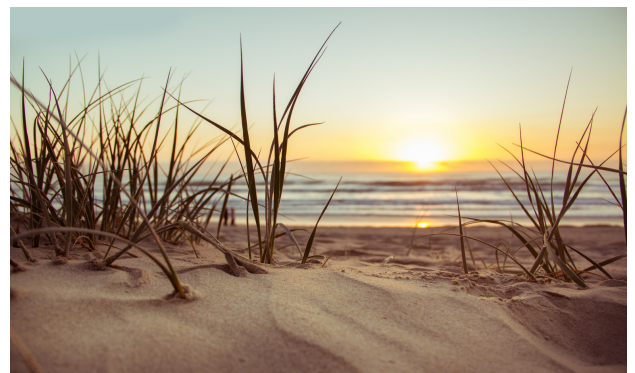
Find more information that may be helpful in identifying and avoiding these plants here:

<https://ontarionature.org/demystifying-poison-ivy/>



How much do you know about Sun Safety?
Take this free quiz and find out!

[How Sun Savvy Are You?](#)



COVID-19 : NEWS & UPDATES

INFORMATION ABOUT VACCINE CLINICS, REOPENING PLANS, ONGOING HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

VACCINATION UPDATES

Currently, all individuals aged 12 and over are eligible for their first or second COVID-19 vaccination. Second doses are provided with a minimum time interval depending on which vaccine you received for your first dose: 8 weeks for AstraZeneca, 21 days for Pfizer, and 28 days for Moderna. If you received AstraZeneca for your first dose, you can safely receive any of the three approved vaccines for your second. If you received Pfizer or Moderna for your first dose, you can safely receive either Pfizer or Moderna for your second.

To book your vaccination, go to [Ontario.ca/bookvaccine](https://ontario.ca/bookvaccine), call 1-833-943-3900, or contact a participating local pharmacy. Hastings & Prince Edward Public Health is also now offering walk-in clinics in various locations that do not require an appointment. Visit their website for dates and times of current walk-in clinics scheduled in your area - hpepublichealth.ca/vaccine-booking/

If you are still uncertain about vaccinations or have questions about safety, take a look at the links below for trusted, fact-based information.

- Hastings & Prince Edward Public Health Unit - hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines/
- Women's College Hospital: Vaccine Bulletins (available in multiple languages)
www.womenscollegehospital.ca/covid19/covid-19-vaccine-multi-language-information-sheets

REOPENING PLANS & UPDATES

After a year and a half of grief and stress, many of us are eager to resume normal activities. The province of Ontario is currently in Stage 3 of its official reopening plan and all residents are still encouraged to be cautious, continue social distancing, wear masks inside with large groups, and keep washing your hands. Within Stage 3, many businesses have reopened to indoor dining and shopping but there are still restrictions in the number of people that can be inside at one time. Please continue to follow guidelines and safety protocols in place at retail and food service locations.

At this time, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) advises that unvaccinated or partially vaccinated individuals can safely gather outdoors with a small group of fully vaccinated individuals, but should otherwise wear masks, physically distance, and avoid crowded spaces regardless of the vaccination status of those around you. If you have received both vaccine doses and at least 14 days have passed since your second dose, you must still wear a mask in crowded indoor or outdoor settings where physical distancing is not possible.

Check out this helpful infographic from PHAC to find out how mask wearing and distancing apply depending on the situation - [What does being vaccinated mean to me?](#)

Vaccination efforts will need to be greatly increased globally to protect everyone. No country is safe from COVID-19 until all countries are protected and provided with adequate vaccines and other medical resources to test, treat, and prevent COVID-19 infections.

LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP NEWS

RECENT UPDATES ON COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Foundation of the QLIP

Another great achievement of QUIS' history was the foundation of the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership (QLIP) in 2012. This council of community businesses & agencies 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 became funded by Citizenship & Immigration Canada (CIC).

Nowadays, the council is funded through a grant by IRCC (formerly called CIC) and has over 67 stakeholders including Municipalities, the Provincial government, Chambers of Commerce, educational institutions, legal services, police services, the health care sector and local employers. QLIP 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.

Recent Updates

In the past year and a half, the COVID-19 pandemic has created significant challenges for our community. Newcomers, particularly, may be facing unique issues, such as isolation from family members in home countries, language barriers, access to health care, social isolation not only because of the pandemic, but because of culture and language, and lack of information or in-person assistance with immigration issues.

The pandemic has also shed light on very important social justice issues across Canada that are affecting various groups in society including immigrants, indigenous and racialized or BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) persons. Our own community was not immune to some of these issues.

Throughout 2020, agencies that are members of the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership worked closely together to help address some of the issues either brought about or highlighted by the pandemic. Health agencies like the Hastings and Prince Edward Public Health worked together with QUIS and QLIP to ensure that newcomers had access to and information about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine for their unique situations. QLIP also worked closely with the Cities of Belleville and Quinte West and the Bay of Quinte team to promote the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Regional Immigration Pilot focused on Belleville and Quinte West. This pilot has helped over 100 newcomers get permanent residence in the community through their local workplace.

Partnerships with several agencies and community groups such as the Belleville Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Belleville Quinte West Community Health Care, Quinte West Community Safety and Well-Being planning committee, and Loyalist College have allowed for collaborative efforts to investigate solutions and plan for more inclusive services and communities including mental health services, housing and anti-racism activities.

While the work of QLIP in 2020 was focused on emergency measures and responses to address newcomer needs in the community, 2021 has the partnership taking on pro-active and solution-focused work. A new Anti-racism subcommittee has been initiated and QLIP has started work on an anti-racism project that will benefit our whole community.

To learn more about the Quinte Local Immigration Partnership, please see our website at: <https://www.quintelip.ca/> or contact us at: lip@quinteimmigration.ca.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 2021

IRCC INFO SESSION - August 11

Get updates on IRCC and QUIS programming plus a Q&A session with QUIS staff!

SCULPTING WORKSHOP - August 27

Learn how to sculpt! Suitable for all ages and sculpting material is provided.

QUINTE WEST & BELLEVILLE WALKING GROUPS

Organized by the Community Health Centre

Quinte West: Tues & Wed 10-11am.

Meet at 70 Murphy St. Trenton

Belleville: Tues 10-11am & Thurs

6-7pm. Meet at Jane Forrester Park, Belleville.

SEPTEMBER 2021

INFO SESSION - Hastings Housing Resource Centre - September 15

Learn about housing resources and supports in the Quinte area.

OUTDOOR CONVERSATION CIRCLE - SEPTEMBER

Location and details to be announced.

MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS

Organized by the Community Health Centre

Tuesdays from 6:45-8:15pm via

Zoom - September 14 to October 19

BACK TO SCHOOL - September 7

First day of school for public and Catholic school boards in Hastings Prince Edward

OCTOBER 2021

INSURANCE INFO SESSION -

Learn about various types of insurance and how they function in Canada. You have many options!

FELTING WORKSHOP -

Learn how to make a fox out of felt! Suitable for ages 12+ and felting materials provided.

THANKSGIVING DAY - October 11

QUIS offices will be closed for the holiday.



Email Meghan to register for info sessions & workshops at ceotis@quinteimmigration.ca

COMMUNITY PROFILE

PROFILING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Ever since she saw the lovely area of Frankford, Ontario, Pavla Hoca and her family dreamed of opening their own business in the region. Pavla and family are originally from the Czech Republic and moved to Canada in 1999 where they settled in Orangeville.

Several years ago, on a family trip to visit Ottawa, Pavla and her family passed through Batawa and the Trent River area. They fell in love with the region because it had a similar feel to their hometown of Decin, that sits on the Elbe River in the Czech Republic. In 2011, the family purchased the old Molson's Bank in Frankford, Ontario. Pavla requested information from the city of Frankford on zoning for the business. She was told it could be zoned for a small coffee shop or bakery. So, the idea of a coffee shop became her goal!

To get "training", Pavla took a job at a Tim Horton's in Orangeville, where she learned about the chain's technique and strategy. Pavla had great management support at Tim Horton's, and they taught her a lot about the business. She was already experienced at baking, so she knew she could get her own coffee shop up and running.

Getting their new building ready took many years to complete and a lot of hard work. Pavla and her family were living in Orangeville, approximately 245 kms west of Frankford. They woke up at 5am on all their weekends, holidays or vacations to drive to Frankford and work on the renovations until late at night and then drove home again to Orangeville. In May 2019, the renovations were complete and the coffee shop was opened! Pavla stayed in Frankford, living in the basement of the coffee shop for 5 months without her family, in order to get the coffee shop up and running. Her family joined her in October 2020 when they bought a house in the Stirling area.

Although it was a lot of sacrifice and hard work, Pavla's advice to others wanting to start a business is, "Do not give up. If you fall on your knees, do not be afraid. Stand up and continue...follow your dream or idea." And the dream paid off because the restaurant won the Restaurant Guru 2021 award for "Best Interior" in Quinte West and is a recommended eatery on the Restaurant Guru 2021 list!

Pavla's goal with the coffee shop is to introduce, "... a little touch of Europe, a place where [customers] can feel at home, have some similar food or goods.... a place where people can meet with friends and family in a relaxing atmosphere". She wants to continue to bring that "little touch of Europe" to the community in the future and introduce more European meals and goods to customers.

The Old Bank Café is located at 1 Mill Street, Frankford. Their hours of operation are Wednesday to Sunday 9am-5pm, no reservations needed. Their patio is currently open (22 seats available) and when indoor dining is an option they have 30 seats available indoors. The coffee shop follows all the pre-cautions for COVID-19. For more information, menu and daily updates, visit their FB page at: <https://www.facebook.com/oldbankcafee> or their website at: <https://www.oldbankcafe.com/>



Old Bank
Cafe
FRANKFORD, ONTARIO





Did You Know??

Explore the Waterfront

You can rent kayaks and paddle boards in Belleville, Picton, Milford and Napanee!

<https://popupshop.discoverbelleville.ca/>

<https://cabinfeverkayak.ca/>

<https://princeedwardcountyvacation.com/>

<https://www.riverbank.rentals/>

A library card gets you more than just books!

The Belleville & Quinte West libraries are connected so you can enjoy both locations.

Regular online activities, access computers, borrow DVD's, adult activity kits, access to streaming services and more.

<https://bellevillelibrary.ca/index.php>

<https://www.library.quintewest.ca/en/index.asp#>

Good Food Market Bags

Community Development Council of Quinte

\$10 Bag of Vegetables

\$5 Bag of Fruit

Order and pay online at cdcquinte.com/shop/

Order by phone at 343-645-6429

Sports, Recreation & Day Camps

Quinte Sports & Wellness Centre have started offering limited programs again for adults and children!

<https://www.belleville.ca/en/learn-and-play/recreation-programs.aspx>

Swimming at Kinsmen Outdoor Pool in Belleville is now available but you must pre-registered to ensure space



RETURNING TO THE CLASSROOM

IMPORTANT INFO FOR PARENTS & ENGLISH LEARNERS



*****The official plan from the provincial government was released August 3, 2021. For the most up to date information please contact your school board office directly.***

- All elementary and secondary school students in Ontario are expected to return to in-person learning and will physically attend their classrooms
- Face masks will be required for all students between Grade 1 and Grade 12. Masks will be optional but recommended for Kindergarten. It is likely face masks will not be required outdoors.
- Remote or distance learning is an option for parents who do not feel comfortable sending their children to school
- Elementary students - it is likely that class cohorts will continue with all grades but students will be able to use common areas like libraries and cafeterias
- Secondary students - full day instructions is expected but course timetables will be flexible to allow for a change if outbreaks occur; smaller schools may continue class cohorts
- Self-screening for COVID19 symptoms is strongly encouraged and rapid testing for school staff may also be conducted
- No information has been released about vaccinated students and showing proof. No information has been released about students or staff who are not vaccinated

How do I register my child for Kindergarten?

To register for Junior Kindergarten, your child must have been born in 2017 (4 years old). To register for Senior Kindergarten, your child must have been born in 2016 (5 years old). If your child attended Jr. Kindergarten last year it is not necessary to register them again.

- Hastings & Prince Edward District School Board - <http://www.hpedsb.on.ca/kindergarten-registration-2021>
- Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board - [http://www.alcdsb.on.ca/Schools/Pages/Registration.aspx#/="](http://www.alcdsb.on.ca/Schools/Pages/Registration.aspx#/=)

Learn more about the education system in Canada here - The Newcomer's Guide to Elementary School in Ontario & The Newcomer's Guide to Secondary School in Ontario

English as a Second Language

Loyola School of Continuing Education has their registration form online for the 2021/2022 school year.

<http://learningatloyola.ca/program/english-as-a-second-language-esl/>

Contact Loyola directly to find out their plans for returning to in-person learning.
613-966-9210