



# INCLUSION

## Community Conversations Project 2015

In 2015, eight local government, not-for-profit, and service agencies came together and held community conversations in each of the three North Shore municipalities.

We talked with 150 people born outside of Canada about their hopes and dreams for community on the North Shore. We heard about employment, volunteer opportunities, and the desire to succeed in Canada. And we heard — over and over — about the deep desire to belong.

We learned that inclusion is not an immigration issue – it's a human issue.

### HERE ARE THEIR STORIES . . .

**Belonging Through Deeper Connection:** People want to live in an inclusive community — they want to feel like they belong. They want to create friendships and share their personal experiences with other Canadians, but they are concerned that people are isolated within their own cultural groups.

As newcomers talk more about these concerns, they talk about their lack of confidence, and the motivation and courage needed to connect. Language barriers and a lack of cultural understanding make connection more difficult. They also talk about a lack of spaces where meaningful connections can happen, and they talk about a Canadian tendency towards superficial politeness.

They believe we need to focus on creating opportunities to participate in non-segregated activities. Newcomers want to take responsibility in their communities, to come together to build something new, and to do work together with other Canadians.

In understanding our communities better, we can learn how to do work that matters most.

**Success At Work And School:** People want success at work and school for themselves and for their children, but they are concerned that they don't have the necessary skills and opportunities.

As people talk more about these concerns, they talk about the importance of learning English, acquiring Canadian workplace experience, and the difficulty in getting their qualifications recognized.

They believe we need to focus on creating opportunities for learning English, volunteering, and employment. We also need to develop better communication around existing opportunities. Newcomers want personal relationships with people they can depend on for assistance and support.

