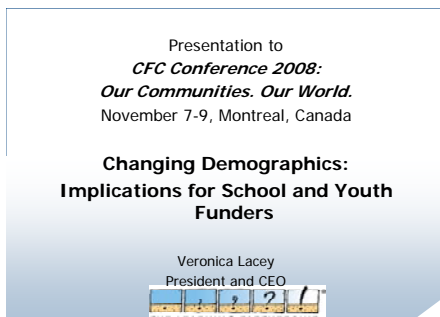


**Presentation for  
Community Foundations of Canada Conference**

**Changing Demographics:  
Implications for School and Youth Funders**

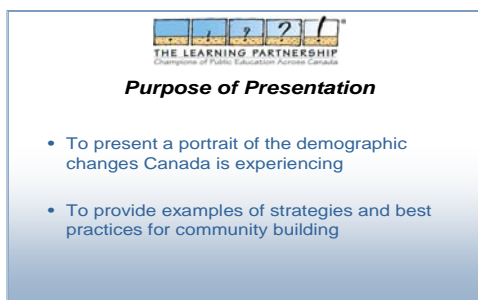
**November 7, 2008**

**Introduction:**



I am honoured to be speaking to you this morning as representatives of Community Foundations, both from communities in Canada and from international communities. Your organizations have contributed and continue to contribute immeasurably to our communities and the people who live in them.

It is my goal in this session to present a portrait of one of the emerging issues affecting our communities – the demographic change we are experiencing.



This is the face of our Canadian youth today.



These youth are our nation's future; and we can only build a strong future by working with young people and their families within the context of their schools and communities.

Our country's strength depends on their success and we need to understand who they are, so together, organizations such as yours and mine can make a difference.

The face of our population is in the throws of tremendous change – we are an aging population, facing a decline in numbers. Within this context, we are experiencing a number of other major demographic shifts: we are becoming increasingly diverse and multicultural; the population of Aboriginal school age young people is projected to increase from 5.6 percent in 2001 to 6.6 percent in 2016; and our rural communities are becoming depleted at a precipitous rate.

The fact that our population is changing is not new; but the pace and nature of the change are unprecedented and they are significant - for you, as funders and builders of Canada's communities and for the country as a whole.

This conference provides an exciting opportunity to grapple with fundamental questions that deal with how to position community foundations in the dynamic global environment in order to maximize your ability to make lasting differences in our communities and in our world, and how to develop visionary leadership that welcomes innovative approaches, builds on strengths, models inclusiveness and takes appropriate risks. In short, it is about being Community Builders.

I will present a number of strategies for strengthening diverse communities and conclude with some examples of programs that successfully address some of the challenges we are all facing in our diverse world.

## Section 1:

### Understanding your community: Portrait of an emerging Canada

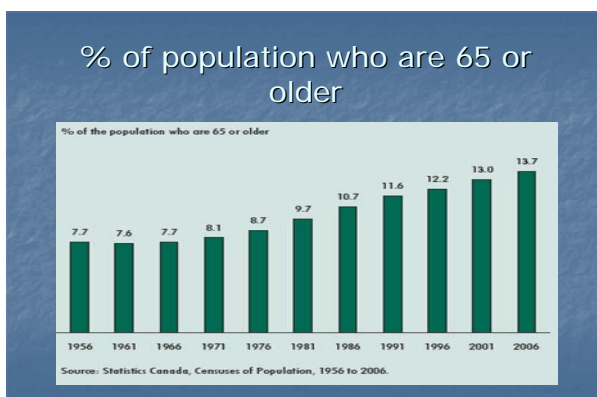
About 18 months ago, my organization, the Learning Partnership, undertook a project to engage communities across the country in a discussion about the impact of major population changes on education and to develop policy options for governments and communities.

We undertook this project in partnership with the Margaret McCain Foundation, CD Howe Institute, TD Bank Financial Group and the Canadian Council on Learning.

I believe that the findings from that project, supplemented by up-to-date census data is important to you as community leaders. I will share some of those findings with you today. The full report is available on our website.

Like many developed countries in today's world, Canada's population is aging and our numbers are declining. It is a phenomenon that is having, and will continue to have, a profound impact on our economy, our social service system, the voluntary sector, our education system; and the list goes on. The average age of our population is now about 39, up from 26 in 1971 and by 2056, Statistics Canada projects it will be between 45 and 50.

### Slide 2: Percentage of population who are 65 or older



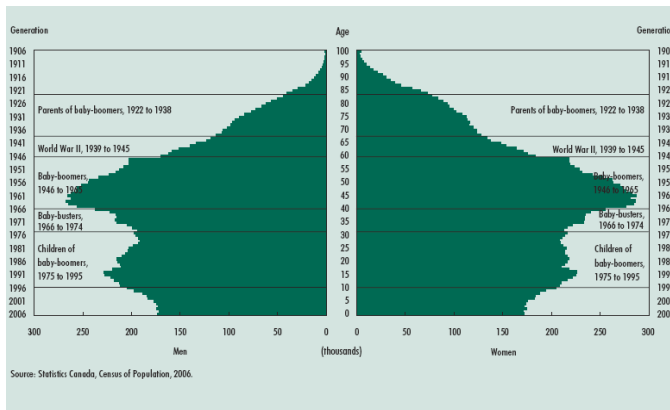
By 2041, about one in four Canadians is expected to be 65 or over.

By 2056, an estimated 1 out of 10 Canadians would be 80 years or over, compared with just 1 in 30 in 2005.

In 2006, our school age population was 18.7% of Canada's population; by 2021, this group is projected to decline to just 15.6 %.

The graying of Canada's population will, without a doubt, have considerable implications for foundations and community organizations.

### Slide 3: Age pyramid of the Canadian population



The dependency ratio -- the relationship between those who pay taxes and those who utilize the social service system that taxes fund -- will increase.

This means that availability of funding for the social safety net, which includes government and the charitable sector, will decrease while the demand for community and social services will increase.

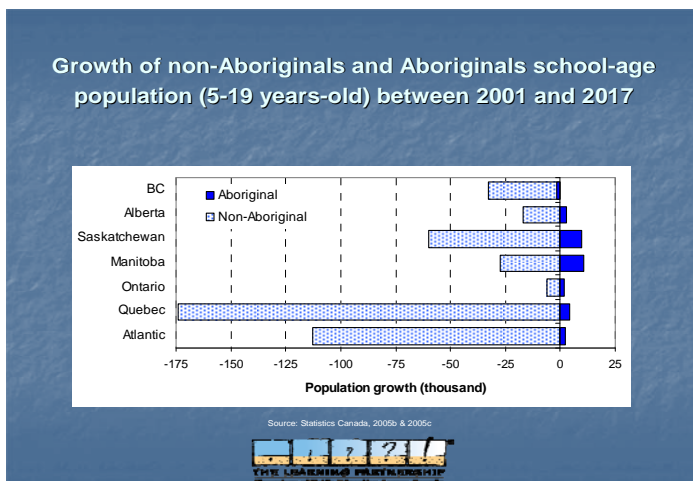
Although it is too early to be specific, this will undoubtedly be exacerbated by the economic turmoil Canada and the global community now face. Some of these challenges will be offset by opportunities – such as a potential influx in the pool of volunteers and, if the economy stabilizes fairly soon, of personal donations.

That said, with the savings of baby boomers having declined so significantly in the past two months, the likely of increased personal donations may not be plausible. Clearly, the aging and subsequent decline of Canada's population will undoubtedly have serious socio-economic implications for communities across the country.

But Canada's demographic decline is only one of a number of demographic trends shaping Canada's reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These trends are significant as they involve groups that have experienced or risk experiencing socio-economic, educational and political disadvantage in Canada. We simply cannot afford to leave any groups behind, for their sake and for that of the country's prosperity and cohesion.

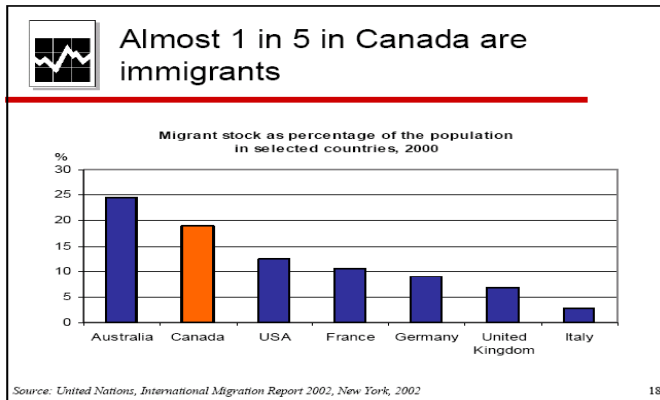
Take the Aboriginal population, a group that continues to be vulnerable and at risk as an example. In some regions of the country, the Aboriginal population is growing at a significantly faster rate than the rest of the population. The Aboriginal school age population is projected to increase from 5.6% in 2001 to 6.6 % in 2016. This slide demonstrates:

**Slide 4: Growth of school-age non-Aboriginals and Aboriginals by province 2001-2017**



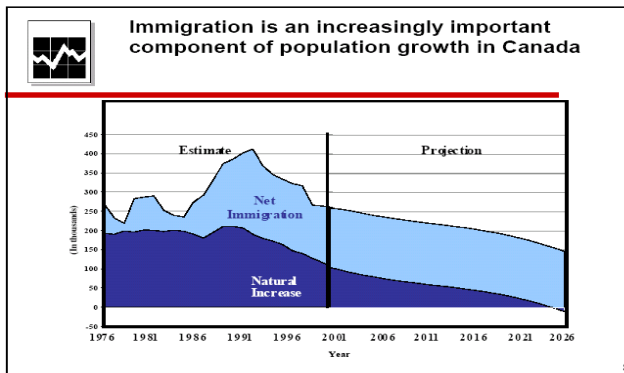
As a result of immigration policies throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present, Canada is becoming increasingly diverse.

Take a look at the next slide-- **Slide 5: Almost 1 in 5 Canadians are immigrants**



Assuming Canada's demographic decline continues immigration and, to a lesser extent Aboriginal communities, will likely provide the only sources of population growth by 2030. This will be problematic unless these groups are able to thrive and succeed in all facets of Canadian life.

**Slide 6: Immigration is an increasingly important component of our population growth.**



According to Canada's most recent census, immigrants made up the vast majority of the 1.6 million new Canadians (i.e. immigrants and natural growth) between 2001 and 2006 such that Canada had the highest population growth rate among G8 countries. In the year 2000, 227,465 immigrants came to Canada. By 2005, this had risen to 262,236 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004, 2006); and nearly 80 percent of all immigrants to Canada are members of visible minority groups.

**The important conclusion from this research is:**

**The aging of our society and the increase in immigration are two trends that are therefore inextricably intertwined and will shape Canada's population for many years to come.**

Canada's growth and economic development have relied on immigration since its inception. Founded on the basis of three cultures, Canada quickly evolved into a land of opportunity and safety for numerous cultural, ethnic and linguistically diverse people.

By the 1980s, multiculturalism was regarded as a core Canadian value. Today, diversity is a defining feature of modern Canada, especially in our larger urban centres. Canadians generally value diversity and our policies recognize cultural and ethnic diversity as a source of strength. It is central to how we view ourselves in the world.

On the basis of a number of key indicators, Canada's diversity works well. Take education for example. Canadian students measure up well on international tests compared to students in other OECD countries and Canada's average drop-out rate has declined significantly over the past decade or so. The success of some groups, such as students from mainland China and South East Asia, however, masks the underachievement of others. Some recent immigrants, especially those who speak neither French nor English, or who are visible minorities in large urban centres, are not doing as well. Aboriginal youth, a group that is growing much faster than the rest of the population, as well as young people from some rural communities are also struggling in school and beyond.

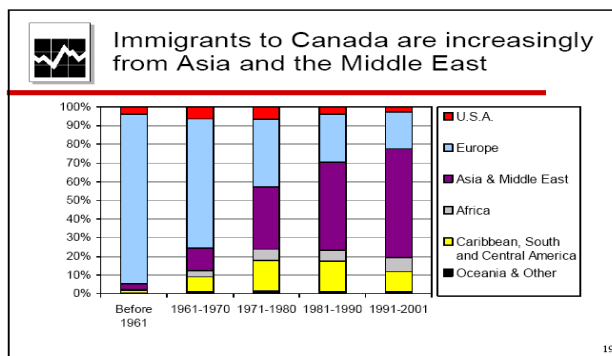
A recent important study entitled 'Reading the Future' by the Canadian Council on Learning, provides other relevant data. The study paints a portrait of Canada's adult literacy levels and projects what our literacy levels will be through to 2031. The data reflect some of the complexities Canada is facing in light of current demographic trends; and although they pertain to adults, the profile is relevant to education systems and communities across the country.

The study projects that the proportion of adults with low literacy skills will remain virtually unchanged although we will see a 25% increase in the number of adults with low literacy skills, from almost 12 million to just over 15 million. The number of immigrants with higher literacy skills will increase from 1.8 million to 3.7 million—and the number of those with low-level literacy skills will increase by 61%, to a total of more than 5.7 million. The number and proportion of adults in Canada with high literacy skills will not offset the predicted proportion or number of adults with low literacy skills.

Demographic realities are raising concerns about the ability of our community structures, our governments and our social and education systems to ensure that Canada remains economically productive and socially cohesive. A growing percentage of some groups of young people are at risk of being disengaged from their school experience, of not completing high school, and, ultimately of not being integrated into the Canadian workforce and society. Consider these recent Statcan census data:

- a) Immigrants to Canada are increasingly from Asia and the Middle East, rather than from Europe, and arrive without the ability to speak French or English (Canada’s official languages)

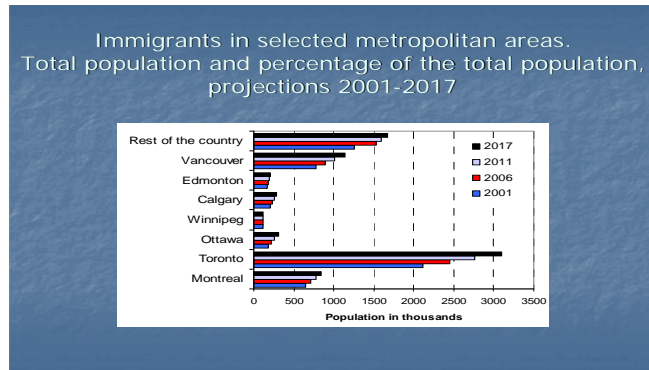
**Slide 7: Immigrants to Canada increasingly from Asia and Middle East**



- b) The immigrant population is increasingly diverse; close to 80 percent are visible minorities.
- c) There are major differences in achievement in school and beyond among immigrant and visible minority groups. The high achievement of some groups masks the significant underachievement of others.

- d) Immigrants who are visible minorities experience more difficulty than immigrants who are not visible minorities in entering the economic mainstream of Canadian society.
- e) Immigrants to Canada tend to settle in the largest urban areas, modifying rapidly the ethno cultural composition of those communities.

**Slide 8: Immigrants in selected metropolitan areas – 2001 - 2017**



- f) While Toronto remains the dominant hub for newcomers, its proportion of Canada's immigrant intake dropped to nearly one-third in 2007 from half in 2001. Those settling in western cities (such as Calgary, Edmonton, Regina and Saskatoon) have increased every year in the past five years.
- g) Immigrants who arrived in 1980 earned 130 percent of their Canadian counterparts whereas immigrants who arrived in 1990 earned 55 percent

Slide 8: Earnings of recent immigrants as a percentage of earnings of Canadian born

EARNINGS OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF EARNINGS OF PEOPLE BORN IN CANADA						
Years since arrival	Men			Women		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
1	71.6	63.4	63.1	64.7	70.0	60.5
2	86.9	73.3	71.4	79.3	79.8	68.4
3	93.4	77.0	75.5	84.4	84.4	71.7
4	88.8	77.1	77.3	87.8	82.0	74.3
5	92.7	78.5	77.1	91.7	83.8	77.4
6	93.5	81.5	76.5	94.9	83.3	77.8
7	95.1	84.5	76.6	97.9	87.3	76.8
8	89.9	97.5	75.2	96.3	94.6	80.2
9	97.3	97.2	78.3	103.1	93.7	82.2
10	100.4	90.1	79.8	103.1	93.3	87.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 census analysis series, Earnings of Canadians: Making a Living in the New Economy

## **Section 2: Community Building for the Diverse Community**

Cognizant of the impact of these demographic shifts, governments, communities and the educational system are becoming increasingly mindful of the need to find ways to ensure that our young people have the opportunity to succeed - in school and beyond.

As foundations that are integral to the vitality of Canada's communities, you have clearly demonstrated an appreciation for the impact of these trends on the communities you service.

There are new achievements and income gaps in Canada and how we address our growing discrepancies will have a significant impact on our future.

Programs you fund help close those gaps. It is therefore not enough to see yourselves merely as funders. Yours is a role of developing, shaping and building the communities in which you operate. You have the ability to contribute significantly to the economic well being of your communities and to their social cohesion.

Governments, educators and communities have developed successful approaches to address our growing diversity with an aim to fostering better integration of immigrant and Aboriginal families, in both urban and rural communities.

I would like to suggest that three specific strategies stand out as being particularly useful for building communities given our diverse demographic: understand your community; develop a culture of inclusion and build partnerships.

### **Slide 9: Community Building for the Diverse Community**



**THE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**  
Department of Public Education Ontario Canada

**Community Building  
Strategies**

1. Collect data to better understand your community demographics
2. Develop a culture of inclusion to make diversity work
3. Develop partnerships in your community – with national, provincial and local organizations

**a) Collect / understand the data:**

The ability to understand your community is essential to being a successful community builder. Critical to that understanding is having comprehensive data that is both general and specific. Indicators such as community performance, labour information, student performance, graduation rates, post high school career choices and occupations, ethnic origins, languages spoken are invaluable.

For those of you from community foundations in Canada, I know you are familiar with your Community Foundations *Vital Signs* report cards. But for our international guests, I would encourage you to have a look at these as excellent summaries of understanding your community.

In October 2008 15 community foundations across Canada released their ' Vital Signs' report cards. These communities across Canada have recognized the value of data and have collected information on education levels and socio-economic indicators as they relate to Aboriginals, immigrants and to Canadians in general. The data are valuable to the Community Foundations and to the communities themselves. Vital Signs should be conducted by every Community Foundation. Although collecting the data can be challenging and costly, organizations and funders need the data in order to provide relevant, focused and effective community supports.

During the project that I mentioned earlier that The Learning Partnership conducted on the impact of demographic changes in Canada on our public education system, in addition to a major research paper, the project included regional roundtables across the country.

It gave us the opportunity to talk to parents, educators, business and community leaders, about their demographic challenges affecting their communities and what people were doing to respond.

People throughout the country addressed the importance of having (and therefore collecting) community data as well as the need for organizations and communities to evaluate their programs in order to help community leaders stay proactive and to enable funders to fund according to the changing needs of their communities. Across the country we heard of the importance of having sustainable, multi-year funding, to ensure that programs have a chance to succeed. Start up programs involving immigrant students and their families are such an example. These clients may need to be funded over a longer span than is typical to allow them to adjust to their new environments.

**b) Develop a culture of inclusion**

As citizens, we all have a moral imperative to embrace the challenges posed by demographic change and to make diversity work. Community Foundations have a leadership role to play in this regard. Foundations can be inclusive from the initial planning and early decision making stages within a diverse community. It is easier, in the long run, to be pro-active than reactive.

In Canada, many not-for-profit board members are older and more likely to be male and from a non-visible minority background than the community's population. Efforts to recruit board members who reflect the communities they fund are important. Boards can be strengthened by reflecting the diversity of their community's demographic; it enables them to better understand ethno-cultural issues and values and their impact on the community that they fund. Diversity training should be incorporated into training for new Board members.

This means that organizations, workplaces and communities must be responsive to the needs of and proactive in engaging immigrant, visible minority and Aboriginal communities. Collaborative relationships - among Boards, members, volunteers, staff and the community - that respect independence and diversity, foster dialogue and share ideas and experiences can go a long way to increasing success. Despite the importance of inclusion, it is a challenge for all boards and organizations

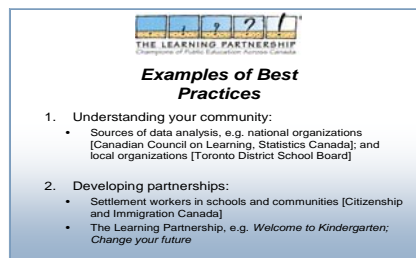
### c) **Develop partnerships**

Community effectiveness is compromised by fragmented jurisdictional structures. In Canada the federal government establishes policy in a number of areas that affect your work - economy, immigration and Aboriginal affairs - but provinces, municipalities, school boards and community organizations, are responsible for providing labour, settlement, social and educational services.

Nevertheless, effective community building demands that all levels of government and the community work together to achieve the variety of community goals. Our work, and your work, is too important and too complex, especially in our diverse world, to do it all alone. All sectors need to develop partnerships that include public, private, charitable, and educational partners. They need to do this in order to fully understand local governance, political structures and alliances and community and family traditions.

Specifically, the creation of strong school - community partnerships for funding programs concerned with youth is essential in any attempt to foster integration of immigrant students. Schools must also develop strong relationships with community partners to provide supports for immigrant youth and their families.

Such an approach allows for a broader perspective and contributes to a community foundations' ability to be a leader in addressing issues and problems in a particular community.



### **Section 3:**

### **Examples of Best Practices**

**i) Understanding your community through data**

Schools are the hub of a community. Children bring everything to school and the teachers, principals see the first signs of distress of a community, the new face of the community. I encourage you to reach out to your schools and boards in an effort to understand your community better. They are great sources of data and willing partners.

A brief example -- **The Toronto District School Board (TDSB):**

I mentioned some statistics earlier that described Toronto as a city that is becoming increasingly diverse on many fronts. Aware of the need to understand who was succeeding and who was struggling in school, the TDSB decided in 2005 to conduct a student survey in order to *“collect student demographic and social environment data to assist the Board in developing policies and strategies to close the achievement gap between groups of students, as well as to establish a baseline of data to measure improvements in the educational outcomes for all students...”*

The system-wide survey was completed by more than 100,000 senior school (Grades 7-8) and secondary school (Grades 9-12) students in the Toronto public school system. The data have yielded invaluable results for the board regarding which groups are doing well and which groups need extra support based on demographic factors such as socio-economic status, gender, race, language, country of origin, and family background. The data will enable the Board to assess the effectiveness of programs and services, to establish specific programs for underachieving students, to remove systemic barriers to student success and to inform and direct funding decisions. The data will also serve as a baseline for future studies of how these students are doing over the course of their secondary school careers

You can see how this type of data is very important to you as a community leader and funder.

## ii) Developing partnerships

**No sector alone can do it alone. For example:**

**Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)** is partnership of community agencies, school boards, and the federal government, which helps newcomer students and their families settle in their school and community. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Settlement Agencies and School Boards established this school based outreach program in cities across the country.

SWIS places settlement workers in schools with large numbers of immigrant students. The program's success is centred on using the school, the primary socializing arena for young people, to promote settlement and foster achievement.

The SWIS worker contacts all newcomer families to orient them to school and community resources and to refer them to specific services. The program focuses on newcomer families that are in their first few years in Canada and on newcomers that have unresolved first year settlement needs. Families with long term settlement issues or who need intensive support are referred to settlement agencies and other community services.

**The Learning Partnership (TLP)**, the organization I represent, works with community partners, governments and schools to implement programs that support young people in public schools across Canada. Two of our 15 programs are particularly successful in supporting immigrant and / or visible minority youth. These programs also have valuable parallels with the Community Foundation world.

I will share examples of two programs that need community partners to deliver:

The Learning Partnership's Welcome to Kindergarten (WTK) Program is a flagship program for TLP. It supports three and four year old children and their families, before the children start school, to enhance the development of their early literacy and social readiness skills.

WTK provides training and support to early years' educators on how to engage parents, families and caregivers in the early learning of their children. It also provides parents and caregivers and their pre-school children with resources and experiences necessary for children to begin their formal education with a foundation in early learning that is nurtured in their home. Participants receive a WTK Bag with such resources as children's books, magnetic letters and numbers, playdough, crayons, and construction paper.

Initiated in 2002, WTK serves 1220 schools and 50,000 families across Canada. TLP collaborates with school boards / districts, schools, and **over 400 community partners** including public health authorities, libraries, child care centres, prevention agencies, Community Foundations, and other funders. The program is designed to address the needs of families of pre-school children that are vulnerable or at risk. The assessment of need is based on data from the Early Development Instrument (EDI), a population-based tool developed in Canada to measure the state of children's development at Kindergarten entry, community characteristics including socio-economic status, ESL (English as a second language) or new immigrant status, level of parents' education, numbers of single parents, health and mobility. With its focus on acclimatizing parents and caregivers to the demands of school and the importance of school readiness, the program is particularly suited to new immigrants unfamiliar with the Canadian education and social service systems.

Parent orientation materials included in the WTK Bag are available in 23 languages. An important component of the orientation involves the opportunity to connect with settlement workers who are specifically trained to communicate with and address the needs of new immigrants.

Evaluation studies conducted by The University of British Columbia, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and Nipissing University have indicated that the program enhances parental trust of teachers and schools, facilitates parental awareness of community partners' use of community resources and familiarizes parents with what to expect from the Canadian education system. The program also enables teachers, school administrators and community workers to know more about the families and to build relationships with the parents, further increasing the potential for parental engagement in their children's learning. Enhanced engagement in the education system and community is an important result of the spirit of inclusiveness experienced by families in effective programs.

**Change Your Future (CYF)** is an innovative educational program designed to increase the odds of success in school. The program provides racially diverse students who want to succeed academically with the necessary support to stay in school and to plan their futures. Working within the school system, CYF Counselors are placed in schools 1.5 days per week and work with school staff to increase the level and quality of educational attainment among the students participating in the program. CYF counselors function as mentors to the students. They are also visible minorities and young and help the students optimize their educational opportunities during and after high school. They help participating students (grades 7-11) overcome barriers, make the right decisions, set goals, build confidence and engage in a self-help and self-discovery process.

**The vision of the Learning Partnership is national – but we operationalize the vision community by community**



In summary:

- Take steps to better understand who lives in your community
- Put diversity on your radar
- Be community builders, in addition to community funders

#### 4. Conclusion

I have provided a portrait of Canada to help place your work within the context of the demographic shifts taking place in Canada and throughout the world. It has become clear that understanding diversity has become a socio-economic imperative for our modern, migrating world. We must understand the nature of the gaps between those who succeed and those who do not in order to provide programs and services to those in need of support. As a country, we have to continue to work on narrowing that gap; it is good for everyone.

Community Foundations are uniquely well-positioned to be leaders in that task. With the data and the awareness of the full implication of our demographic changes Community Foundations can be positioned to be creative and flexible in your thinking; to be inclusive in your actions; and to understand that ‘one size does not fit all’ for a diverse population.

I have attempted to give you a picture of how, in my world, we have addressed those challenges and I trust that some of our approaches are relevant to you.

If I could leave you with a short list of priorities I would suggest the following three:

- Understand your communities
- Put diversity on your radar
- View yourselves not only as “community funders’; but as “community builders”.

Thank you.....Introduce Paul