

## Ontario College Advisors Attend CIITE Training Session – July 14 -15<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Advisors from Ontario colleges gathered at the Humber North Campus for a two-day training session on July 14 – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in order to better understand how to deliver effective, highly-specific advising to the rapidly expanding population of internationally trained immigrants (ITIs) arriving in Ontario.

Advisors learned about the challenges and critical barriers ITIs face when attempting to successfully integrate into the Canadian labour market. Elizabeth McIsaac of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) informed the group that despite the fact that Ontario continues to face challenging labour demands and increased skills shortages, many highly-trained and well-educated immigrants continue to be underemployed in jobs not commensurate with their education and experience. She noted that by 2011 it is estimated that 100 % of Canada's net labour growth will rely on immigration, emphasizing the need to attract and successfully integrate skilled immigrants into Canada's labour market.



Elizabeth Mc Isaac, Executive Director of TRIEC speaks to the ITI Advisors.

Nikhat Rasheed, CIITE's Employment Expert, provided the Advisors with an overview of the socio-economic climate within which they will deliver their services

to ITIs. Her presentation included an overview of the Ontario labour market, supply and demand trends, characteristics of immigrants to Ontario, and specific issues immigrant professionals and tradespersons face when integrating into the Ontario workplace.

Kevin Kamal and Anglicka Neuenhofen of World Education Services (WES) delivered a comprehensive workshop on credential assessment. They reviewed different types of assessments, explained WES' fee structure and the various online tools, and encouraged Advisors to use WES' newly-developed resource, Preliminary Online Equivalency (POE), to assist clients with their credential assessment needs. Ann-Marie McGregor of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) guided the Advisors through how to effectively access and navigate the online services, often available at no cost to newcomers, on [settlement.org](http://settlement.org). On the second day of training, representatives from Skills for Change, delivered diversity training and cross-cultural communications workshops to broaden and enhance Advisors' understanding and awareness of their culturally diverse clients.

Trevor Massey, Executive Director of CIITE, shared with the Advisors his sense that most Ontario colleges appreciate the importance of ITIs to their growth potential and are beginning to implement effective strategies to better integrate them. Massey emphasized the need "to deliver our clients with the best advising service as they navigate application and admission processes, choose the right academic program and secure fully rewarding employment." CIITE will

provide additional training seminars later this fall. In addition, CIITE will administer online discussion forums to facilitate peer learning and encourage sharing best practices between Advisors across the province.