

Colleges Integrating Immigrants to Employment (CIITE) has collected personal stories from the internationally trained immigrants (ITIs) who have been served by the CIITE project. They have been written by Ani Tulay Yildirim, an internationally trained journalist from Turkey, who recently graduated from the Canadian Journalism for Internationally Trained Writers Program at Humber College.

Janet Li

Canada was not what Janet Li imagined it would be. All Janet wanted when she arrived from Canada in 2007 was an entry level job in mechanical engineering. She found a job as a mechanical assistant but was unfortunately laid off after four months.

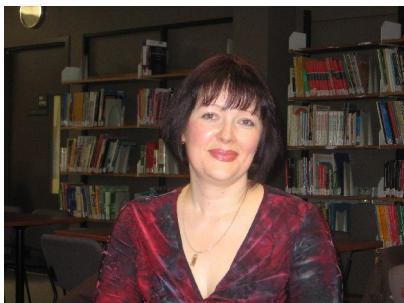
When Janet applied for Employment Insurance (EI), she was informed about the Ontario Government's Second Career Program. Hunting for the right program, Janet chanced upon a CIITE ITI Advisor who recommended a six month Mechanical Technology Program at North American College so she could support her husband and daughter Nina.

Janet is grateful that she has the chance to study in Canada. "If the Ontario Government didn't pay for my school and some expenses, I wouldn't be able to study. I would be looking at just a labour job". She hopes to find a job in her field when she finishes the course—then husband Jason will have a chance to start his Second Career program.

Janet is also participating in the CIITE Competency Assessment for Mechanical Engineering Technologists.

Olena Rysovana

Olena Rysovana, a Ukrainian software engineer with 18 years of experience, and she waited eight long years for her dream of living in Toronto to come true. Despite discouraging remarks from her friends and family, Olena received the good news - her immigration clearance - on Christmas Day. Lucky for Olena, she found a job to support herself and her



Olena Rysovana is currently enrolled in an BA of Applied Business. (Photo by Ani Tulay Yildirim)

18 year old daughter as soon as she arrived.

Olena's Canadian friends were a great help to her. They suggested she take an ESL program at an Ontario college to improve her English language skills. Olena thinks that the most important thing for immigrants is to know the language. "I have many friends and they are all very successful. All of them have Canadian education. If we want to do the job we want, we need to study. If we want to be part of this country and society, the best way is to study."

Olena wanted to change her profession in Canada from

software engineering. While she was taking English classes at an Ontario college, Olena met with a CIITE ITI Advisor to assist in her search for a program related to accounting. Eventually, Olena chose to enroll in a 4-year Bachelor of Applied Business program. Her international credentials will be credited by the college and will shorten her length of study. for which she will receive credit. Olena is grateful for her ITI Advisor's guidance who "helped us to understand the programs and see the differences clearly. I think it is a very good promotion; it will help immigrants to achieve their goals in a shorter time."

Muhammad Javid Alam

When Muhammad Javid Alam immigrated to Canada in 2007, he thought he would find a job in his field right away. He tried his luck for 6 months, before becoming a security guard. It wasn't his dream job, but a "survival one" which helped him to support his family; a wife and a 30 month old daughter.

Meanwhile Muhammad managed to find an entry level banking job where he had a chance to learn about Canadian markets. After seven months he was laid off and started the job hunt once more. "I lowered my resume. I did not have a language problem but not having Canadian experience and education was the reason I was given for not qualifying for work."

Muhammad's friends guided him to apply for employment insurance (EI) through which he was able to receive Second