

Volume 1/Issue 2  
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# TESL Canada Connects

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*“A teacher is a  
candle that burns to  
enlighten others.”*

*Afghan proverb*

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***Welcome to the second issue of our TESL Canada Connects newsletter  
featuring news from programs across Alberta.***

### **Dynamic ELL Programs Serving Newcomers**

The Calgary Immigrant Educational Society (CIES), which just celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October 2018, has been innovating and blazing new trails in Alberta since 1988. A strong supporter of inter-organizational partnerships, it's had a busy year to celebrate its three decades of operations.

CIES' Language department, which began offering e-learning programming 6 years ago, recently launched two English for Employment classes online, Adult ESL Class Online (AECO) offered English/job search training, while Workplace Online Retention Class (WORC) provided English/workplace communications instruction. These projects are unique in that they're also offered as free open educational resources. Students, instructors, and administrators across Canada are able to access and use the class materials to supplement their classroom instruction or can use them to launch their own e-learning course. Registration is simple and administrators are encouraged to reach out for more information if they want to build on its materials or offer them independently.

CIES also offers other unique projects. The success of its FARM (Foundations in Agricultural-based industries for Refugees and Migrants), which provides linguistic and professional bridges to the agriculture industry and an on-site paid practicum for newcomers, has led to a research study on service gaps in partnership with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT). CIES' online digital literacy program, NICO (Newcomer Introduction to Classes Online), recently concluded a national study on immigrant barriers to e-learning and will be compiling the findings and committing them to a new online orientation project that builds off the resources and best practices of its partners at NorQuest College in Edmonton.

The effects of dislocation and trauma on ELL students have long been an area of focus for CIES, evidenced by its Refugee & Newcomers Emotional Wellness (ReNEW) project. With a counselling component offering much-needed in-office support to clients, the project recently expanded in partnership with the University of Calgary and is now examining mental health issues and support agencies across Canada's prairie provinces in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Calgary.

**Colyn deGraaff**  
***ATESL President and  
Manager, e-Learning & Communications  
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society***

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*An inspiring  
essay  
recommended  
by BVC  
instructor, Greg  
Danowski : The*

*Task of the  
Translator by  
Walter  
Benjamin*

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### **New Post-TESL Certificate Program at Bow Valley College**

Bow Valley College is excited to present their new Post-TESL certificate program. This program includes five online courses designed to deepen subject matter knowledge, enhance instructional skills, and build a professional community of ELL practitioners. The courses are:

- ESL Literacy Material Design
- Strategies for Teaching Refugees
- Teaching in Multilevel Contexts
- Inclusive Teaching Practices
- Teaching English for the Workplace

Each 12-hour course is taught over four weeks and facilitated by a subject matter expert. The course content is presented through webinars, videos, readings, podcasts, slidecasts, and examples. Participants complete quizzes and assignments and engage in the discussion board. Participants who complete four out of the five courses will receive a Post-TESL certificate. This pilot project is funded by the Government of Alberta and is currently available to ELL practitioners across Alberta. Beginning in fall 2019 this program will be offered as continuing education courses through Bow Valley College.

For more information please see: <https://globalaccess.bowvalleycollege.ca/networks/ell-training-network#section-1622>

#### **Post-TESL course participants share their experiences:**

“I have been teaching for about 9 years now and I feel with this course I see all of the pieces coming together for me.”

“This course was pivotal in reshaping how I feel about my teaching and how I need to adapt my practice to ESL literacy learners.”

“Thank you for the chance to take Strategies for Teaching Refugees. It was an incredibly valuable course. I think it should be a required course for all ESL/LINC instructors.”

**Diane Hardy**

**Director Innovations, School of Global Access  
Bow Valley College**

### **Rural Routes in 15<sup>th</sup> Year**

The Rural Routes program is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year of providing high-quality professional development support and services to adult ESL providers and ESL programs.

Rural Routes receives funding from Advanced Education & Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for ongoing ESL capacity development services to rural and small urban ESL providers in Alberta.

The Rural Routes program improves access for small ESL programs and their providers located in urban areas. We support and build capacity of ESL providers so they can offer culturally integrated English language programs and services to enhance economic and social integration in rural communities for adult newcomers.

We reach beyond the NorQuest regional stewardship, as we are a provincially and federally funded program. Our clientele includes the Community Adult Learning Programs (CAPS), CALP partners, and non-CALPs such as church and library programs who provide front-line service that support newcomers to establish themselves in their communities throughout Alberta.

We are committed to providing continued support to our current clients and welcome new communities, programs, and ESL providers.

Our Rural Regional Advisors and Intercultural specialists stay at the leading edge of new information, standards and resources being developed in Alberta and across the country so they can pass this information on through the services we offer. Our services align with Canadian Language Benchmarks, ATESL’s Best Practices, and Guidelines for ESL programming.

**Debbie Severinsen**

**ATESL Rural Routes Representative**