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## Engage!

### **A World of Experience**

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As Canadians we have historically prided ourselves on our multiculturalism and acceptance of newcomers. Recently, as we have witnessed the struggles of new Canadians to apply their education and training within the Canadian job market, we've worried about our reputation as a land of opportunity.

There is some good news - employers are increasingly waking up to the world of experience that immigrants can bring to the workplace. In fact, in Toronto this week, that experience is being celebrated.

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) is presenting an exciting week of events profiling the immigrants who have made the Toronto Region their home, and the employers and others who have aided in their successful integration into the workforce.

The week's schedule of events includes:

- [20 Journeys: A visual essay of the immigrant experience](#)
- [The Mentoring Partnership Awards](#)
- [The Immigrant Success Awards](#)
- [Promising HR Practices in Financial Services](#)
- [Living the Dream](#)

Each one of us has a role to play in bringing immigrants' skills into the Canadian economy and labour market. What role will you play?

 Visit the TRIEC site for more details and resources!

#### Related Links:

- [New Home, New Job](#)
- [Grab the best, wherever they're from](#)
- [How much do foreign credentials count?](#)
- [Hireimmigrants.ca](#)

By: Louise Kearney

## One Man, One Tractor... Across Canada

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When asked how one might define Canada, words that come to mind may include winter, snow, hockey, or some other facet of our cold climate. One word that might be overlooked is agriculture.


Agriculture was once a cornerstone of Canadian industry. Recently however, farming families are becoming trivial players in Canada's national economy and the true origins of their craft are being forgotten.

That's why renowned adventurer and photographer Carl Hiebert will be riding his vintage 1949 McCormick tractor across Canada - interviewing and photographing Canada's farming families along the way.



AgVenture Canada begins June 1 in Vancouver, where Carl will start his 7,000 kilometre, cross-country journey. Nearly three months from now, he will arrive in St. John's, Newfoundland with a wonderful collection of stories and photographs about Canada's unsung heroes – farmers. The end result will be a one-of-a-kind coffee table book illustrating the roots of Canadian farming.

We're proud to support Carl in his AgVenture!

 To learn more about AgVenture Canada and Carl Hiebert's cross-country journey, please visit [www.agventurecanada.ca](http://www.agventurecanada.ca).

By: Matt Gordon

## CSR in BC's Capital Region

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May 13-19 marked the first annual Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Week in BC's Capital Region. Local partners including the Quality of Life CHALLENGE came together to build awareness and understanding of the broader role of business in the community and showcase local examples of CSR practices that are reducing poverty amongst the waged poor and enhancing quality of life.

The partners hosted a "Progressive Supper Theatre" on Monday, May 15. Nearly 100 people came together to participate in an innovative evening to launch the new Vancouver Island Social Purchasing Portal and the Quality of Life CHALLENGE *Living Wage dialogue* on the real costs of living in BC's Capital Region. The Living Wage dialogue focuses on the real costs of living in the region, the challenges to employers, and the range of Human Resources options employers can consider to move employees towards a living wage.



[Learn more about the first annual Corporate Responsibility Week here!](#)

### Related Links:

- [Fostering Engagement, Collaboration and Inclusion](#)
- [Vibrant Communities in BC's Capital Region](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

## Vibrant Communities Update

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**Niagara Region, ON** – Two more Job Busses are now operational, transporting low-income workers to employment opportunities in the Niagara Region. This brings the total of Job Busses in the region to four. Learn more about Niagara's intermunicipal transportation strategy [here](#).

**Hamilton, ON** – Liz Weaver has been appointed as Director of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Prevention. Liz brings a wealth of community-based experience, knowledge, and leadership to this position, having most recently served as the CEO of YWCA Hamilton. Access Liz's full bio [here](#).

**Waterloo Region, ON** – What happens to real people when policies change? On May 23, Opportunities Waterloo Region hosted Kate Bezanson, co-author of *Telling Tales: Living the Effects of Public Policy* as she discussed her research on the impacts that the policies of the Harris government had on people's lives. Read the book review [here](#).

## Back to the Future

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Some ideas are worth repeating – like this technique that Tamarack has used many times for guiding a diverse group of people through the development of an action-oriented, go forward plan. Called *Future Search*, the technique derives from well-researched theories on the conditions under which diverse groups will cooperate.

*Future Search* is a planning meeting that brings people from all walks of life into the same conversation - those with resources, expertise, formal authority and need. They meet for two to three days telling stories about their past, present and desired future. Through dialogue they discover their common ground and develop an action plan for the future.



Based on a process developed in the UK in the 1960s and used extensively in the 1970s in the US, *Future Searches* brought as many as 300 people together at a time and within a day or two people would commit to new projects considered unthinkable a few days before.



[Learn more about Future Search here!](#)

### Related Links:

- [Future Search technique](#)
- [Searching for Responses to Poverty: A Future Search case study](#)
- [Future Search “ripple effects”](#)
- [Additional resources and tools](#)

By: Susan Taylor Simpson

## Picnics & Doughnuts

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Being half-Portuguese, I grew up experiencing the joys of traditional Portuguese food and the kind hospitality that accompanied it.

Often in the summer my parents, along with several family friends, would make plans for a picnic. We would drive out to our favourite park, search for that perfect spot, set up chairs, and unload all our packages. Once that was done, the younger children were free to go and play while the adults enjoyed each other's company while preparing an all day meal. What a production that was – a labour of love! Good food, good company.

Each family brought enough food to feed... well, you know. The table overflowed with a variety of fruits, vegetables and meat dishes such as spicy barbeque chicken and barbequed fish of all sorts. But what always grabbed my attention was the huge platter of Portuguese doughnuts.

Even cold that dessert was addictive. Needless to say, that dessert was always the first to go. I don't ever remember leftovers!



[Get Sue's recipe here!](#)

### Related Links:

- [Get more Tamarack recipes!](#)

By: Sue Damiao