

**For Immediate Release****November 10, 2021****Forum: The Power of Immigrant Employment on Vancouver Island**  
**The Comox Valley community is invited to an online discussion on November 24**

COMOX VALLEY - The Immigrant Welcome Centre's Welcoming Communities Coalition (WCC) invites organizations, business owners, and the community at large to attend its online Comox Valley community forum on *The Power of Immigrant Employment on Vancouver Island*.

Every year, the WCC hosts a community forum and invites residents and other stakeholders to an interactive discussion on solution-focussed ways to respond to an issue impacting newcomers in our communities. This year, participants will hear from two guests and have an opportunity to discuss lived experiences and key learnings in breakout sessions on the theme of immigration and employment.

Participants will hear from **Brooke Thoburn**, a labour market specialist with WorkBC's Creative Employment Access Society (CEAS) about the local labour market outlook and the role immigration will play in future labour shortages. **Jenn LeVesconte**, the manager at Winners in Courtenay, will talk about her company's diversity and inclusion practices that contribute to worker recruitment and retention and her experiences on their regional Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

"We know that there are labour shortages across Canada, and we are hearing from local employers that they want to learn more about how to recruit and retain a diverse workforce," Immigrant Welcome Centre executive director Jim Brennan said. "We spend so much time in our workplaces, and so any changes organizations make to help their employees feel more welcome and included will have an impact on the overall wellness of their staff, and will help with recruitment and retention of people from all backgrounds."

The Comox Valley community forum takes place online on **November 24** from **1 to 3 p.m.** Register for free by following [the link on our website](#). The WCC is hosting a second forum in Campbell River on November 25 that is also free to attend (follow the link for more information).



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## **About the Welcoming Communities Coalition**

The Immigrant Welcome Centre's Welcoming Communities Coalition is an initiative supporting service coordination, local partnerships, and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers in the North Island. Through community-level research and strategic planning, the WCC identifies barriers facing newcomers, raises awareness around newcomers' needs, and collaborates with local stakeholders to reduce them.

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## **Media Contacts**

To arrange an interview with an IWC spokesperson contact:

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