



**TRIEC**

Toronto Region Immigrant  
Employment Council

Creating

# Impact

on Immigrant Employment

Annual Report 2010

## Vision

A Greater Toronto Region that prospers by fully engaging the contributions of skilled immigrants.

## Mission

TRIEC creates and champions solutions to better integrate skilled immigrants in the Greater Toronto Region labour market.

## Objectives

- To convene and collaborate with partners, creating opportunities for skilled immigrants to connect to the local labour market.
- To work with key stakeholders, particularly employers, building their awareness and capacity to better integrate skilled immigrants into the workforce.
- To work with all levels of government, enhancing coordination and effecting more responsive policy and programs for skilled immigrant employment.

TRIEC is a Maytree idea.



M A Y T R E E

For Leaders. For Change.

# TRIEC Council Members\*

## Chair and Co-Chair

Gordon M. Nixon, President and CEO, RBC

Zabeen Hirji, Chief Human Resources Officer, RBC

## Organizational Members

ACCES Employment Services • American Express Canada • Avana Capital Corporation • BMO Financial Group  
Brampton Board of Trade • Capgemini • Career Edge Organization • Centennial College • Centre francophone de Toronto  
CERIS - The Ontario Metropolis Centre • Certified General Accountants of Ontario • CGI • Chinese Professionals Association  
of Canada • CIBC • City of Brampton • City of Mississauga • College of Nurses of Ontario • Communications, Advertising  
and Marketing Professionals • Community MicroSkills Development Centre • Compugen • COSTI Immigrant Services  
D & V Electronics Ltd. • Deloitte • Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre • Ernst & Young LLP • Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP  
George Brown College • Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance • HelpCaster Technologies • HispanoTech.ca  
Human Resources Professionals Association • Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning  
Iranian-Canadian Network • JobStart • JVS Toronto • KPMG • LCI Associates Inc. • LEA International Ltd. • Manulife Financial  
Maytree • Microsoft Canada • Mississauga Board of Trade • Mount Sinai Hospital • Nytric Limited • Ontario Council of  
Agencies Serving Immigrants • Ontario Society of Professional Engineers • Peel Newcomer Strategy Group • Pitney Bowes  
Professional Engineers Ontario • RBC • Ryerson University • Samtack • Scotiabank • Seneca College of Applied Arts  
and Technology • Sheridan Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning • Skills for Change • State Farm Insurance  
Stikeman Elliott LLP • St. Michael's Hospital • Steam Whistle Brewing • TD Bank Group • Toronto and York Region  
Labour Council • Toronto Board of Trade • Toronto Community Foundation • Toronto Public Library  
Town of Markham • Tyco Electronics Canada • United Way of Greater Toronto • United Way of Peel Region  
United Way of York Region • University of Toronto • World Education Services • Xerox Canada • York University

**TRIEC sincerely thanks Council Members, our partners in creating immigrant employment solutions.**

\*For a list of individual representatives please visit [www.triec.ca](http://www.triec.ca)

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# Leadership Message

**In the seven years since TRIEC was formed, we've worked with our partners to find solutions to the unemployment and underemployment of immigrants. We've helped more newcomers establish professional connections through mentoring, developed tools and programs to support employers and newcomers with integration, and increased the capacity of professional immigrant networks. To create the conditions for positive change, we've worked with media to call attention to immigrant integration and profile the solutions that work.**

As we report back on our accomplishments this year, we take a closer look at how TRIEC's efforts are making a difference in the lives of individual immigrants. Because at the end of the day – and year – everything we do is about ensuring that immigrants can fully participate in and contribute to Toronto's economy and community.

And we know more action is needed.

We believe that immigration makes the Toronto Region a vibrant and prosperous place. However, between 2005 and 2009, the number of immigrants choosing to call the region home dropped by almost 30 per cent. If we want Toronto to continue to attract the best and the brightest, then we must position ourselves to better compete in a global talent marketplace. Toronto needs to do better.

In this report, we highlight success stories to show us how.



**Gordon M. Nixon,**  
President and CEO, RBC  
and Chair, TRIEC



**Zabeen Hirji,** Chief Human  
Resources Officer, RBC  
and Co-Chair, TRIEC



**Ratna Omidvar,** President,  
Maytree and Chair, TRIEC  
Board of Directors



**Elizabeth McIsaac,**  
Executive Director, TRIEC



## Opening Doors

**“After realizing my dream in Canada  
I’m happy to pay it forward.”**

Aditi Swaminathan, CHRP, Consulting, Human Capital, Deloitte  
former mentee and mentor, The Mentoring Partnership.

## Gaining industry insights and connections through mentoring

Mentoring is one of the most powerful interventions proven to connect immigrants to the labour market. Since 2004, over 5,600 skilled immigrants have been mentored through The Mentoring Partnership program.

Canadian professionals volunteer their time to help newcomers during their job search process by sharing their knowledge, experience and professional networks. Mentors gain leadership skills and insight, and a better understanding of the challenges skilled immigrants face.

The Mentoring Partnership is a collaboration of corporate partners, 12 community partners and TRIEC.



Aditi Swaminathan is not your typical mentor. Four years ago she was a mentee striving to find meaningful work.

A human resources professional with an MBA, Aditi's decade of experience spanned India, Indonesia and the United States. Aditi had a baby soon after arriving here, so it was a year before she began seriously looking for a job and employers were not responsive.

Aditi applied to The Mentoring Partnership and was paired with Angela Agostino, Director of Human Resources at Pitney Bowes. Angela helped Aditi position her experience and encouraged her to be patient. Aditi went on to find suitable employment with a multinational transportation organization and now works with Deloitte.

Aditi always knew she wanted to share her road to success once she was established. With three years of Canadian experience under her belt, Aditi applied to become a mentor. "I knew The Mentoring Partnership would introduce me to a motivated newcomer who might also need support," says Aditi.

Aditi now mentors Shilpa Arya, an immigrant from India whose experience and education mirrors her own. While Shilpa has been proactive in her quest to establish herself, Aditi is there as a sounding board and provides guidance along the way.

"Acting as a mentor means I have come full circle. After realizing my dream in Canada I'm happy to pay it forward," says Aditi. When asked, Aditi is quick to confirm that she will mentor again.

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## Making Connections

**“AMD has a good reputation and I see room to grow here.”**

**Sonny Jiang, Senior Software Engineer, AMD.**

## Linking immigrants to job opportunities

TRIEC works with the CASIP Employer Services Network and other community partners to develop streamlined, innovative solutions to better connect job-ready skilled immigrants with meaningful work – a win-win for both employers and newcomers.

We've also broadened our partnerships because we know that immigrants will pursue different paths to find work. Through our strong connections with professional immigrant networks, we can now reach thousands of immigrants.

Learning about a career opportunity is often dependent upon who you know. TRIEC works with organizations serving skilled immigrants and cultivates relationships with local employers to broaden the employer's candidate pool and make employment connections possible.

Sonny Jiang is one of the immigrants who found work this year through these connections. A software engineer with seven years of experience in China, he moved to Canada to be closer to the rest of his family. To network, Sonny joined the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC), a TRIEC Council Member and professional immigrant network.

It was through CPAC that Sonny learned TRIEC had partnered with Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. (AMD), a leading global semiconductor design innovator. A strong believer in the benefits of a global workforce, AMD wanted to tap into immigrant networks to expand the company's applicant pool and hire top talent.

Sonny attended an on-site career day hosted by AMD and after several rounds of interviews, received a job offer. "AMD has a good reputation and I see room to grow here," says Sonny. "It's a great environment and I really like the people I work with."

Earlier this year, Sonny attended on-site language training classes over the lunch hour. He values this investment in his communication skills and the opportunities this holds for his future.

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## Integrating Talent

**“I’m now communicating more with my colleagues...I’m building my interpersonal skills and asking for help when I need it.”**

Jennyfer Pacelo, Project Manager, American Express Canada and participant, TRIEC’s Achieving Success in the Workplace.

## Helping immigrants succeed on the job

TRIEC believes that immigrant integration is a two-way process. Newcomers need to adapt to the Canadian workplace, while employers must be open to new ways of doing business and clarifying unwritten rules of corporate culture.

Our Integrating Talent video showcases inclusive talent management practices. Integration workshops for employers help participants orient, onboard and promote skilled immigrants.

Under the BUILD IT project, TRIEC, in collaboration with CASIP, piloted Achieving Success in the Workplace. This workshop supports newcomers during their first 90 days on the job. We have equipped our CASIP partners to deliver this training on an ongoing basis.

BUILD IT was established to connect internationally trained IT professionals to York Region employment opportunities, and support their effective integration into the workplace.

In an ironic twist of fate for a risk manager, Jennyfer Pacelo's immigration papers were fast tracked after the devastating floods in the Philippines left her car submerged, her house destroyed and no family to turn to. In April 2010, Jennyfer was reunited with her family in Canada.

While attending a job search workshop at ACCES Employment Services, Jennyfer learned about an American Express Canada Technologies hiring event for project managers, a field she had worked in previously. She was hired a few months later.

Jennyfer realized that while she was getting her work done, her evaluations weren't entirely glowing. Jennyfer signed up for Achieving Success in the Workplace. "Right away I felt as though I wasn't alone," says Jennyfer. "The immigrants in my class were all experiencing similar challenges around the nuances of feedback."

Jennyfer can now pinpoint what responses she needs to flesh out during a performance review. "I know about constructive criticism," explains Jennyfer. "We were taught that too, but Filipino managers are more blunt. Now I know how and when to push a manager to be more direct with me."

The workshop also boosted her morale. "I'm now communicating more with my colleagues," says Jennyfer. "I'm building my interpersonal skills and asking for help when I need it."

The onus to adapt isn't on Jennyfer alone. American Express Canada has sent staff to TRIEC's integration workshops to ensure that both immigrant employees and managers are equally informed and committed to new approaches to integration.

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## Building Networks

**“We obviously needed to find jobs, but the bigger idea was to support new Iraqi immigrants so they are not lost when they land.”**

Hiam Al Sabery, President of the Iraqi Canadian Engineers and Architects Network, and Senior Electrical Engineer, Venneri Consulting Engineering.



## Increasing the capacity of professional immigrant networks

TRIEC works collaboratively with immigrant networks to increase their capacity to connect their skilled immigrant members to meaningful employment. We are doing this by building the capacity of individual and collective networks, by connecting networks with relevant stakeholders, including government and employers, and supporting the development of immigrant network leaders.

Since launching our Professional Immigrant Networks Initiative just over a year ago, TRIEC has convened two learning exchanges, hosted multiple professional development events, and piloted a networking event with members and organizational affinity groups.

Despite 20 years of international engineering experience, Hiam Al Sabery accepted unpaid work to prove himself to a Canadian employer, while he worked towards licensure. He eventually secured good work and then the recession hit. Hiam was unemployed again, but this time he had two years of Canadian experience, his P.Eng. and the support of a small, but strong network of Iraqi engineers and architects – many of whom had also been laid off or who were in search of more meaningful work.

After months of meeting at Tim Hortons, the group decided to formalize their sessions and establish an association. “We obviously needed to find jobs, but the bigger idea was to support new Iraqi immigrants so they are not lost when they land,” says Hiam. Seventy-five Iraqi engineers and architects formed the Iraqi Canadian Engineers and Architects Network (ICEAN) in the fall of 2009.

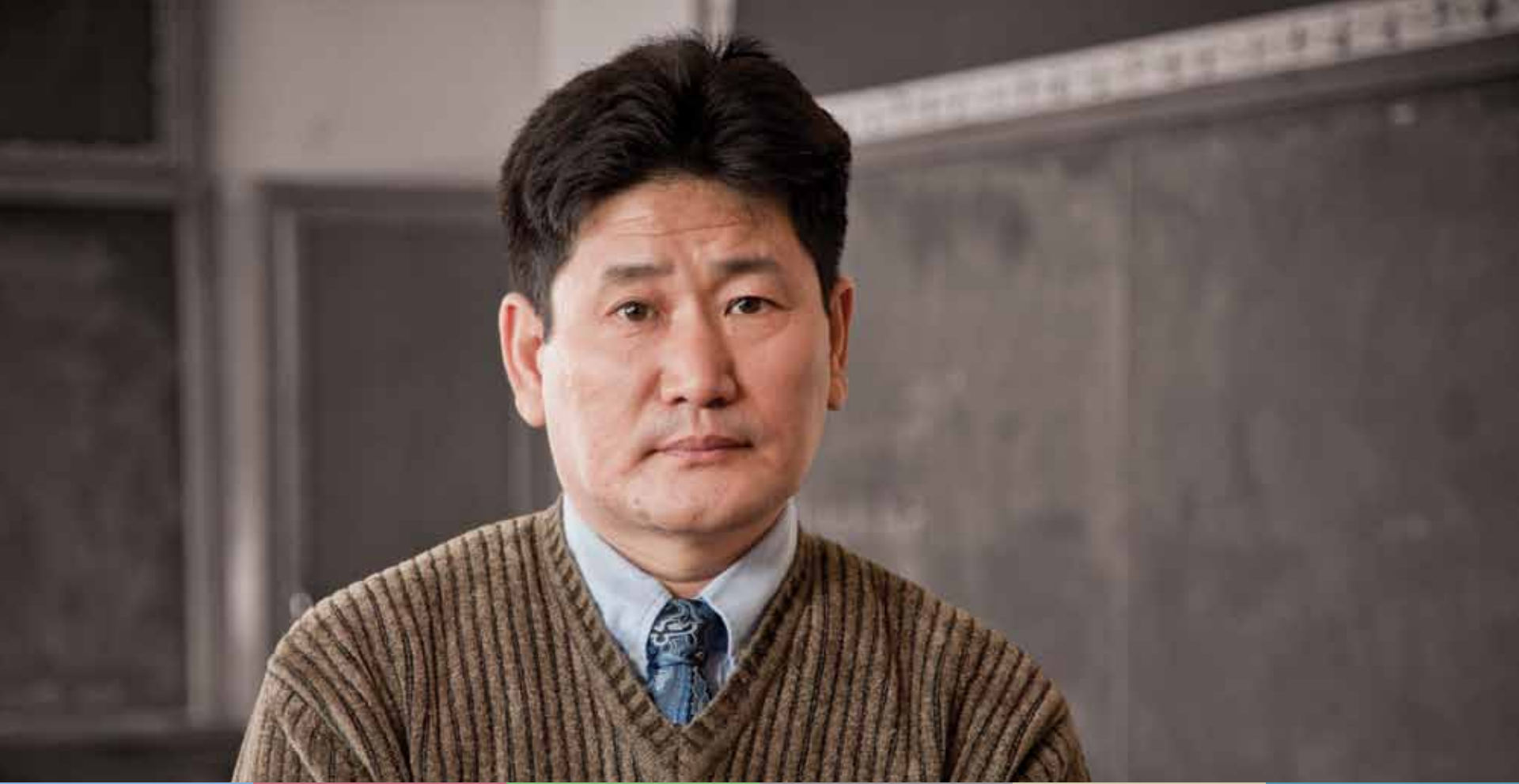
Since connecting with TRIEC, ICEAN has piloted a group mentoring project with JVS Toronto. Hiam also sees a lot of potential to learn from other networks. “The Filipino Accountants invited me to their welcome event for new members,” says Hiam. “I could see how such a simple gesture can make new members feel included right away. ICEAN wants to borrow this idea.”

Hiam’s current job came through a referral from a fellow ICEAN member. The flourishing network has now grown to over 250 Iraqi engineers and architects.

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## Telling Stories

**“TRIEC is doing important work by spreading awareness about immigrant talent and recognizing TFSS.”**

Tenzin Ngodup, an internationally trained doctor and now, Program Manager, Toronto Foundation for Student Success, one of this year’s Immigrant Success Award winners.

## Spreading awareness about what works

While employers seem more aware of the skilled immigrant talent pool, persistent underemployment and unemployment indicate there is more work to be done. Highlighting successful outcomes in hiring immigrant employees is a powerful incentive to bring more employers on board.

For five years TRIEC has searched for employers who are living and breathing examples of this business case. In total, TRIEC's Immigrant Success Awards have recognized 25 employers and individuals for their leading and innovative practices to better integrate skilled immigrants in the Toronto Region labour market. We believe that more and more employers are hiring immigrants, and we will continue to champion the talent pool until that is the norm.



A child of Tibetan refugees living in India, Tenzin Ngodup came to Canada to become a contributing citizen and give his children more opportunities. Tenzin brought 10 years of experience as a medical practitioner, but could only find work in a factory. He began volunteering at Hincks DellCrest Centre and soon was hired on as a part-time research assistant.

In 2008, Tenzin was hired by the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS), the foundation arm of the Toronto District School Board. TFSS had launched the Sprott Asset Management Gift of Sight and Sound program, designed to screen children in priority neighbourhoods for vision and/or hearing difficulties.

TFSS wanted international medical graduates (IMGs) to do the screening to help build trust with kids and parents. Initial accuracy rates were so high that IMGs currently manage and coordinate the whole program.

Tenzin is now the program manager, but still dreams of becoming a doctor. "TRIEC is doing important work by spreading awareness about immigrant talent and recognizing TFSS," says Tenzin. "I hope that more employers are inspired by TFSS and will hire IMGs or other skilled immigrants into fruitful positions."

In the meantime, Tenzin is thrilled to be doing meaningful work in the healthcare field, while gaining management experience.

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## Sharing Knowledge

Tesfakiros (Tes) Haile, an immigrant from Eritrea and now Sales Manager for Africa and the Middle East, Phoenix Geophysics, shortlisted for this year's IS Awards.

Tes, Phoenix Geophysics and TRIEC's research on employers were profiled on the front page of the Globe and Mail's Report on Business section on Wednesday, May 11, 2011.

There is power in numbers. TRIEC knows this and works closely with ALLIES, a project of Maytree and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, to harness the potential of ten immigrant employment councils and networks across the country. We share ideas, promising practices and tools.

## Contributing to a national movement to make change

We continue to contribute learning tools to [hireimmigrants.ca](http://hireimmigrants.ca), an online hub for all things immigrant employment. The Roadmap has now been syndicated through two provincial immigration portals and four municipal websites within Ontario. TRIEC's training videos are popular amongst employers and immigrants across the country.

Nine mentoring programs have been established in five provinces. This year we presented at the first-ever national mentoring conference hosted by ALLIES in Calgary. We shared the technology from our matching database to ensure that other programs are primed to hit the ground running.

We've shared our learnings on what works when trying to engage employers on the ground. When possible, we've delivered employer contacts of companies looking for national strategies to mentor and recruit skilled immigrants.

Most importantly, we welcome the opportunity to meet with other immigrant employment councils more frequently and engage in meaningful discussions on what can be achieved together. The time seems ripe for a national, coordinated strategy on immigrant integration in Canada and the number of willing partners is growing.

In partnership with:



A Maytree idea  
In partnership with The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation



## Facilitating Coordination

Hector Hernandez, an immigrant from Mexico and now, Business Improvement Specialist, Thales Canada, one of this year's Immigrant Success Award winners.

## Working with government

TRIEC's Intergovernmental Relations Committee brings together representatives of ministries and departments from all three orders of government to share information and explore key policy and program issues related to immigrant employment. The committee focused on three priority areas in 2010:

### **1. Connecting new immigrants to employment-related information**

The committee explored new avenues to ensure that skilled immigrants are quickly and effectively connected to the wealth of information that is now available to them in order to accelerate their integration into the labour market. The committee investigated questions of how to better coordinate government sources of information and possible strategies for joint marketing and outreach. The committee continues to pilot new approaches.

### **2. Discussing income and other supports for skilled immigrants to facilitate access to labour market integration programs**

Skilled immigrants are often not eligible for the income supports they need for employment preparation because of eligibility requirements that exclude them. The committee explored several related questions: What is the new thinking on income supports? How can we ensure that immigrants qualify for supports? How do we build the specific needs of immigrants into the design of income supports? While solving these questions is beyond the scope of TRIEC and the committee, a deeper understanding of policy options was important learning.

### **3. Developing an employer engagement strategy**

Labour market programming has been designed largely around the needs of the unemployed individual, and does not have an explicit focus on engaging employers. There is a strong and growing demand from employers for support and learning. Small and medium-sized employers in particular could benefit. The committee continues to explore options for a simplified interface to direct employers to programs and services that will link them with skilled immigrants, and a possible "Employer Gateway."

### **Intergovernmental Relations Committee**

Citizenship and Immigration Canada  
Industry Canada  
Service Canada  
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
City of Toronto  
Region of Peel  
Regional Municipality of Durham  
Regional Municipality of York

# Financial Statements

Year ended November 30, 2010.

## Balance Sheet

Unaudited  
As at November 30

	2010
	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash	85,919
Term deposits	653,700
Interest receivable	2,662
GST and other receivables	44,517
Contributions receivable	178,396
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>965,194</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Accounts payable	88,305
Due to The Maytree Foundation	178,228
Due to related party	1,563
Deferred contributions	632,951
Total liabilities	901,047
Surplus	64,147
<b>Total liabilities and surplus</b>	<b>965,194</b>

## Statement Of Operating Activities

Unaudited  
As at November 30

	2010
	\$
<b>INCOME</b>	
Government of Canada	1,591,534
Government of Ontario	1,026,388
Corporate donations and sponsorships	185,804
The Maytree Foundation	73,493
Other donors, interest income and other income	30,858
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>2,908,077</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Salaries & benefits	1,359,494
Programs	839,373
Communications and events	295,456
General and administrative	367,539
Capital expenditures	31,566
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>2,893,428</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>14,649</b>

# Our People

## Board of Directors\*

**Ratna Omidvar**, President, Maytree, and Chair, TRIEC Board of Directors  
**Naomi Alboim**, Fellow and Adjunct Professor, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University  
**Carrie Blair**, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Canadian Banking & Insurance, TD Canada Trust, TD Bank Group  
**Mario Calla**, Executive Director, COSTI Immigrant Services  
**Zabeen Hirji**, Chief Human Resources Officer, RBC  
**Diane Jeffreys**, Managing Partner, GTA Advisory Services, KPMG  
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**Kamran Niazi**, Senior Manager, Human Capital Consulting, Deloitte  
**Yezdi Pavri**, Vice Chairman, Deloitte  
**Alan Rego**, Manager, Consumer Relations - North America, Procter & Gamble Canada Inc.  
**Sanish Samuel**, Director of Finance and Administration, York University Foundation  
**Philip Schalm**, Program Director, Gateway for International Professionals, The Chang School, Ryerson University  
**John Tory**, Chair, Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance, and Corporate Director and Broadcaster, Newstalk 1010  
**Shelley White**, CEO, United Way of Peel Region  
**Daniele Zanotti**, CEO, United Way of York Region

## Special thanks to the following former board members who resigned this year:

**Jennifer Rowe**, Vice President, Corporate Marketing & Communications, MFC Global Investment Management, Manulife Financial  
**Monique Bateman**, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, TD Canada Trust, TD Bank Group

## Staff\*

**Elizabeth Mclsaac**, Executive Director  
**Charles Achampong**, Manager, Corporate and Stakeholder Relations, Toronto  
**Joan Atlin**, Director of Programs  
**Vimla Beg**, Executive Assistant and Project Coordinator  
**Monica Anne Brennan**, Manager, Program Delivery, The Mentoring Partnership  
**Melwyn D'Costa**, Manager, Corporate Partnerships, The Mentoring Partnership  
**Claire DeVeale-Blane**, Manager, Communications  
**Rose De Veyra**, Research and Curriculum Developer  
**Natalia Dobrynina**, Coordinator, Communications  
**Rodel Imbarlina-Ramos**, Manager, Corporate and Stakeholder Relations, Peel and Halton  
**Tulan Ma**, IT Systems Analyst  
**Akash Mahajan**, Manager, Corporate and Stakeholder Relations, York  
**Lillian Manea**, Manager, Operations  
**Meena Sankaran**, Coordinator, Program Delivery, The Mentoring Partnership  
**Racquel Sevilla**, Manager, Program Development  
**Rajni Sharma**, Program Administrative Assistant  
**Navpreet Singh**, Manager, Training and Workshop Development, Employer Initiatives  
**Kuziva Ziramba**, Program Coordinator, Employer Initiatives

\*at time of printing

# A Year in Pictures

TRIEC is a convener and collaborator. Much of our work is about bringing partners together to brainstorm new ideas, build on promising practices and recognize what's working.

## December 2, 2010: The Mentoring Partnership Partners Meeting

We specially thanked 27 employers for their steadfast commitment in 2009-2010 and celebrated City of Toronto, TD Bank Group, Deloitte, KPMG and Scotiabank, as leaders in mentor recruitment.



## March 10, 2011: 5th Annual IS Awards

This year TRIEC recognized Thales, Canada; Nancy Steele, Director, American Express Canada; Toronto Foundation for Student Success; and Deloitte, for their innovation and leadership in integrating skilled immigrants in the Toronto Region.



## March 31, 2011: Networking Beyond Boundaries

Member immigrant networks, affinity groups and TRIEC organized an event for over 200 Hispanic/Latin American professionals.







# TRIEC

Toronto Region Immigrant  
Employment Council

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[www.triec.ca](http://www.triec.ca)

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