



**iS** TRIEC'S 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL  
**IMMIGRANT  
SUCCESS  
AWARDS**

AWARDS RECEPTION  
**JANUARY 19, 2009**



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Toronto Region Immigrant  
Employment Council

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## RBC BEST IMMIGRANT EMPLOYER AWARD

**For a small and medium-sized employer with fewer than 500 employees that successfully recruits, retains and promotes skilled immigrants.**



### NYTRIC LIMITED

Nytric Limited has found global success through the cutting-edge ideas of its diverse workforce — more than two-thirds of their employees are skilled immigrants.

Located in Mississauga, Ontario, this innovation-consulting and venture technology firm turns back-of-a-napkin ideas into marketable products. With big clients like EA Games, Pratt & Whitney and video-game

manufacturer Global VR, Nytric generates about \$4 million per year in revenue. Ninety per cent of their products are exported.

To compete in the international market, Nytric leverages the brain power of its twenty-seven employees. In the engineering department, for example, the ratio of immigrants to Canadian-born employees is two to one. Immigrants also hold executive positions: Av Utukuri, President and Chief Technology Officer, was born in India; Ted Chen, Director of Product Development is from Taiwan; and Anthony Gussin, Director of Business Development is a native of the United Kingdom.

Because Nytric's management team can personally relate to other skilled immigrants struggling to find work, the company welcomes candidates with international credentials and experience. "From our perspective, Canadian experience is irrelevant — if someone is a good engineer, he's a good engineer. It doesn't matter where he came from," Anthony says. "That's one of the key components of our hiring strategy."

This inclusive policy has helped skilled immigrants like Riddhesh Raval. He came from India in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering and experience with a multi-national software company. After working a general labour job for \$8 an hour and volunteering in his field, Riddhesh found a position with Nytric as a senior software engineer.

In addition to valuable experience, Nytric's diverse team brings a knowledge bank of various languages and cultures. With input from their Indian-born staff, for example, Nytric changed the trivia questions in a family DVD game to reflect the colloquialisms of South Asian cultures. This savvy marketing strategy enhanced the product's appeal overseas. Employees fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese also help the company negotiate with Chinese suppliers and oversee international manufacturing — both assets that were highlighted during Nytric's delegation to Asia last year.

"Nytric is a very innovative organization," Anthony says, "And I don't think we would have this unique approach to innovation if we didn't have different people from different walks of life."

## TORONTO STAR IMMIGRANT CHAMPION AWARD

**For a local champion who makes a positive difference by assisting skilled immigrants with their entry and development in the workforce.**



### **PATRICIA O'CONNOR**

*Coordinator of Field Programming, Internationally Educated Social Work Professionals (IESW) Bridging Program, The Chang School, Ryerson University*

Through a program that is the first of its kind in Canada, Patricia O'Connor is making notable strides toward integrating immigrant social workers into the labour market. She is the Coordinator of Field Programming for the Internationally

Educated Social Work Professionals (IESW) Bridging Program at Ryerson University's Chang School of Continuing Education.

Launched in 2005, the program has helped more than 100 people move successfully into employment, by offering courses, individual consultations, mentorship, job hunting tips, supervised work placements and outreach to employers. Within a year of completing the certificate program, more than 90 per cent of graduates find employment in hospitals, community health centres, child welfare agencies, women's shelters, and other community-focused organizations.

Patricia was instrumental in creating the IESW program — she has an extensive resume and three decades of experience as a community worker, teacher, health promoter, and as an advocate for social justice.

IESW graduate Christine Okech is one of the numerous benefactors of Patricia's work. "I felt for the first time in a long time that nobody was judging or doubting me, and I met social workers from other countries and realized I was not alone." Christine, originally from Kenya, now works as a child protection worker for the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton. She nominated Patricia for the IS Awards and included testimonials from over a dozen IESW program graduates.

"The most meaningful part of winning this award is that the nomination came from internationally educated professionals who completed the program and are currently working in the field of social work," says Patricia. "Their patience, courage, efforts, and the trust they placed in us have encouraged us to continue to work with creativity and persistence to build a strong program that delivers on its promises and leads to real change. Their endorsement of our approach inspires me to move forward with renewed commitment and enthusiasm."

Patricia also coordinates a network of over 550 internationally educated social work professionals, and organizes educational workshops and presentations for employers to raise awareness about the ways in which immigrant professionals can make valuable contributions to their organizations.