



# ThePRACTICEFIRM NEWSLETTER

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

|                                                            |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Practice Firm provides Canadian Work Experience</i> | 1 |
| <i>Work in Canada Now a Reality for Olivia</i>             | 2 |
| <i>Coordinator's Corner</i>                                | 3 |
| <i>The Toastmasters</i>                                    | 4 |
| <i>The Virtual Business</i>                                | 4 |

**Did you know?**

**Practice Firm graduates have earned more than \$2.4 million annually since late 2005.**

Prepared by Practice Firm Participants:

**Public Relations:**

◆ Dayo Ogbeiwi

**Editor:**

◆ YongZheng Deng



The Government of Canada has contributed funding to this initiative

## THE PRACTICE FIRM GIVES IMMIGRANTS CANADIAN WORK EXPERIENCE

One of the reasons for immigrants' difficulty in getting into their profession is the lack of Canadian work experience. The creation of our Practice Firm was developed to target this difficulty.

Douglas College's Surrey Training Centre operates the Practice Firm. Funded by Service Canada, the Practice Firm was set up to address the issue of immigrant professionals who have formal training in their foreign countries and are looking for a first work experience in their new country. The mission is to address the lack of Canadian work experience and transition to Canadian culture.

The Practice Firm has been in operation since late 2005, opening doors to at least 80 immigrant professionals per year. Participants at the Practice Firm gain the opportunity to learn the Canadian business culture by working in the Practice Firm business environment called 'Way of the World Travel and Cruises' for up to 12 weeks.

With more than 150 people that have participated in the Practice Firm, 89% of the graduates are employed. With many participants coming from an accounting background, a key aspect is doing business in the latest version of Simply Accounting software.



*Coordinators and participants of the Practice Firm*

The concept of the Practice Firm is and will always be an inspirational and goal achiever for participants for a very long time. It bridges a gap for one of the barriers and difficulties immigrants face in getting employment in their field. However, participants regain their confidence and self-esteem and see themselves as an important contributor to the Canadian workforce.

**THE PRACTICE FIRM:  
MAKING WORK IN  
CANADA A REALITY**



**Participants'  
Testimonials:**

"It gave me a lot of opportunity to apply my accounting knowledge and I gained more local experience. It also taught me how to speak in public and prepare for an interview."

"This Practice Firm is for someone like me who really needed work experience to find a job. Working here is like gaining confidence."

"I consider the opportunity as very valuable to me because it is a practical experience in my accounting profession."

"It is a working environment to meet people from diverse cultures, share different working experience, and sharpen your skills."

## Work in Canada, now a Reality for Olivia

Olivia Arias was born in the Philippines and migrated with her family to Canada on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2007. A certified public accountant from her country, she had worked for more than 10 years as a senior accountant.

With her years of experience, she was determined to bring her skills and training and put them to good use in the Canadian workforce.

Like many immigrants, Olivia was full of joy, excitement, hopes and aspirations wanting to start a new life, and continue to work in her field as soon as she got to Canada.

Some weeks of job search went by with no luck; approximately 100 resumes were sent out without a single reply. Olivia had decided to get a job to keep her family going and financially they were just able to survive.

A co-worker at her "survival job" told her about "the Practice Firm"; Olivia made up her mind to start working at the Practice Firm, Way of the World Travel and Cruises (WWTC).

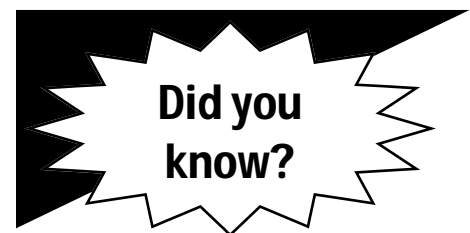
She found her work at WWTC was definitely a perfect fit for her skills. She worked as an Accountant in the Business to Business Division, putting her skills to the test and learned how to deal with different cultures, relating to people in a diverse and dynamic workplace. Most importantly, Olivia gained the Canadian work experience she needed.

**Olivia secured an accounting position within 8 weeks of participating in the program at DMK Stone in Richmond.**



Her goal is to tell her story to all, especially to professional immigrants seeking employment.

Olivia hopes that her story will motivate aspiring professional immigrants who lack Canadian work experience to join the Practice Firm.



**92% of participants rated the Practice Firm as very helpful in getting or managing their new jobs.**

# Coordinator's Corner

by Stephanie DeRapp

It has been an exciting year of operations for the Practice Firm. We have seen so many of our participants move forward with their dream of working in their profession and providing a meaningful life in Canada for themselves and their families. The program has seen such success, winning "Program of the Year" by ENET Society and being chosen as a Best of the Best employment program presenter at the Western Shifting Directions conference.



The Practice Firm model of "learning by doing", has promoted many of our participants to expand their computerized accounting skill base along with gaining an understanding of local office and business culture.

Our newly added Toastmaster's for public speaking has been a great success with our participant enjoying the dual benefits of building on their public speaking ability at the same time gaining CGA public speaking credits.

Working hard to develop professional association partnerships have be a key part of this past several months. This has resulted in participants being able to credit time spent in program towards both the CGA and the Institute of Professional Bookkeepers of Canada as work experience time for their designation.

These new partnerships help many of the Practice Firm participants, as almost 60% of them are internationally trained accounting professionals.

The participants gain additional benefits as being Douglas College students, this student status helps many with accessing a reduced professional association membership fees such as with BC Human Resource Management Association.

The employer community has been very receptive in their understanding and comment regularly on the value and innovation of such a program model. The employers see the work experience as true business experience.

We look forward to 2007-2008 and sharing in our participant's career success.

## 2006 - 2007

### Participant's Profiles

- 57% Accounting
- 18% Office Admin.
- 11 % IT
- 7% HR
- 5% Purchasing
- 2% Marketing



The Inukshuk, which is in the WWTC logo, is one of the most famous ancient stone symbols found across Northern Canada. They symbolize the safe passages, natural shelter and good hunting. Also, with the image of a human and their strength of presence, Inukshuk provides secure and comfort feelings to the lonely travelers.

### *Participants'*

### *Testimonials:*

"The Practice Firm is the first place in Canada where I use some of my professional skills and knowledge. It is a proof that I can transfer my skills to the practical work in a Canadian workplace."

"The Practice Firm and its procedures are very useful for every one. They can help people make fewer mistakes."

"The Practice Firm is like an Inukshuk, providing secure and comfort feeling to the somewhat lonely immigrant job seekers."



10060 King George Highway  
Surrey, BC  
V3T 2W4

Phone: 604-588-7772  
Fax: 604-588-7774  
Email: [practicefirm@douglas.bc.ca](mailto:practicefirm@douglas.bc.ca)

**Information sessions  
held every Tuesday at 10**

**We are on the web!**  
[www.wwtc.ca](http://www.wwtc.ca)

**The Practice Firm  
(WWTC) is mentored by**



Within one year, more than 80 employees worked tirelessly on the development and enhancement of WWTC policies and procedures to ensure that this unique virtual e-business is run in an effective and profitable manner.  
-- Gail Olson  
Operations Division

## The Practice Firm launches Toastmasters International



All participants at the Practice Firm are members of Toastmasters. Toastmasters is recognized around the world and highly recognized for its creative ideas to enhance communication, management, leadership, and improvement of public speaking skills.

This self-paced program is part of professional development targeted to encourage participants from all backgrounds to speak effectively in public and at work, communicate better amongst their co-workers, listen effectively and express themselves easily, especially at interviews.



*Toastmasters session at the Practice Firm*

At each meeting, every participant at the Practice Firm is given a chance to speak openly on different topics of interest. The Toastmasters club at the Practice Firm helps to make all participants become better communicators, learn skills that will help them to be more successful and help overcome the fear of public speaking.

Toastmasters at the Practice Firm is an educational program, a rewarding practical experience and a unique learning environment for immigrants.



## The Virtual Business



*Participants of the Operations Division*

Way of the World Travel and Cruises (WWTC) is the Practice Firm, which simulates a full cycle business and full cycle accounting transactions with other Practice Firms all over the world.

Since the creation of WWTC, the business model was designed to employ a maximum of 20 employees in various departments, running two separate divisions, Business to Business (B2B) and Operations.

So far, the Practice Firm has been doing business with other Practice Firms both nationally and internationally.

Since September 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 the virtual sales generated a "revenue" of over \$350,000.

To learn more about the business products and services visit our e-store today at [www.wwtc.ca](http://www.wwtc.ca)