



5575 Boundary Rd.
Vancouver, BC V5R 2P9

T. 604 254 9626
www.mosaicbc.org

September 22, 2017

For Immediate Release

Richmond-based Businesses Facing Chronic Worker Shortage Set Up Unique Refugee Initiative

(Vancouver BC) Richmond businesses are facing an acute shortage of more than 500 workers, mostly in the restaurant sector, and are looking to refugees and new Canadians to help ease this crisis.

The Business Association of Richmond has organized a Halal-inspired Chinese banquet feast for Syrian, and other refugee newcomers as a welcoming gesture and job-networking opportunity. The September 30th event will take place at the Continental Seafood Restaurant in Richmond.

Partnering with MOSAIC, the association is hopeful that the event will prove to be a successful initiative in recruiting newcomers to help solve a chronic labour shortage for many of its members.

According to the data from the B.C. Asian Restaurant Cafe Owners Association - a founding member of the association - there is a shortage of more than 500 employees, mostly in Richmond restaurants. This figure represents approximately 15 per cent of all employment positions for the Business Association of Richmond's 1000+ members. The positions are predominantly entry level and need to be filled immediately.

Sunny Ho, Chairman for the association, said that the labour shortage is serious and has existed for a few years. "We approached MOSAIC because of their reputation and success with finding employment for refugees and newcomers. We hope this initiative will help refugees to find jobs, as well as address the problem of workforce shortages in the Richmond restaurant industry."

The association is hoping that 250 Syrian and other refugee newcomers will attend the dinner, which will offer them a chance to meet in a relaxed environment and network with many Richmond business owners.

MOSAIC offers unique training and employment programs for Syrian refugees and led the Metro Vancouver Refugee Response Team with the BC Provincial Government. Since September 2015, the organization has worked with 1380 Syrian refugees and over 4000 total refugees.

However, many refugees can be hesitant to accept job offers before they feel settled into their new communities.

Sherman Chan, MOSAIC's Director of Family and Settlement Services, noted that "Often, they have experienced a lot of trauma and need time to settle and adapt to their new environment. We can perform the introductions, and offer training and support, but in the end, they will make the decision regarding when they are ready to work, and what type of work they want to be engaged in.



“Ongoing planning has been discussed regarding follow-up services for job interviews, job position updates and language training for the refugee newcomers, and preparing employers to recruit and retain newcomer staff.”

MOSAIC, in conjunction with The Business Association of Richmond will be hosting a job fair in November. Najah Hage, Manager of Employment Programs said “this will bridge the gap between employers and newcomer job seekers.”

The 10-course Newcomers Welcome Dinner Gala has been modified from the traditional Chinese menu to accommodate Halal dietary guidelines.

Event Information:

Saturday, September 30, 2017

Reception 6 pm; Dinner 7 pm

Continental Seafood Restaurant

11700 Cambie Road, Richmond, BC

MOSAIC is a non-profit charitable organization and the primary settlement and employment services agency in Vancouver assisting newcomers to Canada at 26 client sites across Metro Vancouver. MOSAIC delivers services and engages in community building and advocacy to facilitate meaningful participation of immigrants and refugees in Canadian society. Our client-centred multilingual programs and services cover six major program areas – Employment Programs, English Language Programs, Settlement Programs, Children and Family Programs, Specialized Programs, and Interpretation and Translation Services.

-30-

Media Contacts:

MOSAIC:

Sherman Chan, Director of Family and Settlement Services - O: 604.254.9626 C: 604.219.3208

Business Association of Richmond:

Gen Wong, Executive Director and Spokesman –O: 604.273.0920 C: 604.603.1178

