

Immigrant now helping others

From page 1.

questions, but addressed her needs.

The flyer explained how the agency helps immigrants and refugees. Ms Daneshi learned the government and agency would assist her with language, employment and social issues.

Since a counsellor at the agency spoke Farsi, Ms Daneshi was able to explain she graduated with a degree in sociology from the University of Allameh in Tehran in 1994 and spent seven years teaching in Iran's public school system.

She also had experience as a counsellor.

She was assigned counsellor Mitra Beikmirzie, who

became an adviser, facilitator and friend.

"Mitra was the first person to help me find my confidence," Ms Daneshi said. "She's been wonderful."

Ms Daneshi took language classes and the family decided to attend St. Matthew's United Church to fulfill spiritual and social needs.

"I was encouraged to go to church to mix with Canadians," Ms Daneshi said. "People at the church were very kind and this helped improve my English."

It didn't take Ali long to pick up the language.

"His father helped him and he mixed with the English-speaking children," Ms Daneshi said. "Ali has adjusted well."

Mr. Yazdankia found work in manufacturing almost immediately, while Ms Daneshi secured a job teaching Farsi in York Region public board's international language program.

She also volunteers as an interpreter and translator.

Ms Daneshi was pleased to hear a \$920-million immigrant settlement deal was struck this week between the province and federal government.

The funding is for improving language training for immigrants, many of whom speak neither official language.

Ontario is using some of the money to launch a website to provide information for immigrants on job opportunities, training, skills accreditation and more.

Agencies hope cash will eliminate settlement roadblocks

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

At what point in an immigrant's journey to Canada does the land of promise turn into a series of road blocks?

As far as Hashim Ali can tell, it's as soon as the plane touches down.

The barriers are odd given Canada's history as a nation built on the backs of newcomers, said the executive director of My Canada Integration and Settlement Services, a Richmond Hill-based agency offering services to York Region immigrants.

More importantly, immigration is now the backbone of York's growth and the reception newcomers face is critical to the region's success, he said.

Of the 38,000 people who move to York each year, more than 11,700 are new immigrants, with another 13,600 being newcomers from other countries who settle elsewhere first before moving to the region.

That's why Mr. Ali is hoping a historic agreement signed Monday between Ottawa and Queen's Park, which will see the federal government invest \$920 million over five years in Ontario immigration services, will usher in innovative and comprehensive changes.

Not that he is holding his breath based on the lack of co-ordination he's seen in the system so far.

"The system is not working as it should be. People who come here have to go through a lot of work to know where settlement workers are," he said, concerned the splintered system often leaves immigrants floundering in their new homeland.

It's not that agencies don't exist—for example, a search of "York Region immigration" on the website of York's Community Information and Volunteer Centre reveals 15 related organizations—it's that services are fragmented with no one association overseeing operations.

The system needs more accountability with clear benchmarks for agencies, Mr. Ali said.

"The government is spending millions of dollars. Where is that money going? That is the question. This is the public's money. It's tax money. Money is being wasted," he said.

Roger Manning, executive director of Catholic Community Services of York Region, the region's largest immigration agency, agrees more co-ordination is needed. But a new diversity office being implemented through York Region's human services planning coalition in the next year will provide one-stop shopping for newcomers seeking programs, he added.

At the same time, Mr. Manning cautioned against establishing a super-agency to deliver the services now provided by different community-based organizations, stressing the more important issue is addressing the immigration funding gap between York and other communities.

"As far as the needs of York Region are concerned, our per capita funding for serving new immigrants is substantially lower."

Federal and provincial funding for immigrant services in York in 2004-2005 was \$179 for each new immigrant, compared to \$873 in Toronto, \$558 in Peel, \$503 in Durham and \$418 in Halton.

BOOK & WIN!



Go places... for less!

1,000'S OF DISCOUNTED TRIPS AVAILABLE

Puerto Plata 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 24	Allegro Playa Dorada 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 24 \$469 AT/TS TAX \$274	Varadero 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 26, 27	Hotel Internacional 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 26, 27 \$529 SUNO/50 TAX \$199
Cayo Coco 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 27	Iberostar Dakqiri 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 27 \$629 AT/TS TAX \$199	Punta Cana 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 25	Barcelo Bavaro Caribe 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 25 \$629 AT/TS TAX \$274
Jamaica 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 28, Dec 05	Holiday Inn 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 28, Dec 05 \$729 SUNO/50 TAX \$248	Mayan Riviera 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 26, 27	Club El Mandarin 1 wk • All Inclusive Nov 26, 27 \$759 AT/TS TAX \$263

***NOVEMBER BOOKING BONANZA!**
Book & win lots of amazing prizes!
GREAT PRICES... GREAT SERVICE... AND A GREAT CHANCE TO WIN!
For more details visit belairtravel.com

4 Winners Daily!

Book online today at belairtravel.com!

TOLL FREE 1-888-7BELAIR

Local: 416-288-6500 (Scarborough, 2206 Eglinton Avenue East) | Local: 905-438-8888 (Oshawa, 1288 Ritson Road North)

Toronto departures. Package Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include hotel taxes and service charges. All advertised prices were the minimum adult prices available at press time and may vary according to dates chosen. Prices are for new bookings only, subject to change, and to availability at time of booking. Canadian and foreign departure taxes, transport related fees, fuel surcharges, GST (where applicable), service fees and insurance are not included. Please refer to the tour operator's brochures for full terms and conditions. See the applicable Sunquest brochures for terms & conditions and complete details. Promotions subject to change without notice. Call 1-800-10226.

Michael-Angelo's



PROUD TO BE BACK IN MARKHAM



Michael Pugliese, CEO with sisters Sandra & RoseAnn

The Pugliese family is pleased to be back in Markham with a state-of-the-art grocery complex, after a 10 year hiatus. This community has played a major role in the history of our family's business, and to return with the most modern grocery complex in Markham is doubly rewarding.




Family patriarch, Angelo Pugliese, started the family's grocery heritage more than five decades ago including owning and operating prosperous fruit and vegetable markets in Toronto and Markham before moving to Mississauga to open a full-service supermarket in 1985.

We changed to our current company name in 1995, always keeping to our core values of quality, freshness and value. These values helped us to win numerous awards including The Mississauga News Readers' Choice Awards for Best Independent Grocery Store and the Consumers' Choice Awards for Best Fruit & Vegetable Store. All this expertise has come together in our new Markham facility that features:

- The widest variety of fresh produce available anywhere, including organic fruits and vegetables
- Professional butchers who feature naturally-aged Certified Angus Beef and pasteurized Northridge Farms meats
- Fresh & live seafood • Brand Name groceries • Fully stocked deli and On-site Bakery
- Our own "Angelico's" brand of freshly-prepared foods, sauces, soups and dressings
- Team of Professional Chefs • On-site catering services, bistro, juice bar and complete floral service.

Daily deliveries from the Ontario Food Terminal, unrivalled selection and a family tradition of excellence in family food retailing have earned Michael-Angelo's its outstanding reputation. We're now ready to show Markham what we have to offer - and that's "only the very best".

THIS WEEK'S SPECIALS

<p>PRODUCE</p>  <p>Product of U.S.A. or Mexico, Canada No. 1 Fresh, Extra Large Field Tomatoes .79 lb 1.74 kg</p>	<p>GROCERY</p>  <p>Christie Dad's Cookies 1 69 325g / 350g pkg</p>	<p>DELI</p>  <p>Mastro, Magra Spicy or Regular San Daniele Mortadella 3 99 8.80 kg</p>	<p>MEAT</p>  <p>Fresh AAA Alberta Beef Boneless Eye of Round Roast 3 49 7.69 kg</p>
--	--	---	---

PRICES VALID AT MARKHAM LOCATION ONLY FROM THURS. NOV. 24 - WED. NOV. 30
LOOK FOR MORE GREAT SPECIALS IN OUR FLYER IN THIS PAPER!

celebrate
THE SEASON

Visit us for all your personal & corporate gift giving ideas & party needs. • Festive floral arrangements • Gift baskets to suit any budget • Gift cards • Specialty cakes, chocolates, cookies • Party planners

www.michaelangelos.ca

Bringing You "only the very best"



8555 Woodbine Ave. (at Hwy. 7)

Business Hours
Monday - Friday - 8am-10pm
Saturday - 8am-9pm
Sunday - 9am-6pm

Tel. 905-307-8555



We reserve the right to limit quantities. No refunds. Savings based on regular prices at Michael-Angelo's. Although we strive for accuracy in both copy and illustrations, errors may occur. Photos are representational. We reserve the right to correct any errors. Specials available only while quantities last.