

MEDIA RELEASE

**December 21, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MR11-063**

**English Language Students
Make Connections at NIC**

A student in Noreen McCaffrey’s English Language for Adults class at North Island College immigrated from China only weeks ago. Each day she comes to class and is coached on the standard Canadian greeting, ‘Hello. How are you?’ “Today when she entered the classroom, she said it spontaneously,” says McCaffrey. “The whole class cheered.”

At NIC, the term ‘International Student’ includes immigrant students who have come to Canada to live but Naomi Wolfe, an instructor with NIC’s English Language Program (ELSA), is quick to clarify that immigrant students have different needs than traditional international students who are coming to Canada to study with the intention of returning to their home country.

“Immigrant students have given up their entire life. They make a deep commitment to become active members of a new culture, community and country. The shift is so big it can impact a person’s sense of identity in a way that is not always temporary,” explains Wolfe. “They’re looking for work, sometimes whole new careers, their kids are in school. These new Canadians are very invested in community. That’s why language learning is so vital.”

NIC’s ELSA program, offers beginner-level English instruction for landed immigrants and refugees or those applying to become landed immigrants. This program is designed to give students the English language and life skills necessary for them to function in Canadian society. The Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development and the Welcome BC Branch sponsor this program.



ESL students Fionna Chung from Korea, and Karen Beaudoia from Peru, with instructor Naomi Wolfe.

The College also offers an Academic English Language program which prepares students for entrance into university and college programs. This program offers four levels including pre-intermediate, intermediate, advanced, and university/college preparation. Each level provides courses in reading/writing, speaking/listening as well as grammar. Electives are available as well and include pronunciation, IELTS preparation and a seminar course which individualizes instructional support.

“NIC has helped me so much to overcome my fear,” states Karen Beaudoia, a student from Peru who has been in the ELSA program for four months. “I’m much more confident now and starting to feel like I belong in my new life.”

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The next session of the ELSA program at NIC will begin on January 3rd and there are still spaces available. Interested students are assessed by an ESL faculty member to determine the most appropriate courses for registration and success. For more information please contact Colleen Hanley at 250-334-5021.

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