



# Showing our Roots

ARDA Newsletter  
Winter 2010

## Newcomer Settlement Project

The Newcomer Settlement Project is an initiative shared by ARDA, the Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency, and the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority. The project provides settlement services to the quad counties through Regional Immigration Navigator Tanya Felix. Tanya's role is to provide support to newcomers as they make their transition to life in our region. She acts as a starting point for anyone considering a move to the quad-county region and also works with community groups, employers, and organizations in trying to make our communities more welcoming for newcomers and discusses options for hiring internationally.

The project recently launched a series of workshops. The first workshop, held on February 15, 2010, focused on "Hiring temporary foreign workers" and included two guest speakers; Vida Davis from Service Canada's Foreign Worker Unit and Godfrey Marchand from Halifax BioMedical. Vida presented on behalf of her department and outlined the four steps a business must take to hire a temporary foreign worker. Godfrey spoke first hand about the process the business had gone through and the success he has had hiring a foreign worker.

There will be four of these sessions in total – one for every county, and the topics will differ at each. Upcoming sessions will focus on settlement and integration, conducting business internationally, and creating welcoming communities.



A Relocation and Settlement Guide has been designed with immigrants in mind but is also a valuable resource for people moving here from other parts of Canada and even former residents.

The guide was developed in response to requests from newcomers and organizations for more information on the process of immigration and settlement. The primary focus of the guide is to assist newcomers with settling in the area, but it also includes information on resources available in other parts of Nova Scotia, neighboring municipalities, and Canada.

The guide is available to download on ARDA's website or can be picked from ARDA, GCRDA or S-HRDA.

## Twenty community leaders first to graduate from StFX Extension Department's Rural Leadership Development pilot Program

Twenty emerging community leaders from Antigonish, Guysborough, Inverness, Pictou, and Richmond counties graduated on February 13, 2010 from the StFX Extension Department's six-month pilot program in Rural Leadership Development. Alisha Grant and Shannon Long from ARDA were two of the four Antigonish participants graduating.

The participants spent six months focusing on developing their leadership skills and identifying local and regional community development opportunities. "All the communities from which these leaders hail, as well as the region as a whole, will benefit from the participants' knowledge, experience, skills and networking gained during this program," says Phil Davison, interim director, Extension Department.



ARDA's Alana Paon working with Town of Antigonish councillors and senior staff during a strategic planning session.

## Strategic Planning

In 2009, ARDA set out to build capacity within community groups and organizations by facilitating strategic planning. Significant work has been done on strategic plans for the Town of Antigonish Council and senior management, the Beautification Committee for the Town of Antigonish, and the Antigonish Highland Society.



ARDA's Alisha Grant and Shannon Long with their portfolios at the graduation ceremony of the Rural Leadership Program.

## ARDA's Roots

If we were to sum up in one word what we're about, it would be this: Antigonish. Everything we do is about empowering the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to be a thriving place to do business, a great place to live, and a community of growth. We believe that it's the combination of economic and community development that makes for a strong, sustainable future.



We're on Twitter!  
Receive current tweets about ARDA's projects and what we're up to in 140 characters or less.  
<http://twitter.com/antigonishrda>



In December ARDA hosted a Holiday Open House. It was an opportunity for members of the community, our partners, and stakeholders to come and chat with ARDA staff and board members, to spread some holiday cheer, and for us to say thank you for all of the support. Over 30 people attended and ARDA hopes to make this an annual event!

## Website Updates

ARDA's website is kept up to date and features our news and success stories. Over the past year, ARDA has had great success in a number of projects and we're very proud of our work. One of our success stories even features video testimonials from community leaders and business owners and summarizes just a few of our accomplishments in the last year.

Bookmark [www.antigonishrda.ns.ca](http://www.antigonishrda.ns.ca) and visit it often so you know what we're up to at all times.

## Our Team

Gerry Grant  
Executive Director

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Office Manager

Shannon Long  
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Alana Paon  
Business Retention and  
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Executive

### Development Officers:

Ashley Bouchie  
Alisha Grant  
Heather Myers  
Shannon MacIntyre

## Our Board

George Lerikos  
Sally van de Wiel  
Donnie MacDonald  
Liz Chisholm  
Ian MacNeil  
Joe Boudreau  
Vaughan Chisholm  
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## Business Retention and Expansion (BRE)

BRE is an internationally-recognized program that helps existing N.S. businesses stay and grow in the province. ARDA staff conduct business surveys to identify barriers of growth, develop strategies to overcome those barriers, and seize opportunities for expansion. In order to prioritize which businesses to visit, ARDA has developed a prioritization matrix that has been identified by our funders as an RDA best practice. Check our website under "Success Stories" for more information.



In July 2009, the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage hired consultant Roger Brooks, to conduct a "secret shopper" style assessment of the Northumberland region from Amherst to Aulds Cove. This assessment is an important component in understanding our current tourism market. The community of Antigonish can use the information to move forward attracting more visitors to our area. The assessment report provided valuable insight and suggestions on the areas of the community that needed improvement and how to undertake those changes. The report can be found on ARDA's website: <http://www.antigonishrda.ns.ca/resources/publications/>



On November 17, 2009, the Olympic Torch Relay made its way through Antigonish. It started in the county and made its way through town to the StFX campus for a two-hour celebration. An estimated 2,500 people were in attendance for this once in a lifetime opportunity. The day was filled with excitement and fun with many interactive games and talent on the stage to engage the crowd of all ages. To host an event of this size meant that many people had to come together. ARDA was a member of the community task force consisting of numerous community partners including the Town of Antigonish, the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, StFX, RCMP, Health Promotion and Protection, Antigonish Chamber of Commerce, Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority, 98.9 XFM, RBC, and Coca-Cola.