



## **Employment Summit aims to connect Syrian refugees to jobs**

### **New arrivals from Syria get coordinated help to gain an economic foothold in GTA**

**Toronto, March 21, 2016** – A unique networking summit to familiarize Syrian refugees with the GTA job market and connect them with interested employers is being hosted by Ryerson University, the Consortium of Agencies Serving Internationally-trained Persons (CASIP), Lifeline Syria and the Refugee Career Jumpstart Program (RCJP).

The one-day event will be held at Ryerson University on March 21. The summit's goal is to help job-ready refugees displaced by the Syrian conflict find meaningful employment as quickly as possible.

Approximately 50 refugees who have at least an intermediate English language proficiency are expected to attend. The refugees will participate in a workshop offering a range of practical skills for finding meaningful employment in the Canadian workplace. The day-long event also features a keynote address on finding success in the workplace by Ellen Austin, Human Resources Business Partner at The Business Development Bank of Canada and an advocate for the inclusion and employment of internationally trained professionals.

The summit also involves working with attendees to create and register a skills profile with Magnet, a cross-sectoral employment technology platform, to support their job search.

Once registered with Magnet, candidates attending the seminar can be matched to employers who have expressed interest in hiring refugees based upon their skills, preferences and talent requirements. Also attending the seminar will be a range of support agencies engaged in helping Syrian refugees find jobs and enhance their skills and language proficiency.

Magnet's data-rich network, developed at Ryerson University and founded in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, creates a platform that allows potential employers and support agencies to more easily identify and provide professional development support for job candidates within the refugee talent pool.

"Organizations like the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge have forged creative partnership with employers, like Paramount Fine Foods, to address the support and employment needs of Syrian refugees," says Mark Patterson, Executive Director, Magnet.

“However, in many cases, finding the right candidates and helping them properly prepare for these opportunities is a major challenge. Magnet provides the technology infrastructure that interconnects the community and employment support agencies and provides one point of contact for employers. We are excited to be working with CASIP and other agencies in the Greater Toronto Area. Magnet offers a platform for scaling this effort efficiently and effectively matching people with needs and people with capacity.”

More than 70,000 job seekers and 6,000 employers are currently registered with Magnet. Membership also includes more than 25 universities and colleges, along with an array of community-based employment stakeholders.

“CASIP is a network of 11 employment service providers; together we have decades of experience and expertise in helping new Canadians find employment across the GTA,” says Allison Pond, CEO at ACCES Employment. “We are working closely with our many employer partners to ensure Syrian newcomers find good and meaningful employment.”

Registering and building a profile on Magnet is free. Refugees can learn more about how Magnet can help them with their job search and professional development by visiting <http://www.magnet.today/>. The site features a page specifically for the Syrian refugee community.

Magnet is a technology platform that can support communication between refugees and employers in all communities across Canada. Other communities wanting to learn how Magnet can help can contact Magnet by visiting [www.magnet.today/contact/](http://www.magnet.today/contact/)

#### **Social media:**

#### **#employSyrians**

Web: [magnet.today](http://magnet.today)

Twitter: @MagnetToday

LinkedIn: [Magnet.Today](http://Magnet.Today)

Facebook: [Magnet.Today](http://Magnet.Today)

#### **About Magnet**

Magnet is a new network powered by data-rich, job-matching technology that connects job seekers with employers based upon skills, preferences and talent needs. The network is also a unique source of real-time labour market information for decision makers and community planners. Magnet’s goal is to address unemployment and under-employment specifically as it relates to youth, new immigrants, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and other individuals facing barriers to employment.

**About CASIP**

CASIP is a consortium of independent, community-based agencies and colleges who deliver employment and training services to skilled immigrant job seekers and to employers. We have been collaborating since 1998 to drive innovation, advocacy and excellence in employment services for skilled immigrants and employers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

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