

EQUILIBRIUM SCHOOL

July 2026

NEWSLETTER

Hello Equilibrium Newsletter readers!

Now that the warm weather is finally here, many readers are making travel plans. However, with the high price of gasoline these days, some of us are probably limiting ourselves to destinations that aren't too far away. If you're on a budget, yet want to see some very interesting Alberta attractions, consider two that my wife, Judith, and I have visited and enjoyed over the past few years.

[More about Alberta's attractions on page 3.](#)



Remembering Our Friend and Colleague Monika Stefanska

As we wander down the roads of life, we get to meet all sorts of people who play all sorts of roles in our own stories. Like guests at a party or students in an EAL class, some stay longer than they need to and others leave a lot sooner than we'd like. We have no power over this; it is what it is. I am sure that anyone anywhere who was lucky enough to meet Monika Stefanska will agree that she represents the latter.... Read more on page 19.



Tina and her parents

My Dad, Arne V. Jensen by Tina Jensen

I would like to share the story of my sweet dad who passed away on April 20, 2026. And to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone at Equilibrium for your kindness and sympathy.

More on page 4.

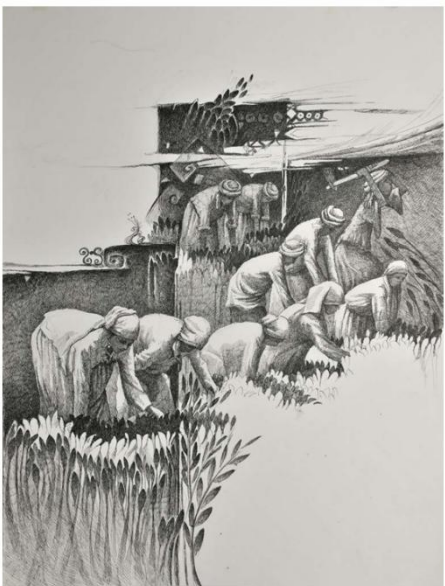


Ukrainian Festival. More about our sponsorship on page 20.



Our LINC students had an amazing time at Bowness Park enjoying a fun picnic filled with laughter, games, and great company...

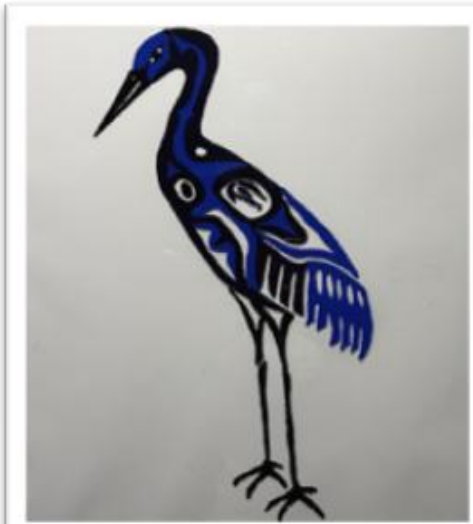
Sunshine, fresh air, and unforgettable memories. See more on page 7.



Our EAL student has an amazing talent — find out who it is on page 22.



One of the most important lessons I've learned from my mother has been to keep moving forward in life, no matter what it throws at you. Read more about the inspiring story of Fatima's mother on page 13.



Indigenous Peoples History month in

Canada. On June 21, it is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Its purpose is to highlight the contributions and cultures of Indigenous Peoples across the country. It's a special month for me, because I'm Indigenous.

More on page 11.

Goals

Exploration



Goals and Exploration

Tina's afternoon class watched some Artemis II footage in April and learned about this extraordinary mission. They wrote about setting goals and exploration.

By Guy

Canada shaped my vision. When I arrived in Canada, after some days all changed (my vision of life). I understand that it's a country of opportunity for hard-workers having goals. But to exchange with most people, you should know how to talk English. While I learn English, I make progress and it permits me to improve myself and understand the system.

By Salem

I am a newcomer in Canada, so since the first day when I came, I began to explore this big country. Everything is different than my native country. I did train for driving a forklift, but unfortunately, I never worked with it. Now my mission is to learn and improve my English for the best

integration because I applied for many jobs before, but I never was selected.

By Saida

Canada (Calgary) is my new exploration; it is a challenge for me. This adventure is teaching me how to live far from my family, and independence and patience. It is teaching me about this beautiful city (Calgary), different places and cultures. Living in Canada helps me to change my ideas, gives me opportunities to improve myself (educational and professional). I learned then to achieve my goals is not impossible, I just need to work hard and not give up.

By Sadiq

I worked for five years as a radio presenter, but my specific goal was presentation on TV screen. It wasn't an easy jump for me because working in TV needs more professional training. So, I started my best and when I had free time, I watched national, then international services, live TV talk shows, and so on. After one year, I found my first TV job as a presenter of short news bulletins. I can't forget that because I was really excited.

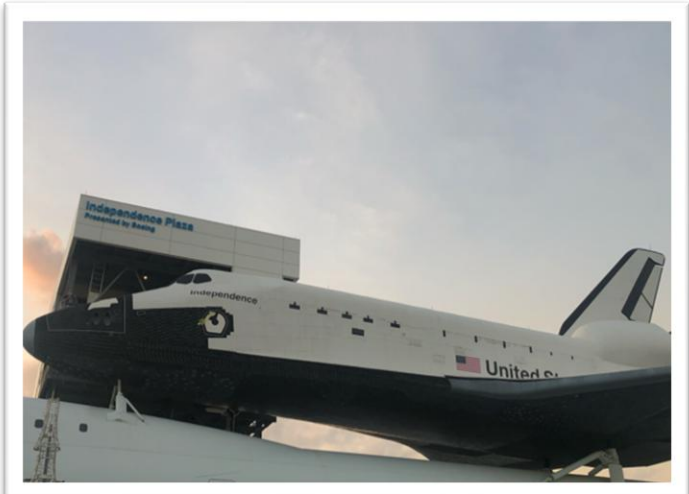
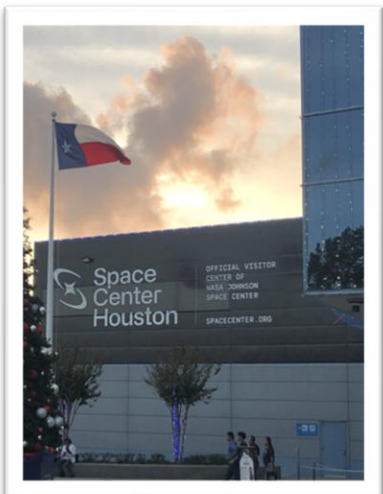
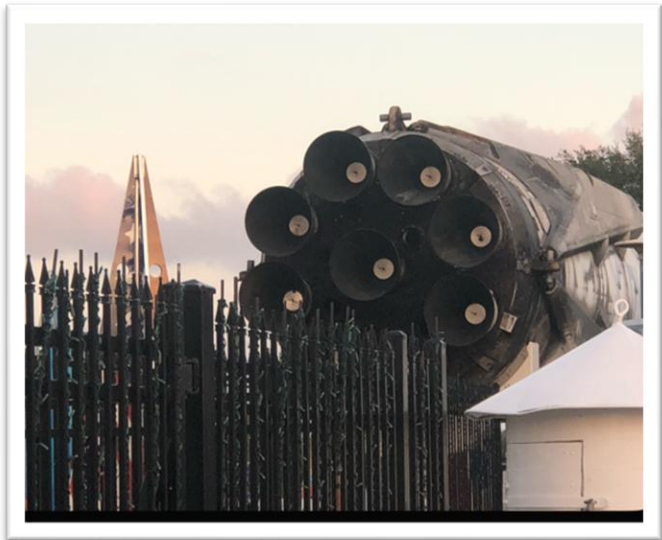
By Michel

Learning many things in our life changes the way we think or act. I will present a new exploration of my life and state how it transformed me. On the one hand, I have learned about new personnel skills that

you need to have to get a job, like good communication, problem solving, critical thinking, flexibility and adaptability. Those things taught me the importance of having a good training to be selected for a good job. Another thing that I have learned was exploration of the new country, Canada. I am still learning about community. I met new people and learned about their culture and shared experience. To conclude, learning new things and discovering new places improves our brain and breaks the myth about how we think.

By Amirouche

I'm an Algerian engineer in one of the best international corporations. Before becoming an engineer, I studied 5 long years at the university, and I aced my master's degree of Mechanical and Petrochemical units in 2014. In 2015, I was selected by Sonatrach (an Algerian international corporation). I began my career as an engineer in training for 2 years, then I became a Permanent Engineer Level 01. I took many years to reach my goals. During my long years of work, I enjoyed working with people from different provinces and countries. I worked and collaborated with many multidisciplinary teams. I grew in my career, and I brought value for my company. As an engineer level 03, I took a career break in January 2026.



Space Center Huston, Texas, Pictures by SSero.



Tina’s afternoon class got into the springtime spirit and composed some haiku, which are traditional Japanese poems. They are 3-line poems with a pattern of 5-7-5: five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line, five syllables in the third line. Haiku are usually about nature or beautiful things.

By Cedric
Come and sleep with me
Feel the softness of my arms
Life will be better

By Sadiq
Look! Spring comes again
The wind brings black and white clouds
Oh! It is raining

By Michel
Lovely pink colour
Clouds of glory fill the sky
Let all come singing

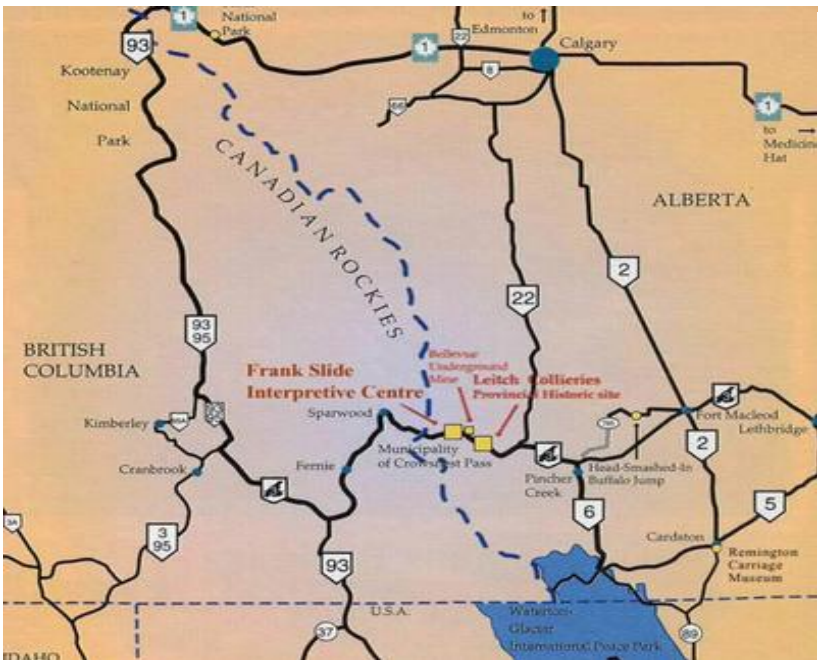
By Amirouche
Believe in yourself
You are stronger than you think
Don’t give up – good luck!



Hello Equilibrium Newsletter readers!

Now that the warm weather is finally here, many readers are making travel plans. However, with the high price of gasoline these days, some of us are probably limiting ourselves to destinations that aren’t too far away. If you’re on a budget, yet want to see some very interesting Alberta attractions, consider two that my wife, Judith, and I have visited and enjoyed over the past few years.

- Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, <https://frankslide.ca/plan-your-visit> :**
Located about a 2.5 hour (225km) drive south of Calgary in the scenic Highway 3 Crowsnest Pass, this Alberta heritage museum not only provides information about the massive and deadly 1903 Turtle Mountain rock slide that demolished much of Frank, an early 20th century coal-mining town, but it also gives lots of information about other coal mining developments and tragedies throughout the area. The Interpretive Centre also offers viewing platforms and trails through the debris fields on both side of Highway 3 in addition to various exhibits. Judy and I spent at least 3 hours at the museum and could easily have stayed longer, but we visited in late December so limited our time outdoors due to the cold weather. Also, we wanted to see many of the other small towns and attractions throughout the Crowsnest Pass.
- Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, <https://headsmashedin.ca> :** With a name like this, you just know its got to be an interesting place to visit, right?! It is located a few kilometers west of Highway 2 on Hwy. 285, very close to the junction of Highway 3 with Fort Macleod. From Calgary, you can drive there in less than 2.5 hours. The Interpretive Centre is a UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site that preserves and interprets over 6,000 years of Indigenous, First Nations culture and their ties to the massive Prairie Bison herds that roamed all over the area for centuries before the majestic animals were hunted to extinction by intruding settlers. The museum offers interactive exhibits and outside interpretive trails, all for reasonable admittance fees. While Judy and I visited the museum for at least 3 hours, we could have stayed longer and still not have seen everything of interest.



ALBERTA ATTRACTIONS

While it is possible to visit both sites in one day, I recommend staying in a campground (such as Chain Lakes Provincial Park, situated on Highway 22) or a hotel/motel in the general area to take your time and visit each area separately. South of Calgary, we took Hwy 22 to the Frank Slide museum, then headed east up Hwy 3 to the junction of Hwy 2 and the nearby Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Interpretive Centre, but the reverse trip would work just as well. ENJOY!



My Dad, Arne V. Jensen - by Tina Jensen



I would like to share the story of my sweet dad, who passed away on April 20, 2026. And to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone at Equilibrium for your kindness and sympathy.

Arne Vedel Jensen passed away peacefully in the early hours of April 20, 2026, aged 92. His youngest daughter Tina was at his side.

He was the loving husband to Etsuko for 61 years and beloved dad to Lisa and Tina.

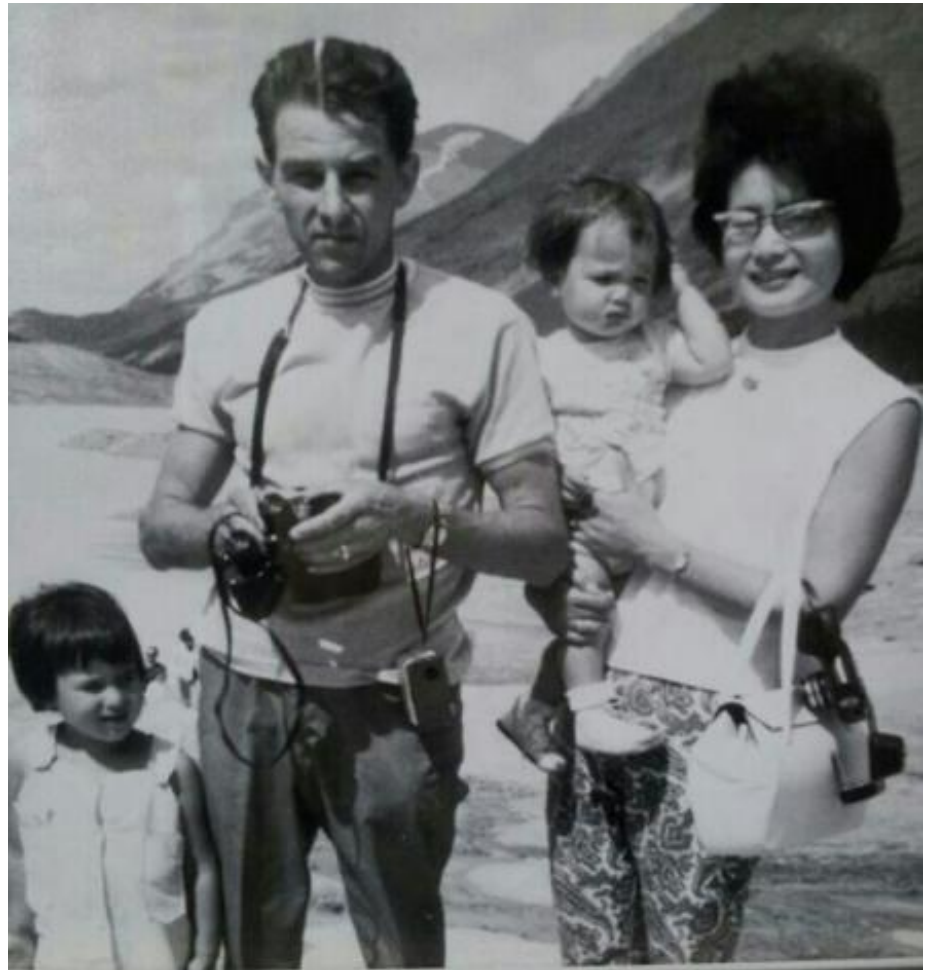
His passing was peaceful, quiet and calm. He did not suffer any pain or fear, and remained patient, pleasant and agreeable. His doctors, nurses and physio team described him as "lovely" and "a gentleman." One of his hospital roommates was pleased to hear him singing at night.

Arne was born in Denmark, the second of five brothers. He lost his mother when he was 12 years old but still seemed to have many happy and funny memories of his childhood on the farm.

He immigrated to Canada by ship in the early 1960s, seeking a new life. He worked on farms in Ontario and Red Deer before settling in Calgary. He met Etsuko through a correspondence program (details have always been vague!) and..."things happened," he said. They were married in Calgary on October 23, 1964. They bought a brand-new house in Calgary, where he and Etsuko continued to live. Five years later, Arne's brother Helge and Etsuko's sister Shigeko married, and soon after Lisa and Tina enjoyed the company of their little cousins, Nicholas and Maja. The two families spent lots of time together, enjoying the outdoors and celebrating holidays and special occasions.

Arne worked hard as a finishing carpenter, mostly in Calgary. He had one exciting job in the 1980s that took him to Japan for 6 months working on a yacht, which then sailed to San Diego for completion. Otherwise, he was always home for dinner and spent his free time working on the yard and garden or building and fixing things in the garage. There was nothing he couldn't build, fix or grow.

Many happy summers were spent driving through Canada and the USA in the big blue suburban, camping in the green and white



Boler at KOA campgrounds. Stops included Mt. Rushmore, Devil's Tower, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Las Vegas, Disneyland,

Washington DC, CN Tower, Great Lakes and Niagara Falls, just to name a few; the Boler trailer was plastered with souvenir stickers. Closer to home, the family visited many nearby places since the girls were little, including hikes to Johnston Canyon and the Lake Louise teahouse, to the sound of Arne's ever-present Danish clogs. Trips to Banff, Christina Lake, Two-Jack Lake, Lake Minnewanka, Peyto Lake, Drumheller, the Enchanted Forest, the Ogopogo and Flintstone parks, numerous hot springs, and of course, the Calgary Stampede all created wonderful memories and many, many colour slides!

There were family trips to Japan in 1970 and Denmark in 1974, but Arne made a solid, happy life in Calgary. He took the girls swimming, bike-riding and ice-skating, tobogganing, and the whole family tried cross-country skiing. He loved playing board games, dominos and card games, where it was easy for him to win as he could see the cards reflected in everyone else's eyeglasses! He enjoyed 5-pin bowling with Etsuko, and carpet bowling and riding his bicycle in his retirement. He travelled in Alberta with his 55+ Alberta Games carpet bowling team. The last few years presented medical issues and hospital stays - minor strokes, neuropathy and stage 4 prostate cancer. But Arne never complained and was always pleasant and cooperative. He enjoyed relaxing in his big green chair doing crossword puzzles, sudoku, Reader's Digest, watching old movies and offering commentary on the neighbours and current events, accompanied by Loki the cat on his lap. Arne was humble, reliable, hard-working, and a bit shy. But he had a dry and observant sense of humour - he didn't say much, but he didn't miss anything.

He had a long, happy and peaceful life.

Arne will be greatly missed by his wife and daughters, extended family and his longtime neighbours and friends.

STARTING AGAIN IN CANADA

Opportunities, Risks, and the Hard Work Behind Immigration

Before Immigration: The Dream and Expectations

Before I immigrated to Canada, I had already built a life and a career in my home country. I was 39 years old, and for almost 15 years, I had been working as a university professor at a prestigious university in Iran. It was not just a job for me. It was the dream job I had worked hard for many years to achieve. I had studied, struggled, competed, and sacrificed to reach that position. In many ways, I felt that I had finally arrived at the place I had once dreamed about.

Because of that, the decision to immigrate was not simple. Immigration did not only mean moving from one country to another. For me, it meant leaving behind a professional identity, a stable position, a respected title, familiar colleagues, students, friends, and a life that had taken many years to build. It meant accepting that I might have to begin again in a new country where my past experience, education, and professional achievements might not immediately have the same meaning.

Before coming to Canada, I had many hopes and expectations. Like many immigrants, I thought about better opportunities, more stability, a safer future, and a new environment where hard work could open new doors. I imagined Canada as a place where I could grow, learn, and build a better future for myself and my family. At the same time, I knew that this new beginning would not be easy. Starting again at 39 is very different from starting when you are very young. At that age, you do not come with an empty backpack. You bring your history, your achievements, your responsibilities, and also the emotional weight of everything you leave behind.

Looking back, I can say that before immigration, my dream was not only to come to Canada. My real dream was to rebuild my life without losing myself. I wanted to respect the past I had worked so hard for but also find the courage to begin a new chapter. That was the first lesson immigration taught me: sometimes opportunity comes with loss, and sometimes a new beginning starts with the difficult decision to leave behind something valuable.

The Reality After Arrival

When we arrived in Canada, it was early January. By the time we landed in Calgary, it was one of the coldest nights of the year. The temperature was around -35°C. For us, this was not just cold weather; it was a completely new experience. We had never felt anything like that before. After almost two days of travelling, long stops, and three flight legs from Isfahan to Calgary, we were physically exhausted and emotionally overwhelmed.

Our first impression was difficult. When we stepped into the condo we had rented online, we found it very small, cramped, dark, and empty. It was not the beginning we had imagined. We were thankful that, with the help of the internet, we had been able to arrange a place before arriving, but the reality of that first night was still very hard. Some experiences are difficult to explain because words cannot fully

describe the feeling of arriving in a new country, in freezing weather, with no familiar people around, and realizing that everything must start again from the beginning.

Settlement was also complicated because of the delay in visa processing. My wife, Elahe, had missed her Summer Term and had to withdraw from all her courses. When we arrived, she had to continue her studies while already carrying the pressure of a missed term and a difficult transition. At the same time, we had to learn how to live in a new city, understand new systems, manage daily needs, and slowly create a sense of home.

Those first days taught me that immigration begins with more than paperwork and travel. It begins with uncertainty, stress, and the need to solve many problems at the same time. However, it also begins with resilience. Even when the first impression is difficult, you start learning, adjusting, and finding small ways to move forward.

Rebuilding Life Step by Step

Soon after arriving, both of us started working. Elahe was studying and working at the same time because if she had only studied, managing our life in Canada would have been very difficult. A large part of the burden was on her shoulders. She had to manage her studies, work, and many responsibilities of our new life. I tried to support her as much as I could and help with anything that could make life a little easier for her.

Less than a year after our arrival, we were both working in the same workplace. With Elahe's referral, I moved from the college where I was working to Equilibrium School. This became an important step in our settlement. The friendly environment, professional setting, supportive colleagues, and lovely students at Equilibrium School made our days more meaningful, even though we were thousands of miles away from our homeland. Working with newcomers and language learners also helped us feel connected to people who were going through their own journeys of starting again.

Still, we know that we are only at the beginning of this new path. Every day, new problems come up, and every day we have to find ways to manage them. Immigration is not only about finding a job or renting a place. It is also about building the roots that a new life needs making friends, creating a new sense of belonging, understanding a new culture, and rebuilding identity and meaning in a different society.

This part of the journey takes time. It cannot happen in a few weeks or months. But step by step, with work, patience, and support, a new life slowly begins to take shape. For us, Canada is still a new chapter, but it is a chapter we are learning to write with hope, responsibility, and hard work.

Opportunities, Risks, and the Work Behind Immigration

Immigration can open many doors, but it does not open them automatically. Canada offers many opportunities: education, safety, diversity, professional growth, and a society where people from different backgrounds can try to build a better future. For many newcomers, these opportunities are the reason they take the risk of leaving their home country and starting again.

However, immigration also comes with real risks. Some people arrive with strong education



and experience, but they may not find the same professional position quickly. Some need to study again, improve their language, change their career path, or accept jobs that are very different from what they had before. Financial pressure, loneliness, cultural differences, and uncertainty can make the first years very difficult.

For people in their late thirties or older, this experience can be even more challenging. At this stage of life, people usually carry more responsibilities. They may have family duties, financial commitments, and a professional identity that took many years to build. Starting again does not mean forgetting the past. It means using the strength of the past to survive and grow in a new place.

This is why immigration requires more than hope. It requires patience, flexibility, humility, and continuous hard work. Newcomers need to learn new systems, build networks, improve communication skills, and accept that progress may be slower than expected. The journey is not always smooth, but every small step matters.

Final Reflection

When I think about our journey, I do not see immigration as a simple success story. I see it as a difficult but meaningful process of rebuilding. We left behind a familiar life, professional achievements, family, friends, and a sense of belonging. In Canada, we had to begin again in many ways: emotionally, professionally, socially, and culturally.

At the same time, this journey has taught us important lessons. We learned that strength does not always mean feeling confident. Sometimes strength means continuing even when everything feels uncertain. We learned that building a new life takes time, and that small achievements should be respected because they are part of a much bigger journey.

For anyone thinking about immigration, especially in their late thirties or later, my message is simple: come with hope but also come with realistic expectations. Canada can offer opportunities, but those opportunities need effort, patience, and resilience. Immigration is not an easy shortcut to a better life. It is a new beginning that asks a lot from you before it gives back.

We are still building our life here, one day at a time. The roots are not deep yet, but they are growing. And perhaps this is the real meaning of immigration: learning how to plant yourself again in new soil, while carrying the memory and strength of where you came from.

By Amin P.

A Special Person

Tina’s afternoon class wrote about a special person in their lives.

Guy

My sister was a strong woman. After getting her visa for Canada, she left her country two days later. When she arrived in Canada, she didn’t know that Calgary particularly was an English-speaking city. After two years of English learning, she began to look for a job. She did cleaning for two years and she never gave up because she graduated in Communications. A couple months later, she found a job as Director of Programs at Canada Radio. She got married, had two children and finally became very happy in her new life.

Cedric

When I was young, my brother Herman liked to play soccer. He spent most of his time with his friends at the stadium. He shared with us his best exploits every day. One day, we had a big surprise at home. His coach came to our home for a meeting with our parents. He told them that he would like Herman to become a member of his team. My parents didn’t know this before. They were surprised about it. They didn’t give him their answer right away because it was important to have a deep dialogue with Herman first. Based on many stories narrated by my brother and us to our parents, my parents concluded that Herman liked soccer. They decided he could become a member of Dynamo Club. It was a great moment for my family and his friends.

Amirouche

My friend was a pharmacist in Algeria. He left the country to join his wife in France. When he arrived, it was during COVID. They told me “it is a hard moment’ but he was lucky to find a good job opportunity at the hospital in Paris. In 2023, he invited me to visit him, so I spent with his family (wife and two children) a pleasant couple of weeks. During this visit, we planned and visited many tourist areas, parks, museums. We tasted Indian and Thai food. I thank him so much for the good “souvenir.”

Saida

My father was born in Algeria. He left the country at the age of 18 and went to France. He studied there and learned more skills. After a few years, he became a carpenter. He worked very hard as a carpenter in France for more than 20 years. At the age of 20, he came to Algeria and married my mother. After their marriage, my father came back to France for his work, but my mom stayed in Algeria. She didn’t want to leave Algeria and her parents. For this reason, my father spent 20 years between Algeria and France. Now my father is retired and lives with my mother and their children in Algeria. My father is very happy with his life and enjoys it.

Astrid

My friend was a student in Cameroon. He studied system information at university. He left the country for educational reasons and came to Morocco. In this country, he went back to school to become an informatician. Sometimes it was difficult and hard, but he didn’t give up. After two years, he moved to France. He found work and started to work there in a very big company. We kept a good and long relationship and sometimes we had a long conversation on the phone about his country, people and more. I think that he was very happy in his life and safe. He shared with me a lot of pictures about his new life in France.

Sadiq

My father was a teacher. He started his first job as a history teacher in 1965. He loved it because he thought his students should learn about his country. In 1972, he went to Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Sometimes my father said to us, “I had a very difficult situation. For example, students needed books and we applied to the government, but we didn’t get enough books for them.”

Roman

I was born in the Ukraine about 40 years ago. My mother was Ukrainian and my father too. They worked together in a big organization and met there. They got married after 5 years. I had two sisters. I came to Canada two years ago with my family. During this time, I went to Equilibrium School in Calgary and finished one course. After that, I looked for a job but unfortunately didn’t find one. I felt embarrassed and stressed. I told this to my case manager, and she gave me a couple of pieces of advice. One of these was to come back to school and improve my English knowledge. Improved my language four days a week and felt better and better every day. After that I finished my school and gave my friends advice to go to this school.

Salem

My father was an agricultural engineer. He left his town Skikda when he was 14 years old to Guelma city to learn agriculture. When he was 17 years old, he obtained his first diploma of Technician in Agriculture, then he left Guelma to another town, Mosta. He studied in university and obtained his second diploma in Engineering. After that, he started a career as a teacher and taught agriculture at another city, Constantine. After some years, he ended his career as a teacher and became a manager of a company that sells agricultural products: herbicides, pesticides and fertilizer. He retired when he was 65 years old after a long and hard career.

Michel

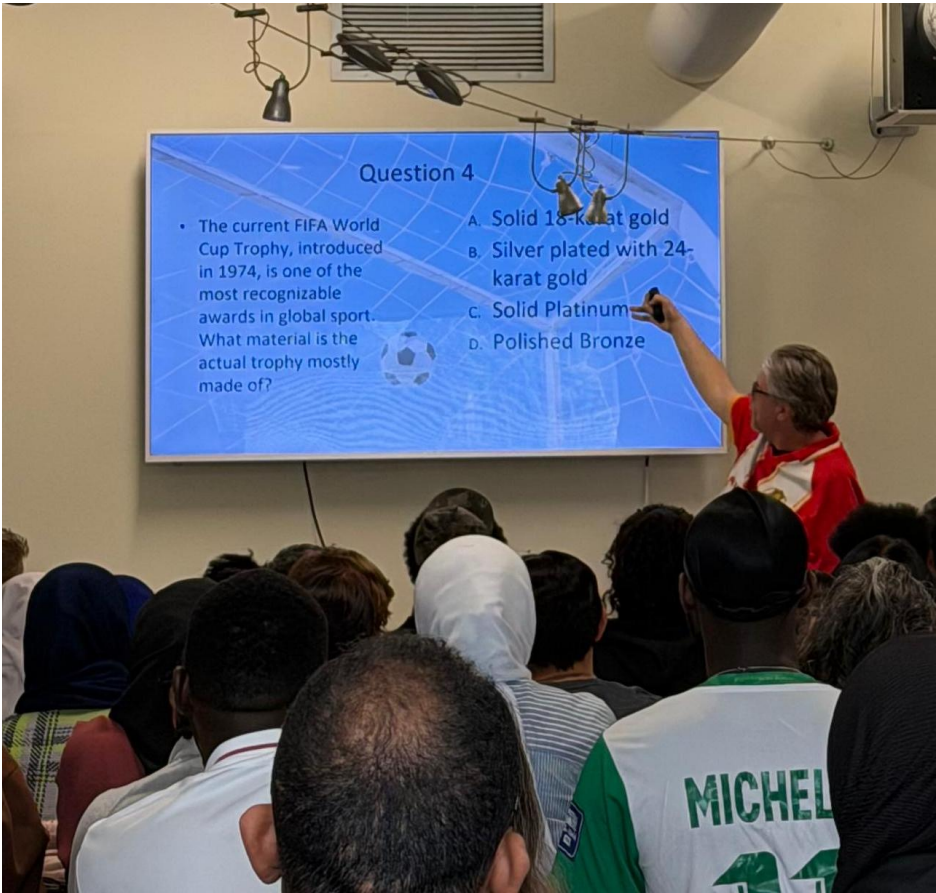
My uncle was an engineer in Cameroon. He left the country and his family for something back and landed in France. In this country, he hadn’t a job and life wasn’t easy for him and his family. Due to many problems, his wife divorced him and left him with four children. After that, he decided to move to another country. He came to Canada and established in Quebec. In this country, he got a good job as a manager and took care of his children. They were very happy with his life.

Mariusz

I have a friend in Poland from my first birthday. When we were children, we were naughty boys. One time we sat on the parapet on the second floor. His mother caught me and him at the same time. She was scary. Another time we decided to do some cooking. We opened cupboards. Next, we took flour and we started to prepare a cake on the floor. All the flour was on floor. She told us this story when we were adults, then we laughed. She told us always when we were too quiet that meant something would happen.



Our **LINC** students spent a wonderful day at Bowness Park, where they gathered for a picnic filled with food, games, and laughter. They enjoyed the sunshine, shared conversations, and had a lot of fun together. It was such a positive experience that many of them said they would love to do it again.



FIFA World Cup 2026



Our students were excited to dive into some fun and surprising soccer facts. Darren even turned it into a mini quiz to test everyone’s knowledge, and the students loved it.



**WORLD
CUP
2026**

Soccer

Soccer(Football)

Tina's afternoon EAL class did a lesson on "Soccer" (Football) and wrote about their experiences and opinions on sports.

They answered these questions:

- 1. Why do you think soccer is the most popular sport in the world?*
- 2. Many soccer fans become violent during tournaments. Why do you think this happens? What can the government do to prevent this?*
- 3. What can children learn from playing sports?*
- 4. Have you ever played a team sport? What skills did you gain?*

Satvinder

Soccer is popular because it is easy to play. People need a ball and some open space. It is played in many countries and enjoyed by people of all ages.

Some fans become violent because they are very emotional about their team. Some fans drink too much alcohol and become violent. The government should make strict laws against those types of fans.

Sports are good for everybody. It makes everybody healthy. Children should participate in sports. A sports person follows discipline and teamwork.

Miu

In my opinion, why it is important depends on the country. Many people bet on the sports games. Soccer only needs a ball and a small space to enjoy it.

Fans become violent because some of them have high adrenalin and lose control. The government can prevent this by increasing stadium security and banning violent fans.

Children can learn teamwork, discipline, communication and how to deal with both winning and losing.

Mariusz

When we are starting to teach children, we're trying to give them part of life. Sport teaches kids discipline. If you want to be successful in life, then you must prepare for hard and disciplined work. Next, every teacher has to show children how to lose because when you're losing the game, it's part of life. You're trying to explain to them that this is not the end; next time will be better. The next important thing is respect for the next player. Next is cooperation with another player. Sport also teaches

children creative thinking. In my opinion, every child should have contact with sport. Sport is good for health.

Roman

I think soccer is the most popular sport in the world because it is easy to play. Soccer has simple rules. To play soccer, you need a ball and some space. People of all ages can play it.

Some fans become violent because they are very emotional about their teams. Drinks, for example alcohol, and large crowds can cause problems. The government can increase security, punish violent behaviour and promote respect between fans and visitors

When children are playing soccer in a team, they learn about respect, cooperation between each other, communication, discipline and responsibility. This sport also helps them stay healthy and make new friends I play soccer very often with my children. In Ukraine, I played on a professional soccer team in my city. My son is now playing soccer in Calgary on the Junior Vancouver Whitecaps team. When I was younger, I learned teamwork, patience and how to work toward a common goal.



Roman

Michel Kuate

Nowadays, playing with a team is beneficial because we earn many skills such as discipline, teamwork and coordination. The first thing young people acquire when playing games is coordination. In fact, by gaming together, we learn how to anticipate, to understand the other players. As a result, the team can win a sport or learn their mistakes. Team sports cultivate discipline and teamwork for teenagers, which are the valuable skills young generations can earn and use those in their life. Children learn respect



and concentration and also train how to follow rules for games. Playing in a team enables children to be focused and develop their critical thinking, train them respect, good communication and continuous improvement.

Astrid

Many reasons that made me think that soccer is the most popular sport in the world are, first of all soccer is the game which represents the members of a country, it reunites people of one country; it's a game together which fights for a country. Finally, the game represents a war where the people of one country get to win the title of champion.

Many soccer fans around the world become very violent during tournaments because it is the passion or lovers of soccer. These kinds of fans know how to play football really, but they just love to see a team play football. Some of them want to be the best champion around the world and when it doesn't happen, they are very violent because they lost the game.

Children learn from playing team sports like loyalty, solidarity, teamwork, self-control, self-confidence, discipline and maybe organization.

I have played a team sport and this sport was handball. I played this game when I was young in high school. The skills I had gained from my experience were teamwork, discipline, solidarity, organization and self-confidence.

Guy

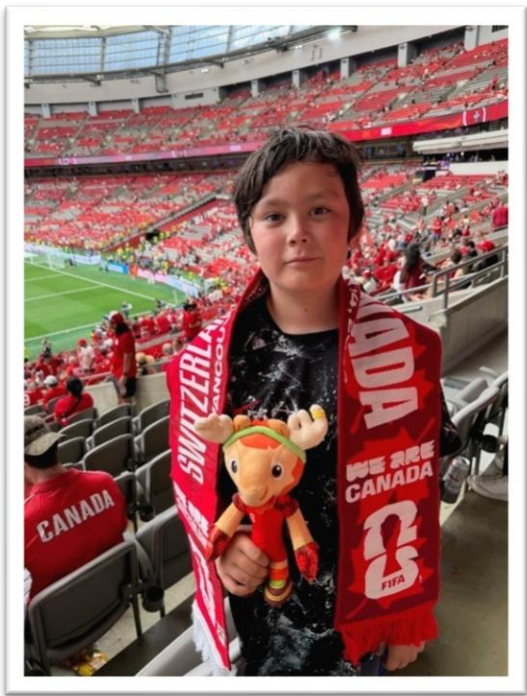
There are many benefits when children play for a team. First, playing for a team is very good for them because it teaches them about team spirit. Also, by playing for a team, they learn how to share, understand and be kind with everyone. Finally, playing a team sport is useful for children because it's good for their discipline. For all these reasons, children should be in team sports, not only for their education, but also for relaxation.

Benafsha

I like to play soccer. I had played with my sister and brother when I was young. We had a good time together. We just played for fun. I do not have experience playing on a team. I have never been on a team but in the future, I would like to play for some team.

Soccer (Football)

Tina's afternoon EAL class writings



This is Ewan, the son of Tina's cousin Maja Tait (some may remember her as she gave a talk about civic elections last fall. Maja is the Mayor of Sooke, BC).

Ewan is proudly wearing the Team Canada jersey at the FIFA game in Vancouver between Canada and Switzerland on June 24.

Sadiq

I think soccer is the cheapest sport around the world; also, it's easier than other sports. Everyone can play with just one ball and some friends. I think the modern kind of soccer is most interesting for people because all of the rules are easy to know. Almost 12 years ago I played on a team of football as goalkeeper. I was on a media football team in my home country of Afghanistan. I had more training in my field because this is a national game in my country.

Salem

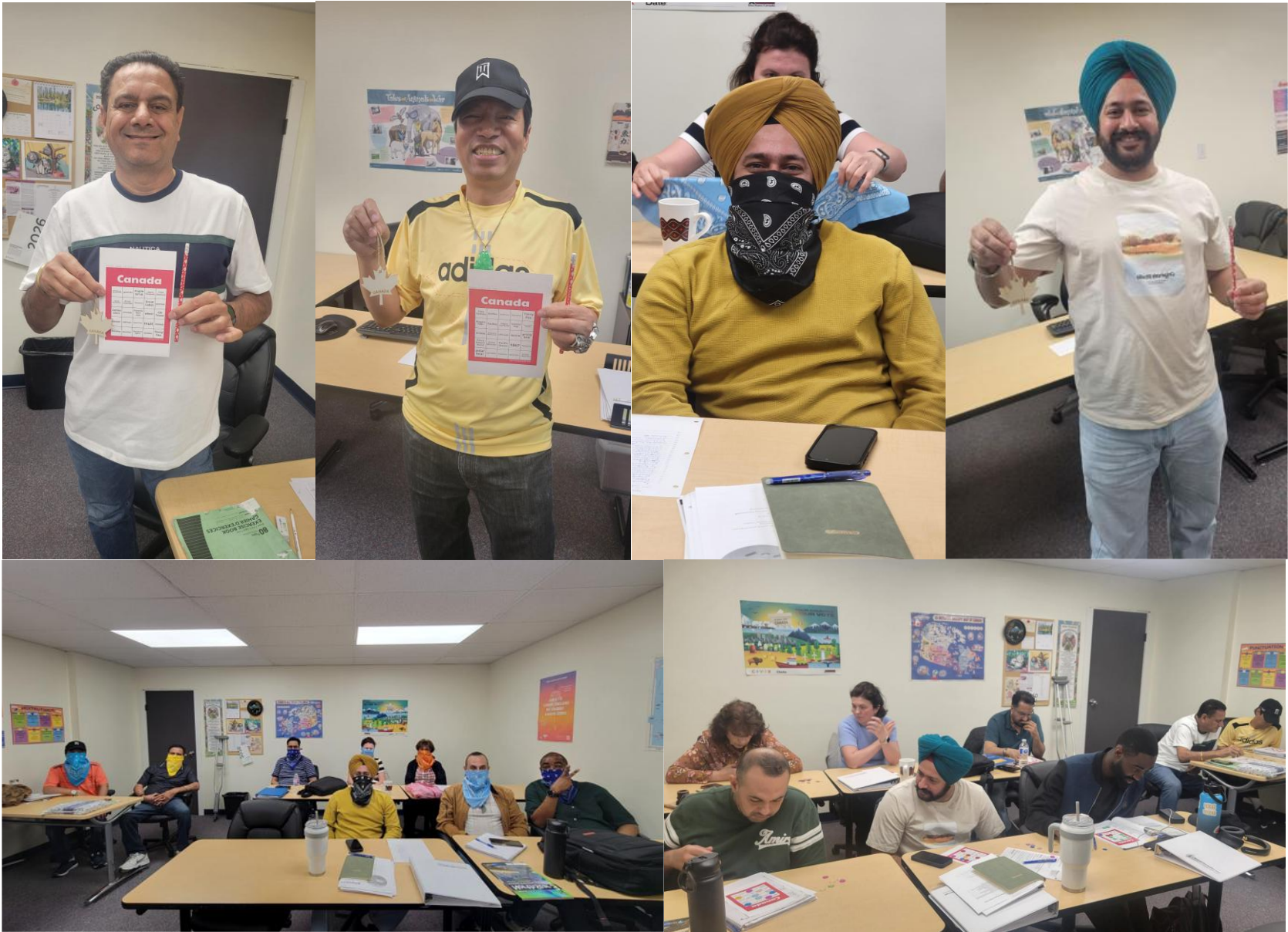
I think soccer is the most popular sport in the world because it's simple to play. You need just a ball, and rules are simple to understand. You can play football or soccer almost everywhere: in the street, in a field, in a park, and it doesn't require a lot of equipment. Also, soccer creates excitement and federates a fan in association and makes relationships between them by enjoying supporting their team. Soccer is played in all the continents from professionals to young children and aged people.

Michel Kayaga

In my opinion, football is the most popular sport in the world because more than half of the people all over the world watch and like football. In many countries, football is a "religion;" soccer is a combination of many emotions. The violence during tournaments happens sometimes because people saw their team lose or because they can't face the defeat. To prevent it, the government can make advertisements for fair play. Children can learn fair play, teamwork, discipline, and motivation. I play football and sometimes basketball. I have played since I was a kid. I gained fair play and motivation.

Amirouche

A team sport is a great way for children to learn a lot. First of all, they meet each other to play together which makes them happy to hang out outside school and home. Also, team sport is good for health because team sport encourages children to do more effort and use more energy. Finally, team sport is a sport where children compete, support, help and enjoy playing. Children can learn from playing team sports many skills and behaviour about support, help communication and they learn how to be leaders.



1. Students playing (and winning) Canadian BINGO!
2. Students ready for Stampede with their bandannas!

Tina's EAL students

Indigenous Peoples Month & Day



Pinting By Taylor W.

June is **National Indigenous Peoples** History month in Canada. On June 21, it is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Its purpose is to highlight the contributions and cultures of Indigenous Peoples across the country. It's a special month for me, because I'm Indigenous. I am an Anishinaabe kwe (pronounced like: ah-nishin-nah-be kway). This means I'm an Anishinaabe woman. Anishinaabe refers to the First Peoples of the Great Lakes Region. My mom's side of the family comes from a place called Batchewana Bay, on Lake Superior in Northern Ontario. My clan is the Crane Clan.

Clan systems have always been used by Indigenous cultures, and these systems are connected to governance, kinship, and spirituality. They are used to ensure everyone follows certain social rules. For example, there is a universal rule that says you can not marry within your own clan. Nowadays, in many cultures, it's very understandable that you cannot marry your own family members. However, hundreds of years ago, a lot of people didn't understand the reason. Before science and technology advanced, Indigenous peoples still understood that having a combination of different genetics was important for health and wellness, which is why this rule existed and still exists today.

Each clan is associated with certain traits and responsibilities in a community. Those in the Crane Clan historically have been seen as having good communication because they can see everything, and therefore, take more into consideration. As a result of this strength, they are often the ones who act as diplomats and take care of nation-to-nation matters.

The strengths of the clan are reflected in what the animal looks like. If you look at a Crane, it is tall with a long neck. It can turn its head to see in every direction, and it can look over everything. This is what makes them good communicators.

Our clans are still important ways we identify ourselves. We wear signs of our clans on our traditional clothes and say our clans in introductions. We often have art reflecting our clan in our homes. A few years ago, I painted my mom a crane which she now has hung in her house.

Downtown Observations – A Free-Verse Poem

by Dale T. Latham, BSc.

An Equilibrium, CAEC Instructor

The Elevator

Looking out at night sometimes, observing the concrete
Buildings all around, people locked up like inmates,
Meeting on the elevator, eyes gazing at the floor.

No one knows anyone, just strangers meeting briefly,
Getting off the lift, riders hear the doors slam, the locks clicking,
Tucked away for another night of false security.

Night turns to day, the dawn brings new hope,
Perhaps friendliness may not be a myth after all,
If someone has the courage to say, “hello.”

His words break the silence, "good morning, everybody!"
No response, faces blank, one or two smile,
You'd think they'd never seen a cowboy hat before.

The elevator goes from floor to floor,
Picking up slaves of their daily routine,
Captive of thoughts in their own reality.

The door opens, the world appears through plate glass,
And out they go, one by one, to answer to their masters
Until evening comes, and all can escape again for a few hours.

Then, the elevator goes from floor to floor,
Dropping off slaves of their daily routine,
Captive of thoughts in their own reality.



The Elevator





Equilibrium Expands Its Testing Services: IELTS Arrived June 13!



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accept IELTS
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IELTS is one of the
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● Speaking

Equilibrium Testing Centre is proud to announce that we will officially begin administering IELTS examinations starting June 13, 2026.

IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is one of the world's most recognized English language proficiency exams. It is accepted by universities, employers, professional associations, and immigration authorities in Canada and around the world.

IELTS specifics

IELTS continues to be one of the most widely recognized English language proficiency tests in Canada and around the world. Globally, more than 3 million IELTS tests are taken each year, with Canada being one of the leading destinations for IELTS candidates. Many of these test takers are pursuing immigration, higher education, professional licensing, or employment opportunities.

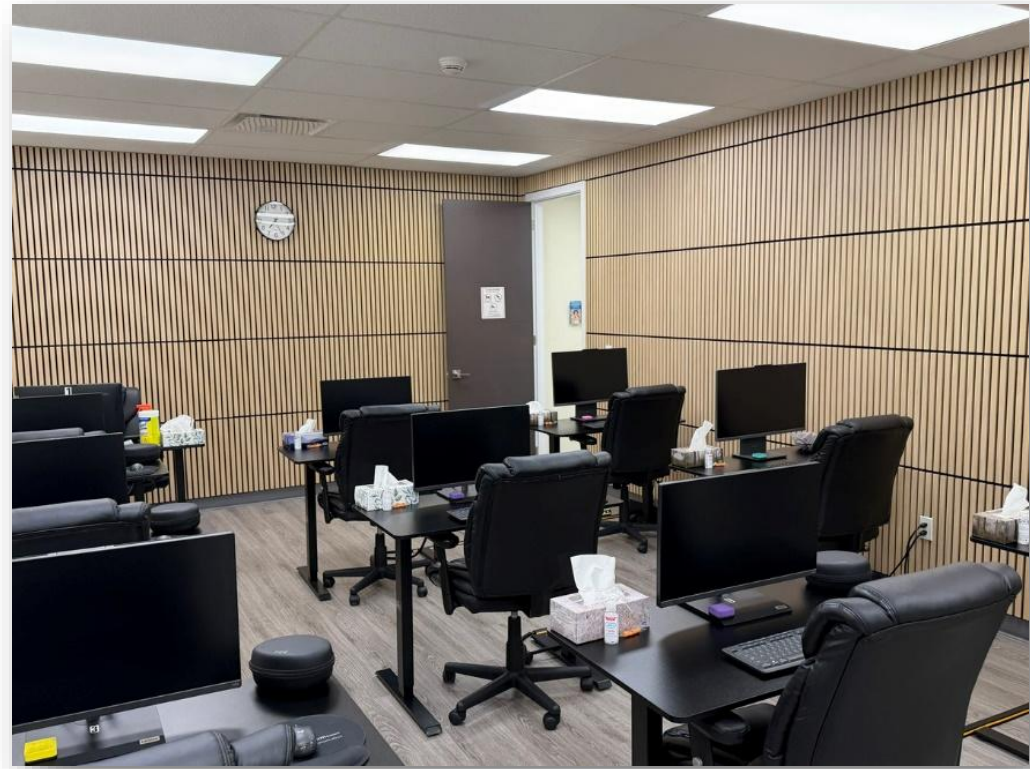
There are two versions of the IELTS exam:

IELTS General Training (GT) – primarily used for immigration, permanent residency, citizenship, and employment purposes. This is the exam most commonly taken by candidates applying through Canadian immigration pathways.
IELTS Academic – designed for individuals applying to universities, colleges, and certain professional organizations where proof of academic English proficiency is required.

Both exams assess four core language skills: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking, helping organizations accurately evaluate a candidate's ability to communicate effectively in English.

DID YOU KNOW?

- IELTS is accepted by over 12,000 organizations worldwide.
- Canada recognizes IELTS for many immigration pathways.
- IELTS tests four skills: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking.
- Equilibrium's first official IELTS exam session takes place on June 13, 2026!



By Margo and Serhiy



**WIDELY ACCEPTED
IN CANADA**
Used for immigration,
citizenship, study,
employment and
professional licensing.



**FIRST IELTS
SESSION AT
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JUNE 13, 2026!

How my mother adjusted to retirement

By Fatima – EAL instructor



One of the most important lessons I’ve learned from my mother has been to keep moving forward in life, no matter what it throws at you. As a child, I would go to my mom after falling down and scraping my knee, losing a favorite toy, or even not finishing my homework. She would always calm me down and tell me to look for solutions, not the problem. This became my philosophy in life.

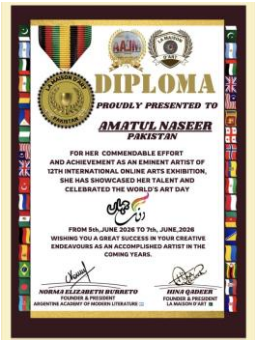
My mom was never one to wallow in her problems or difficulties. She has always been a resilient person who adapts to situations very quickly. Married at a young age, she learned housekeeping on the go. She quickly learned to

sew, embroider, knit, and crochet because she wanted her children to be the best-dressed ones around. I still don’t know how she managed to raise six children, keep a perfect house, travel frequently, and entertain guests so often. She did, however, find time for her hobbies. She loved painting, decorating, and design. My younger sister, shortly before leaving home, convinced her to begin studying painting with a proper Ustaad (master artist), apprenticing alongside a group of women who gathered in a studio twice a week.

Fast forward to all six children having flown the coop and, 54 years after a happy marriage, losing her loving—although very demanding—partner. For a while, I worried about how she would define herself now that she was no longer the wife and mother, she had always identified herself as. My resilient mother took some time to grieve, but with the support of family and friends, she refused to let her loss define her. She paused briefly to evaluate her situation and then took on the role of family matriarch without hesitation. She now manages my father’s farms and employees, guides my brothers as they take over the business, and still finds time to do the things she loves, including visiting me and spending time with my children, always teaching them something useful.

Now, when I want to talk to my mother, I have to work around her schedule. She paints at the studio, volunteers at an orphanage teaching art to young girls, creates bespoke bags and crocheted dolls, visits family and friends, and manages her household—which is no small affair in Pakistan. She also entertains generously and cooks her favorite dishes for the people she loves. On Sundays, she often walks through the historic inner city of Lahore with a friend or her cousins. Recently, I jokingly suggested that she should start giving tours since she knows the city’s historical sites so well. She actually thought about it for a moment and replied, “Not a bad idea.” Oh no, I thought. I barely get to talk to her on the one day a week that I do—what if she starts doing that too?

This year, she participated in a national exhibition and bazaar to showcase her paintings and crafts and was quite successful in her endeavor. The experience has given her a new sense of confidence, and she now comes up with fresh ideas almost every week. She tells me about the latest café she has visited with friends, what she has taught, and what she has learned recently. Keeping yourself busy and fulfilled after retirement is not easy, but thankfully, I have her example to aspire to.



FROM TEACHING TO ENTERTAINING — FATIMA’S FABULOUS MOTHER. LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER.

We love to cook!

Darya’s Banana Bread Recipe

Most people won’t know this about me, but I love to bake. I love being home alone and taking my time going through a recipe and then being able to eat the results of my hard work. One of my favourite things to bake, and one I’m quite famous for among my friends and family, is my banana bread. This recipe is the easiest and fastest one I know. I have made it so many times that I have this specific recipe completely memorized by heart and I thought I would share it with everyone at Equilibrium.



This recipe yields one loaf of Banana Bread. For the recipe, you will need one medium sized bowl, a loaf pan, an electric hand mixer (or whisk if you don’t have one, or just like manual labour), and a spatula.

Ingredients

- 3 Very Ripe Bananas (the more ripe, the sweeter)
- 1 Egg
- ⅓ Cup Sugar (½ Cup if you like it more sweet)
- ⅓ Cup Butter
- 1 Tsp Vanilla Extract
- ½ Tsp Baking Soda
- 1 Pinch Salt
- 1 ½ Cups Flour
- ½ Cup Chocolate Chips

Baking Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Celsius (177 Fahrenheit)
2. Put all ingredients EXCEPT for flour and the chocolate chips into the bowl and mix them up using the hand mixer
3. Add in flour slowly while mixing at the same time
4. Add in the chocolate chips while mixing with a spatula
5. Grease the loaf pan with butter or your favourite non stick cooking oil spray
6. Pour the prepared mixture into the greased pan
7. Put the loaf pan into the oven for 55 minutes. When done, use the toothpick test to check that it’s done
8. Enjoy!

Armenian Gata Recipe

Gata is one of the most popular Armenian pastries and one of the most beloved sweet treats of our students at Equilibrium School. It is crispy on the outside, flaky on the inside, and filled with a sweet vanilla butter mixture.

Ingredients

For the Dough: 430 g all-purpose flour, ½ tsp baking soda, ¼ tsp salt, 5 g vanilla, 150 g unsalted butter, 250 g plain yogurt and one egg.

For the Filling: 250 g white sugar, 200 g all-purpose flour, 120–130 g unsalted softened butter, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

For the Egg Wash: 1 egg yolk, 1 tablespoon milk

Instructions: Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

Make the Filling: In a bowl, mix the sugar and flour. Add the softened butter and vanilla extract. Use your hands to mix everything until the ingredients are well combined and crumbly.

Prepare the Gata:

- Divide dough into two equal strips.
- Brush each strip with egg white.
- Spread a few tablespoons of the filling over the dough, leaving about 1 cm (½ inch) empty around the edges.
- Gently press the filling down with your hands.
- Fold and roll the dough twice to form a long roll.
- If the dough becomes too soft, place it in the freezer for a few minutes to make slicing easier.
- Cut each roll into diamond-shaped pieces.
- Mix the egg yolk and milk, then brush the mixture over the top of each piece.
- Use a fork to make decorative patterns on the surface.
- Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until the Gata is golden brown.

Important Notes:

- Before making the Gata dough make sure that all the ingredients are refrigerated cold.
- To combine the cold butter and the dry ingredients you can cut the butter into small cubes, or you can use a grater.

By Hasmik EAL instructor - Enjoy!





Andrew’s Basic literacy student Muoi wanted to comment on her experience at the school because she felt learning English was important for her.

This month I studied a lot of English. I learned how to give self-introductions. I learned how to answer some common questions when meeting new people. I also learned a lot of vocabulary words to help me understand English better.

By Zahra Abbasi – EAL student

My Kind Aunt from Hamedan

When I think about my childhood, I remember the beautiful city of Hamedan in Iran. It was a small and peaceful place, surrounded by green meadows, tall hills, and beautiful mountains. The mountains stood proudly in the distance, with brilliant vista , and in winter their tops were always white with snow. In spring, the air smelled of flowers, and in summer, the sky was bright and blue.

One of the sweetest parts of my childhood was my paternal aunt. Her name was Gajar , and I called her Aunt Gajar. She was quite old, but her heart was young. She had a warm smile, a kind face, and eyes full of love. Every time she came to visit our house, she brought me food and candy. I still remember the sound of her footsteps and how excited I felt when I saw her coming through the door.

At night, after dinner, she would sit beside me and tell stories. Her voice was calm and gentle. She told me stories about angels, about good and bad people, and about animals that could talk. Many of them were from Aesop’s fables, but at that time, I didn’t know that. To me, they were simply my aunt’s stories.

She had a special way of telling stories, full of life, love, and sometimes a little humor. She was very witty and funny, and she made me laugh even when I was sleepy. I often fell asleep while listening to her voice, dreaming about the angels and the clever animals from her stories.

One of those that had a profound effect on me was the story of the “Mouse and the Mountain “.I remember one day telling my aunt that I wished I wasn’t so small and that I could be tall like her. She smiled and said, you remind me of the story of the Mouse and the Mountain. I asked her to tell it to me, and she said:
One day, a tiny mouse stood in front of a huge Mountain.
“I am too small,” the mouse said. “No one sees me. I wish I were big like you.”
The mountain smiled. “Watch, little one.”
A strong wind blew. The mountain did not move, but the mouse was pushed along the ground. Quickly, the Mouse ran into a small hole and hid safely inside.
The mountain said, “See? I cannot hide or move. You may be small, but you can go places I cannot. Every size has its own strength.”
The Mouse understood and felt happy to be small.
What I learned from it was that size is not important.

Sometimes, on sunny days, she took me and other family members on small picnics outside Hamedan. We would go to the meadows or near the mountains, where the air was cool and clean. She brought delicious food, tea, and fruit. I remember sitting under the trees while she talked and laughed with everyone. Those were happy times — simple and full of love.

Years later, I left my country. Not long after that, my dear aunt passed away. I was far away and couldn’t say goodbye. It still makes me sad when I think of that. But her memory stays with me always.

Even now, when I think of her, I feel two things at the same time — pleasure and sadness. Pleasure, because she filled my childhood with warmth, stories, and laughter. Sadness, because she is gone, and I will never hear her voice again.

But in my heart, she still lives. Her kindness, her laughter, and her stories are part of me forever.

HAIKUS

by Liliya’s LINC CLASS

Since we all eagerly awaited the arrival of spring in Calgary this year, my LINC students chose to learn and practice spring-related vocabulary and discuss spring-related topics.

The students were inspired by learning about spring festivals from around the world, including the beautiful Cherry Blossom Festival. They explored how these celebrations welcome the changing season and discovered the unique features of haiku poetry. After reading examples and learning the traditional haiku structure, several students created their own poems.

Liliya, LINC instructor

Blue sky, bright and clear
Birds fly high above the trees
Warm sun on my face.

Meron, LINC student

Fields of fluffy snow
Like a blanket of soft wool
Covering the ground.

Neelam, LINC student

Snow begins to melt.
The trees are sprouting new buds.
Spring will be here soon.

Ping, LINC student

Swallows cross the sky.
Pear blossoms falling softly.
Qingming now draws near.

Ping, LINC student

Stars shine very bright,
Silver moon glows in the dark,
Watching over us.

Sezen, LINC student

My Autobiography

Guangyi Wan, our LINC/ EAL student

I am Chinese. I immigrated to Canada in 2009 and have lived here for more than 15 years.

I was born in China in 1937. I completed my elementary, middle, and university education before 1961.

In China, I worked as a computer engineer and a university computer science instructor. I designed a Microprocessor Experiment Instrument and published computer textbooks.



My students used the instrument to gain practical experience and improve their design skills. They learned how to design printed circuit boards (PCBs) and build electronic devices, which helped prepare them for professional careers as computer technicians and engineers.

In 2009, I immigrated to Canada because my daughter was studying at the University of Montreal. My wife and I wanted to support her, as she is our only child.

When I arrived in Canada, I hoped to find work in my profession. Unfortunately, my English was not strong enough, so I began attending LINC classes to improve my English language skills.

After three years, I improved my English from CLB 2 to CLB 4. Then I received a letter from the Computer Department at the University



of Calgary inviting me to become a visiting scholar.

In 2015, I retired at the age of 77.

Now I am healthy and energetic. Studying English is one of my hobbies, and I continue to improve my language skills.

I have a dream. I want to become fluent in English and gain a deeper understanding of multicultural society. Then I hope to travel independently throughout Europe, North America, and Africa.

To achieve my dream, I have set the following goals:

First, I want to graduate from a college and improve my English to CLB 8.

Second, I want to read English novels, poems, newspapers, essays, and political articles fluently. I also want to enjoy television, movies, radio programs, and everyday conversations with my neighbours in English.

I hope to continue living independently in Calgary or another English-speaking community without needing a translator or interpreter.

Third, I want to communicate confidently with Canadians, Americans, Europeans, and anyone else who speaks English, including doctors, nurses, government officials, salespeople, and business professionals.

I am eager to travel around the world.

These are my goals and dreams for the future.

Although there are many challenges ahead, I am determined to overcome them. I will continue learning about Western culture, politics, and world geography.

I welcome both the opportunities and the challenges that lie ahead, and I will face the future with optimism.



Our students are always ready to learn something new.



“Going to...”

Tina’s EAL afternoon class practiced the simple future (‘going to’) by writing about their future life. Can you tell fact from fiction?

Astrid

I’m going to take a driving class next July, and I’m probably going to pass my Class Five driving licence. I’m going to continue with my English class. I hope to find a good job because I want to earn enough money to buy my apartment. I would like to have my sweet home. I’m going to look for a job weekends online and at many agencies. I would like to study oil and gas at university. I’m going to pass my IELTS exam in September. I hope I can join the next session for January 2027. I am going to be an engineer and that’s my dream.

Cedric

I am going to start my CPA program in September or December. It depends on how the admission process is going to be. I’m so excited to dive into this new academic environment. This is going to help me to root my transition career in accounting and finance in North America. In the end, a CPA designation is a great value title which is going to open the world of infinite opportunities, like a financial planner, manager, CPA or auditor. However, the path is going to be long and hard. You should be patient, resilient and work very hard to succeed. Nothing is impossible for someone who trusts in yourself and manages as well as your available resources.

Benafsha

I am going to apply for a Bollywood class to improve my English. After I finish this class, I am going to move to Los Angeles. I have some relatives there so in the beginning I’m going to stay with them. I hope to have fun. I’m going to be living away from home for the first time in my life. I’m going to miss my mother.

Salem

I am going to move to another country next year, and I’m probably going to choose a tropical country. In the beginning, I am going to work hard this year to earn enough money to buy a house in this country, and after I am going to open a beach restaurant, and I am going to spend my time fishing and tasting the local food. I am going to rest and enjoy life until the end of my life. That is my dream.

Satvinder

I am going to try my Red Seal Electrician challenge next year. I am going to go to BC. In Surrey, I am going to get a job as an electrician. I am going to complete my hours as required for the Red Seal. I am going to stay there for one year. After, I am going to open my own company. For a long time, my friend is saying to me to join his company as a partner. Maybe I am going to join it.

Miu

I am going to apply for my Canadian Citizenship in two months. When I finish my English course, I’m going to take a short vacation. After that, I’m going to work to save more money because I’m going to apply for a program at the college and also in my dream, I’m going to win the lottery, and in the end, I’m going to travel around the world.

Mariusz

I’m going to buy a farm in BC. I’m going to plant walnuts on that land. After that, I’m going to plant truffle mycelium around those walnuts. After 2-3 years, I’m going to take those truffles, and I am going to sell them to the restaurants for a big profit. Next, I am going to buy a fishing boat and sail on the lake. Finally, I’m going to relax and enjoy life.

Sadiq

In the near future, I am going to improve my English. I am going to study ever day and practice speaking with my classmates in school, then after school I am going to try more talking or making English conversations with my daughters at home. I am probably going to find a part-time job while I continue my study. I am also going to exercise, eat healthy food, swim and finally go to take long walks every weekend.

Roman

My life is going to change a lot in the near future, I hope! I’m going to finish CLB 4 or 5 in Equilibrium school and start high school in Canada at SAIT. I’m going to study hard because I want to get good grades. I’m going to improve my English and prepare for the IELTS or another exam. After that, I am going to finish special courses and, in the future, I’m going to study Business of Data Analysis at university. Also, I’m going to find a part-

time job to get experience and ear some (a lot of!) money. I hope that I’m going to achieve my goals and build a successful career in Canada.

Michel

I’m going to go back to school in January. I’m going to start a master’s degree in Geometrics at the University of Calgary. First of all, I’m going to pass an English test with a good mark. After that, I ‘m going to start the admission process. After that, I’m going to find another job and get a better salary. I am also going to get married and build a family. I hope to be a good parent and a good husband. In conclusion, I hope I’m going to have a good integration and build a good life in Canada.

Amirouche

I’m going to start a new life in this country. I have a family here, so I’m going to build a new home with them. First, I’m going to improve my English. Then, I hope to find a good job as an engineer because I had experience in Engineering. Second, I’m going to buy a house and a new car. Finally, I’m going to travel around the world. In conclusion, I’m going to make a comfortable life.

Saida

I hope my life is going to change for the best in the near future. First, I am going to improve my language skills. After that, I’m going to study in college and graduate there. Then, I’m going to look for a good job because I want to build a better life. Also, I am going to find new and honest friends, because it is very important to have friends and spend time, share good moments with them. Finally, I am going to travel around the world, learn more and enjoy my life. For these reasons, I am going to work hard.



The Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival falls on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Chinese lunar calendar every year. Along with Chinese New Year, Qingming Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival, it is one of the four major traditional festivals in China.

The festival has a history of more than 2,000 years. It was also the first Chinese festival to be included on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This year, the Dragon Boat Festival was celebrated on June 19.

The Origin of the Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival is most commonly associated with Qu Yuan, a patriotic poet from the ancient State of Chu.

More than 2,300 years ago, during the Warring States Period, the State of Qin attacked Chu. Qu Yuan realized that the King of Qin was plotting against Chu and tried to warn King Huai of Chu. However, the king ignored his advice and exiled him from the capital.

Later, King Huai was captured by Qin and died in captivity. Soon afterward, the capital city of Chu was conquered by Qin forces. After hearing the tragic news of his country's downfall, Qu Yuan became overwhelmed with grief.

On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, Qu Yuan threw himself into the Miluo River.

When local people learned what had happened, they rushed out in their boats to search for him. This event later inspired the tradition of dragon boat racing. People also threw rice dumplings, called zongzi, into the river so that fish would eat the food instead of harming Qu Yuan's body.

To honor his loyalty and love for his country, people continued these traditions year after year. Eventually, they became part of the Dragon Boat Festival.



Eating Zongzi

Zongzi are sticky rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves. They can be filled with many different ingredients, such as pork, salted egg yolk, red bean paste, dates, or nuts. Different regions of China have different flavors. Some are savory, while others are sweet. For hundreds of years, eating zongzi has been one of the most important customs of the Dragon Boat Festival.



Hanging Mugwort

Many families hang mugwort and calamus on their doors during the festival. These plants are believed to bring good luck and help protect people from illness and harmful influences.

Wearing Five-Colored Threads

Children often wear bracelets made from five-colored threads: blue, red, white, black, and yellow. In traditional Chinese culture, these colors symbolize good fortune and protection. People believed the threads could drive away evil spirits and bring health and happiness. Today, the Dragon Boat Festival is not only a time to remember Qu Yuan, but also a celebration of Chinese history, culture, family traditions, and hopes for health, happiness, and good fortune.

There are also other theories about the festival's origins. Some scholars believe it began as an ancient dragon-totem worship ceremony among the Baiyue people of southern China. They held rituals, raced boats, and offered food to rivers and dragons while praying for good fortune and blessings.

Dragon Boat Festival Traditions



There is a traditional rhyme that many Chinese children know:

“On the fifth day of the fifth month,
A sweet fragrance fills the air.
Mugwort hangs on every door.
People eat zongzi and enjoy dragon boat races.”

Dragon Boat Racing



Dragon boat racing is one of the most exciting and well-known traditions of the festival.

Teams paddle long, colorful dragon-shaped boats while drums beat loudly to keep everyone rowing together. The races symbolize the efforts of the people who searched for Qu Yuan in the river.

For hundreds of years, eating zongzi has been one of the most important customs of the Dragon Boat Festival.

Ping Zang, LINC student

Remembering Our Friend and Colleague Monika Stefanska

As we wander down the roads of life, we get to meet all sorts of people who play all sorts of roles in our own stories. Like guests at a party or students in an EAL class, some stay longer than they need to and others leave a lot sooner than we'd like. We have no power over this; it is what it is. I am sure that anyone anywhere who was lucky enough to meet Monika Stefanska will agree that she represents the latter.

It's hard to imagine Monika no longer being around us. She had a way of lighting up a room or livening up a party and was always a voice of encouragement and motivation that could simply make even the best of times become even better. Somehow, she even managed to be motivating and/or encouraging while unleashing a uniquely characteristic bluntness that was offered in a way which only Monika could offer. She was more than a colleague, or even a friend, and she will be missed in ways that are hard to put into words.

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I feel quite honoured to have been asked to prepare some words about Monika and her long history at Equilibrium. In one way or another, she has been a part of this school for over twenty years, and she will always be remembered for the happiness, enthusiasm, and knowledge she shared with everyone she taught and worked with.

Monika first walked through the doors of Equilibrium School on October 6th, 2005, to write a placement test. She had just moved to Canada with her daughters in July of that year and was eager, as Monika always was, to begin building her life. She became an EAL student the next month (November 2005) and worked on improving her English until August of 2006 before taking a break and then returning to study again from May to August of 2008. August of 2008 was right around the time I began working for Equilibrium and I remember meeting Monika on one

of my first days on the job. She made an effort to say hello to me and insisted on making sure I was thoroughly and properly introduced to all the other students in her group. She was one of those people who always took time to find out how you were doing, remember whatever you told her, and then follow-up the next time she saw you. People like that are naturally amazing and exactly the type of person you want to meet when you start a new job.

By September of 2008, Monika had completed her EAL studies at Equilibrium (except for the brief period a little later when I taught her TOEFL preparation classes) and was hired as a Polish language instructor. Back in those days, Equilibrium ran a small private Polish language school with Monika's daughters and Anna and Kasia's children. The classes ran on Saturdays, so if you happened to be in the school (for example to teach a class or complete a university assignment) on a Saturday, you'd get to hear Monika gently but firmly (definitely firmly) building the Polish language skills of a group of children. Of course, she'd always take time to say hello, share news, and find out how you were doing. She'd often get you to try your luck with a few Polish words, as well. In my case, those interactions usually ended with me being politely advised that the words were likely very difficult for me! Oh well.

Of course, teaching Polish language classes wasn't Monika's first foray into the teaching world. She had completed a master's degree at the University of Olsztyn which is not too far from the town of Przasnysz in Northeastern Poland where she was born. She used her education to become an early childhood educator at different Polish private schools. She also did similar work during the few years she lived in Chicago, USA, (where her daughters were born) before coming to Canada. Eventually, Monika would use her education and experience to work at the onsite preschool at Equilibrium (this was where the computer lab is now), own her own day home, and open her own preschool (called Learning by Playing) which closed during the COVID pandemic. This, however, would come alongside and after a few more years of Equilibrium experiences.

The school hired Monika as a basic literacy instructor in September of 2013. I remember her being quite happy to accept this role and also ready to jump into it and own it in true Monika fashion. Her kind but ever-determined nature was likely a massive benefit to

her students, and it was also great to have her around the school (as opposed to the daycare) on a more regular basis. As I have said, Monika was always a welcome addition to anyone's day. She became a LINC instructor in October of 2021 and continued in that role for the remainder of her time as an Equilibrium teacher.

As we all know, Monika spent much of the last eight years of her life battling a disease that no one wants to battle. She did not, however, let the disease destroy her spirits or define her life. Instead, she almost double-downed on a *carpe diem* mindset, traveled a lot more, personified the virtue of kindness, took time to enjoy the odd pint of Guinness (her beer of choice), and lived each day to the absolute fullest. She also maintained her well-developed and well-known fashion sense and was always (always) well-dressed. If you ever saw Monika wear the same outfit twice, well, you didn't. Yes, where many others have given up, she chose to rise. Her determination to embrace life in the face of genuinely unpleasant circumstances should serve as an inspiration to anyone and everyone.



Calgary Ukrainian Festival

The Spirit of Community



The first Ukrainian settlers arrived in Alberta in 1892.

Two friends, Ivan Pylypiv and Vasyly Yeleniak, the first Ukrainian trailblazers, arrived in Canada in 1891. They were both 32 years old. They came without their families to explore opportunities and suitability for immigration.

They came through Quebec City to Winnipeg but then moved further on to Edmonton area. They also went south to Fort Calgary.

They ended up working on a farm in Manitoba, and then Ivan returned to Ukraine to collect their families. He also persuaded four of his friends with families to emigrate overseas.

The six families successfully arrived in Canada in June 1892 and eventually settled northeast of Edmonton, in what is now known as Kalyna Country.

Since then, the Ukrainians have shaped Alberta's cultural identity. Today, Alberta is home to the second-largest Ukrainian population in Canada. The community thrives through rich historical sites, active support for recent newcomers, and vibrant festivals. One of them is the Calgary Ukrainian Festival which takes place every year at the beginning of June.

Calgary Ukrainian Festival

We honour the memory of many Ukrainian immigrants who settled across Canada more than 125 years ago. By preserving our cultural heritage, we pass Ukrainian customs and traditions from one generation to the next. Everybody can enjoy two days of Ukrainian dancing and singing, arts and crafts, food and drinks. Everybody could participate from the age of three to over ninety-three!

This year, Equilibrium School took part in the 16th Calgary Ukrainian Festival as a sponsor. Our teachers volunteered at Equilibrium stand for both days.

On day two, we grabbed a chance to ask Calgary Mayor, Jeromy Farkas, to endorse the Equilibrium School brand, and he was really happy to do that! We also asked him to take part in our perogy eating contest, but he humbly rejected the offer...

Pity!

The contest turned out to be one of the highlights of the festival! Kyle Mack announced the rules, and the fun began!

*On both days people competed both in teams and individually to consume as many perogies as they possibly could! If you think it is easy, think again! When you know that a person next to you can be one or two perogies ahead of you, it is a real challenge to catch up and not to choke! To say nothing about the day after the competition! **But it WAS fun!***

And the winners were content not only with the delicious food they had had but also with the prizes they got at the end!

Of course, it is not only about fun. While Ukraine still fights against the ugliest invasion ever, the whole spirit of the festival was pierced with the motives of defending the homeland, support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the memory of those who gave their lives for the freedom of our beloved country.

And of course, we cherished the memory of those who made it possible for the Ukrainians to find their second home in Canada! May their hard work, dreams, aspirations and determination to start a better life for their families in Canada always be remembered!

By Oleksandr Chebotaryov, CAEC and EAL teacher

The Three C's: My experience as a Summer Student

Confidence, compassion, and communication are essential qualities in both professional and personal environments. Through the guidance and support of the wonderful faculty at Equilibrium, I have had the privilege of developing these skills in a dynamic and welcoming setting. My role as a summer student has allowed me to be both a teacher and a learner. By assisting others in learning the English language, I have gained valuable insight into a wide range of cultures and languages. At the same time, the encouragement of Equilibrium's teachers has given me opportunities to strengthen my leadership skills through teaching, helping me build confidence in public speaking and leading groups.

Working with students from diverse backgrounds has also taught me the importance of effective communication. Every individual faces unique challenges, and I have learned that the ability to recognize different needs and adapt accordingly is essential for successful teaching and meaningful connections. Being a summer student at Equilibrium has provided countless opportunities for personal growth while teaching me valuable life lessons. With the support of the kind and encouraging staff, I have continued to develop the confidence, compassion, and communication skills that will benefit me far beyond the school. Most importantly, this experience has reinforced the idea that learning never truly ends; there is something to be learned from every person we meet and every experience we encounter. By Isabel



Famous Landmarks

Tina's afternoon class read a news article about the designer of the Calgary Tower. Then they wrote about a famous landmark in their country.

Salem

Maqam Echahid is an iconic building in Algeria. It was inaugurated in 1982 in the capital, Algiers. It was designed by a Polish sculptor. It overlooks a panoramic view of the Bay of Algiers. It is a symbol of resistance of Algerian people against the French colonizers. The final structure is three palms with a flame on the top and a museum in the underground. It was built on the top of a hill so you can see it from a major place of the city.

Benafsha

I want to talk about the Shrine of Hazrat Ali in Afghanistan. It is an Islamic country where most people, about 99%, follow Islam. Masjids are found in almost every village and city. It is one of the most famous religious sites in Mazar-isharif province. It was built in the 18th century. It is the largest masjid mosque in Kabul. It is famous for its large blue dome and historic architecture. Many people gather here for Friday prayers and Eid prayers.

Mariusz

In Warsaw there are a lot of important buildings and landmarks. One of them is Panorama Racławicka. Inside is the biggest painting in the world. That painting is about fighting for independent Poland. The painting was produced in 1893-1894. We can say that this painting was the first 3D painting. It is one episode of Poland's history, fighting for independence.

Amirouche

An important landmark in my city is Cap Carbon, located in Bejaia, Algeria. It is a famous lighthouse, more than 200 metres above sea level. The lighthouse was built in 1900 and is still working today. This place is important because it helps guide ships and improve safety. Every year, thousands of tourists visit this site to enjoy the amazing view, mountains and blue sea. In my opinion, Cap Carbon is important because it represents the beauty and history of my region.

Saida

Park National Gouraya is an important landmark in Bejaia. It is famous for its green mountains and amazing sea view. Visitors can see monkeys there called Barbary Macaques and enjoy hiking in nature. At the top of the mountain there is Yema Gouraya, a symbolic and spiritual place that overlooks the city. This park is

perfect for relaxing and discovering the beauty of Algeria's parks.

Cedric

In many cities all over the world, we can find diverse monuments or historic places. These remind us of either the bravery of distinguished people or memorable events. It is so important to remember and honour the contributions of these people. The youth of a nation that aspires to build a strong future for themselves should commemorate their iconic people by building monuments, museums and celebrating memorable days.

Sadiq

The Minaret of Jam is a famous historical tower in western Afghanistan. It was built in the 12th century during the Ghurid Empire. The minaret is about 65 metres tall and made with Islamic designs and calligraphy. Today, it is protected as a UNESCO world historic site.

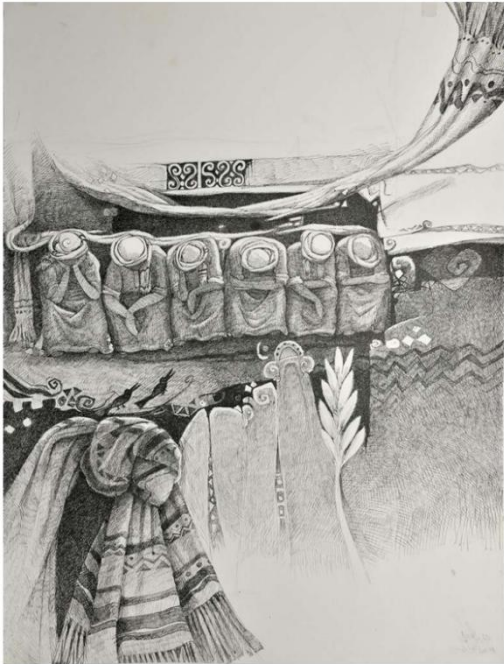




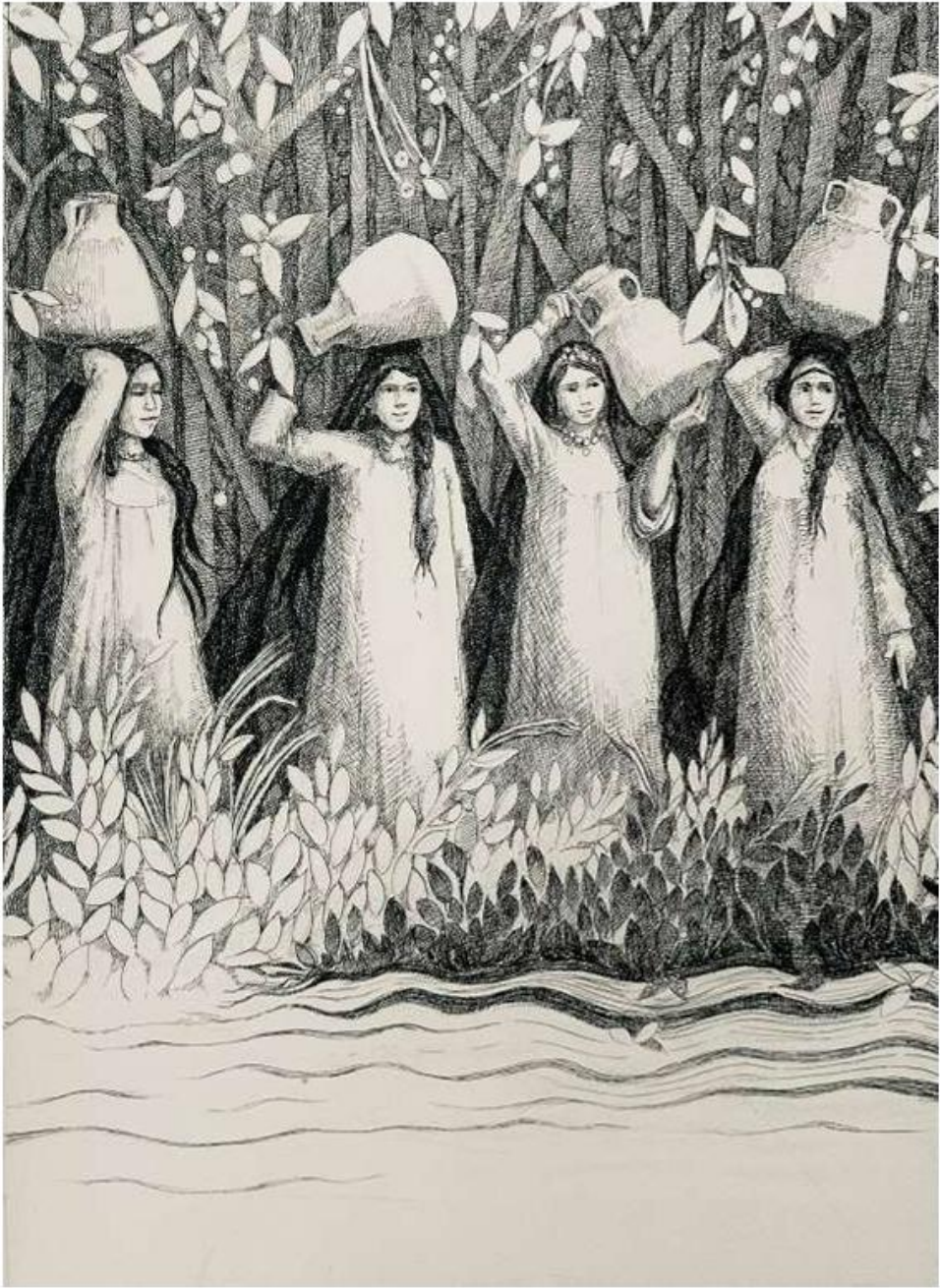
Dr. Hoda Gharib is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Arts. She is currently working as a Senior Graphic Designer and Illustrator, she also practices visual arts and has many artistic contributions at the local and international levels. She specializes in the arts of printmaking and drawing, in addition to her work as a trainer and arbitrator for arts. Her Artwork is found in a wide range of books, from illustrations accompanying literary texts to scientific and historical books and biographies.

One of Ron’s EAL students (Hoda Gharib) is a fantastic artist, so Ron asked if she would be willing to share some of her artwork with the school in the newsletter. She kindly agreed. Hoda is originally from Egypt and moved to Canada with her family in 2023 with her family. She has been a student at Equilibrium since 2025.

You can follow Hoda and her artwork on **Instagram at Hodagharib.**



Research Artworks (2026): Translating Poetry into Visual Forms
 Drawing - Nib & Ink on cardboard



STAMPEDE 2026





STAMPEDE 2026



One day, a fellow painter saw a jewellery box I had finished and suggested that I enter it in the Calgary Stampede Art Show. I had never even heard of the competition! Since then, I have entered almost every year and have been fortunate to win at least one ribbon each time. This year's piece was inspired by my love of fantasy-style insects and frogs. I wanted people to recognize the frog without painting it too realistically, making the colourful insects the main focus. The patterns at the bottom evolved unexpectedly. My daughter said they looked like cacti, and when I looked at the finished piece, I remembered something my porcelain teacher often says: "We unconsciously paint what we've seen all our lives." She was right—it brought back memories of the gardens in Mexico. This year, I was thrilled to receive a second-place ribbon, along with very encouraging comments from the judge. Now it's time to start thinking about next year's entry! By Tony V.





Stampede 2026



Cultural Dresses and Objects from around the world

Ahmed Sulaiman from Sudan

One traditional outfit from my culture is the Sudani Jalabiya. It is a long, loose robe, usually made from fine muslin, that many Sudanese men wear, especially in white. It is comfortable to wear in hot weather and is often worn for Friday prayers, family gatherings, and special celebrations. It can be worn for work, university, weddings and even

funerals and promotes the culture of equality, everyone rich or poor wears the same basic dress. The thobe is an important part of Sudanese culture and represents tradition, respect, and pride. It is an extension of a 3000-year-old tradition from the Kingdom of Kush and Meroe. It is also worn with a turban to show nobility.



Zahra Abbasi from Iran

Zahra didn't have an item of clothing to share she shared this picture as a piece of Cultural art. The picture is inspired by Ancient Persian (Achaemenid) art. The lion is a powerful symbol of courage, strength, leadership, and protection in Persian culture. The surrounding floral designs are inspired by the rosette motifs seen in ancient sites such as Persepolis, representing beauty, harmony, and immortality. Together, these timeless symbols reflect the rich artistic and cultural heritage of Iran.



Fazili Mwanatunga from Congo

La Sape – Congo

Fazili is dressed in the style of La Sape, a famous cultural tradition from the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Sapeurs are known for wearing elegant, colourful suits with carefully matched accessories to express dignity, confidence, and creativity.

More than just fashion, La Sape celebrates self-respect, peace, and pride in one's identity. It shows that true elegance comes not only from clothing but also from good character, respect for others, and personal style.



Fereshteh Gharesi from Shiraz Iran

Traditional Iranian Embroidery

Fereshteh shared an example of traditional Iranian embroidery, including soozan-douzi (hand needlework) and zari-douzi (gold embroidery). These beautiful textile arts are practiced in different regions of Iran and are known for their detailed patterns, careful stitching, and artistic beauty.

Many designs include the boteh jegheh (paisley) motif, a famous Persian symbol representing life, growth, and eternity. Zari-douzi uses gold and silver threads to create elegant patterns on luxurious fabrics, giving the textiles a rich and decorative appearance.

These handmade pieces are often used during special occasions such as weddings, Nowruz (Persian New Year), and Yalda Night celebrations. They represent the creativity, patience, and cultural heritage of Iranian artisans passed down through generations.



Cultural Dresses and Objects from around the world-Continuing

Hewit Sereke and Tsagay Gebremichael from Eritrea

The traditional clothing of Eritrea and Ethiopia is called Habesha Kemis for women and a traditional white cotton outfit with a shawl for men (and even babies and children). The clothes are usually white with beautiful, colorful embroidered patterns around the neck, sleeves, and edges. People often wear them for weddings, holidays, church celebrations, and other special occasions. These traditional clothes are an important part of Eritrean and Ethiopian culture and show pride in their heritage. The traditional clothing of Eritrea and Ethiopia has been worn for many generations and is an important part of both countries' cultural heritage. People of different religions, including Christians and Muslims, wear it with pride during holidays, weddings, festivals, and other special occasions.



Faroozan Haideri from Afghanistan

Traditional Afghan women's clothing often includes a long, loose frock worn over shalwar (loose trousers), along with beautiful jewelry and a decorative headpiece. These traditional clothes have been worn for generations and are an important part of Afghanistan's cultural heritage. Many women wear them with pride at weddings, religious celebrations, festivals, and other special occasions. The Afghan dress is known for its beautiful hand embroidery, which often includes colorful patterns inspired by Afghan art and traditions. The traditional jewelry and headpieces have roots in different regions of central Asia and are often made with silver, coins, beads, and gemstones. These pieces are passed down through generations and represent beauty, history, and cultural identity.



Masoumeh Ashuri from the Hazara region of Afghanistan

Hazara Embroidery (Kashida)

The beautiful embroidery on this jacket is inspired by Hazara Kashida, a traditional hand-embroidered style from Afghanistan. Known for its colourful geometric patterns and detailed needlework, Kashida embroidery can take months to complete. Today, this traditional art is used not only on dresses but also on jackets and other clothing, helping preserve Hazara culture while blending it with modern fashion.

Selseleh: A traditional silver headpiece often worn by Hazara women and girls during weddings and other special celebrations.

In this picture Masoumeh is wearing the embroidery on a more modern style jacket.



Nancy Lopez from Mexico

La Catrina – Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead)

Nancy is dressed as La Catrina, the most recognizable symbol of Día de Muertos, a Mexican celebration that honours and remembers loved ones who have passed away. Families build colourful altars with flowers, candles, food, and photographs, believing the spirits of their loved ones return to visit during this time.

Created by Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada in 1912, La Catrina reminds us that death is a natural part of life and that everyone is equal, regardless of wealth or social status. Nancy's handmade costume celebrates this meaningful tradition and the rich cultural heritage of Mexico



Jaspal Singh Brar from India

Sikh Traditional Attire (Rajasthan, India)

Jaspal is wearing a traditional kurta pyjama with a brocade waistcoat, along with a Sikh-style turban (pag) and patka. This elegant attire is commonly worn by Sikh men during festivals, weddings, religious celebrations, and other special occasions. The richly woven brocade fabric adds a festive touch, while the turban represents dignity, faith, and identity in Sikh tradition.

What I liked learning about this semester by Patty-Jo's

LINC AM class

Esrom- I liked learning about the world cup in English, pride month, job interviews, shopping, and Canada Day.

Malaz- I liked learning about Bowness Park and job interviews, and illegal job questions.

Zeynab- I liked learning about Kahoots. I also liked going to The Core as a field trip.

Aida- What I liked learning about this semester was Canada Day, jobs and occupations, interviews, and shopping. I also liked the presentation about Banff.

Yan- I liked learning about job interviews, hiking, and family trees.

Monjurul- I liked learning about hiking, job interviews, shopping, and hiking.

Danyat- I liked learning about illegal job questions, “walk me through your resume”, strengths and skills, job interviews, and indigenous people.

Ariane- I liked learning new words like, “still, recently, volunteering, leftovers”, and I learned to talk about my biography with sequence words.

Eti- I liked learning about shopping and how to not answer questions politely, and about the community. I also liked playing games, watching videos, and spelling games. I liked listening to Country Roads.

Seada- I liked learning about wild animals, and the specific words: leftovers, enthusiastic, punctual, discrimination.

Juka- I liked preparation for job interviews, family tree, shopping problems, pronouns and nouns, and Canadian culture in general. I also liked giving class presentations, and of course “O Canada”.

Rezene- I liked learning about calling 311 and how to answer illegal questions in a job interview and vocabulary.



Front row: Zeynab, Juka, Seada, Rezene, Esrom
Back row: Danyat, Monjurul, Eti, Malaz, Narges, Yan, Aida

What I liked learning about this semester by Patty-Jo's

PM LINC class

Esrom- I liked learning about and preparing for a doctor’s appointment. I also liked learning about roommates, household chores, shopping problems, return policies and dialogue, and about the yellow jacket. I liked listening practice too.

Lidiya- I enjoyed conversations about shopping, cultural events, wild animals in Canada, Indigenous people, 311 non-emergency and “O’Canada”. I enjoyed my teacher and classmates.

Eyobel- I enjoyed listening practice, partner work, Indigenous people, native people, Canadian writers, personal information, household chores, and roommates.

Ikram- I enjoyed listening to “O’ Canada”, group work and listening to dialogue. I enjoyed learning about Aboriginal people in Canada. I enjoy my teacher and classroom friends.

Malaz- I enjoyed learning about family and how to go to the doctors and Indigenous people. I also enjoyed the shopping field trip.

Ivy- I enjoyed learning about Canada and Indigenous people. I enjoyed Patty-Jo, my teacher. I liked the shopping field trip. I love my class.

Azada- I enjoyed learning about dialogue, household chores, and wild animals. I enjoyed my teacher and classmates, and listening to “O’ Canada”.

Dana- I enjoyed learning about household chores and roommates. I use chores every week. I liked learning vocabulary like “neat freak” and “tidy up”. I enjoyed learning about famous Canadians like Lucy Maud Montgomery, and *Anne of Green Gables*. I liked learning why the soil in PEI is red.

Raquel- I enjoyed learning about shopping, and I enjoyed learning “O’Canada”.



Front Row: Raquel, Esrom
Back Row: Ikram, Ivy, Eyobel, Azada, Lidiya, Dana

Kahoot fun!!!



Household Chores

May 11, 2026

Raquel, Dana, Esrom, Eyobel



Selfie

Patty-Jo, Esrom, Eyobel, Dana, Raquel

Olena's LINC students shared some pictures they took when **travelling to interesting places** or having **special events**.

Walid shared some pictures of Eid celebration in Calgary. His family and friends went to mosque for prayers and after that they went to a restaurant to celebrate together. Even the cold snowy weather didn't stop them from experiencing the joy of Eid to the fullest.



Mliete from AM LINC class sent a photo of Easter celebration. On the photo we can see Eritrean national clothes which people usually wear on Easter Day and some traditional food.



Kahoot with Julia's class!

Backrow: Esrom, Zeynab, Danyat Aida, Blanca, Jacmelee, Paula, Christina

Front: Berenice

TRAVELING



Monica Arango sent a photo of her family trip to Colombia. They visited the famous Cocora Valley which is known for beautiful wax palms and fantastic view. **The Cocora Valley** is located in the Central Cordilera of the Andean mountains. The valley is part of the Los Nevados National Natural Park, incorporated into the existing national park by the Colombian government in 1985. It is the main location where the national tree of Colombia, the Quindío wax palm can be found, as well as a wide variety of other flora and fauna, all of which are protected under the park's national status.

Suly Coromoto, my PM LINC student shared a photo of her trip to Xochimilco, a borough of Mexico City. She was excited to see multiple colorful boats and to sail on them. Xochimilco is best known for its canals, which are left from what was an extensive lake and canal system that connected most of the settlements of the Valley of Mexico. These canals, along with artificial islands called chinampas, attract tourists and other city residents to ride on colorful gondola -like boats called trajineras around the 170 km (110 mi) of canals. This canal and chinampa system, as a vestige of the area's precolonial past, has made Xochimilco a World Heritage Site.



Shopping

May 14th, 2026

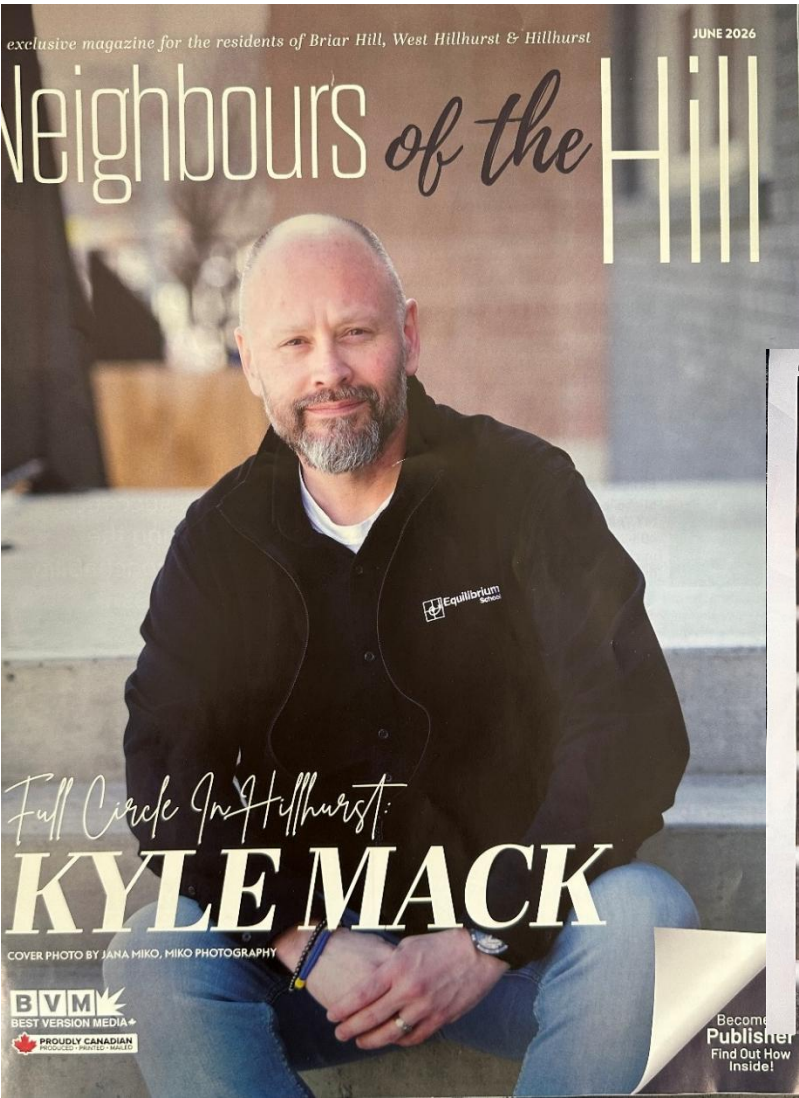
Blanca, Narges, Zeynab



Recycling

June 25th

Ikram, Lidiya, Eyobel, Ivy



By Alison Lukic

Cochrane is a beautiful town located about 30 minutes northwest of Calgary, and I am happy to call it home.

Although I sometimes miss living in the city, there are so many wonderful things to do here. Many people know Cochrane for its famous McKay's Ice Cream, but there are many other great places to visit. Here are five of my personal favourite places!

Cochrane Ranche Historic Site

Located along Highway 1A, the Cochrane Ranche Historic Site is one of the town's most beautiful parks. It has picnic areas, fire pits, walking trails, and large green spaces that are perfect for spending time outdoors. The land was once part of Matthew Henry Cochrane's ranch. He founded the town of Cochrane in 1881. Today, families enjoy visiting the park throughout the year. The property is also home to the Cochrane RancheHouse, which hosts community events, weddings and municipal offices.



Cochrane also has a fantastic **sport centre** with lots of amenities. The centre includes pools, hockey rinks, curling rinks, gymnasiums, indoor soccer fields, a gymnastics centre, and a fitness centre. It also hosts community events such as farmers' markets and Christmas markets throughout the year. Visitors can also sign up for fitness classes, children's camps, and sports leagues.



Little Valley Bagel Company:

Cochrane has a unique food truck scene, and often local food trucks gather for community events and festivals. Little Valley Bagel Co. won two awards in the 2025 Cochrane Eagle Readers' Choice Awards: Silver for Best Lunch and Bronze for Best Breakfast. Their bagels and cream cheese are all handmade, and you can purchase sandwiches from the truck or buy bagels and cream cheese to take home. They post the truck's hours and locations for the week on their Instagram page, so check their Instagram to see where they'll be!



Found Books & Shop is a bookstore that is located in Cochrane's historic downtown, down the street from MaKay's Ice Cream. The shop offers a wide variety of new and used books, along with a cozy café. The environment is very peaceful, and it is a great place to spend a quiet afternoon. The bookstore also holds lots of community events such as book clubs, "sip and stitch" and live music.



Whether you are new to the Calgary area or have lived here for years, spend a day exploring Cochrane and discover all that our town has to offer.

NEIGHBOURS of THE HILL

Kyle, our front-page person in *Neighbours of the Hill*, is amazing. Working with someone so kind, smart, patient, and now officially famous reminds me how lucky we are to have him. If you would like to read more about Kyle, pick up the June's edition in the community.

By Slavica

RESIDENT FEATURE

Full Circle In Hillhurst:
KYLE MACK
BY KELSEY WOODS | PHOTOS BY JANA MIKO, MIKO PHOTOGRAPHY

RESIDENT FEATURE

RESIDENT FEATURE

RESIDENT FEATURE

T R A V E L I N G

I have recently been to my home country, Colombia. I spent two months in my hometown, Cali. During that time, I relaxed at my family's home and helped my mother with some medical appointments. After I had spent another month visiting friends and exploring famous tourist attractions, such as Guatapé and El Peñol Rock. We never had bad weather. It was sunny almost every day, and I really enjoyed it because I don't like cold weather. Being in my country always makes me happy. I enjoyed eating many kinds of fruit that are not commonly found in other countries. Since Colombia doesn't have traditional seasons, there is a great variety of fruits available throughout the year. I really enjoyed my trip, and now I have more energy.

I have recently been to my home country, Colombia. I spent two months in my hometown, Cali. During that time, I relaxed at my family's home and helped my mother with some medical appointments. After I had spent another month visiting friends and exploring famous tourist attractions, such as Guatapé and El Peñol Rock. We never had bad weather. It was sunny almost every day, and I really enjoyed it because I don't like cold weather. Being in my country always makes me happy. I enjoyed eating many kinds of fruit that are not commonly found in other countries. Since Colombia doesn't have traditional seasons, there is a great variety of fruits available throughout the year. I really enjoyed my trip, and now I have more energy.



Iryna

I have taken short trips to Waterton Nationality Park once a month. My family and I have visited that park in all four seasons. My husband has swum in cold water in any weather. I have never swum in cold water, but our children sometimes have swum in cold water with their father. They have felt hot after the really cold water.



Immanuel

My family and I have visited Emerald Lake, British Columbia, and my family has visited Emerald Lake for the first time. The weather was not good, but the weather got better later on, so we enjoyed our short walk outside in Emerald Lake, and we saw a wedding in Emerald Lake that day.

Murielle

Last year, I went to Kribi with my family, and we really enjoyed the ocean. We wanted to swim at the Chutes de la Lobe, but the water was too strong, so we just watched the waterfalls. We could eat fresh fish at the market, or we could buy grilled fish directly on the beach. I chose Kribi because I love seafood, and I wanted to see the famous waterfalls meeting the ocean.



Niaz

Three years ago, my family and I went to the Banff for the first time on vacation . We didn't know about the place and also we didn't know where should we go and also we didn't have any information about the Banff we just were very excited . But when we arrived in the town, we were so excited and we enjoyed a lot from the weather, from the lake, from the mountain, from the town. And also we took a lot of pictures at that place. We liked it and also made a delicious barbecue we ate together and we enjoyed it. We have gotten a lot of experience when we go there again. What should we have? What should we do and also in which part of Banff is more exciting.

Arefa

I have recently taken a short trip to Cascade Pond, Banff, Alberta. My family has visited this place twice a year in the summer. We have often spent time walking around the pond and have enjoyed barbeques and have taken photos of nature. Cascade Ponds is a good place for a picnic and for relaxing. We have often been disappointed when we have to come back home, but we are always excited for the next time!

Teacher Taylor

I have recently taken a short trip to Invermere, British Columbia. My family has visited the lake there twice a year for many years, and we always have a great time. We've often spent time at the beach, or we have gone on long walks. We have never had bad weather, so we have enjoyed all of our time outside. We have often been disappointed when we have to come back home, but we are always excited for the next time!





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- ✿ All 4 skills: Speaking, Writing, Reading & Listening
- ✿ Real exam practice (official materials)
- ✿ Time management & scoring



**Boost your PTE score
in 6 weeks**

Max 10 students per class

DURATION:

6 weeks

SCHEDULE:

Mon & Wed or Tue & Thu
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

FORMAT:

online

Call or register at: 403 283 1111

equilibrium.ab.ca

707 14th Street NW, Calgary, AB T2N 2A4



Our PTE Preparation Course at Equilibrium School is designed to help you build confidence in all 4 skills — Speaking, Writing, Reading & Listening — with real exam practice and proven strategies.

- ✓ Official practice materials
- ✓ Time management & scoring strategies
- ✓ Small classes for personalized support
- ✓ Online format for flexibility

EQUILIBRIUM SCHOOL