

Meet Eva Hadzima, IAF Micro Loan Recipient:

Originally from Slovakia, Eva moved to Calgary in November 2000 hoping to enter the workforce as a veterinarian. She had a Master's Degree in Toxicology from the University of Veterinary Medicine in Kosice, Slovakia where she practiced for six months.

Before arriving in Calgary, Eva learned that veterinarians were listed on the Canadian government website as one of the top ten occupations in short supply, so she knew there would be plenty of opportunity. "I did not know anyone in

Calgary, but knew that Alberta is rich in agriculture and I love to be near the mountains." Although she had the necessary skills, Eva had to begin a long, slow process to be recognized as a qualified veterinarian here in Canada...beginning with six months in the workforce as an animal groomer. "My most difficult challenge was to regain the respect for my training that I had in my homeland." Other challenges along the way included the cost involved in the accreditation process, finding an affordable place to live, and the English examinations.

It took two years of hard work and frustration before Eva was finally able to pass the required English exams. While studying, she worked as a lab technician in the embryo transfer lab at the University of Calgary, and volunteered at a Calgary veterinarian clinic. Her volunteer effort led to being offered a position as an assistant technologist, where she could work with specialists to learn more about her profession in Canada. Determined to work as a veterinarian in Calgary, Eva realized that she could not work and study at the same time if she were to successfully pass her exams. She quit working for four months to study for the last required exam to obtain her veterinary license. However, financing for this expensive exam would be a challenge without an income. Fortunately, Eva learned about Immigrant Access Fund as she researched the opportunity for government subsidy at the EI office. She obtained a line of credit for \$5,000 which was used for living expenses while she took four months off to study, to purchase textbooks, and a portion of the exam cost.

Eva received her accreditation in December 2006 and is now very happy to be working in her profession as an independent on-call veterinarian in Calgary. She hopes to specialize in small and exotic animals in the future. Eva's philosophy is, 'the more you learn, the better'.

By Cindy Pardo

To ease the financial burden of accreditation in Canada, IAF provides loans up to \$5,000 which may be used for tuition, exam fees, qualification assessments, books and course materials, living allowance during study time, or other related expenses that help the applicant progress toward their goal of resuming their career.

**Application forms and information on eligibility are available on our website
iafcanada.org**

IAF is now serving immigrants Alberta wide!

- As of August 1st, The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) is our new loan delivery partner serving Alberta 'north'. Sergio Manrique is the Loan Program Coordinator.
- Momentum continues as our loan delivery partner in Calgary, and has granted 55 loans to date. Vic Rempel is the Loan Facilitator.
- Skilled immigrants from across Alberta can now send applications to Vic or Sergio.
- We are confident our new partner will provide excellent service similar to Momentum.

RBC Foundation shows strong support for skilled immigrants

Through RBC Foundation

RBC Foundation has made a \$100,000 donation to help internationally trained immigrants obtain training and accreditation in Alberta which will lead to gainful employment in their field of expertise and study. Thank you RBC for your commitment to diversity and building community.

If you would like to donate, please call us or visit the "To Donate" link on our website.

Member of the Order of Canada

IAF Board President Dr. Maria Eriksen has just become a member of the Order of Canada for her lifetime efforts to create social equity. Congratulations!



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