

# Enhancing the Well Being, Social and Civic Engagement of Immigrant Women Retirees

Project Newsletter

2/6/2017

Volume 2

## **Early Findings – reinforcing the importance of intersectionality**

As we complete our data collection and move into analysis, one of our earliest insights is the importance of applying an intersectional lens to our data. This means recognizing that the challenges, and contributors to well being, raised by the women we've interviewed are "never the

result of single, distinct factors. Rather, they are the outcome of intersections of different social locations, power relations and experiences" (Hankiski 2014). This impacts our analysis by reminding us to move beyond static, homogenizing categories of "immigrant" and "women" to analyze and reflect on

how these identities intersect and overlap with other factors such as ethno-cultural background, language skills, education, employment history, year of immigration and family composition, (cont. p.2)

## **Project Update**

### **Data Collection**

- 25 participant and 13 stakeholder interviews complete
- 3 months of participant observation with sample of 7 participants complete

### **Data Analysis**

- Interviews transcribed
- Coding in progress

### **Knowledge Dissemination**

- Presentation to University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work Age Friendly Communities Class (January 3 2017)
- Upcoming Brown Bag Lunch presentation at Bow Valley College (February 15 2017)
- Upcoming presentation at the Annual Metropolis Conference (March 16 2017).

### **Co Creation Phase**

- Participants will be invited to engage in March 2017, and the process will begin in April 2017.

## **Project Team**

### **Research Working Group:**

Dr. Martha Fanjoy (BVC)  
Hana Taleb Imai (BVC)  
Celestina Akinkunmi (CIWA)  
Bronwyn Bragg (BVC)  
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### **Steering Committee:**

Elza Bruk (BVC)  
Beba Svirig (CIWA)  
Elizabeth Schnitzler (City of Calgary)  
Dr. Cherylyn Cameron (BVC)  
Patricia Spadafora (Sheridan College)

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and how these factors intersect and interact with the existing structures and systems that impact their daily lives. By exploring

how these intersecting factors shape individual and group experiences we can better recommend policy and programmatic

practices with outcomes designed to improve and sustain the well-being of immigrant women retirees.

## **Methods Corner – Reflections from a project participant**

*In this edition of Methods Corner Dolly Castillo reflects on participating in the participant observation phase of the project.*

It's my pleasure to share with you my firsthand experiences, learnings, and insights into this segment of the research. This follows after a personal sit – down interview with the lead researcher Martha. The idea is to now watch me in action as I interact in various activities. I'm shadowed by an assistant researcher, Laurent Wall, in about 15 activities. We're now 3 / 4 of the way through different events – public and private. This has run the gamut of church celebrations, organization business meeting, socialized organization gathering, community kitchen project planning session, actual cooking half – day activity, and a comfortable chat at my condo unit.

When Laurent and I first agreed on my schedule of activities, I did forewarn him that about 50% of my activities are church centered in the Roman Catholic tradition. The rest are volunteer meetings or social gatherings. I appreciate his open – mindedness in being immersed in my Filipino culture as we attended these activities. As a starter, we had a number of activities lined up for November. The first one was a Philippine community sponsored mass at Mountain View Funeral Home chapel. It was a Mass for All Souls – our departed ones. Then followed some more masses at Sacred Heart coordinated by the Filipino Catholic Society. I'm its Immediate Past President for the last 2 years. Business meetings and social parties were the others in which we made Laurent feel welcomed with intros and hospitality food – a trademark of Filipino gatherings.

I felt and viewed all these activities with a sense of satisfaction and completion. Our groups work hard and play hard. Community service has been my passion since the mid 90's when my daughter was already grown up. I made sure my involvement outside was balanced by roles as a mother – wife – and homemaker. Having another set of eyes to observe me, one who is very open to acculturation, is a very positive path to integration. I firmly believe in inclusivity, working with different generations, collaborations, respect for each other's perspectives, and open – minded, and creative thinking. All these are successfully achieved and demonstrated through my set of activities. I welcome another chance to participate.

*Reference: Hankiski. (2014). Intersectionality 101. [https://www.sfu.ca/iirp/documents/resources/101\\_Final.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/iirp/documents/resources/101_Final.pdf).*