

# LINC Students' Goal Pathways: A Mixed Methods Analysis

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## Table of Contents

Goals Pathways Project .....	3
Project Overview .....	3
Research Objectives .....	3
Data Collection & Methodology .....	3
Findings .....	6
Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis .....	6
Phase 2: Narrative Analysis .....	15
The Typology .....	15
Discussion .....	20
Conclusions .....	22
Limitations .....	23
Appendix A: Participants' Stories .....	24
Participant #1, NorQuest College.....	24
Participant #2, NorQuest College.....	26
Participant #3, NorQuest College.....	27
Participant #4, NorQuest College.....	28
Participant #5, NorQuest College.....	31
Participant #6, NorQuest College.....	33
Participant #7, NorQuest College.....	34
Participant #8, NorQuest College.....	35
Participant #9, NorQuest College.....	37
Participant #10, NorQuest College .....	38
Participant #1, Red River College .....	40
Participant #2, Red River College .....	45
Participant #3, Red River College .....	51
Participant #4, Red River College .....	53
Participant #5, Red River College .....	56
Participant #6, Red River College .....	61
Participant #7, Red River College .....	64
Participant #8, Red River College .....	66
Participant #9, Red River College .....	68
Participant #10, Red River College .....	69

# Goals Pathways Project

## Project Overview

The economic integration of newcomers is not only impacted by the opportunities and barriers they experience, but also by their career goals and how these change through their settlement process. Past research at NorQuest College has shown that students' career goals frequently change between their point of registration and when they exit the program. These new career goals define the subsequent steps that LINC alumni take, ultimately influencing their economic outcomes. There is limited research, however, into the common career goal changes, what trajectories the changes take, and what factors influence the change process. The goal of this research project was to answer these questions by identifying and analyzing the career goal pathways of LINC students at NorQuest College and Red River College. This project was co-funded by the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). It was reviewed and approved by the NorQuest College and Red River College Research Ethics Boards.

## Research Objectives

This project had three main objectives:

- 1) To understand the common pathways of newcomers' career goals as they progress through the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program that is offered by both NorQuest College and Red River College;
- 2) To identify common pathways changes for newcomers as they progress through LINC and the settlement process; and
- 3) To identify how the LINC program and other factors impact goal pathways.

Our specific research questions were:

- 1) What are the most common career goal changes for newcomers?
- 2) What pathways do these career goal changes take?
- 3) Do and, if so, how do these pathways differ across different stages of the settlement process?
- 4) How does the LINC program and other factors influence the pathways of students' goals?
- 5) What areas (services, programming, etc.) help students through the process of setting/changing goals?

## Data Collection & Methodology

The project used an explanatory sequential mixed method approach. Phase 1 involved a quantitative analysis of existing LINC student data to identify common goal changes. Phase 2 involved face-to-face narrative interviews with LINC students who had engaged in the most common pathway changes identified in Phase 1. The purpose of the narrative interviews was to understand how and why the students' career goals changed.

## Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis

In phase 1, existing data from NorQuest College’s student records and the 2018-2019 LINC Outcomes Survey were used to track students’ career goals at the moment of registration and at the completion of the program. The LINC Outcomes Survey is an annual survey conducted by NorQuest College to gather data about LINC completers’ outcomes immediately post-program. In the survey from which the data was pulled, student administrative data was used to identify the LINC students whose last enrollment in the LINC program was in the previous academic year (2017-2018) and who had not further registration in the LINC program. A random sample of 431 former students were selected and invited to participate in the survey. The survey was administered online using the Qualtrics Platform and callbacks were conducted in several languages. A total of 255 former LINC students completed the survey, resulting in a 59% response rate. In addition to demographic measures, the survey included questions on students’ current occupation and occupational aspiration. The LINC Outcomes dataset was then paired with background information from administrative records, specifically the respondents’ occupation and occupational goal at the point of enrollment at NorQuest College. Given the focus of the current study on change in respondents’ occupational aspirations, cases with missing data on the outcome variable (i.e. occupational goals) were listwise-deleted to create the analytical sample for the current analysis (N=228).

The specific measures analyzed were:

- **Home-country occupation.** This is the respondent’s self-declared occupation in their home country and comes from survey data. It is the response to the question “What was your occupation in your home country?”
- **Current occupation.** This is the respondent’s self-declared current occupation in the LINC Outcomes survey, and is the response to the question “What is your current main occupation?”
- **Initial Target Occupation.** This is the student’s self-declared goal occupation at the point of enrollment and comes from administrative records.
- **Current Target Occupation.** This is the student’s self-declared goal occupation after LINC completion and comes from the LINC Outcomes survey data. It is the response to the question “What is your goal occupation?”

Survey and administrative data on students’ occupations and occupational goals were coded using the National Occupational Classification (NOC) categories developed by Statistics Canada. Occupations were specifically classified using the ten broad NOC categories to allow comparison. The NOC classifications are based on skill type, which considers the similarity of training and work experience required to enter an occupation. Table 1 presents example occupations for LINC students included in these categories.

**Table 1: Taxonomy Goal Occupations by NOC Broad Category**

<b>NOC Broad Occupational Category</b>	<b>Representative Goal Occupations Listed by Students</b>
<b>Business, finance, and administrative occupations</b>	<i>Accountant, Business Administration Professional, HR Manager, Insurance Professional</i>
<b>Education, law, government and social services</b>	<i>Daycare Teacher, Social Worker, Child Care Worker, French Teacher</i>

<b>Health occupations</b>	<i>Dental Assistant, Nurse, Pharmacy Technician, Pharmacist, Health Care Worker, Medical Assistant, Dentist, Doctor</i>
<b>Natural, applied sciences and related occupations</b>	<i>Civil engineer, software engineer, aircraft mechanic engineer, computer programmer</i>
<b>Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sports</b>	<i>Graphic designer, professional photographer, interior designer, personal trainer</i>
<b>Sales and service occupations</b>	<i>Hotel receptionist, housekeeping, janitor, security guard, hairstylist, cook</i>
<b>Trades, transport and equipment operators</b>	<i>Taxi Driver, Truck Driver, Maintenance technician, Electrician, Construction worker</i>

The analysis of the data, however, also included the additional categories of *Student, Other, Homemaker, and Self-employed*, which are not included in the NOC categorization.

Using these categories to code students' goal occupations allowed us to identify goal pathways that involve major changes in occupation or occupational aspiration. These data were used to examine the distribution of occupational aspirations across categories at the point of enrollment and after LINC completion, the degree of prevalence of goal change (i.e. the percentage of goal changers), and the most common occupational pathways for goal changers.

## **Phase 2: Qualitative Analysis**

Once the most common career goal changes were identified, current students who matched these career goal changes were recruited from NorQuest College and Red River College. Program instructors who were asked to identify students who matched the career goal changes and provide them with information about the project. Students who were interested in participating were asked to directly contact the research team. In total, 20 students were interviewed, 10 from NorQuest College and 10 from Red River College. Interviews were conducted face-to-face between November 2018 and November 2019. In four instances, the interviews were conducted in the student participants' natal language and translated into English. All other interviews were conducted in English. Of the 20 interviews, 16 were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The remaining 4 transcribed by the interviewer post-interview then verified and validated by the participant.

Interviews were analyzed using A. Frank's narrative inquiry approach. Narrative inquiry was chosen to provide a narrative complement to the statistical analysis of career goal changes. Frank's approach allowed for the identification of both the typologies of newcomers' goals pathway changes (i.e., common stories of pathway change experiences) and the meaning making behind when goals change (i.e., why the goal change was made and the various factors that impacted the choice).

When taken together, the qualitative and quantitative findings enable a rich understanding of the social, relational, and economic factors underpinning students' career goal changes, thereby enabling LINC providers to better support newcomers in the settlement process and their economic integration.

# Findings

## Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis

### Respondent Demographics

Of respondents included in the analytical sample, two-thirds (67%) of respondents were female. The most common age group was 30 – 40 years old. Almost a quarter (22%) were between the ages of 19 and 29 and 36% were older than 40. The majority of respondents (70%) were married and one-fifth (20%) were single, never married. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents have one or more dependents. About two-fifth (41%) of respondents have one or two dependents, close to a quarter (23%) have three to five dependents and 5% have six or more dependents. While 8% live in a single-person household, thirty-nine percent (39%) live with two or three others, close to half (45%) live with four to six others and another 8% live with more than six others in the household.

**Table 2: Basic Demographic Characteristics of Analytic Sample**

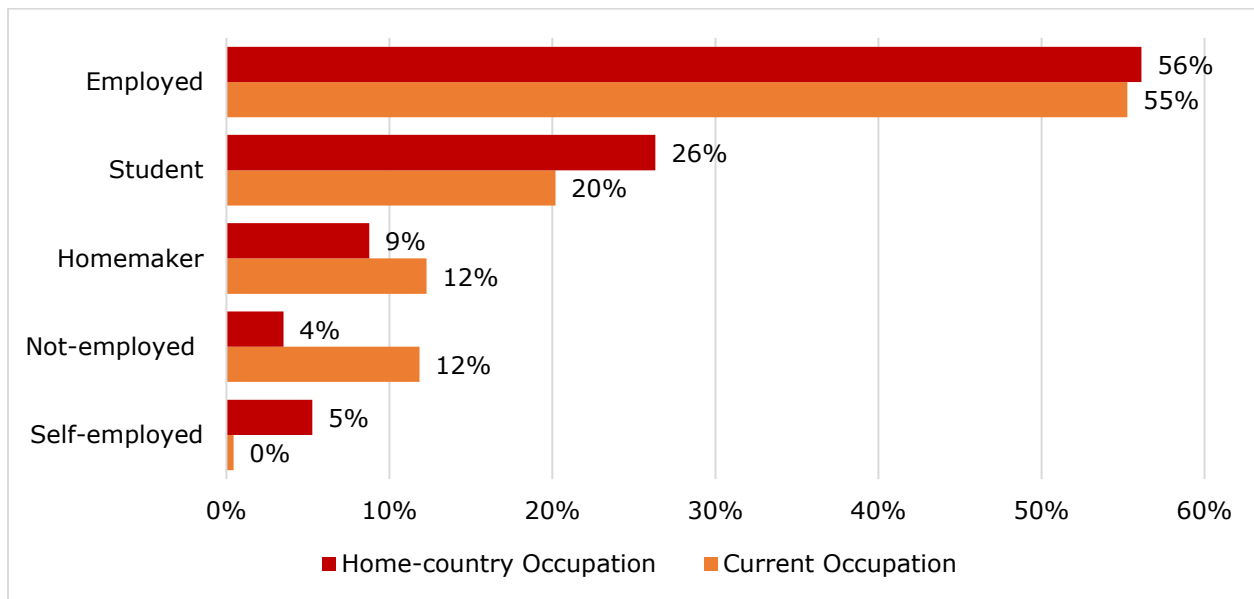
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
<i>Female</i>	67%
<i>Male</i>	33%
<b>Age</b>	
<i>19 - 29 years old</i>	22%
<i>30 - 40 years old</i>	42%
<i>41 or older</i>	36%
<b>Marital Status</b>	
<i>Single, never married</i>	20%
<i>Separated, widowed or divorced</i>	9%
<i>Married, common law, or cohabiting</i>	70%
<b>Dependents</b>	
<i>None</i>	32%
<i>One to two</i>	41%
<i>three to five</i>	23%
<i>Six or more</i>	5%
<b>Household size</b>	
<i>One</i>	8%
<i>Two to three</i>	39%
<i>Four to six</i>	45%
<i>More than six</i>	8%

### Goals and occupations

#### Current and Home-country Employment/Occupational Status

Figure 1 provides current and home country employment status for this sample of respondents. One-fifth (20%) of the sample indicated that they are currently studying, and 55% are employed. The rest of the sample were either a homemaker (12%) or not currently employed (12%). When asked about home-country occupation, about a similar proportion (56%) were employed, and about a quarter (26%) were a student. Nine-percent (9%) of respondents were a homemaker and 4% did not have employment in their home country. While none in the sample were currently self-employed, 5% said they were self-employed in their home country.

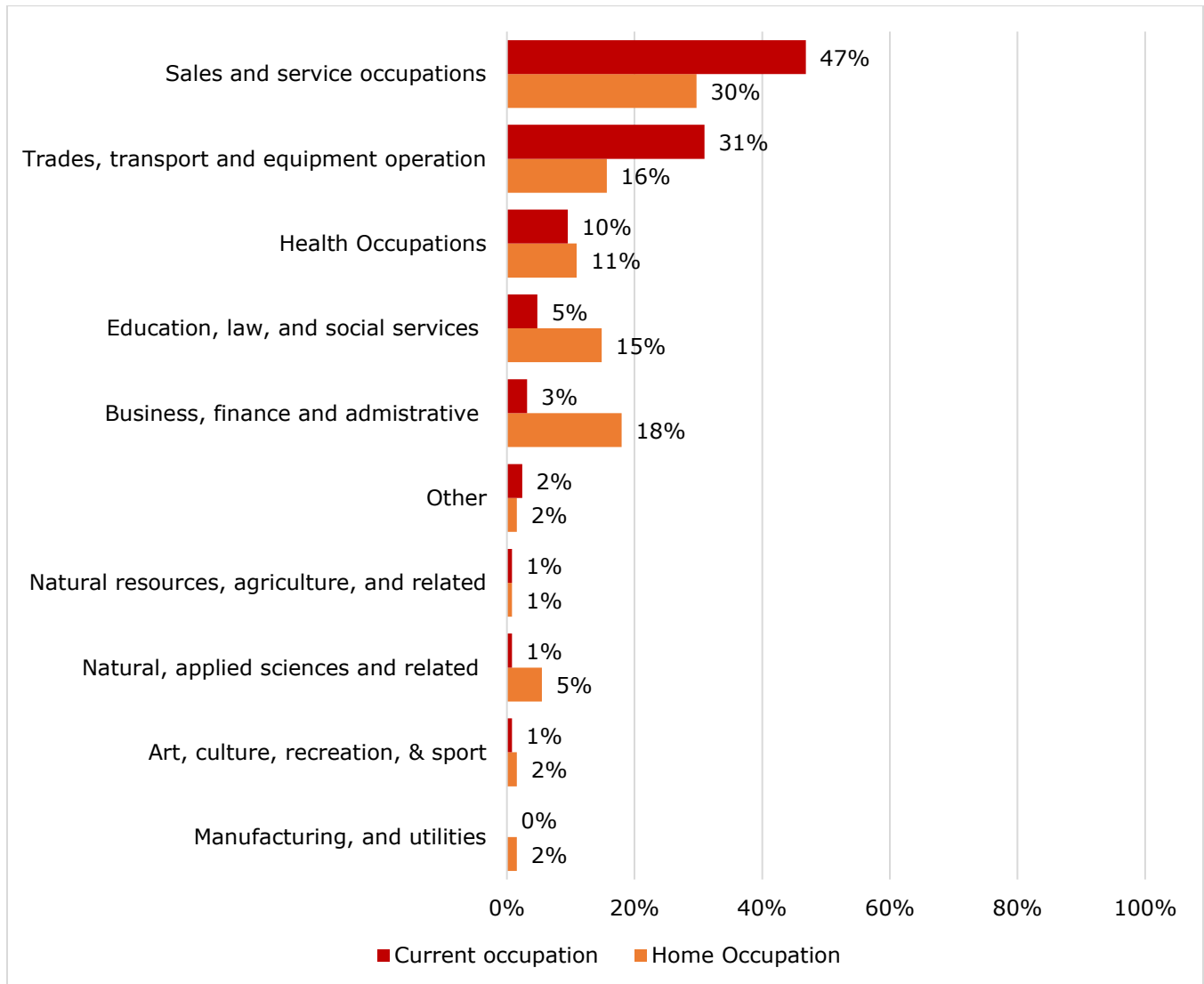
**Figure 1: Respondents' Current and Home-Country Employment/Occupational Status**



### Current and Home-Country Occupation

Figure 2 provides the breakdown of current and home-country occupations by NOC broad category for respondents who plan to be employed. The most common current occupations were in sales and services (47%), trades and transport (31%) and health occupations (10%). A small minority work in education/social services (5%) and business, finance and administration (3%). By comparison, only 30% worked in sales and service occupations, 31% in trades/transport and 11% in health occupations, in their home country. In their home country, however, 15% worked in education and social services and 18% in business, finance and administration. These data indicate that, compared to their home country employment, respondents' current occupations (in Canada) were more likely to be in the sales and services and trades and equipment sectors and less likely be in health occupations, education/social services and business, finance and administration.

**Figure 2: Respondents' Current and Home-Country Occupation, by NOC Broad Category**

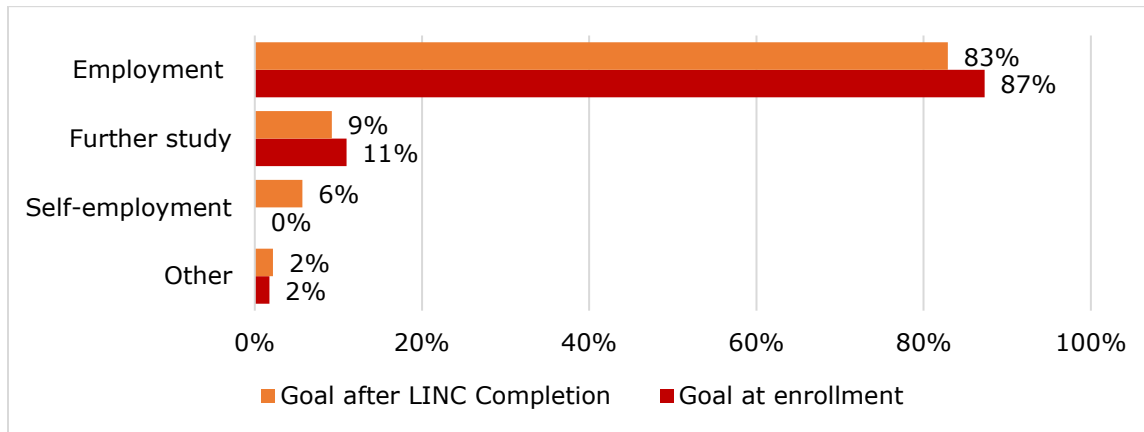


**Employment Goals and Goal Changes**

It is important to note that not all LINC students list employment as their occupational goal, and employment goals do change over time. At enrollment, 87% of respondents planned to be employed and 11% wanted to pursue further study. After LINC completion, 83% wanted to be employed, 9% wanted to pursue further study, and 6% wanted to be self-employed.

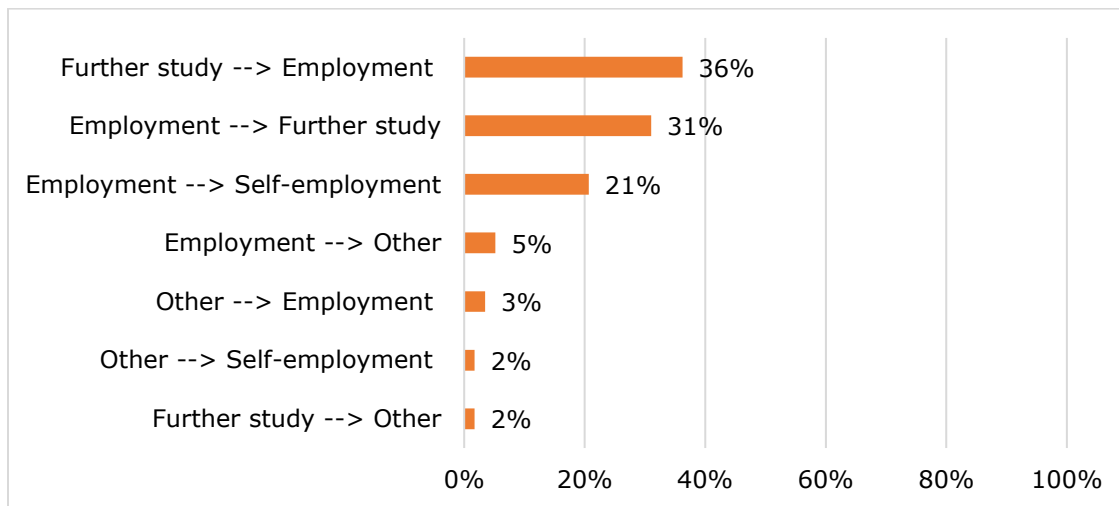


**Figure 3: Respondents' Employment Goals at Enrollment and LINC Completion**



An examination of change in employment goals shows that 25% of respondents changed their employment goal<sup>1</sup>. Among those respondents, 36% were respondents who listed further study as their occupational goal and now have specific occupational goal. Thirty-one percent (31%) were students who listed a specific occupation goal at enrollment, but now want to pursue further study. One-fifth (21%) were students who listed a specific occupational goal at enrollment who now want to pursue self-employment.

**Figure 4: Types of Changes in Employment Goal among LINC Completers**



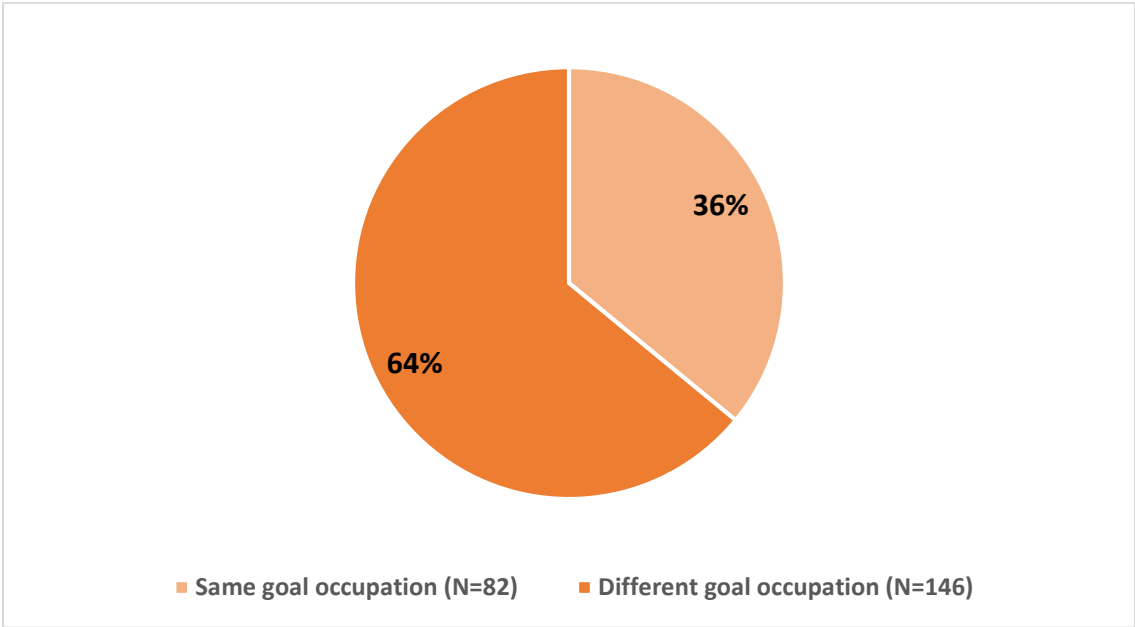
### Occupational Goal Changers

The analysis also determined whether or not change in specific occupational goals was prevalent among LINC students who participated in the study. The results show that, for the majority of students (64%), target occupation at enrollment was different than their self-reported target

<sup>1</sup> Note that this figure (i.e. 25%) captures only major changes in employment goal, such as a change from planning to pursue further education to aiming to be employed. An examination of changes in specific occupational goals shows that 64% of respondents change their occupational aspirations.

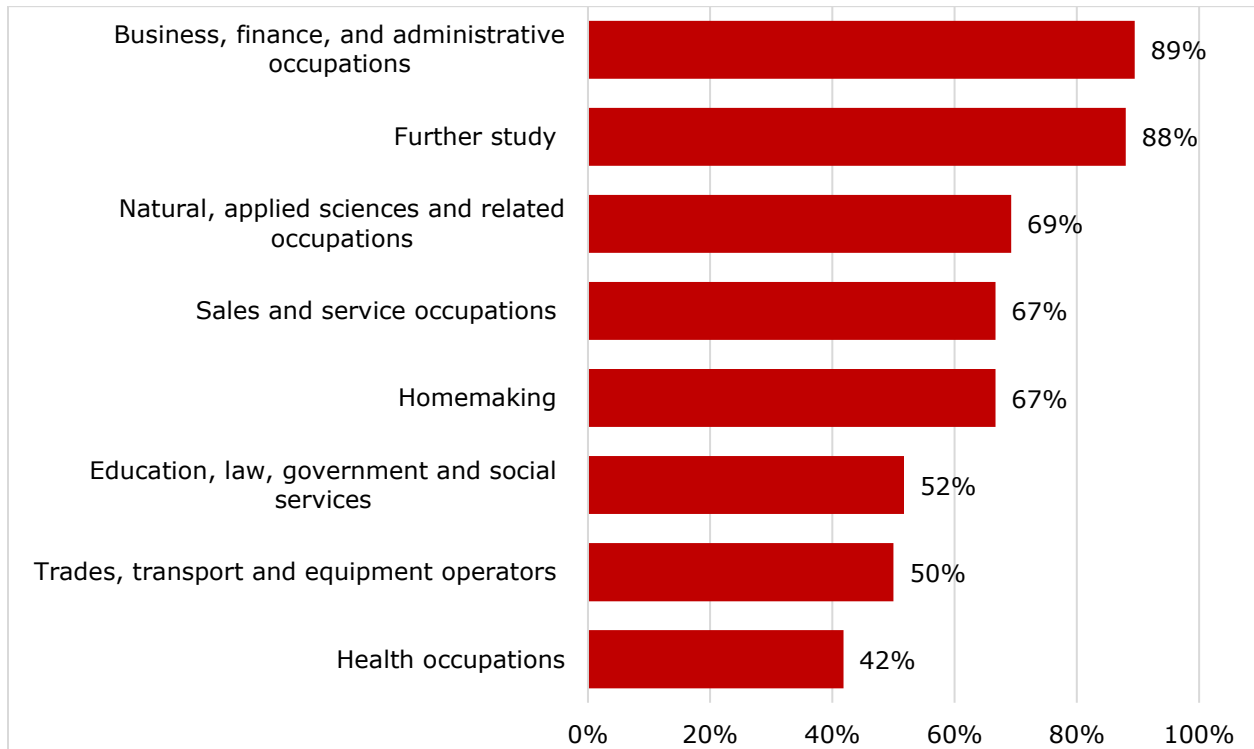
occupation after LINC completion. The analysis also examined if CLB level at completion (i.e. highest CLB completed) was associated with goal change. For the overall sample, there was no statistically significant correlation between goal change and clients' highest CLB at program completion.

**Figure 5: Percent of Students that Changed their Target Occupation, N=228**



The data were further examined to determine if LINC students' initial target occupation was related to the probability of occupational goal change. Figure 6 presents the result from this analysis, which provides the percentage of respondents with goal change by initial target occupation. The percentage of students that changed their occupational goal ranges from 42% (health occupations) to 89% (Business and administrative occupations). More than two-thirds of students with initial goal occupation in the natural and applied sciences (69%) and in sales and services (67%) changed their goals. Only about half of respondents with initial target occupation in education and social services (50%), trades and transport (50%) and manufacturing utilities (50%) ended up changing their target occupation after LINC completion. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority (89%) of respondents with further study as their initial goal now changed their occupational aspiration.

**Figure 6: Propensity to Change Goals by Initial Target Employment or Occupation**



## Target Occupations and Goal Pathways

### Initial vs. Target occupation

The data show that the hierarchy of most common occupational choices is stable over time. LINC students who participated in the study generally aim to work in the health occupations, education & social services, trades, transport & equipment operation, business, finance & administration, and in sales & services. About one-in-ten plan to continue further study (11% at enrollment and 9% after LINC completion). Compared to plans at enrollment, a higher percentage of respondents aim to work in education & social services (17% vs. 13%) and sales & services (7% vs. 5%), and a smaller proportion of students want to work in health occupations (27% vs. 29%) and business, finance, & administrative occupations (7% vs. 8%).

**Figure 7: Initial and Target Occupations for All Respondents (N=228)**

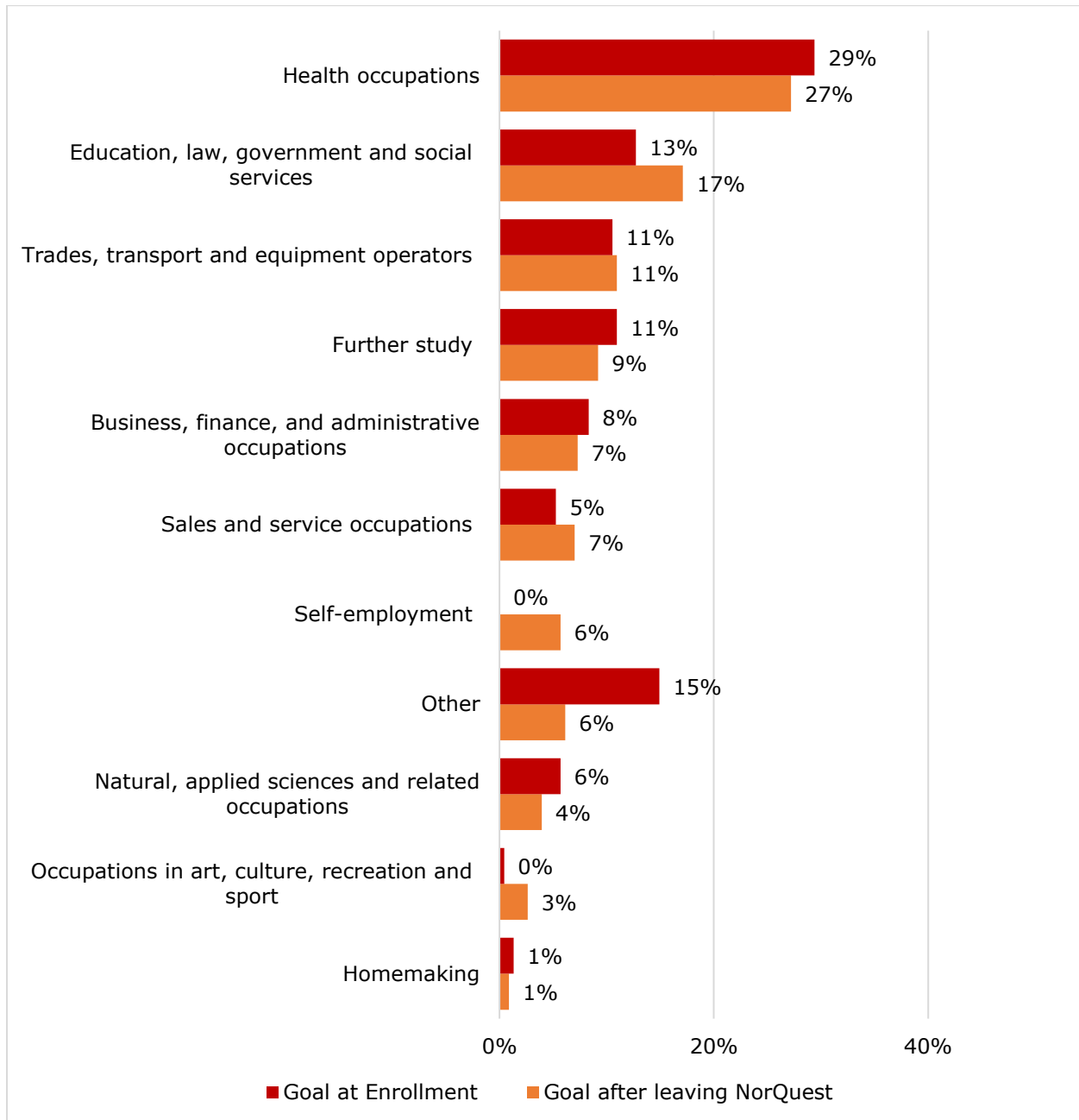
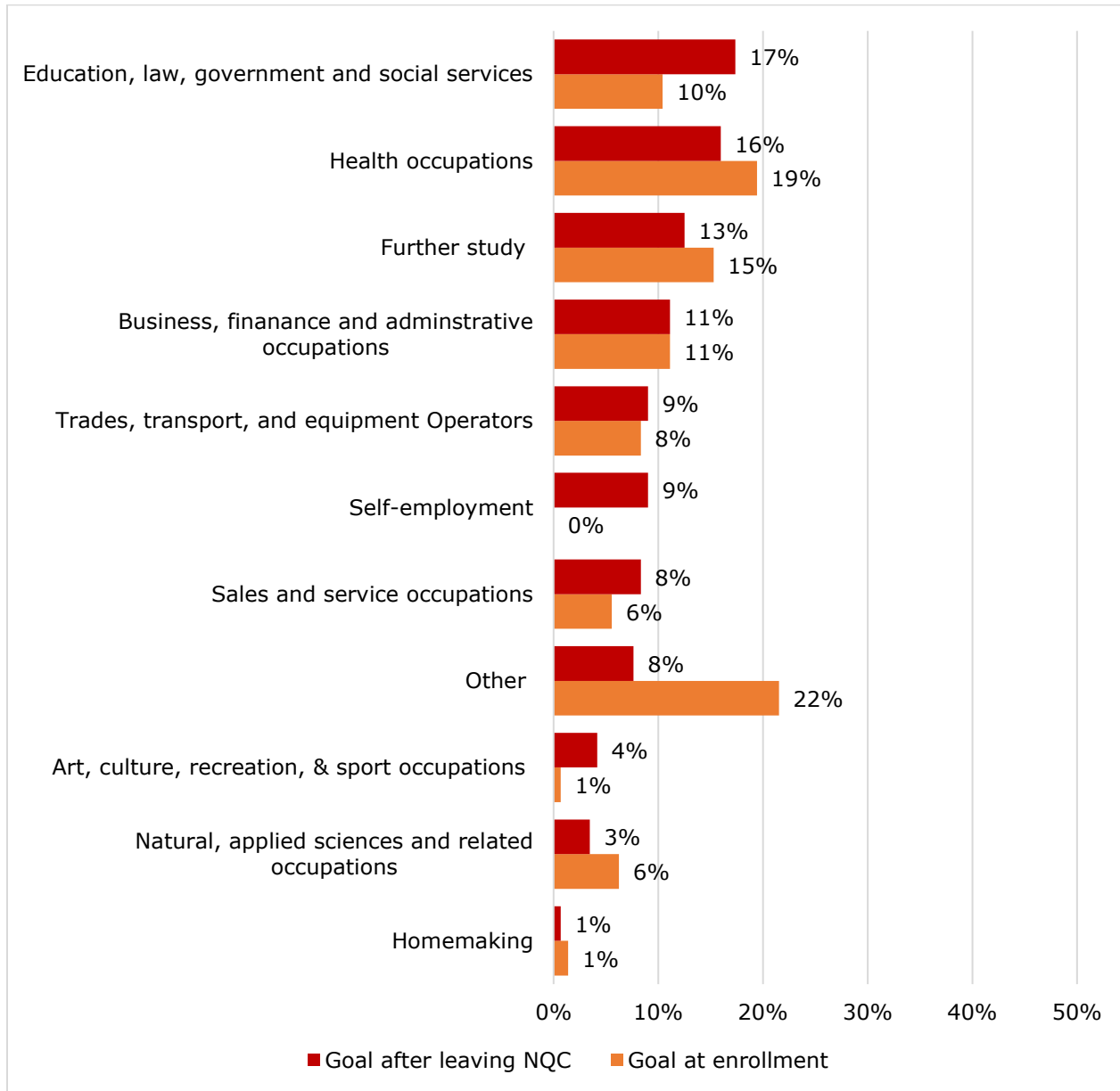


Figure 8 shows initial and current target occupations for goal changers. The most common initial occupational goals for goal changers are in health occupations (19%), education and social services (10%), further study (15%) and business administration (11%). The most common current occupation goals for goal changers, on the other hand, were in education and social services (17%), health occupations (16%) and further study (13%). This suggests that goal changers are more likely to shift into the education and social services sector.

**Figure 8: Target Occupation at Enrollment and after LINC Completion for occupational goal changers, by Broad NOC Category**



**Goal Pathways**

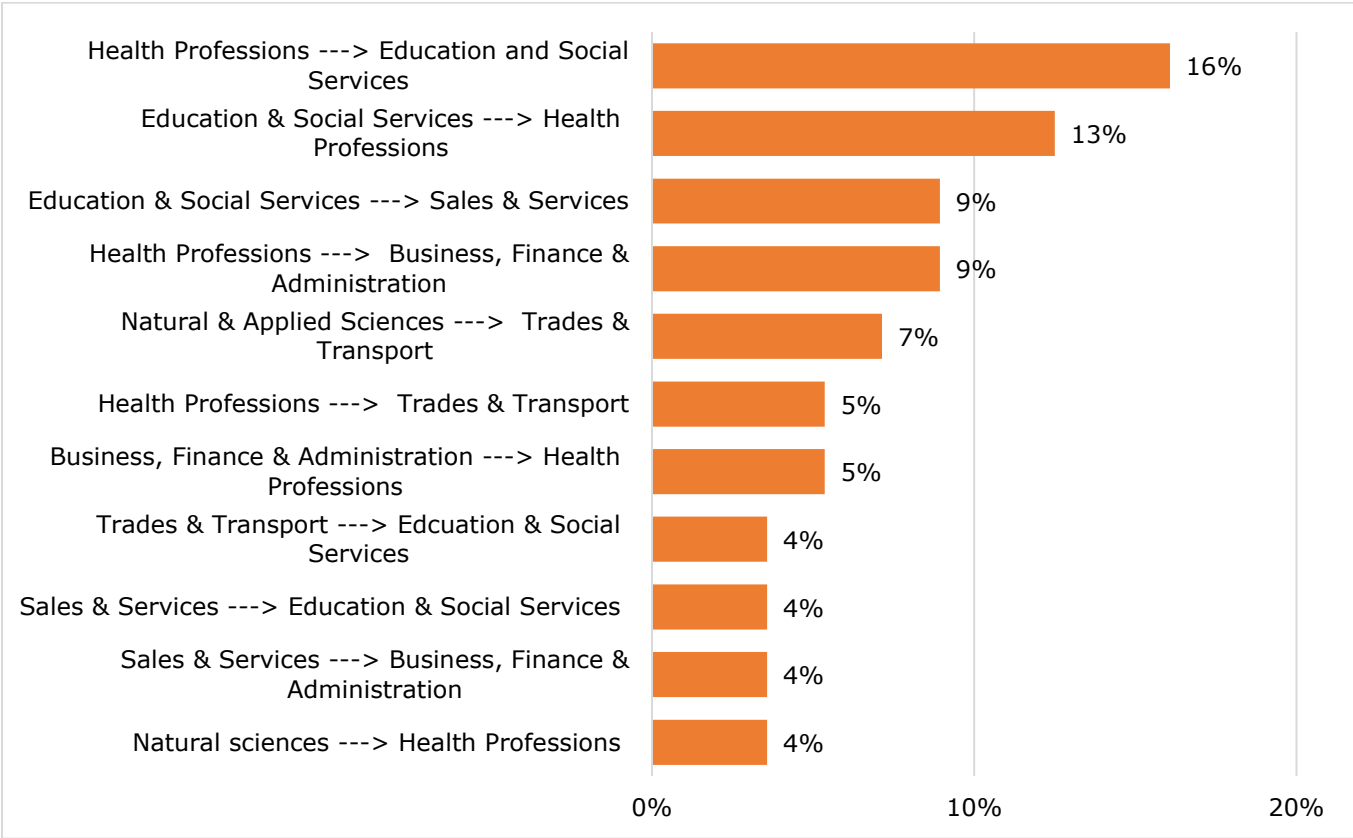
Figure 9 shows the most common goal changes among the LINC students that were surveyed. Sixteen percent (16%) of the goal changes were a shift from a health occupation to an occupation in the education and social services sector, which is the most common goal change in the data. The second most common goal change was a shift from a target occupation in the education/social services sector to a goal occupation in the health professions (13%). That is, switches between these two occupational categories represented 29% of all goal changes.

Respondents switching from a goal occupation in the health professions often switch to education and social services (16% of switches), business administration (9%) or trades and transport (5%).

Those switching from education & social services change to an occupation in the health professions (13%) or sales & services (9%), and those changing from the natural & applied sciences move to occupations in trades and transport (7%) and the health professions (4%). There were no clear differences in goal pathways between lower-level (CLB 1 – 4) and higher-level (CLB 5 and above) language learners; however, this is likely due to the small sample size of goal changers across CLB levels.

Respondents changing their target occupation from a job in business administration are likely to switch to a goal occupation in the health professions (5%), and those switching from sales and services often aim to go into education & social services (4%) or business administration (4%). Finally, students who switch their goal from a job in trades & transport were likely to switch to a job in education and social services (4%). In addition, there are conspicuously absent goal switches between two occupational categories, namely business administration and education/social services.

**Figure 9: Most Common Goal Changes among Respondents with Specific Goal Occupations, by Broad NOC Category<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>2</sup> Only students with specific occupational aspiration are included here (i.e. respondents with such employment/occupational goals coded as self-employment, homemaking, further study, and "other.")

## Phase 2: Narrative Analysis

### Career Goal Pathways: Character & Circumstance

From the accounts collected, newcomers' stories of how and why they change career goals involve a combination of character and circumstance. But while individual circumstances varied widely, participants demonstrated a consistent pattern of specific character traits, attributes, relationships, and actions as they worked through the process of deciding to change their career goal and identifying a new goal. Or said differently, participants appear to adopt and portray different type of 'roles' during their career goal change. The typology that developed, therefore, is built around at the different characters of/roles played by the protagonists (i.e., LINC students) as they move through the career goal change pathway.

While a consistent pattern of roles was identified, it must be noted that the different protagonist roles within the typology are not exclusive. That is, while some individuals only presented one type, other participants adopted several roles in sequence before finally deciding on a new career goal. For those who adopted multiple roles, one role would frequently initiate the change in their career path while another role would determine their new career goal. The pathways, then, can be either non-sequential or sequential. For example, a non-sequential pathway would be someone who is, by natural inclination, a Map Reader. Upon considering changing career goals, they ask for information from counselors, teachers, practitioners, and they choose a new career path based on that input. An example of a sequential pathway, however, would be someone who starts as an Industrious Companion. This individual's circumstances lead them to a desire for a new career and, in seeking out career information, the Companion becomes a Map Reader who collects information on new careers. The results of the information collected may, in turn, lead the Map Reader to become an Analyst, one who weighs and balances the cost/benefits of any new career path, and it is in the Analyst role that the new career is decided upon. This typology, therefore, should be understood as describing different modes of being or roles that LINC students may occupy at different times throughout their pathway to a new career goal.

### The Typology

The following table outlines the different protagonist roles (or 'types') presented by the individual interviewed, as well as the features found in each role and the stories that exemplify it. As evidenced by the number of participants who embody these roles, certain roles are appear to be adopted more frequently than others. However, due to the low number of overall participants in Phase 2 (N=20), the frequency of each type may be due to chance.

PROTAGONIST	STORIES	FEATURES
The Industrious Companion	NQ1 NQ2 NQ3 NQ4 NQ9 NQ10 RRC2 RRC5	The Industrious Companion arrives as the companion to the head of the immigrant/refugee unit but, in the process of settlement, discovers a desire to claim their own identity. Although this story is often that of a woman in a traditional family unit, it was a story collected from men as well – particularly those whose partners either arrived earlier, adapted more quickly, or were more immediately employable. The Industrious Companion may have less immediate financial need if the head of the unit has stable employment, but this does not change their own desire for self-fulfillment and the respect of others.

The Map Reader	NQ2 RRC3 RRC5	The Map Reader is a newcomer who actively seeks maps of the new occupational landscape from college services and the Internet and chooses the path that seems the most direct route to their goals. The Map Readers tend to be anxious to understand Canadian employment culture, to find a clear path to a career through education and certification, and to regard the input of other newcomers as being of less value because it comes from a place of partial knowledge.
The Copyist	NQ6 NQ10 RRC1	The Copyist sees the success of similar refugees/immigrants, usually from their own identified group (whether religious, ethnic, national or racial) and decides to copy that path, even if it has no relation to their previous goals or training. The Copyist relates to other newcomer experiences and wants Canadians to understand the challenges faced by newcomers. At the same time, they use cultural and personal networks to solve their most immediate needs for material survival. They look at both school and work opportunities through a community lens with the knowledge that they might be slowed in their progress toward their ultimate career goal, but this is a landscape they understand.
The Escape Artist	NQ1 NQ2 NQ6 NQ7	The Escape Artist is dissatisfied in the career they had in the country they left and is using the change of country to escape from an occupation or profession they felt constrained by. Upon arrival, they may already have a new career path in mind. The new country presents many options, and there may be some ambivalence about which path to take – the important consideration is that they approach their immigration as a new beginning. While some may occasionally reference returning to their country of origin because it offered career advantages, their desire to escape political or social circumstances convinces them to put distance between their earlier pursuits and the ones they will follow in Canada.
The Converted Volunteer	NQ2 NQ4 NQ8 RRC3 RRC7 RRC8 RRC10	The Converted Volunteer has a positive experience as a volunteer, either before immigration or after, that reveals a personal need that they feel they can fill through finding an occupation in that environment. In some cases the position may be one that does not exist as an career choice in their country of origin; it might have been fulfilled by the extended family, for example. The clearest set of stories came from LINC students whose volunteerism is arranged through the colleges as an opportunity to practice their language skills; inspired by what they witness and how the volunteer placements make them feel, if the college offers a training program related to the jobs (daycare, healthcare) the Converted Volunteer can see a clear continuum from volunteer activity to career opportunity. Other Converted Volunteers have to look for training requirements and options.
The Analyst	NQ2 NQ7	The Analyst experiences a strong desire for sustainability as soon as possible following immigration. The Analyst calculates time to retrain, long-term benefits vs time and money



	NQ9 RRC1 RRC8	investment, and effect on family. The framework is one of pragmatism and denial of personal interests. The Analyst changes goals to achieve an earlier benefit, but they are always thirsty for information that could affect their calculations. They may determine a succession of goals with a view to increased sustainability. They might change their goals frequently as they see local circumstances change or as new information becomes available.
The Interrupted Pragmatist	NQ3 NQ5 NQ6 NQ9 NQ10	The Interrupted Pragmatist typically had an education cut short in their country of origin. Upon arrival, the original potential career path has already been abandoned. The change of circumstance in Canada allows for an education that grafts a new path. The frustrated original dream is replaced by a desire for any accomplishment, and if there are too many obstacles in the way (such as a lengthy route to recertification), the Interrupted Pragmatists will accept a lesser position in a related field.
The Sod-Layer	RRC1 RRC2 NQ4 NQ10 RRC4 RRC6 RRC9	The Sod-Layer arrives in Canada with the intent to take their previous career and lay it down in Canada, but finds the soil doesn't sustain what they have brought. Their plan is not to change careers but to seek adaptation, the fertilizer that will make the transplant successful. In some stories that means achieving a greater level of financial stability before they seek re-qualification.

## The Stories

The following demonstrates how participants adopt certain roles in the process of changing their career goals, whether these are a single role or multiple roles. For persons with multiple roles, each role is differentiated by a color with the relevant narrative text coded accordingly. Beside the story is a brief explanation of how the participant specifically embodies the role(s). All stories have been anonymized to protect the identity of the participants. For all of the participants stories, see Appendix A.

Participant #2, NorQuest College	Role Type & Explanation
<p><i>I came to Canada in December 2015. I came with my husband. I have family in back home, but here I have my husband and my daughter.</i></p> <p><i>When I arrived, I didn't understand anything. I sat at home for two months, I don't go outside. After coming to LINC, I am changing my language, changing my reading and writing. It's helping me.</i></p> <p><i>I didn't have a goal back home. I only went to university for one year before we came to Canada. I have experience back home, helping with my grandfather's health needs, taking him out. And I have experience in child care.</i></p> <p><i>When I came to Canada, I was thinking of a career in seniors' healthcare. Then I changed my goal for Nursing. My</i></p>	<p>This participants begins her career pathways journey most evidently as <b>an Industrious Companion</b>. She immigrants to Canada with her husband, the head of her household. Aside from caring for her family, she did not have a career prior to immigrating. After she begins LINC, however, she begins to look for self-fulfillment.</p> <p>During her immigration to Canada, however, the participant is also <b>a Converted</b></p>

*dream is to help people. So I looked for Nursing programs, but there are long waitlists, and then the programs are four years long – that’s long for me. When I came to LINC, I sat beside my friend and she told me, “After I finish LINC and ESL, after that I want to go to a course for Nursing, but a lot of people are going for Nursing.”*

*A lot of people in my class plan on going for nursing. Nursing and daycare. I changed my goal to doing Ultrasound. I found it online. Ultrasound is two years, and I asked around: not a lot of people here are looking to be trained in Ultrasound. I don’t want to have to wait more than a year to get in. Waiting is hard for me. Maybe I need to finish fast; I don’t need to be going to school even more time.*

*I have a friend outside LINC who’s a doctor. I asked her about people who work for her clinic. She told me ultrasound is good, she has a need. It is easy to find a job, and not a lot of people on the waiting list. After you finish, there’s work. But Nursing? A lot of people on the waitlist.*

*I am going for a different space, a good job. After I finish Ultrasound training, I want to help anyone who needs it, anywhere. I am looking for a good job, and I look for any space, clean. I will look for a good job and give back to Canada. Canada, she gives me good space, and good health and good learning, and in return I want to find a good job after I finish ultrasound training.*

*For whatever I study, I need to improve my English reading, writing, speaking and listening. So hard, not easy. After my English is better, after that I will look into courses. Maybe Nursing, maybe Ultrasound. I look at a lot of courses online, but I am not ready right now. I need to finish LINC and ESL first, then I will look again.*

*My teacher answers questions about how long courses take, if they need upgrading and ESL first. I am looking for an easy course. I don’t like being in school all the time. I need work.*

*I want to tell any student just go to learn English. It is not easy and not hard, just go and study every day, practice every day, do that. Everyone should do that after studying every day: practice, do homework, do assignments. After you finish learning English, you can look for and do any course.*

**Volunteer.** After having cared for her grandfather, she discovers her “dream is to help people.” When planning to move to Canada, she discovers this goal can be realized through a career in senior’s care.

Uniquely, however, this participant is also something of **an Escape Artist**. Although she doesn’t explicitly state that she was unhappy being a homemaker and caregiver, she deliberately uses her immigrant to Canada as a reason to pursue a career. This role leads her to become a **Map Reader**, examining the occupational landscape. She reviews various online programs and considers waitlists, as well as speaks with her instructor, her friends within the LINC program, and people she knows outside of it. As with other Map Readers, the input of non-immigrants carries more weight in her opinion that that of her fellow immigrants.

In examining her choices, the participant discovers that her ideal program, Nursing, has long waitlists and take 4 years. This is problematic as she wants employment soon. “I need work.” As she begins to weigh the value of and time required in pursuing her ideal career against her own temperament—“Waiting is hard for me”—and her desire to be hired quickly in “good job” in a sector that has many vacancies, the participant takes on the role of **the Analyst**.

<b>Participant #9, Red River College</b>	<b>Role Type &amp; Explanation</b>
<p><i>I arrived to Canada in March of 2017, two years and eight months ago.</i></p> <p><i>In my home country I used to work for more than three years in a day care as child care worker.</i></p> <p><i>Since September 2018 I have been working at the [community organization] in the day care.</i></p> <p><i>When I arrived to Canada, I already had information about the Early Child Care program because my sister came to Canada two years before me and she gave the information, and therefore, my initial idea was to study this program and open my own day care.</i></p> <p><i>I don't know if I can say my career goal has changed, because I still have as my main goal to open my own day care; however, now that I have more information about other programs, I would like, once I established my day care, to study social work. Those would be my two careers.</i></p> <p><i>The reason for including social work? I am really concerned about how many people from [country] here in Canada and Winnipeg don't have access to jobs and academic opportunities, and then many of the youth are involve in gang activities. I think the origin of these problems occurs in immigrant families where both parents have to work and children grow up with a lack of cultural identity and is easy for them to get involved in criminal activities. Then with a day care and after as a social worker I can help people from my culture in the process of settlement in Canada.</i></p> <p><i>As I mentioned you before I had access to information to the child care program for my sister. Working and volunteer in day cares with people from my culture has allowed me to know their needs and motivate me to help them. It's very sad to think of a child who now is noble, honest and cute, later when he grows up gets involved in criminal activities.</i></p> <p><i>Here at LINC I think when you understand and have a better level of English you feel more comfortable searching information and you can access it. With more information I decided the steps to follow, first complete my English courses and complete the child care program.</i></p> <p><i>Yes, the courses at Red River College have been helping to learn more vocabulary and practice my English, and also get more knowledge about Canadian Culture.</i></p> <p><i>I think would be important for me to get more information about post-secondary studies when I arrived to Canada. I feel some people doesn't have enough information about post-secondary options.</i></p>	<p>This participants is, throughout her entire career goal change journey, a <b>Sod-Layer</b>. She describes how her original intention was to pursue the same career in Canada as she did in her home country, child care. She even had a sibling forward her information about a local post-secondary program to facilitate the transition.</p> <p>After arriving in Canada and settling into a local community, as well as beginning to volunteer and take LINC, this participant realizes that she wants to modify her career goal. She is adapting to the realities of her local community where she sees many children become involved in illegal activities and fail to obtain jobs or pursue school as young adults. Helping care for children is no longer sufficient in helping children and youth become fully engaged adults; they also need social workers to support them through this transition.</p>

## The Interview Typology: Interviewer/Client Relationship Qualities

In addition to the typology of career goal pathway changes for LINC students, the interviews also revealed a typology of the narrative conversation. While not the subject of this study, the nature of the relationship with the interviewer, as determined by the style of the interview and how questions were asked and answered, may have contributed in some fashion to the pathways typology. Although there was no clear link that could be drawn between country of origin and the interview typology, this may be partly a function of the small sample size and there being no reliable way to assume other clients from those countries fall into the same types. Participants' sex, however, may have played a factor. Specifically, male-identified participants noticeably did not cast the interviewers in the role of social worker.

Interviewer type	Interview	Description
Conduit	RRC5 RRC9	Interviewer is seen as a representative of either the school or the government. The participant has a message to deliver regarding their needs in particular or newcomers' needs in general.
Confidant	NQ1 NQ4 NQ6 NQ7 NQ8 RRC4	The interviewer's interest in the story is interpreted by the participant as an interest in their personal story as much as their change of career goals. The participant wants to tell their story, including the personal details of their family and history. The participant is not seeking information, but is asking to be heard.
Career Counselor	NQ2 NQ3 NQ6 NQ7 NQ9 RRC3 RRC6 RRC7 RRC8 RRC10	Both the interviewer and the participant stick closely to what their current program is for and how it meshes with volunteerism, employment, etc. The participant see the interviewer as a source of knowledge and seeks information related to job skills, etc.
Social Worker	NQ4 NQ5 NQ10 RRC1 RRC2 RRC3	The interviewers converses with the participants, commenting on their experiences. They are fleshing out the stories of the whole person rather than the list of questions related to career path changes. The participant outline personal circumstances that they are trying to solve through finding an employment option. They also express their need for other kinds of intervention, such as mental health support. The participant seeks approval. This is the only relationship that the male clients did not forge with the interviewers.

## Discussion

Changing career goals during the course of one's study appears common for LINC students. While only one quarter of the respondents in Phase 1 changed their overall career goal (employment, further studies, etc.) between starting and completing their LINC programming, nearly two thirds (64%) changed the specific goal occupation that they wanted to pursue. Of particular note is that,

between enrolment and completion, self-employment became a viable option for some completers. Whereas no students identified self-employment as their career goal at the start of their LINC program, 6% sought to pursue it upon completion. Additionally, when examining completer's current activity post-program completion, 20% were already currently pursuing further studies, highlighting that one-fifth were actively pursuing the further education required to attain their goal occupation. This is supported by the stories collected of current LINC students who, upon deciding on a new occupational goal, are actively identifying the next steps (post-LINC) required to attain it, whether it be further education, applying for foreign credential recognition, or leveraging personal networks to gain entry into the field.

Additionally, a comparison of occupational goals across time (i.e., initial goal at enrollment vs. goal after LINC completion) shows that the hierarchy of most common occupational choices is generally stable. The most common target occupations are in health, education/social services, business administration and trades/transport. Indeed, 60% of all occupational goal changes were shifts in or out of four NOC categories: (1) Health occupations, (2) Occupations in education, law and social, community, and government services, (3) Business, finance and administration occupations, and (4) Sales and service occupations. Among those with specific occupational goals, the two most common goal change were shifts from the health professions (e.g. nurse, health care worker, dental assistant) to an occupation in education and social services (e.g. social worker, child care worker, teacher) (16% of switches), and vice versa (13% of switches were from education and social services to jobs in the health professions). This suggests that students' occupational goals evolve on two-directional pathways across some of the most prevalent occupational choices. There may be multiple reasons for the dual pathway between education and health, including the predominance of the programs at the colleges under study, that both sectors consist primarily of 'caregiving occupations,' enabling the easy transfer of soft skills, and that both sectors are predominantly female reflecting the gender composition of this study's sample. Both the potential influence of related but different programming and the transfer of soft skills in selecting one's new career goal is supported by the pathways narratives. Further study, however, is required to determine the degree to which each comes into play for the broader LINC population.

Although both the quantitative and qualitative data suggests that LINC completers have clear career goals at the time of completion and a strong understanding of how to achieve them, they also show a significant gap between students' current occupations (post-LINC completion) and occupational aspirations. The most common current occupation was in sales and services (26%), only 7% aspire to be employed in this sector. Similarly, close to one-third (31%) of respondents are employed in the trades, transport and equipment operation category, whereas only 11% now aspire to be employed in this sector. By contrast, only a small minority of respondents are currently employed in the health professions (10%) and in education & social services (5%), despite these two sectors being the most common target occupations for LINC students (27% want to work in the health professions and 17% in education and social services). This suggests that, while LINC students have a strong sense of their career goals, only a few have been able to directly attain them immediately post-completion of the LINC program. This claim is supported by the narrative accounts, where participants routinely describe the further actions they must take to achieve the occupational goals. It also provides evidence that the LINC program is often only the beginning of the educational journey required to full economic attachment in newcomers' careers of choice.

What is elided in the statistical data, but most evidenced in the participant narratives, are the multitude of influences on why students decide to change career goals and how they come to select the new goal occupation. As previously noted, the career goal change pathways may be simple choice based on their new circumstances, but more commonly it is an incredibly complex process, involving multiple stages. The narrative also attest to the different motivations behind career goal changes. For some newcomers, immigrating to Canada and deciding upon one's occupational goal



becomes a means of leaving a less satisfactory career behind or of discovering new meaning to one's life, whether intentional or accidental. Others arrive in Canada with clear career plans but find themselves thwarted by the realities of the Canadian system. Of these, some modify their occupational goals as an adaptation to their new circumstances, while others simply attempt to identify the most viable remaining options.

In addition to the highly varied motivations for changing career goals, we also see extremely different approaches to how the choice is made. Whereas some heavily weigh their options and the commitments required of each against the resources required, impacts on their family, and the prospective time to employment, others readily follow the career trajectory set out by fellow community members who appear 'successful.' Moreover, some draw heavily on their family and local community in making their choice, and others reject that knowledge, viewing the challenge of identifying a career as a means of them 'becoming Canadian' and fully integrating into Canadian society. The range of motivations and the ways they engage in the decision-making process are vast, as are the sources of information they draw upon: teachers, counselors, fellow community members, career services, the Internet, and even interviewers. Further quantitative research is required to determine the degree to which these various sources inform newcomer decision-making overall.

The narrative typology not only suggests the different pathways newcomers may experience, but also suggests the different community and institutional supports that can help them with their career choices. For some, like the Map Reader and the Analyst, objective information from credible sources (both in person and online) are essential. Those, like the Converted Volunteer and the Copyist, however, would benefit best from being given a wide variety of experiences within and outside of the classroom. And those, like the Sod-Layer and the Interrupted Pragmatist, are best served by career counseling, coaching, and bridging programs. What is evident, however, it is that no single service or experience is sufficient in supporting all newcomers in choosing a career goal. Moreover, no single element is best provided at any given time in the newcomers' programming. Since newcomers can move through various roles in any order as they to change career goals, having a wide range for services, supports, and experiences consistently throughout their time as a student is recommended.

## Conclusions

The results of this study demonstrate that LINC students frequently change career goals as they study and that the decision-making process is widely varied and complex. It is, therefore, important for LINC providers to understand both the most common career goal changes newcomers make and the different pathways student may take goal change process.

Both the qualitative and quantitative findings demonstrate that the LINC program is an opportunity for newcomers to reconsider and revise their career goals in light of the new life they are building in Canada. The frequency of career goal changes among newcomers suggests that direct support for career decision-making is an essential component of the LINC program and supporting services. However, career change pathways are rarely straightforward and frequently involve social, relational, and economic elements outside of the program. Therefore, the various community-based learning experiences, general student supports, and instructors' active discussion of students' lives outside of the classroom are equally as important. Depending on their particular circumstances at any given point in time, newcomer students require different career services, decision-making supports, and experiences.

While this study was overtly focused on LINC students' experiences and choices, it is also revelatory of the LINC program itself. Although the LINC program is primarily designed to facilitate language acquisition, settlement in Canada, and eventual employment, this study reveals that the

LINC programs also facilitates the personal growth of its students. In undertaking the process of changing their career goals, newcomers are engaging in a questioning of who they thought wanted to be upon arrival and who they now want to be as they begin to settle in Canada. It is both practical and existential, and it is an act most commonly associated with pursuing higher education. In this way, the LINC program is much more than a language acquisition and settlement program. By supporting a reconsideration of career goals, the LINC program facilitates newcomers becoming more deeply attached and engaged in life in Canada. Indeed, one may even claim that to actively reconsider one's career goal is to move beyond one's plans as an immigrant to true settlement.

## **Limitations**

While informative, this study is limited. Specifically, both the quantitative and qualitative components had a small sample size: 228 cases and 20 participants, respectively. Future research should use a larger sample of language learner to further examine the link between language acquisition and goal change. Representation by gender and country of origin, while reflecting the total LINC population, was similarly limited due to the small sample size. The findings, therefore, cannot be considered representative of all LINC completers who change their career goals. Additionally, the quantitative analysis was limited to NorQuest College completers only as comparable statistical data on incoming and outgoing career goals was not available from Red River College. As career goals are informed by local economies, we cannot assume that the frequency of career goal changes and the most common occupational changes reported here are those for LINC students attending Red River College. A follow-up study comparing incoming and outgoing career goals for Red River LINC students is required.

# Appendix A: Participants' Stories

## Participant #1, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Escape Artist*

In [country] I was lawyer, in practice for almost 12 years. I came to Canada because my husband was working for company in [country], and the company transferred my husband to Canada. At first we were only going to stay for three years, then go back to [country]. So when I first arrived, my plan was only to learn English.

In [country], I was upset with my career. I no longer wanted to be a lawyer. Being a lawyer is hard. You always need to be fighting. My first case I had to defend a man who had been beating his wife. He told me that this time it had just been a fight, but that other times he had beaten her. I was a lawyer, and I needed to defend him. Sometimes you need to do things you don't believe in; I can, but I don't like it.

In my country, I felt I needed to defend people because of the laws. People need to get their rights.

I arrived in Canada in 2013, on a work permit visa. I needed to wait for two, almost three years to get my Permanent Residency and enter the LINC program. During those years I went to a church to learn English with a volunteer teacher. When I got my PR I went to [community organization]. I applied for the LINC program, which I started in another place - then I moved to NorQuest because many friends told me NorQuest is the best place to learn English in the LINC program. Besides, the [other] location was not good, and I did not feel encouraged. Here I feel encouraged, encouraged to go to college. I am in my second term here. Right now, I do not have a job.

When I came to Canada, I decided to change my career. I knew it would be hard to work for a lawyer in Canada. Here I had this opportunity to change.

We were only going to stay for three years, but then the [country's] economy was down. And I have two kids. I decided to stay in Canada because of them. I need to think about their lives. They speak [language], and one can read it, but they can't write it. Here we have focused on learning English.

In Canada we have many rights. Many immigrants, many people, don't know about what rights they have, what benefits they get. Now I think I would like to help people, because when I was a new immigrant I didn't know about many benefits immigrants have. Now I can help my new friends: if you qualify for a benefit, probably I can help them get it. Not just immigrants, all people.

So I am considering social work.

Because when I arrived in Canada my work permit meant I had no benefits. After I got my Permanent Residency, I knew about my benefits. I think I can help people to get better his life, their life.

I need to improve my English. My plan is to stay in the LINC program until level 7. When I finish level 7, I will return to [community organization] to be tested.

After, I will apply for...I'm not sure what career, because I don't know about them. I don't have



much information about social work, but I am looking for new information. I need to know, I need to get more information about them so I can enjoy using my knowledge for a new career.

I like working with seniors. About two years ago I volunteered in a seniors' home, assisting a recreation coordinator for three or four months. This wasn't through LINC. I made friends with a woman who is a friend of my friends, and who I met while shopping at the grocery store. I told her I was interested in doing some volunteering, because at first I had been volunteering in my kids' school, where they had one [language]-speaking teacher. So my friend was volunteering to help a very old woman who needed help to eat, so we went together. We helped another lady eat too. Yeah, I thought "I can do this because I like crafts, I like decoration." I cannot [speak] very well [laughter], but I can work with my hands.

Here at LINC someone came to my class to talk about these programs. I saw about recreation for seniors. There's a LINC volunteering program, but it is in the west and end that is too far for me.

I am considering social work because last term I did one presentation about laws and being a lawyer in [country]. Afterward my teacher told me I can work with social work because I have experience with writing, and when I was working in [country] I worked for the government as a lawyer for people with low incomes. I liked that.

The teacher gave everyone a book about social work. Now, now I plan to go see a navigator to get more information.

Yesterday I started looking at social work. It's a good career, are there are job openings? At my age, I need to decide on something. I need to see. I like social work as something that will help me in my future, but I need to see. Maybe I love social work but there are no jobs. Because now I am in [age], I need to decide one thing because I like, I like social work but social work, what will help me in my future?

Now I have a plan. My first goals: finish the LINC program while I am looking for more information about social work and working with seniors.

I have a friend from [country], who is here in the LINC program, looking for a new career in Canada. She told me it's a good fit for me, social work, because I understand laws.

The students in level 6 start to think about careers, to plan. Level 4 is basic, but in Level 6 it's good to plan.

I'm not sure but, I think I am learning to write and read English more quickly than learning to listen and speak. I think I need to work hard on my speaking and listening, but for me it's not easy...

I think I need to improve [laughter] a lot my English first.

My previous studies were almost 16 years ago. Now we have new learning technology, now we have Moodle. In NorQuest I can learn about new technologies for learning. I like this, yes. Now I feel if I improve my English, I can go any college, yeah. Not only get one job; in NorQuest I feel I can continue my education.

For information I like to go to the navigator, but people said you need to arrive early to be in line. It's a problem because I live far away. If I come here early, I can't go back to my home. I need to stay here long time.

## Participant #2, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Map Reader*
- *The Escape Artist*
- *The Converted Volunteer*
- *The Analyst*

I came to Canada in December 2015. I came with my husband. I have family in back home, but here I have my husband and my daughter.

When I arrived, I didn't understand anything. I sat at home for two months, I don't go outside. After coming to LINC, I am changing my language, changing my reading and writing. It's helping me.

I didn't have a goal back home. I only went to university for one year before we came to Canada. I have experience back home, helping with my grandfather's health needs, taking him out. And I have experience in child care.

When I came to Canada, I was thinking of a career in seniors' healthcare. Then I changed my goal for Nursing. My dream is to help people. So I looked for Nursing programs, but there are long waitlists, and then the programs are four years long – that's long for me. When I came to LINC, I sat beside my friend and she told me, "After I finish LINC and ESL, after that I want to go to a course for Nursing, but a lot of people are going for Nursing."

A lot of people in my class plan on going for nursing. Nursing and daycare. I changed my goal to doing Ultrasound. I found it online. Ultrasound is two years, and I asked around: not a lot of people here are looking to be trained in Ultrasound. I don't want to have to wait more than a year to get in. Waiting is hard for me. Maybe I need to finish fast; I don't need to be going to school even more time.

I have a friend outside LINC who's a doctor. I asked her about people who work for her clinic. She told me ultrasound is good, she has a need. It is easy to find a job, and not a lot of people on the waiting list. After you finish, there's work. But Nursing? A lot of people on the waitlist.

I am going for a different space, a good job. After I finish Ultrasound training, I want to help anyone who needs it, anywhere. I am looking for a good job, and I look for any space, clean. I will look for a good job and give back to Canada. Canada, she gives me good space, and good health and good learning, and in return I want to find a good job after I finish ultrasound training.

For whatever I study, I need to improve my English reading, writing, speaking and listening. So hard, not easy. After my English is better, after that I will look into courses. Maybe Nursing, maybe Ultrasound. I look at a lot of courses online, but I am not ready right now. I need to finish LINC and ESL first, then I will look again.

My teacher answers questions about how long courses take, if they need upgrading and ESL first. I am looking for an easy course. I don't like being in school all the time. I need work.

I want to tell any student just go to learn English. It is not easy and not hard, just go and study every day, practice every day, do that. Everyone should do that after studying every day: practice, do homework, do assignments. After you finish learning English, you can look for and do any course.

## Participant #3, NorQuest College

*Roles:*

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

From [country#1], I went to [country #2]. Then, in [country #2] I got married and could come to Canada along with my husband as part of his sponsorship.

He was living in [country #2] with me, but we came here as I was in his sponsorship package.

When I arrived in Canada, I thought I would immediately go to school and get a job. So, I did not find Canada as I expected. I thought I could get a job straightaway.

I had completed grade six.

Here, I started school immediately, but then I got a job so I stopped. Now I am working as a janitor and learning fulltime. For the future, I have a plan to study daycare and get work.

I cannot achieve being a doctor or a nurse because I am married and going to have kids in the future.

I got the information about daycare in this school, from teacher [name] last term. I chose daycare because you can get job in once you complete LINC 6.

I spoke with my husband and he supported me in this decision. At first he told me to continue school, but I refused and told him that I wanted to get in daycare, then he accepted my idea.

I just know that I will get to it in LINC 6.

I will ask them for more information after I reach LINC 5. The office gives us all information. They tell us every option available so that we may make our choices. Some of my classmates have also chosen to go in daycare, but I made the choice before I knew that. After consulting with my teacher.

## Participant #4, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Converted Volunteer*
- *The Sod-Layer*

I came to Canada from [country] about three years ago. I am married, and my current husband is Canadian. So I came here with my son - he was 10 years old at the time, and now he's 12. We waited approximately one year because I got a visitor visa but my son didn't at first. We came here and started the immigration process from Canada, so we couldn't leave Canada two years because the process is automatically closed if you leave Canada without your permanent visa.

Then my son visited [country] last year and decided to stay there with his birth father. So my husband is working here and lives on a farm, and I live in a room near the college.

In [country] I got a master's degree and I worked for over 20 years as a piano accompanist for conductors in a Music Academy. The last eight years before I came to Canada I also worked in a music school, teaching children to play piano. So I had two jobs and I was thriving in a big city like Edmonton. It was really stressful and a shock when I came to Canada to the countryside to farm, in a house with just one - only one - house one kilometer away. It was very stressful for me.

I had hoped I would have a few students and make friends, and my husband told me I had a very good education and I would get students easily, but at the time I couldn't speak well, not like now. But people understood me and I understood what they spoke to me. It was hard. Take the phone, for example. If somebody spoke very fast I was frustrated. I felt lost, without a vehicle and without a job, without communication, I was lost. It was more than six months. When winter came it was very hard. I just stayed home. My husband, he gives me a ride, but I was a very open person, a communicator, and for me it was very hard to stay all the time at home. Of course on a farm I couldn't find two students, because it's a very small city. About 1200 people, and most of them are Mennonite and they let you know. Their children do not get the best education; most have home education, homeschool. After school they give them hockey, but not piano. Most are very conservative, not very close to community.

Two years nobody told me about NorQuest College. I did work on the computer well, but it was very boring for me. I just stayed home. I decided that when I got my permanent resident visa I would go back to [country] forever. But I came back to Canada in May 2019 and a friend of mine told me "You need to go to learn your English; is here where you can go." If you know my husband, he's a real tightwad and he doesn't want to spend too much money for education, because he never got higher education. I know he's happy now.

You get more organized skills when you go to college because it stimulates your work. I volunteer with one group from [country] and [country] and they speak their own language and they will all stay the same level. It doesn't seem fair, because the government pays a lot of money to teach people and people sit in the home not reading books, not listening to music. Go just to the library, you will never reach your certificate.

I'm working in [town], not that far from where my husband works. I teach piano to three students there.

And in Edmonton, through NorQuest, I volunteer. My first choice was to volunteer with kids who have trouble with their family, but the first opportunity wasn't organized very well and the coordinator said, "Sorry, too late." He had somebody already. The second case he said to me "It's too far for you to go there," because it took me 1 ½ hours to come to NorQuest College, to Westmount, and he said it's too far for you. But I said for me it doesn't matter, because I'm a

strong person and I can go very far and I say okay... but if you have another option for me... and actually, yeah, a friend of mine advised me to volunteer at a daycare.

I don't remember who in my community told me they needed volunteers at the daycare, but some of the parents were from [country] and [country], so I volunteered there a very short time, because they sent me to get experience in English and then I spoke only [language] and [language] with students, and afterward we have to assess how far I reached my goals in the volunteer place. It was stressful and started to cry, because I didn't know what to write because I got no experience speaking English there. I went to several daycares, about two days a week. It was amazing to stay with children; they're very open and you can carry them and show them how to hold scissors, how to blow something. They were very happy. They want you, when they are going to bed, to hold their hands. It's an amazing feeling. But I was worried that I was not getting enough experience in English.

So then I was told I could volunteer as a teaching assistant here at NorQuest College. I'm doing volunteering also with Level 2 whose English is very poor. I help the teacher and [name] and another teacher, [name]; they are all amazing here at NorQuest College.

I think I would like to work as a teacher probably. I spoke with my teacher here at NorQuest and she told me. "Yes, we have courses if you want to be a teacher in daycare; we have courses in NorQuest College." So if I have finished my current program and have the finances in order, maybe I'll try to go to daycare courses here in NorQuest College.

For now, I need to pay for my rent, for the bus, everything, so I would like to find some kind of part time job. I can work Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday and Friday and maybe Sunday but only part-time. This is a bit too tough a time to find a job. I'll take any kind of position – Walmart, doesn't matter where I am.

I still do some activity here as a musician, as part of a small organization. We do Christmas and Easter and any [community] events. I have been a professional for more than 20 years, but to work professionally here I would need to prove that my diploma is equivalent to a Canadian one. I can't even try – it's not so easy when you are a poor person living in the countryside.

I knew it might be like this, because 23 years ago I worked in [country] as a nanny. We needed to buy a house in [country], so I work illegally in [country]. Many, many people moved there at that time from the Philippines and China. They had contracts from local people. I worked there about nine months and I earned big money to go toward our first house.

I got a lot of help here at NorQuest from [name]. She helped me a lot and showed me how to do a cover letter. Also [name] told me I need to go to MacEwan and bring my résumé. I will need to do an evaluation, like IQ. So I am waiting for February when I should finally have all my papers about my evaluation for my diploma from [country]. The principal of the daycare where I was volunteering as part of LINC 6 told me about the different levels yesterday: If I reach my English ESL 7, I can go to the child care center. With English level 7 I can get Level 2 in daycare. Daycare has three levels. Level 1 you need just level 5 English, Level 2 you need level 7 English and for Level 3 it's the highest and it's very hard to get; you need to know many courses or go to learn to a minimum \$5,000 or to get level 9 or 10 of English. It was the principal who told me, "If you have a disability, go and take this LINC because it will really help and you'll get this certificate and you will learn more about life in Canada. Really amazing college."

Before I came to LINC I worked in a seniors' lodge for 9 or 10 months, but they put me on night shift, so it is hard to work at night shift, because you are working midnight to 8:30 pm, with only a short break, and I need 40 minutes to arrive to job and 40 minutes right back, so you feel sleepy; it's very dangerous. So I had experience there, but we didn't help the residents. We just prepare breakfasts, wash everything, clean storage, it was really hard. I remember once I worked four

nights in a row, and once I worked and there was a girl from [country] working in Tim Hortons only night shift, and she was working seven nights in row, so I couldn't imagine. I had experience with seniors so I volunteered for [local health facility] from LINC. We volunteered outside in October and November, and we volunteered in the food bank.

I also got first aid and safety certificates from LINC, so they help me to feel more confident. We got also first aid and computer customer service and food safety service and I plan to get another two certificates. These certificates will help me get a job in daycare.

I believe in any country we need to have paper, like a diploma or something. It's important to prove "I know this and I know this" when people say "show me what you have" and "show me your certificate to approve." So I need a certificate. It's very important. Also, we have a very nice girl from [country]; she quit college and she says I can be proud to be a teacher, and she speaks better than me and she just came to Canada in September last year. She's LINC 7 in grammar and everything - it's very high. I don't know why she quit.

I can go to Service Canada and probably ask them to find a job, but I did it online and sent my résumé two months ago. It doesn't work. Nothing works with me.

I got more support more help in NorQuest College from [name] and from [name] than even I could imagine. Honestly, being a Canadian who just stays at home with my husband is not interesting. He doesn't know about university, goals. He was born in 1955, no computer. Actually, he thought he doesn't need to have computer skills because he works as a farmer, and now everything is on computer and he is a little bit lost without my skills, without my English, and without what I have learned already. NorQuest College helped me a lot; I am planted like a greenhouse, and everyone cared about me and everyone wished me the best in my life. I learn a lot here in NorQuest College. It is good to have Volunteer One LINC and the other LINC that is full time and I can get English five days a week for six hours a day. Volunteers in a couple hours will not speak much, but in the LINC you can take speaking, listening, writing and reading every day to push you up to a very high position.

I need to practice more English at home. I need to read more.

Would I work at something that is not a daycare? If I get experience somewhere else, why not? I mean. I can work as a cashier in Walmart. Everywhere there's no job, and I apply for Walmart as a cashier. I'm not applying to be a manager. I did an interview two months ago. It's hard to find a part-time job. I am easy to go and learn something new, to get experience. The LINC volunteer program gives good experience in working as a team, people from different countries, different nationalities, different religions, they need to work. And you do something good for people, and it makes me happy just to do it for free. I enjoy volunteering in a food bank - its great experience... but I need to work.

In [country] I had two jobs and I'm feeling inactive here, I feel lazy without a job.

## Participant #5, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

When I came to Canada, this country gave me the opportunity to study that I didn't have in my country. I said I wanted to be a doctor. I would like to be, but when I continued to study...study... I think that's too big. I am a single mother and I have my own kids, I have too many children to be a doctor. It takes a long-time; I have to borrow money to study, and it is too much. I can't be a doctor in my situation now; it is a process that would take eight years because I have an English degree, because I didn't study back home. Also that career is then six years to be a doctor, the minimum I think, so that's why I changed to be a practical nurse. It is two years added to my current program and costs less money.

I came to Canada in August 2015, as a refugee from [country]. I came because I was a refugee in [country] with my husband and one of my sons. We had one year and half in [country] during which the government said "You are safe here and nothing bad will happen." After two years and a half, somebody from [country], crossed without restriction the frontier. They came and found my husband and they killed my husband. I was pregnant with my youngest boy. After that the government sent me documents and sent me here with my two children.

In [country] I went to school only for one year, when I was 15. So I can read and write in my language. I worked on the farm with animals and plants, mostly with animals. I helped the animals when they got sick, and that's why I think if I have the opportunity to go to school I want to be a doctor, because when I helped the animals I can't ask them how they feel after. That's why I wanted to be a doctor, because I want to help people.

In our class we had presentations from people from here at NorQuest talking about different careers. Nursing, daycare etc. They explained what it takes, how much it costs. Then I talked about it with friends at the school and in my church. They said "Continue with your English."

Right now I receive money from Alberta Works for LINC, but after the 20 months of benefits is done I have to borrow the money if I want to keep going to school. I know if I borrow money for eight years, it is too much. Too much, and I don't know how to pay it back. I have my own family to support, and when they grow up they will need to go to school too. So I think it is too much money to borrow to survive these years. That's why I am taking something short.

I chose nursing because it is two years and costs less. I can do this, maybe. I could borrow 20,000. I don't know how much it will cost, but if I can finish with that and start working...It's not being a doctor, but it is somewhat the same. The same medicine.

I have been looking at nursing training options on the internet, how long is the course, how much are the fees, what is the difference when we study online or here or another school, how many hours in class and how many hours in practice outside with people in the hospital, like that.

When I was in LINC 1 I stayed one year to pass LINC 2, because my older son has some psychological problems because he saw his father die. He has a psychologist, arranged for by the settlement worker. So when he is fighting at the school or crying, I feel bad and it is hard for me to learn. Even my youngest son, when he fights I feel more depressed, it is harder for me and I cannot learn. That's why I said to take a long course is too long and too difficult for my situation. Some days my son is okay and some days my son comes back again, he remembers his dad and he can't learn also, he is in grade 3 and he can't read, he can't write, the numbers a little bit I'm teaching him, but the problem: he learns the numbers up to 100 and two days later he doesn't remember even the letters ABC. The psychologist says he is going to take a long time but he is going to be better, but I don't know when. That situation makes it hard for me to concentrate in school, but I can do it, because if I leave the school and go to help him, nothing happens. Maybe



he progresses, maybe he stays the same, but my situation stays the same, because I have to learn something to start work. That's why I said two years I can do.

I plan to talk with the navigator about nursing programs here and also NAIT or Grant MacEwan. They all visited the school to talk about their programs. I had heard about the nursing programs before coming to LINC, but I wanted to be a doctor, not a nurse.

The computer training here teaches us how to use the computer or internet and how to work on the computer too - different programs like Word, PowerPoint. They showed us career websites, searching for things like banking jobs.

To pursue nursing I have to continue with ESL, and to some degree math and biology, I think. So finish LINC too, and have a good mark like 70% in math, English and biology, then to start that career.

What I still don't know is where we are going when we choose a career, and where we go to borrow the money to go.



## Participant #6, NorQuest College

*Roles:*

- *The Copyist*
- *The Escape Artist*
- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

I am originally from [country], and I came in Canada with my husband and two sons as a refugee in 2017, after nine years in [country].

In [country] we didn't get chance to choose our career. When you finish high school, the government tells you: you nurse, you doctor, you teacher... But me, I studied. So I went to college and I became a preschool teacher. I like nursing more, so when I get a chance, I start.

In [country] I had no chance, so I was self-employed - a merchant. And when I came here, I started LINC. I told them I was a teacher, and they said that I could do that here. But I have a plan to study nursing. I like to help people.

That has not changed.

When I got here, NorQuest, she said, "Your kids are part of this. When you study hard, the kids too. You have teaching also." She said it like that. Okay, but when I choose, I think nursing is better for me.

That's why I changed my mind. And I saw some people from [country], and some who also went for nursing, and a woman who was from [country] but who was a graduate. I knew her before. This was at the graduation ceremony last year, for NorQuest. I asked her, and she said, "You can, but you must study hard." And when I study hard, which I am, I want to be a nurse.

I asked the lady which course will be hard for me. She said, "Mathematics." I used to be good at mathematics, but it has been ten years since I did anything related to mathematics. Maybe that is why it is hard. Biology I can read, so no problem. But mathematics I don't know. I will also take common courses maybe, in the break time. My husband tried to help me study. He appreciates me every day, what I am doing. He believes I can do it.

I asked my instructor last session if I could be a nurse. She said yes, but the way she said it was without enthusiasm. It did not make me feel confident. I wanted more advice, encouragement. She doesn't ask me in the classroom about my goals, about how my kids are. So I did not ask her again.

Last week someone came from NorQuest to talk about the careers we can take here. She talked about nursing. She told me what grade I would need to get, what ESL levels are best. I check everything on the internet. I search everything, and when I do I improve my knowledge and ideas. She told me to find listening and reading aids, and I think that is my responsibility.

You know what? Now I am level 5, and I want 6 and 7. For that I could do the ESL maybe one, three months. You need fluent English. What else?

NorQuest is helping with my English and my computer skills. I am learning faster here.

## Participant #7, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Escape Artist*
- *The Analyst*

I come from [country] with my parents as Permanent Residents. If you get a low mark in school in [country], they hit you with something. Very bad. But I didn't go to high school in [country], because by then we were refugees in [country]. But we came to Canada as Permanent Residents.

When I first came to Canada I wanted to be a mechanic. I like working on cars, and the mechanics I have met made me excited about being a mechanic.

But when I started thinking about my job at A&W, which I had before I came to the LINC program, I realized I love to make and cook food. Sometimes I cook at home. I thought this would be a good idea for the future, cooking, being a cook manager. So I changed my mind.

I haven't talked to anyone here about that yet, because I want to improve my English language. Then I want to go for upgrading and then take courses, like at NAIT, then go to my dream job. Cooking. I found information about NAIT by going online. I knew how to use a laptop before I came to LINC. Since childhood. The LINC program has improved my language skills, my speaking and a little bit my writing and listening. It is still very hard to read. It helps me find and read the information from my laptop about my dream job.

At first I was thinking of doing the upgrading here, when I wanted to be a mechanic. I found out all about upgrading using computer searches when I first arrived in Canada. But now I want to be a cook.

I have not talked to anyone here about the upgrading. I think someone came from ESL? They came to our class, and they talked about how ESL can help people in the 17-25 age range do a little bit faster upgrade. I need to finish this level, and then Level 5, and then I can go to upgrading and it's free for a year. That makes me feel like I am moving closer to my dream, faster. It's exciting. After that I will go to NAIT for cooking.

I have not talked to anyone about that here, about the cooking. I don't know anyone who has done it. I have one friend who has done upgrading. That friend says you have to study more, talk to the teacher.

I have been to the Career Centre to get help with my résumé and then for the cover letter. They helped a lot, and today I need to finish the letter. Actually, it's done.

I went because my teacher said, "When you need help, you have to explain, tell me what I am doing that is good or bad." We had a presentation from career services on résumés and cover letters, so I made an appointment. But I already had a résumé from before.

They were friendly at career services, feeling like a home. They spoke to me nicely. When I didn't know the spelling, they spelled it for me. Actually, I wrote it by myself, and it is a very good idea.

Now, about becoming a cook. I need somebody to help me, to tell me what I need to do, step by step. What courses do you need, what LINC talks about... sometimes the Internet runs audio - I need to know what it is I have to do to go to the next level toward my dream of cooking.

## Participant #8, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Converted Volunteer*

I came to Canada in 2015, alone. Without my husband.

In my country, [country], I was studying in the university. When I graduated I thought about a career as a journalist.

I was finished university, but I was married very young, and that affected my journalism aspirations. When I talked to my husband, when I told him I want to be journalist, he didn't help me for that. I decided to move... to travel anywhere, and then my destination became Canada.

My plan when I moved to Edmonton was to train to be a journalist. But my first language was [language], and in Edmonton we speak English. I asked people, a friend and a bilingual journalist I met at the [community organization], and they said I would have to start all over. When he said that, I... I was... in my life everything is about being a journalist. I don't know. I don't want to retrain from zero, that would take long time for me.

And then, sometime I went to do volunteering in food bank, I say that is good because I like to help somebody.

When I came to Canada, I see people help, because I like to help people. When I am in my country, if you have some problem you tell me what you need. If I want to help you, if I can help you, I do. In my country we don't have a job like social worker, but when I came here, I saw that people help. I came here like a refugee, and then I experienced how people helped me. I like that, I love it. So when I arrived in Canada and started school, I asked myself why don't I choose social work? I like to help people.

When I started my refugee claim, before I came to LINC and when I still thought I would like to be a journalist, my counsellor went with me to Alberta Works. I saw people who were interested in me, they asked me questions, they helped me to do things. I didn't have anything; they helped me with all I need. I asked my counsellor, what do they call this worker? He told me it's Social Worker. I say I like this work. Because they help people, and I like helping people.

I started LINC at [other SPO], part time because I have small children. When I started there, I asked the teacher, some teachers there speak a little bit of [language]. "What means Social Worker?" then they gave me information about that. They told me there are too many branches in social work. They told me about one branch and then they told me it would be good if I did that, and if I spoke English well it would not take too much time, unlike my goals in my country.

When I came here, I saw the programs in NorQuest College's Viewbook. They have like Nurse, Social Worker, many things. I said "Ah, that's fine for me, maybe I want to take all my terms here toward becoming a Social Worker."

So when I started LINC4 at NorQuest I asked my teacher, [name].

She asked me "What is your goal in the future?" I said I like Social Work. She said that's good. I asked her, "Do you know about social work?" She said to me "I don't know, really, but I want to give you some information about that." Then she told me I can do that, it's good for me. You know, she gave me advice to do that.

She told me to go take a look at the Viewbook. I thought I found the information I needed in the Viewbook, but I am still not clear on the entire program.

My classmates are all still in LINC, so they don't know much about these programs.

But when I went to buy food I met a woman born here in [province] but who spoke [language], and when she moved here she took a course about social work. She gave me some information, but we were talking in English because I want to practice my English, so I didn't understand really, *really* what she wanted to say me.

I want to talk with people about it, but my English is not good. Sometimes when people speak me, when they talk to me in English, if it's very very hard I don't understand. That's why I want to learn in English more and then know some of the words in English that express what I want to know, so people will give me more information.

I don't think I want to be a journalist anymore. I have five girls and one boy – I want one of my girls to be a journalist. Only when I ask her "Do you want to be a journalist? I would like that." She says to me "Why do you like that but you don't practice?" I like journalism, but I don't... It's not for me in Canada.

I am excited to learn English quickly, to speak fast, but I think so I want to take time.

I have not used any of the career services yet, but we have an assessment about that this week. We do résumés by ourselves, and then we make an appointment with the services.

I have spoken to some friends and classmates about wanting to be a social worker.

Maybe I will talk to the college because they have this option. I think they want to help me, and I have some encouragement with some, with my teacher in level 4. I want to take time, but I want that. I mean, I still want to know how to get into the program, and then how to be a social worker.

In my community I see many people who change their goals when they come to Canada. Like my counsellor, who studied to be a lawyer and here he's the immigration counsellor. I see many people change like that, so I do not think it is a problem if you change.

## Participant #9, NorQuest College

*Roles:*

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Analyst*
- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

My home country, [country], was not safe enough for me and my kids. I arrived here in June 2005. I came along with my husband and kids.

At home I did not have a job. I am just a housewife. I completed grade eight.

In Canada, I want to go to school. After completing school, I will get job in daycare. This may help me to plan to open my own.

I had planned to take any job I can get, but I have decided that I must go to school first. So, I don't have a job.

My preference is working on daycare because it is easy after completing my education. My other plan is, however, to study on health care. Our teacher at the school gave us the information on these programs last term. She told as about nursing; but I did not choose it because it is out of reach for me.

If you want to work in daycare, you need 5 or 6 years, but in nursing it takes 8 years to complete.

The officer named [name] told me that working as a volunteer could help me. I didn't know English. LINC helped me a lot, but the reason I chose daycare is because I want to get a job quickly.

My teacher told me about the daycare, but I need information about health care.

I want to get more information from the teacher because I am here with them. I can't say that I have full information on daycare because I don't know what to do and where to apply. I need help, I don't know where and how to apply.

No, I need help. I can't find it out on my own, and I don't know where to find the information. I just know my teacher only.

## Participant #10, NorQuest College

Roles:

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Copyist*
- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

I was born in [country], where I went to Grade One or maybe Grade Two. Then I fled from [country] to [country], where I had no school, and I came to Canada seven years ago from [city], [country], as a refugee with my husband and children.

When I left my country I left all my property, because of the persecution that happened to me and my husband. We suffered a lot. I left everything with my daughter back in [country]. In [country], I worked a lot of different kinds of jobs to survive, because no one can help me there. I have to pay my rent, no one can help me there. I used to cook and sell [food item], which is a traditional food of [country]. I also worked as a hair dressing salon assistant, and one place doing embroidery, and many other jobs to help myself in [country].

My expectation of Canada was that life would be very easy, I wouldn't worry about anything, I can make money easily. No worries once you reach here, everything will be fine and everything will be fine. What I expected and what I got were not the same.

When I was in Kenya I was expecting that as soon as I arrived in Canada right away I can get a job, I can start right away because there is an excess of jobs. But as I arrived here, I realized that to work any kind of job, first I have to speak well - I have to be a good communicator. And I have to know what to do. I realized these two things are very important to work in Canada.

When I came I wanted to work in a hair dressing salon, even if I share it with one my friends. Share the business, open one together, but even that one is not easy. The salon or to work with somebody else, these are not easy. But right now I am not working outside the home. I have children.

When we first came to Canada we lived in [city]. The government told me that I have to go to school, so I told them I have children—I have a small son who is two years old. They told me there are people who can take care of the children for you in the school. So, surprised, I find myself going to school in the LINC program in [city], and I have a person who can take care of my son for me. So, I learn school and I can also go and observe my children. I can see him, so I am very happy to do that. As soon as learning English or going to school is at the same time, I can observe and somebody else can take care of my children. After I came here I could see how day care providers take care the children, and I watched and I see it is very easy to me and makes pleasure for me. I have experience dealing with children and raising them; I observe them, and it is easy and gives me pleasure, raising the children.

Now that I am in the LINC program at MacEwan, I am thinking of going into daycare. I have a friend who works in a daycare, she is a graduate from a LINC program and then she took the daycare course and now she is working in daycare. She gave me the information and inspired me to work in daycare.

She didn't give me detailed information about day care, but she used to tell me about day care, about what happened in the daycare, how to deal with the students. It is a very hard responsibility to take care of children; it is not easy. Sometimes some children have a behavior you have to manage that you cannot physically. She told me that interest of learning daycare is inside me. I didn't tell her, but she used to tell me what is happening in the daycare and that inspired me.

I haven't spoken to anyone here at LINC—no instructors or counsellors—about the daycare program. I have to concentrate on finishing LINC first. I am only in Level Four.

What I will need in the future is details and tangible information and tangible resources and somebody who can give accessible information: what if I do this, I have access to this...so I need somebody who can give me this help to pave the way to reach that goal.

I keep thinking about daycare because most of students who are attending the LINC program, when they talk to each other they want to learn daycare, so that makes me want to stay and to learn about daycare too. But I was interested from the beginning, within two months of coming to Canada. I love this program. Because I want to stay, I want to spent most of my time with children to give care for them, and I have experience and love and a passion for that. When I started the LINC program, I saw most of the students were like me: they wanted to do that. So, I realized that this is the right field that I chose.

## Participant #1, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Copyist*
- *The Analyst*
- *The Sod-Layer*

I was born in [country], but I lived in [country] and after that I lived in [country]. I have almost 12 years' experience in air conditioning, and in interior assistance—designing and consulting. It is what I did. It is not my job, not really the study I finished. But this is my work experience back home, yes.

The last country that I worked in was [country]. I worked 12 years. I worked only in [country].

Now, before I started to learn English here and go to college I was more than two months working with kids in a daycare. And [right now] I'm only learning English part-time. But next term I'm going to take it full-time.

I started to learn here when I came, because I wanted to continue ... what I did in [country]. At the college they have air conditioning [and] refrigeration faculty courses ... six months. But for this one I have to have a certain number of credits in English, so now I'm taking my English courses to get credits. And after that I'm going to take [courses] in Red River College, in the field I worked in.

So I'm going to continue what I did in my previous country.

I had a résumé for my work in that field when I came to Canada. I applied for jobs in Winnipeg, and I went to the Manitoba Stars employment program. They helped me with employment skills.

Now is registration for 2021. I don't know if, when I finish my English courses, it will be in the summer, so I don't know if I can register for 2021 in February, or if there will be a place for me. Maybe I will be on the waiting list. So in that time I'm going to find a job in my field, but maybe it's also optional to change what I study: maybe I will find myself in a store, or in a kindergarten, or somewhere else.

I don't know. But I have to work. Maybe in a different field, because I don't know if I will find something in my field, because of English. And second, I don't have Canadian experience in my work, because here there is another building code for air conditioning systems, and I need to know this. And I only have experience in one country. In my previous country I didn't study air conditioning, because I'm from architectural and interior designing. And I don't have any certificate in what I worked. It's very hard to find a job if there is no certificate for that job.

I learned in my previous work from zero. Architectural and interior design helped me a lot in what I did, but I don't have a certificate. I have a lot of experience but [no formal training].

So this is why I want to study at Red River College.

We have a little problem with our income; we came with three kids. And my husband also, he started to work after 12 months when we came, but our income was low. So we decided to stop taking English courses. I joined a [religious] community. That was an option, where there was work in the kindergarten and my husband also worked there. I have a lot of experience with kids, because when I learned in [country], I also worked in the kindergarten. I helped pay for my learning while I was there, by working illegally in a kindergarten.

I did not take courses in childcare. No, they asked me about a criminal record and child abuse. And also experience. I have three daughters. And I had also an interview, in which they said they didn't count.

The goal was to do what I did before... But when I see the systems that are being used here, it is



not the same as what I did there. I have a lot of experience that I would like to give to some office; I participated a bit in a very big project. And also smaller, private [projects]. So I want to share my knowledge.

The industry is very different. I think it is also, like in my country it is very dependent what position you will take. You can take courses for drafting but you can come to the office like an engineer. So it is very different kind of thing, with what kind of position you will take in the company.

With the courses here in Red River College, I will get only a license, like a certificate. It is not an engineering degree. It is only a license for a technician. But I need it to understand the codes, Canadian codes, and Canadian systems because it is ... different from our country.

The first reason for working in childcare is really income, because it was a period when my husband only started work in a gym, so he didn't have a lot of personal training. And the income was also low, and at that time we didn't get subsidies, and we didn't find the daycare ... it was a critical two months.

We knew that after coming here we could be without a job for three or four months. And my smallest [child] didn't find daycare in time, so I had to take her with me sometimes to work. And it was a reason why we also have one car. And so it was very easy that we work in the same place [daycare or kindergarten?]-it's like a community, and so I was working together with my husband.

It is a [religious] community, and they have a lot of facilities. There is a kindergarten, there is a school, there is also secondary school. There is a gym. There is like a child, family support, it's like [unclear]. We also came with supporting with help from [religious] community.

They support us, but first of all we were here on the visit.

My husband is a personal trainer. Yes, he is in a gym. He has regular hours, and also he has personal trainers. He does what he studied, what he likes to do, and he feels like a fish in water; it is really what he wants to do. It's not enough, but we decided that one of us will take a course, so we always have one salary as income. We don't have that—we are like month to month—but we are not expecting more because we decided one of us has to study [English].

We are not going to buy an apartment or house now, but maybe ... If I can find a job in my field, really what I know how to do, and what I studied, I think my salary will help. And my husband can do also part time, less personal training than he does now. In the future he will do something else that he wants. So we have like a program.

The childcare opportunity comes from the [religious] community. There is like a country club, like a swimming pool, and all kinds of activities. It's not really kindergarten, it's like a room for children where parents can leave their kids...

For example, somebody wants to go to the gym, women or families, and they can leave the kids a maximum of two hours. It's not a kindergarten, it's not day-care, it's like an hour—I don't know how to say it in English. But they can leave the children for maximum two hours, from one to two hours, and they can go to activities, all kinds of activities like sports.

There is also family supporting so parents can go for meetings, appointments, or appointments in the school. So they can leave their children, from four months to 18 years old. And also it was opening on Sundays, so a lot of families brought their kids and they went to do sports together.

I put my kids there. So after that I talked with the women and we became friends. Because she came here from [country] also, and she was going to move to [city], because her husband was there as a doctor. She and her husband found opportunity to move to [city], because he had a job there in a hospital.

And the husband we talked, there was twice in a week that I came with my smallest baby, I left

her and also I went to do some sport activities, so we started to be friends. And after that she told me that she's going to move to [city], that there will be a spot for somebody to work in the daycare. So I said, Oh, it's work, so nice for me!

So it's like friendship. I didn't know this woman from my country, we never met her. But because she was watching my smallest, and she was so nice, we started to talk. And community here in Winnipeg, they help a lot. They really help a lot. As soon as we came they supported us. And my husband, without English, he started to work after one month, the first months in Canada. And I worked there too, and I felt very comfortable. And every question that I have, I can go there and they will help. That is why I met a lot of people there from my country... It's like community, a big community.

I have a lot of friends here from my previous country, because there are a lot of families that were at my wedding, and I know a lot of them because we chatted before coming, and we met. But I have no family members here. That's really hard, because some days you would like to have a grandma or grandpa... But I think in my experience, I think friends helped more than family. It is my experience. Because in [country] we also were without parents.

I started to learn here from the middle of the course, because I was waiting for my courses, because I was waiting for evening courses. But one day I called to move myself from the evening to the morning classes, and they told me that they have space. And I started to learn here two weeks ago.

I didn't find material for my job. There is a lot of material on the internet, which I think is very useful. Also I think they have very good material on LinkedIn. I have, for example, a profile on LinkedIn. But they ask to do home exercises to prepare for presentations.

So it takes time for me to go to LinkedIn and to work with it, follow it. So it is very interesting, this course for example. It's not really for my profession, but it's like for ... general, because I'm so busy with my children at home...

I feel that [getting comfortable in my classes] takes way more time than I was expecting. I felt new in the class, but I think I'm very international. I was in a lot of countries, and travelled a lot, so I know the culture from [these places], so I can understand. It's not hard for me. But it will take a little time. The teacher I can ask for support, or advice.

I don't know everything that's going on here at Red River College, because I'm only two months, two weeks here. But I saw that there are offices that can help. I think there are a lot of activities also that can help. I think there are a lot of services, but I don't know yet. I didn't have the time to find them ... because I was in Red River College, another campus. So now, here it's different. I will study to go, because I had the student ID, I have to go another place. So I don't know where, now I don't know where to ask for help. But it will take time.

I have to deal with the language barrier, but there are other barriers. If you are talking about my profession. So it is codes, and it is like differences between systems. And also the buildings are different, it's not construction, or this is a problem for me to understand how it works.

Back in [country], I think more was like only drafting persons that were mostly women. In my field I think men is dominant. Because the women took lower positions, like they were drafters more, they were not paid the same as men... There were engineers, there is not a lot of women in this field in air condition systems; I know this. And it is very hard for women to be like consultants. Men, because they also take higher positions, they are also like in the front of the projects, and women I think they are lower. So mostly the men have better salaries, I think.

In Winnipeg, I didn't meet any women that work in my field. So I think this is very good for me. So there are not enough women. It is not a problem. For me, it's like, I know that I felt better to be from... I'm not going to be a leader—and it's my position, I have to be after the man. It's also in

my family—I don't pretend to, for my husband. Also in the project, I have to be after somebody who is dominant.

I'm not pretending to be a... I know that, well I worked in one place in my country that I was in a lot of projects, but I had a small field that, for example a private apartment, luxury apartment it was my field. So it was like something small, but I was alone. And then I was also in a big project, but after the men. And I loved it. It is... I'm not from a place that women and men have to be in the same positions.

Plan B is, if there will be really hard times, income [loss] in our family, I can go for any job that I can find. It doesn't matter if it's a factory, or a shop. I have a lot of experience; I worked a lot in restaurants in my previous country before I started to work in my chosen field.

Because I came to my last country without family, I don't [hesitate to take a] job. It doesn't matter. I always have plan B, it doesn't have to be what I know.

My kids are ten, seven, and one and a half. I think they are small because we worked a lot, and this is also the reason why I did stop. Now I'm really a lot of time with my kids. Because in my previous—before we came to Canada we worked a lot. Also my husband had a private gym, and he also has two jobs, and also I have a full-time job from eight to five. So we weren't a lot with our kids.

Now the oldest go to school and the youngest is in daycare. But when they come home, I'm there. And also before they leave, I'm there. I'm with them. It wasn't so in my country.

I have résumés for all, plan B, then plan C. When I came I did, for example, [put out resumes] for my position. I have a resume for daycares, and kindergarten, and I have resumes for the shops...

I had one interview, but it was in my native language, with somebody who came here from [former country] also, and he has a small factory where I can adapt. But he actually doesn't work in my field, so we only talked about what was going on here. It wasn't like an interview, just a conversation.

I think also I don't feel ready for interviews. Not to sit with somebody. I don't feel that I have knowledge for the interview. Because maybe they will start with what's going on in the field here, and it's not too practical to work with a computer, and to do a plan, and to read a plan, it's exactly what's going on in the field. This is what I don't feel, I'm not prepared for the interview. And it's not just because of language.

I don't have any certificate, and this is very important for me. Also, in my country I have a lot of experience, but I was comfortable that I had no [certificate] ... I didn't have time to study, but it was my dream to study. Because everything that I know, it's like experience. I know this is more, it is very much more expensive experience than studying in my [country]... But I always I feel I need a certificate here in my field.

There is the problem that I cannot sit and learn; I can learn from the work when I have to come to the job. For example, from nine to five, so I can learn. Here, though ... I have to come, I have to go somewhere to learn.

And they say to me, tomorrow you have to bring homework. Or tomorrow you have to do a project. So you have to learn this part. I cannot learn my way... I also had experience working from home, like being self-employed. So, for me, it didn't work. I can't work this way. It's not for me.

I have to dress to go out. Yes, I cannot be at home all the time, I have to go out. I know one of my friends, she likes to work from home. She can organize herself. When I cannot go to work, I think about cooking, cleaning, going somewhere. So when I go out, I'm working, or studying ... So I have to go somewhere.

We talked with the children a lot about what they think about to coming to Canada, because they have a lot of friends here. And it's not just language—at home we speak [native language], at school they spoke [language], and now they speak English and French at school. So we talked a lot, and is it hard for them or not?

No, they like it. They don't treat it like a game, it's not like a short-term adventure, they really came to live... They want to be here.

We don't have money for activities outside our own house, but we can use our minds. Before coming to Canada we also didn't have a lot of things. We didn't have a very high income, because we had experience with our sports gym, private. We live month to month, and sometimes it's better and sometimes it's worse. We are not looking for a lot of money to be happy. If we are healthy, everything is okay...

Why I came here: I wanted to challenge myself. I know where I am, and I know what I'm going to do, and I know where to ask for help. And because of today, I really now understand what is my place.

## Participant #2, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The industrious Companion*
- *The Sod-Layer*

When I came to Canada in June of 2015, I had been working as a schoolteacher, from kindergarten to Grade 8. I had been teaching almost seven years in a private school. Social science, drawing, home economics. I have been working as a cashier in Superstore since 2015. I did another one, at Canada Goose as a sewing operator. That was a fulltime job, but at the time two jobs continued it was very hard for me, so I just left that job. And after I had done that job for three months I noticed that my eyesight went bad, so I decided I need to... I left this job. I mean, because that job was sewing operator, so continuously I need to look at... And then if I sew black colour, so I have to use black colour thread also. So I feel that my eyesight day by day, I cannot see small needle. Before I can see small needle, but after three months I recognised that I can't see small needle, so maybe that job was not suitable for me because...

And it was so hard, I mean continuous eight hours sitting. I love sewing, but after that experience I don't want to do that job anymore. So I decided to leave.

When I first came to Canada I was thinking about the teaching profession. I thought it would be easy because I have a degree, a Master degree, and I have teaching experience. I thought I can easily get a job in a school, at least elementary section. But then I identified that actually I need to get a certificate from here also, and after that it will be not a permanent job. I mean as a substitute teacher I can work, but there is no guarantee that I will get a job.

Substitute teacher. So it was not a permanent place, I mean I need to go anywhere, any school, anytime. I don't drive, so it has to be close enough to get to. Actually all of us immigrants want that at least, a permanent job. But I researched, and I saw that there are so many people already registered for substitute teaching. So I thought maybe it will be hard for me to get a permanent job.

I was so confused. Should I go into the teaching profession or not. Because at this age it is very hard to get a certificate. I actually took my Master's degree many years ago. So now to start from zero, it is hard. So if I take a certificate from here, and after that actually there is no guarantee that I will get a job...it was frustrating.

And another thing I didn't know that about this. That as an educational, if I got a job, maybe it will be educational assistant. So, educational assistant has limited responsibility with those students who are actually not like a regular student. I mean she, or he have some...little problem, or something. Then I thought, day by day I go pick up old skills, so maybe after five years when I take my certificate and everything, and I start to go school, maybe a little student would like me. Because I know a student, usually student like a young teacher, and maybe I cannot do my responsibility very well. Or maybe I will not have enough patience with that type of students.

So, I was confused, I was totally confused. My husband also encouraged me to go teaching profession, but I cannot take decision. I mean I was confused when I got all information about teaching profession, it makes me frustrated actually. So, I think that after that, after got teaching of all of information, I'm thinking about my, which work actually I want to do, I love to do.

So when I think about my choice, I mean I love to do, then also I become frustrated because I like fashion designing work. But when I think about this, okay educational assistant, if I not get a certificate about educational certificate, educational assistant, okay I can study in fashion designing.

Then I realized that this subject—I mean program—is not so demanding. I mean, maybe I will not

get a job in Winnipeg. I mean everyone discourages me about this program when I talk about it. So some people tell me, do that work which you love, don't do this which you don't love. So if I think like this then I feel I need to change my profession, because I love that work more now, more than teaching profession. But when I think about my future, I mean job, career, then I was confused. Is it okay to listen my heart, listen to my heart or not. So...

I feel that if I change my profession it will be better for my heart, because maybe I can do my best by taking which I like most. So, I'm thinking about apparel design here on the Vertical College, but only part time program. So maybe I will take that course.

But I realize one thing, that in Vertical College, or anywhere, they have lots of technical, vocational program. Like they don't have actually cultural, I mean creativity programs, not so many programs. I mean like designing, or creativity. So some people has actually knowledge about technical, they love technical work. Some people actually has different, I mean cultural, or writing, or something like this.

So both, I think both are necessary for society. So if all people go technical, and professional profession who want to go those literature, or I mean creativity sector also need we have, we need. So, I think here they should think about this, because all people are not suitable for a technical line. Some people has creativity, maybe writing, maybe...

Some people is good in the technical things, using tools. With other people it is not like that.

But if you don't have very good career opportunities, people have to think of another thing. I mean they're bound to think another thing, another program, about another program.

Actually I ask everyone. My neighbors, my friends. So some friends told us that, you have to do that work which you love, but already which people already goes in this path. I mean they are living here five years, or six years. They said me, better if you take a course which in future you will get job, better you have to take those type of course. Like accounting, like technical.

But I think they think about money, about career, about job. But I think job, and career, money is not everything. I mean you have to satisfy with your job. If you're satisfied with your job, everything work, you can do best, I think. So it's important for me, because I also did two types of job. So I think here it's, we always been so stressed, so if you love your work then you don't feel stress too much, and you can give your best. If you don't love your job, you cannot give your best.

It's just a responsibility just to do, because you have to do. So I think it's not good. Because in our country, same. I mean I don't have any choice, that's why I am studying this one, or I am doing this job. But when I came here I had hope that that's the country that has no age limit, and I can study anything. And I have dream that I will study in fashion designing here, because in my, back home, I was, I did not have any chance to study in this sector.

So when I came here I had a hope, great hope that okay, now I can do my job, or, which I like most. But when I came here I saw no, situation is different, it's not so easy. If I think about this subject, maybe I have to wait a long time for a job, or opportunity, mainly because a small city. And maybe in fashion sector there is limit job.

So I was frustrated about what should I do, my previous job, or new job. But after four years I did do that job, I think I have to do that work which I like. Now I don't care about my career, or job. If I complete my studies, and if I love this work, continuously doing something maybe I get a good job, or maybe my future will be well, I mean good. So that's why I just think I just want to change my career, I just want to do what I love.

In Winnipeg the fashion sector is very limited. I just need, I want to know what type of job in Winnipeg in fashion sector. So I saw actually it's not direct related, and it's not too much, I mean very limit in Winnipeg. Maybe other, Montreal, or Ontario, maybe they have some job opportunity.



But I need to take certificate also. So...

Yes, clothes, design for clothing. I mean as, I like actually especially women, children clothing design. It was my passion from childhood, I always like to do something different. And I always try to do something new in clothing. So actually I love, when I saw something in picture, or TV, or anywhere automatically I feel that is now, is new, or is good. And I feel like this, that I can find me in this work.

I mean from my heart I feel happy when I see this type of work. A long time, I mean I cannot do anything with this, but when I was a student and I have lots of free time, I always work with this type of design of something. So, I feel that those work give me a life. I mean from inside I feel happy when I saw this type of work.

My own business, yes.

And for business, I think for business people should have some special qualities to maintain his, run his business. I have to have that, those qualities also if I want to run my business. So, this also is not easy.

Because maybe I can do it, create a design, but I don't have any experience about business. So I need actually idea about business also, because otherwise I feel fear, or I feel scared to start a business, because it's about money also.

Like my husband always like teaching profession. He doesn't want to go for another profession, so he continues struggling for go in teaching profession. So that's his passion, I mean he's not only this work. So I think this is good, if you love this work you can continue.

In my case, I love this job, but I mean I don't have any choice, that's why I took this profession.

Yes. I think I love this job, so I mean designing, or something, creating. Creating, any creative work I love. I mean decoration, interior decorating, fashion design, any creative thing I like. I don't like technical line, because I cannot, actually my brain cannot capture those technical terms. So I love actually always any creative, any creative programs.

My family, and friends, they gave suggestions, but just suggestions. Sometimes if you listen too many suggestions you will be more confused. So, sometimes some people have really don't real life ideas, they just think, and just say. So I just ask, I don't have any relative here in Winnipeg, so I just ask my neighbors who already living here a long time.

So they suggest to me, you have to take that type of course which has market, I mean which has job. Otherwise you will be more frustrated after completing study. Then I search everything which has more program in Winnipeg, especially in Vertical College. So maximum is through technical program.

This is my third term at Red River College. So when I came here I complete one term. After that I got a job, and I mean in that term when I was studying I got a job. And my situation was like that, my husband don't have job, and I don't have job, and we are living with children. So that time I need that job, so I just live to my [unclear], I mean complete that term, and then I go, or wait for job.

So that time I didn't understand many things, and I didn't know many information. But when I come back this year, then I realized that I missed many information. So in this term I want to use some information about career, or I know about many organization in this term, I can know. I mean I hear about those organization.

But similarly, I mean last one year, we have some problem. I mean my family have some problem, so I did not... What's the word, understand that what should I do, or where I have to go to overcome those problems. So I participate one session from, in Red River College about how can they help us? Before I thought only about our study, I can get, I get some information from them.

But when I participate with that session then I can understand that I can get any type of help. I mean mental health also they will provide. After that I contact with someone here, when I talked with her then I feel that maybe I can overcome our problems, maybe they will give us some address, or some solution. So it's helped me a lot.

Because I think when you're the immigrant, we don't know many information, or anything, and when we feel frustrated, we feel sick, I mean physically also sick, and mentally also sick. And maybe take a wrong decision, or maybe behave wrongly. And in family, one person if don't feel okay mentally, and physically it influence all of us. I mean if I feel mentally sick I maybe on my children, or my husband, I react more.

Yes. So, I think it's very helpful if there is someone to suggest us, or guide us that you have to do this, and you are not alone, we are also helping you. Maybe we feel inside very good. I mean at least after talking with her, at least I think oh I'm not alone, and there is someone, or some organization to help me. So, because I was so frustrated, still I was so frustrated, because I was in very difficult situation right now, in economic, and family problem, everything.

So sometimes I think that I need to die, because if I go from this world, I don't know have any more responsibility, or something. So when I get some information from them, then I think differently. But, because I cannot share with my parents, or my relatives, or friends because everything is not sharable. Maybe if you share then it will create more problems.

So inside I feel, oh my God, maybe I took a wrong decision to come here. So, when I feel that no, maybe there is some organization, or maybe there is someone to help me, or at least guide me that you can do it, yes, it's very helpful for us, for newcomer.

Because it's totally different our country's system, and here system is totally different. So it's...

Because I face those problems, because from beginning I'm doing study, job, and then I did two job. And then I did again, I start my study and job together, and every, I mean at home there has many responsibility on me. So, I feel so stressed to do everything at a time, and I feel guilty that I cannot give enough time to my children.

Because my children is now teenage, they want to share with me everything, and they want to take succession, or I mean they want to talk with us. But I don't have, as a mom I don't have time to, or I don't have enough time to talk with him, and for that my son face some problem. I mean he has a mental problem now. He spend a lot of time in washroom, and it continue last one year, more than one year, and we tried to counsel him, we are going to a counsellor. And we tried one, last one year, to give up this habit. But we cannot.

And I recognized that he loved to do, I mean game, mobile game, and spending time in washroom. I mean he feel lonely, I think he feel lonely. So when he go washroom he just think of do something, I mean sit down or something. I don't know why, I mean I think there is some problem, mental problem. Because now we cannot, we are not able to give them enough time.

But in our country, actually we live all together. My mother, father, there is a big family. So from beginning, I mean after bath they spend their time with a lot of people. But here they are alone, and my son face some bullying, so he actually don't want to go outside much more. I mean he want to spend time at home with mobile, but actually it's not good if teenager spend more time in device, with a device it's not good.

But what can we do? Because we are busy with our job, and study. And they are feeling lonely here, because before they have lots of people to share their everything, their grandpa, grandma, and everything. But here no one. And when this bullying in school, bullying problem you know that about.

My, both children actually become frustrated to make friendship with anyone. They always afraid to



friendship with mean people, or. I mean now they just, they have one or two friends, because they're scared someone maybe insult him, or insult her. So, yes, they are not so willing to make a friendship with anyone.

As a mom, I feel guilty that I can't do anything for my children. But I came here only for my children. Because we are settled in our country very well, so we came here only for our children's education, and everything. I mean we all love this country, because it is a safe country for us.

But, you know, so our system is like this, so we need to struggle maybe five years, ten years, and in this time maybe the children will maybe go city, or maybe not. I mean it look like now insulting because now they need us, but we cannot give our time, or time for them. So you cannot give guarantee that they will be good a result, or very good subject in future.

And I think in this type of institution should have some, I mean some training. I mean if we have some training course also, or... Not or, and some counselling session, maybe it will be help to newcomers. Because I think as newcomers we feel different type of problem, and in the mixing of us they don't have any idea how can we solve this type of problem.

So I think if we have some counselling session, and some training session it will be very good, because maybe some people need just some training, and then they can go for work. And maybe some people need more mental counselling, or mental support. Because with mental stress you cannot continue study very well, right. So...

And people can share with others.

They're just like... I mean mostly were, I mean totally puzzled, or I mean they become that, oh I made a big mistake to come here, I don't know anything, and what should I do. They don't have any information. So I think in that case you're not, language is only one problem. Another problem also we have to face...

After four years, or five years maybe you can talk with everyone. Maybe not, maybe I don't have any writing skills I mean very properly, but I can talk with everyone, I can explain, and I can... communicate with everyone. So yes it's...

I mean when I came here first, I just concentrate about my language. And maybe they are going to provide some, but I cannot catch everything, because I was so busy with my English language that I have to complete my English first. So it was so, yes, I mean... Many things I missed that time. And that time I can understand also everything, they maybe lecture in class, but I cannot catch everything. So...

And those type of information was that more officially. I mean if I saw something around me then maybe I can catch. But if it is more official, then maybe I need to read everything, and I need to go office, I need to take information. So that time I was scared to talk with the new people because I was not so good in English. So I generally, that time we are not so interested to go office by my own, and ask everything. But when I live here a long time, then maybe I feel comfortable to ask any question to anyone.

The information gap is I think where there is big issue. If I don't know about information I cannot take my right decision, right.

I didn't know that if I become citizen then I cannot continue my English class, I didn't know that.

So, in my case first I gave chance to my husband to complete his education. Because he was more frustrated than me. So I think, and I thought that time, okay I already got a job, it's a part time job, but I can manage my family, and he can continue his study. So after that I can continue my study. But at first he is the man, so he need to complete his study first.

So I gave him chance, he complete his study, and then he doing his job. And then he start his job, and then I decided to come again to complete my study. But already four years gone, so we did

not know, we apply for citizenship and now I fear that if I got citizenship I cannot continue my classes. Then I feel so upset that, and I feel more stressed that this is my last chance. I, anyhow I need to take, or do otherwise I cannot continue my fulltime job, fulltime study, or anything. I need my English benchmark. So I feel more stressed that this is my last chance, I cannot continue anymore. So I did not know that.

Many things actually, yes, we did not do correctly... Yes. So information is very necessary to know if you're a newcomer. I mean about everything. How can they continue their study, career. Many people don't know about their future career, I mean they don't know how to search, or they don't know how to research about any profession, and how to get admission, how to continue with the study. People don't know. So they ask their neighbors, or their friends, and they receive wrong information sometimes.

Learning from family, or from society. So I think all of this newcomers face, they face so much, and sometimes I saw some family was very good in their country, but now maybe fight husband and wife, and just divorce, and everything go very badly. And they are all well established, I mean maybe doctor, or maybe engineer, and that type of family also face those problem.

Men, I think it's very mental pressure if they have a very good job in their country, and here they cannot get into this type of job they feel more frustrated. And maybe they, I mean reflect in family, in his family.

## Participant #3, Red River College

Roles:

- *The Map Reader*
- *The Converted Volunteer*
- *The Interrupted Pragmatist*

I came in August 2018. When I was in my country I just... I was a scholar student. I just finished my high school. And also, I did some volunteer teaching to students in my school. Now, I'm working part-time in a small restaurant. I do everything like washing and cleaning and serving and cashiering. Everything I try to do. I started work in January 2019.

I did some volunteer like as for teaching the students in my school. But I didn't have enough information in Canada on how to reach my goal as a teacher or English teacher or teacher for high school. I'm not sure how long it takes to study at college or university. Or I didn't know whom to ask.

In my country I have a... We have a farm. I have a little experience working...with farms. Very cold here.

It was difficult to get a job here. I talked to my people too. They are from my country and they show me the restaurant and then I went there, talk with him and they hired.

The owners are from another country, but they know work and my friend who are from [country]. He's working different place like in the straw factory. He know our address and he is connected with restaurant.

I don't really like my job. Not really. Because it's working like in kitchen. I want job. I think it's better to work with people and all. I talk to people. I can talk but my work is in the kitchen like I have to work more in the kitchen.

Sometimes I think if I go to truck driving it also take a lot of time because I knew I'll drive. I don't have license. I have to first go to take license. I didn't drive before. I'm still reading the knowledge for the license. I don't know can I go directly to truck driving or no? Or I first go to driving a small car?

A class 5, but until then I go to check driving license for truck it takes maybe four years, five years I think. If I do both of them the same time. I think it will take more than one year.

I discovered my love for teaching as a volunteer. That I was good. I was a little good to teaching, to talking. It's also I can talk of people. Also, it's practice for my language.

I started English classes in February 2019, so this is my second semester. The courses, they help. They would help me at everything, about everything and I do in future.

Yes, I also share advice and when I talk to my classmates, I will ask something and I will get some information about something I know. So, teacher teach me English so of course, it will help me every.

There's one immigrant center also. They show me, then I check I found.

I feel the stress. But I try to do my best. My family is in [country]. There are people here from my country. I know them. I'm in contact but I don't talk every day. Just sometimes.

In my free time I go... Sometime I go do swimming and I go to park and or I go some mall to buy something or see. Yes. Outside is better for me. Even if it's cold. I try to meet people and talk. I like to talk with them. And it will decrease my stress.

I like to volunteer. I try to find somewhere that's good for me. I try to find somewhere that's good

for me. [Unclear]. And I run and so I check my free time. If I don't have time, I can't do it. I like better in contact with people, working with contact of people.

I think for first time I need [unclear] because if I go to like truck driver I need more... I need like work. I need a job or having income. Being a truck driver means being alone a lot, but I think it's very difficult to find a good career. I always thinking about how to find a good career. And also thinking about their income.

I live by myself. I'm living in one room just there are people living in my house but I see it's good for me.

Sometime we are cooking. Sometime we are talking.

When I first arrived I received some information from like where is the [unclear]. I called the city where is the library and the store and about the something but not working here. I don't receive enough about how to work here. I try to search for information about a career but I where can I ask and where can I find this information? I don't know.

Sometime I ask from my teachers but from other stuff. If I have any question I just ask teacher. [Name], she is a good teacher.

I don't think it was a mistake to come to Canada. But I have a problem: I am stuck when it comes to how to get career. How to have a good career and how to achieve.

When my English is good I accept better career. Get information from [online].

I feel better now compared to when I arrived, but also I stuck. Stuck. I do not progress...I expect more but I can't. First step, I think English is important.

## Participant #4, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Sod-Layer*

We arrived to Canada in February of 2015, that's means, next February we will be 5 years here in Canada.

I received a degree in public accounting in my home country, [country], and also I have two specialties, one in bank management and other in formulation and evaluation of financial projects. The level of education would be equivalent to diplomas.

I have more than ten years of experience working at the management level in banks in my country.

I didn't know really how the financial bank system works in Canada, however I thought I had the experience and that would allow me to get a job in the banking sector. I have applied several times but it has not been easy, I have not been able to get a job in that sector.

I have even applied for low positions as a cashier in the bank, I understand, it is a new culture, the financial sector maybe is different but I said, I can start as a cashier and then show my experience and once inside apply for a better position.

Maybe at the beginning the barrier to a career in finance was language, since I didn't have a very good level of English when I arrived in Canada. In addition to that, another thing is that I am a mom; I have a nine years old son. Also, I have in mind that we come to Canada for reasons totally different from the economic ones, however I need to work as we are not rich. We came here, not because we didn't have a job; in [country] we had a good position with good income and good economical standard of living but not a good quality of life.

Another thing that has prevented me is the bank schedule, since at the beginning they don't give you a permanent contract, you are casual and they call you, but you must be available to work nights and weekends, but unfortunately, I need a schedule that fits my home routine and supports my husband. We do not have any relatives here to help us to take care of my son, therefore I cannot accept to work with such open schedules.

My son was being raised by a babysitter when I lived in [country], since I didn't have time for him, only during weekends. When we came here the purpose was to have a better quality of life, with more time for my son and to be able to educate him with the values and principles of our family, which we would not have been able to do if we had stayed in [country].

Some people, friends, have told me you should try, maybe it is only a time, after three or four months they give you a permanent contract, but the truth is that in the applications I have made to the banks I have only been able to get interviewed a couple of times and from there nothing. I think that maybe it's because of my level of English, that I need to improve, that's why I'm here taking these courses and taking advantage of the opportunity that I don't have to pay for them.

Now I am working in a clothing retail store from Quebec, Montreal, called Le Chateau. They have three stores and one outlet. I work in the biggest store as an inventory manager and also I am in charge of the all online stores. And when my manager requires I have to sell and advise customers in person at the store.

My first job in Canada was at the Superstore as a general helper. When the manager interviewed me, she told me "I think your profile is not for this position," and I told her, "Please do not look at my profile, look at my attitude. For me the position is not important, but the opportunity is, because what I want is to have work experience here in Canada." But she told me, "You are overqualified for this position," so I replied, "Doesn't matter. Please give me the opportunity to

work," and then she hired me without asking me more. I felt very happy, but unfortunately I only worked there for a month because they only gave me eight hours a week.

Then in the same mall as the Superstore is Le Chateau's store. I had seen the beautiful clothes they have in the store and had thought I would like to work there. One day I saw they were hiring. I applied and they gave me the job.

Honestly, what I think helped me to get the position was that in the Superstore, how I didn't speak English well, they put me to help with the inventory of products, and I learned the codes and processes.

I have been working for four years at Le Chateau.

I work Monday to Friday, and my schedule was from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. but recently they have reduced me hours, now I am working from 10:00 am to 4:30 p.m. and this Monday they asked me not work on Friday, I have less hours and the same work, I am so tired, I have too much work to do, for instance today I folded 250 shirts.

I have an injury in my shoulder because three weeks ago the girl who was in charge of the shoes department quit the job. Then I offered to help, you know, although those activities were not in my job description, I thought, it is a team work. I had to move around 4,000 boxes of shoes in two days and then I got a shoulder tendonitis in my right shoulder. I am on the supervision of the Worker Compensation Board because I can't do too much exercise with my shoulder.

Moving shoes boxes isn't in my job description. I can do other things, I have too much work to do, but they have been telling me, that right now they need me to move boxes.

Anyway, every time they are taking more hours, for example this is the first Black Friday that I will not work, they told me please don't come to work on Friday and I asked why? I have always worked on Black Friday. The answer was, "Because you aren't part of the sales department and we prefer to give the hours to someone from the sales department."

However, they have always put me to sell, and honestly I am a very good seller, I have made sales of 400 and up to 700 dollars, and then they are happy but they do not pay me a single cent of commission, and I think that is not fair. So I feel demotivated and frustrated. Fortunately my husband has a good salary, but right now we are saving all my income because we want to put a good down payment for a house.

Then I feel sad, unmotivated. I feel that they do not value my work and in truth that I have put a lot of effort, I have put all my heart in my work. Another thing that makes me feel uncomfortable is that I am supposed to be responsible for opening the boxes where the clothes come from, then I have to disassemble the boxes and throw them into the recycling bin outside the store, but because I don't have a specific place to store the boxes before taking them away, I use the bathroom to store them there for a day or maximum two, the problem is that everyone goes and put their garbage in there, then I also have to throw away all the garbage. We also have a role to wash the bathroom; well, sometimes several days pass and nobody washes it. It makes me very uncomfortable to use a dirty bathroom, so I end up washing it more times than it is my turn.

I tell you again I have put a lot of effort in my work and in general to the whole process of settlement and adaptation to a new life in Canada. It is not an easy process; it requires a lot of mental strength and a lot of emotional intelligence, so it encourages me to think about my family. Thank God I have a good husband, hard worker, and my son is growing up healthy in a safe place, and that fills me with joy. But I feel I deserve more and also I feel I can give more professionally.

Yes, I have thought about changing jobs recently, but I really don't know what to do, but as I told you before, I can't stop working. That makes me feel frustrated. Sometimes I think, I would like to speak better English, and I wonder why my parents didn't put me to study English when I was

little. That makes a big difference, because the Manager in general terms is a good person, but she doesn't know anything about leadership. I think I could give her some leadership lessons.

She doesn't know how to treat employees. For example, many times when the store is full of customers and she needs me to help her to sell, she starts shouting my name throughout the all store, but she shouts so loudly that sometimes even customers ask what is going on. Then I have to leave everything I am doing and run to attend customers.

Another thing that made me quite angry happened just a few days ago, when suddenly she appeared in my workstation, station that by the way I designed by myself to help me open the clothes boxes without hurting my back so much, and she closed everything. She threw away all my things and shouted at me, "I need you selling." In truth I felt that it was a great disrespect, I felt very bad and humiliated. Sorry, but I remember it and it makes me cry in anger.

I have researched and there is an accounting and payroll program at a College here in Winnipeg called Herzing College, but first I need to have the right level of English to enter, I think 6 or 7, I am currently at 4-5 here at the Red River College. But I am not sure if I want to work as an accountant. In [country] I did not do it, I like more banking management; however, I would be willing to do it, because I feel that I need another type of work where I do not spend so much time standing, where I can use more my brain, because sometimes I feel that I am becoming mentally slow. Another job where my hands are not mistreated so much. I have not had a manicure in a long time, because there is no point. I would like to dress well again, with heels, and generally feel better, but I don't know what to do.

I think maybe now the best for me is still studying English, improve my level of English, take advantage of all the resources that we have here, all the human and material resources without cost and try to reinvent myself, because finally when you leave your country, leave history behind and then you should start from scratch.

I have been learning other skills I am open to explore more options, like clothing design. After 4 years working at Le Chateau I know more about dress fashion, also I have a lot experience on online sales. I am not tied to the idea that I have to work in the same field as I did in [country]. For me, our life in [country] is the past. I only miss the income, but I am conscious that we change income for peace of mind. My son is learning English and French and he will have better opportunities here. We are happy, we save money and go for holidays every two years, and every other year we go camping. We learned to skate on ice and ski.

The only thing I want is to find a job or a career where I can use my skills and feel valued. I don't think it's too much to ask. I don't want to earn thousands of dollars...well, if it happens it's good, but if not, there's no problem. It is not my main engine.



## Participant #5, Red River College

Roles:

- *The Industrious Companion*
- *The Map Reader*

I'm from [country]. I have been in Canada for only four months. I have one child and my wife, but the rest of the nuclear family is back in [country].

In [country], I completed my bachelor's degree as well as my post-graduation. I'm from a business background. In my country I worked in a multinational company. That was for two years. I have an entrepreneur's mentality.

So, I started a business on my own. And I have some fascination with agriculture. So, I have a really small organic produce farm at home, a large company. In [country], things are different than in Canada. If you want to start a business personally in my home [country], then you are free sometimes to do this. You have to have some processes that you follow in Canada.

In our country, you are sometimes free from tax and government registration [or restriction?] and so many things.

People that don't earn money don't pay tax like they do in Canada. In Canada, if you have some money as a salary, then the government take the tax freely from your salary. But in our country, things are different.

In [country], we export ready-made cameras. We are number two in the world for ready-made cameras. We export shrimp. Many things like shrimp. So, I have a small cultivation land where I produce shrimp, rice, and vegetables. I have a vegetable farm at home.

What reason I did that, but I'm not an agriculture background. I'm a science background. I did it because I like it.

My father, he works under the seaport authority. I did not grow up in a rural area. I spent all my time with my family.

You know, the culture and the overall systems are quite different in Canada. I had planned to get an office job. But when I see the scenario here, I think it's different, and sometimes a slight difficulty for me, because of my English accent, its fluency. And as I think I kind of have a weakness in listening, because the accent, that is totally different sometimes.

So, I submit many applications for one single position. Even I know that I'll get a job in my desired position after a time. So I need to be patient. And I'm trying.

But now I have changed my plan. In my country, if you do the office executive's job, or if you have some other [job in an] organization, and if you are in the senior big position ... if you are a, yes, university graduate, then it is not honorable for you to work as a cleaner, or as a driver. There are some social barriers there.

So, I started that type of job. But now, I mix with the people, and my mentality has already changed. So now I'm very easy to start any job, I think.

You're older expert than me. I think you know everything a little, because I am very new here. In Canada, if you want to, I try to talk with people and get information. So, I know that, if you earn more money, then you will give more tax in Canada.

I heard that, if you do something in cash, okay, then you can save some money, because it is easy for you. Now, if I have the chance to be a plumber, self-employed, then I would take that chance. But before that, I need to educate in plumbing here. Let me see. I need a certificate from any institution in Canada. So, I have a plan to be self-employed here.



But I'm sorry that I cannot follow my fascination. That means that I cannot go to agriculture, I cannot apply my agricultural experiences that I was doing back home. Because, in Canada, if I want to engage in that type of activity, then I think I need to know more about water. Because agriculture is totally dependent on water.

So, I have a plan to pursue a plumbing certificate, and I'll do it when I have more money, opportunity.

My wife has been here for several years. She has experience. So, the salary she got, she earned \$1,800 biweekly, but the government took \$700. And you only get \$1,100. Government will give you benefits, security in lieu of that money. That's good. But only sometimes; so, when you get more money, then government will take more tax.

So you pay your debt. Because, in Canada, you do everything with your credit card. So, sometimes it's a big pressure for you. In our country, we don't do anything with the credit. Even people buy their car, buy apartment, or build their own house without any credit. So, I'm from a different scenario. So, even when I open a bank account, I was given a credit card, and the limit is \$2,000.

But I didn't activate it within two months that I missed, and they took five, ten thousand in credit activities. But my family, now we are very aware in debt for a big amount.

So, if I had more money, I will get more tax. But after that money, which I take in my hand, it's not very easy to pay all my debt. So, it is quite difficult, I think. And for me, it's a big pressure.

So, if I were, if I get something in cash, that means that, if I do a job, and there is a chance to get money in cash without a bank, then it is easy for me to pay my debt. But before that, you need to go take care of work. You need experience. So, I have a plan. I already told you that I have a plan. But I don't know how it will happen.

I'm doing my classes in LINC to develop my English. And then, after, I have a plan to complete my plumbing education. I'll take an office job or something like that. Or even that may be outside the office. That's not a problem. Because I need to change my career, because I need experience if I want to get a good position.

Because one thing about Canada: if you want something better, then you need experience. But I don't have any prospects in Canada. So, I have the mentality to do something from the very beginning. Then I'll get my knowledge and experience, and then I'll apply for the next level.

Who told me about plumbing? I like to talk to people. I like to take in information. Before I move, I need to know the environment. That means you look before you leap. I believe in that.

I think I can be a plumber, because I'm physically active, energetic. There's not a problem for me...

If you don't know something, if you don't know anything, then why would an employer try to get you? So, you need experience. But in Canada, people who normally came here as immigrants, they have some backgrounds in their home. But in Canada, the culture is different. The environment is difficult.

So, we, the newcomers, I believe they have knowledge, but you need to give them the chance. I think if you give them the chance, they can easily adapt to the new system. That means there are two types of these skills. One is a hard skill and another is a soft skill. A hard skill, that is gained from classes, seminars, and some training. So, I strongly believe that if I get the chance, okay, then I can easily adapt.

But in Canada, I see that, in recent times, to get a job is quite difficult. Because more people are coming, but the job sector is coming to limitation. So, you need to choose for yourself more than one sector and job in that if you want to survive.

You can get all the information through the internet. You need to go there. And after that, it's my

opinion that you get the gist of a difficult thing.

That means, if you are not so good at English ... but then you work in a call centre that is very difficult for you. But if you can go do that, then you can easily get English. That is a difficult way. Not many people learn something easily, and first discover it in a difficult way.

So, in Canada, I think that, I already told you that the people that came here, or come here as immigrants, they had their own background. People all have skills.

But in Canada, things are different. So, you need to learn that before. But you cannot learn everything after listening, reading. That's not possible. You need to go for practical jobs.

Suppose that, before I came here, I was street people. That was available in my country. But here, who sees that? There are more people there in the street. They are sleeping. They don't have anything. That's different. So, you need to get into the thing, eh? Not information.

My English class, I'm there about one and a half months. But within this time, I go for my regular activities. But within this time, I didn't get any help. And I want to tell you something: in Canada, within four months, I completed my ... I wanted to develop myself. I completed my entry program, voluntary job, and now I am here. Every time I try to participate in every social activity, that maybe is in a Home Depot. I try to develop myself.

But that, I think they tell you that you'll get information, how to, how to write a good resume. That's really important in Canada. Of course it is important. But only it is not enough for the immigrant. You need some help.

Unfortunately, I don't know why the government is trying to stop this subsidy in the sectors too. And that means that government give the finance to the people for activities by new people like me. But I know, I've heard that the government is going to stop some programs.

If they stop that program that is government, then the immigrants, they will face, I think, more problems. Because nowadays, in Canada, at least in Winnipeg, even a single or simple job is difficult to get.

So, there should be a chance, or... if you don't give them the chance, you need to give them education. You need to give them training. Yeah. And government should emphasize exploring more sectors, so more people can get employment.

I started at Red River College in the first week of February. But I came late, so I think I need to go for the next session. That means February or March. I think, within March, I'll finish my course. I have a plan. I'll develop myself. If possible, I'll do so. But within this time, I need to go for my job, because I can't ... I'm here for four months, but I don't have any job. I depend on my family. So, as a male person in a family, I think it's not good. Sometimes I'm not respectable at my home. So, I'm trying. In future, I need to adjust with my time and my classes.

I take evening classes and during the day I look for a job. I go outside. Within this time, I have so many friends. I try to meet English people, I try to reach my friends. But there are people who are not [open to] people who are newcomers. They're my friends, but they have same knowledge. They are hungry, so how can they give you food? That means they don't have jobs. So, how can they help you? Normally, I don't sit for my help. But I ask for the experience, retail experience, in Canada. And normally, if I need anything. But when I go amid the people who are from my same country in an occasion, in a family setting, then I ask for information.

I think and believe, if you lose your courage, then you lose everything. So I never lose hope. And I believe in my God. I am [religious]. I have a strong religious development.

At the same time, I know that things are different. If you want success, you need to be confident. But go from here, experience your work, your thinking will make you confident. Yes, I try. I try.

Everything is challenging here. Even back home, in winter time, I faced plus ten [degrees Celsius]. But here, I already get minus 24. That means the difference between ... 34 cold degrees already, I faced here. The difference is ... I can ... here, that means that I have already start work. So, if I start within that position ... so, I think I'll go four months 52. No problem. Because I want to start. Now I can go, get back to my back home. It is not very easy. So, you need to stay where you are, and you need to fight.

I think Canada is near 70 times bigger than [my home country]. [Country] is our neighboring country. But people, that means that 180 million people. It's a big people. But in Canada, it's near 70 times bigger, but the population is 37.4 million. Only in the capital city of [country], there are about 18 million people. That is half of Canada.

So, if you want to start a business back home, then it is very easy. And even easy to get some customers. And ... you can get more money.

So, Europe, America, they have technology, but they don't have their customers. That means they have limited customers. But if you want to make more money, then you need to go somewhere else for a year. Asia, Latin America. Because they have more people. So... and even the businesses, they're more easy. In Canada, it's not that easy. To start your own business, even a coffee shop, you need more to observe more restrictions. More paperwork, yes. There are as many shops, but they don't have the customers. Not a single customer in a day sometimes. But they have to give money for the employees every day. I think it's different.

But when I see that ... certainly, in my country, if you start a business, I believe you buy a part of the commission. Only part of a commission. And if it is in the, very close to a school, then the, every day, you can get two thousand. That means that every day you can profit two thousand. That means it's very easy to be in business there.

But I don't understand why, you know, the present government has declared that they are attempting to take millions of immigrants. But I don't know what is going to be in the next few years. Because in Canada, or even in Winnipeg, if you are an immigrant or refugee ... who gives you a job?

People have skills, but they don't have a skill in the perspective of Canada. You need to give them training. And after that, they can get a job. But all people are not same.

More immigrants, and more technology used. And technology will less your employment. So, I don't know. Even in Canada, in the winter time, in the next months, next few months, you cannot get out. Everything will need to go inside your home. So, if, in a country like you, people go around everywhere in every season. That means there is more job opportunity. But here, it is tough.

So, I think government should think about that.

I have a strong mentality. I'm liking in this country. So, I'm not refusing Canada. I don't take help from the government. That means that I don't take the money. Don't, government, don't give me money. That's different things. But if I'm here four months without job ... but I take it from my family, because my wife is here. She's in a job. If that has not happened for me, then I think I was in the same position people who are helpless, hopeless, and disappointing. That's very easy.

So, you can tell it into your report that people, when they come to Canada, they ... you tell that you need to know everything, everything. But it is not so easy. Everything here is very costly. Very costly. So, there should be something for the government to think about. Only English language is not enough; you need to train up. In order to get money.

But the people who are here, they can easily... they have the ability to engage with the system, and they can apply it in their life ... and I think the government should think about human resources. That means they take initiative to make these people into a human resource. That must

be skilled people.

When people are here from different countries, they don't have anything. They have many things. But from the perspective of Canada, they don't have anything.

So that means that you need to give them the chance. If you give them the chance, there is not enough. They can easily take the things. And after that, they can, they can easily give you more positive things. More productivity. I think so. You need to give them chance. You need to show them the way, I think.

## Participant #6, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Sod-Layer*

I came to Canada in 2018 after having been a manager and supervisor for factories for 38 years. Different factories, first I started in the cargo open area, and after that I moved to some manufacturing car factory, industrial company, and for a long time worked in the factory that made air duct PVC drainage pipe.

I went to the college, two years, three years after diploma. For the technician number one, I don't know it in English.

I looked for a job when I arrived in Canada and I can't find it, and now I look for a simpler job and I can't find. And that time I needed a job, but I look for a long time.

I'm a handy man, I can do many kinds of work. I can work with the tools, with many kinds of tools automatic, hydraulic, electric, trading, grinding, measurement, assembling and mounting because I had an auto mechanic diploma and continuing the college, general community college.

Auto mechanical the diploma, high school, vocational school, that vocational school and continuing with SETA technology at a general college.

Here they need some residency for Canada, for training here, but some of them need level six or seven English. And now I'm starting with four, five, maybe I can go there, but I can't work myself because I don't have the certificate. I can't go work for Heyfair for example, mechanical Heyfair I can't do it. I can't work in Canada because I must first pass the training course.

But now I will do whatever job.

I applied many times, I can do work exactly good for online jobs because I can do it on the computer. But I applied to many places and now I go to the OFE, for past [unclear] course and short-term training workshop. They told me, maybe they can't find a job for me.

I was thinking about continuing with my Sky because I worked there for about 25 years in the PVC product factory, pipe making and the drainage pipes, and the smooth pipes, polymers, same as this.

If I can go to the... Pass the training, I think this is very easy for me because I have many experiences, and I grew up with many training, different training in my country. And if I go to training, the work and the class is very easy for me but only maybe English is the problem.

Because I have a knowledge base, I understand the base of all of the things for plumber, electric and mechanical, I understand the base because this is my experience. I worked in different factories, in particular I repaired the gas stoves, the steel stoves, mechanical compressor pump, and centrifugal reciprocating compressor. Many kinds of compressors and many kinds of pumps, centrifugal pumps, many kinds of steel stoves.

And I have a scale for assembling factories, the line product. I went to Germany for training and then I was in one of these factories, I went to Germany...

My company bought a wrapping machine off A.H. Meyer company, the German engineer is coming to my country assembling together, so that we watch. And after that I go to the training for more information to A.H. Meyer in Düsseldorf and after training I came back to my home, my country.

Yes, after training because their wrapping machine returning and some received the training around the pipes, I went there for... Not only operating over the preparing the car, only for filtering, because that filtering is very important, it's just new in my country. It was new, that time it was new and [unclear] it's new too. I went there only for testing the filtering, how we can test the filter.

I started this equipment and preparing many times, it's not important for me, if I can do it well then... I can train right here, I think at benchmark six for training auto mechanics, auto motive for repairing the truck or cars engine.

Everybody at Red River College helped me, yes, but finally they understand that we need the benchmark six for starting the training.

I might go to the auto mechanics at Red River College, yes. Then I can work in a workshop, the mechanical workshop. Car repairing, I like this kind of job because it's interesting and I can do it...

Yes, I can get a job because I know that there will be too many people coming here and all work will be the same as this. Finding a job is difficult, not only for being a foreigner, I've seen many Canadians here looking for a job.

The Immigration Centre made a few résumés for me. When I wanted to I start, the Immigration Centre, OFE, they're making a résumé for me and they search job for me and help me with the other things.

I found friends during this time, but before that I don't have friends and family, I don't have any family here except my wife and my daughter – we came here together. We are all in the English class. Only a few friends with me, I found them here.

Would I change my career? Maybe, not maybe, if I can't find job with my skill I'd do other job, it's no problem, I looked for many kinds of job at that time. Many kinds of jobs, it's a short time ago today, housekeeping and part time in the summer I went for gardening, short time, very short time. This time it's not important for me, I can do all of them, I'm strong, I can work ten or 12 hours in a day, it's no problem for me. I can work in the night, at midnight time, shift time because during my job, the time I worked for 30 years, I worked many kinds of work in manufacturing in the factory.

Shift I was working 12 hours, two days working without rest because sometimes the company, for example the compressor was a problem or damaged and needs repairing, it's very fast. You stay 48 hours or more for repairing this because this is very important for the process on the factory, it's shut down at that time and work there is very hard, repairing this, and the getting it started again.

I can work long periods. Ten years ago I was an assembly man for factory in PVC division. And ten years I stayed in the factory and didn't go out, after ten years of component assembling and started again.

I have a number one certificate in driving, in my country number one certificate can drive all the equipment, truck, trailer, bus, all of them, and the motor to get two. Interesting I don't have any type of motorcycle, but I have the...license.

For a very short time I take the classified, the knowledge in the first time and test round the second time. Now I'm going to register for the class four because the class four can...drive taxis, ambulance limousine. Class one needs money, \$6,000, I don't have money. If I have the money I'd go testing the class one.

I think it's late for me, because I'm past 60 years old, and trucking may be heavy for me this time. And then I have a long-term experience with workmen's care, if I can go to the factory for assembling montage, for repairing, fixing, plumbing. I can do it better, it's better for me and Canada. It's better for me because I have long term experience in managing the worker, in managing the factory, in managing the repairing of equipment. This is better for me because this time in more than over 60 years and driving the truck is maybe difficult for me.

Hard job and I'm most certain for personal self, because I had the certificate number one, but it's not my job, because I learnt everything. I go and very soon I pass the oral exam for the number

one certificate because the technical is very easy for me. Knowledge exam is very easy for me because I was a mechanic, and the driver is easy for me, I do it... I have the license about 40 years ago, and the number one certificate about 35 years ago. Yes, 35 years ago, and then 40 years ago driving same, Class 5 I did 45, 46 years ago and Class 1.

A long time ago and I was young, I was young when I had my number one certificate for driving the truck, plus all of them.

My family needs the money and I can do driving for example taxi or the other smaller vehicle because I have experience without accident. And during this time, 40 ago without accident, 42 years ago, 42 years ago I had a driving license.

Here at Red River College I was going to the class five, six, but I think this class is not suitable for me. I changed and went to the four, five. This class is better because the teacher is very good, and she has a very good experience about this this class and now I'm enjoying this class.

Yes, this is better for me, and we have a problem of writing or a listening problem because in my country usually we... They teach the primary school, high school, university they teach grammar, they teach dictation reading but speaking, and listening exactly listening, I have a problem with listening. Our accent is different, our accent is not encouraged I think, our accent is not correct. I only have a problem for listening, the grammar and the reading...



## Participant #7, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Converted Volunteer*
- *The Escape Artist*

I arrived to Canada in July of 2016, a little more than three years ago.

In my home country I finished high school with a specialty in business, then I obtained a certificate in marketing and I have more than 15 years of experience in business, marketing, sales, accounting and flower design, as you can see I have a lot of experience in business and marketing.

I am working in a Restaurant called Montana's as a kitchen helper, this job help me to bring food to my family, pay my bills, practice English and get better knowledge about the labor market in Winnipeg.

When I came to Canada I was aware that my level of English was not very good to get a job immediately, so in a government orientation session for new immigrants I learned about volunteering to gain experience and practice English. So, I started volunteering for an organization that offers support services for newcomers' elderly. I have a letter for 120 hours of volunteering helping the elderly in various activities such as helping them shopping their groceries, accompanying them to their medical appointments, or simply as a company some evenings.

After volunteering for that organization, I also started volunteering in a school with young children where I have been doing it for more than a year and a half and I have accumulated a lot of experience and good references from teachers.

Then I realized that I really like Canada's education system and that I have skills and vocation to work with children, so I thought that I can study to be an educational assistant.

When I arrived to Canada, I wasn't sure about which career or job, I attended a course called English for Employment and I thought that I would like to dedicate myself to something different than what I had been doing in my country, but I didn't know very well what. I have always liked helping people to learn and especially children, and from there I started to consider dedicating myself to something related to education.

The main reason I changed my career goal was because I discovered that here in Canada there are many options and different careers that I just didn't know in my country, it was like opening my eyes to a great world of opportunities.

I think I decided to become an educational assistant because I really enjoy volunteering at school, I like working with children, I have patience and I feel that they also teach me a lot. I have received letters of recommendation from the teachers and in all of them they motivate me to continue in that field, they say that I really have a vocation for that.

Also I have learned that the educational assistant program is a six months program offered by two colleges here in Manitoba, Red River College and St. James-Assiniboia. My goal is complete the English courses here at Red River College to meet the requirements for registration in the program. Then, still working at the restaurant and volunteering for the schools.

The content of the LINC courses and the way teachers teach English has helped me a lot to learn and reaffirm that I like the education system in Canada and I want to work in education.

I like how schools in Canada make children and newcomer's students feel in a safe place, especially those who are refugees and came from countries at war, like me and my family, we came from [country]. Teachers care that children feel included and use many strategies such as flash cards to help the children to understand and learn in English.



I am very happy with the teachers that I have had here at the Red River College, they have all been very supportive with me, I take advantage of all the resources we have, all the online tools and English clubs such as the dictation in English, pronunciation and more.

They also connect us with other resources such as Manitoba Services.

I have used the services for mental health and parents tutoring, sometimes is really hard to handle the stress with your children, how to give security to them when you are not sure about the future.

The only thing that sometimes makes me a little desperate is the fact that there is a great waiting list for almost everything, for example to enter the English courses, to be accepted in the educational assistant program and then when you finish there is also a large list of people waiting to work and you have to start as temporary covering absences. But I do not complain, I am well, my family is well and safe and I already know what I want to do.

## Participant #8, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Converted Volunteer*
- *The Analyst*

I arrived to Canada in August of 2017, two years and three months ago.

I have more than ten years of experience working as elementary teacher. I got a diploma in education in my country.

I am not working, right now I am a full time student. I am taking advantage that the English courses are free.

My initial goal when I arrived in Canada was to be an elementary school teacher. I didn't know there were more opportunities, so that's what I wanted to do.

Now that I have more information and knowledge about more careers, I have two options from which I am not sure which one choose: one is child care worker and other is accounting and payroll. For both programs I need to pass the level seven of the English program with good grades. Also, a year ago I started a training to be a sewing machine operator and after I finished it, I started working in a clothing factory, but it is a very tired job, very physical and you have to work more than eight hours a day and they only pay the minimum wage. I ended my day very tired and after work I had to attend my children and husband was very difficult, so I quit that job and looked for other options.

As I mentioned you before I had in mind to continue being a teacher same as in my home country and then now I am thinking of being a child care worker or an accounting and payroll.

Well, at the beginning I didn't know how to become a teacher here in Winnipeg, when I knew that the credentials from my country were not recognized and then, if I wanted to be a teacher I had to study more than four years, I started to explore other options. I am interested in studying the Child Care program or the Accounting and pay roll program. The Child Care program interests me because I have experience working with children and related with education and the Accounting and payroll because I am pretty good with numbers and I find very easy the accounting systems.

The decision to change to a new career, was mainly because to works as a teacher here in Canada, I had to go back to study for several years, fist I have to do an upgrading from high school grades, and then, four years at the University and some friends who work in schools have told me that is a very large waiting list of people who wants to work and at the beginning if you enter in to the system, you only have a casual position and you have to be available when they call you and go to the places where they send you. I can't be like that, first because I need a safe job to help my husband and secondly I don't have a vehicle to move to the places where they send me.

I think that attending English classes here at Red River College has helped me a lot, because the teachers are very understanding and help the students a lot, it has also helped me to expand my network of personal contacts.

Here at Red River College I have used the service of a personal counselor especially when I started the courses, at the beginning of the year because I felt very stressed about how I had been working as a seamstress in the clothing factory, but now I didn't have that income that my family needed and that made feels very stressed. They helped me to calm down, focus on improving English and think about how I would later be able to help my family in a better way.

I am happy with the English courses and what I have learned, however I feel that during all the levels I have taken, they give more importance to English that is useful for work and not so much academic English, to me I would like to learn more academic English.



## Participant #9, Red River College

*Roles:*

- *The Sod-Layer*

I arrived to Canada in March of 2017, two years and eight months ago.

In my home country I used to work for more than three years in a day care as child care worker.

Since September 2018 I have been working at the Somali women's center in the day care.

When I arrived to Canada, I already had information about the Early Child Care program because my sister came to Canada two years before me and she gave the information, and therefore my initial idea was to study this program and open my own day care.

I don't know if I can say my career goal has changed, because I still have as my main goal to open my own day care; however, now that I have more information about other programs, I would like, once established my day care, to study social work. Those would be my two careers.

The reason for including social work? I am really concerned about how many people from [country] here in Canada and Winnipeg don't have access to jobs and academic opportunities, and then many of the youth are involve in gang activities. I think the origin of these problems occurs in immigrant families where both parents have to work and children grow up with a lack of cultural identity and is easy for them to get involved in criminal activities. Then with a day care and after as a social worker I can help people from my culture in the process of settlement in Canada.

As I mentioned you before I had access to information to the child care program for my sister. Working and volunteer in day cares with people from my culture has allowed me to know their needs and motivate me to help them. It's very sad to think in a child who now is noble, honest and cute, later when he grows up gets involved in criminal activities.

Here at LINC I think when you understand and have a better level of English you feel more comfortable searching information and you can access it. With more information I decided the steps to follow, first complete my English courses and complete the child care program.

Yes, the courses at Red River College have been helping to learn more vocabulary and practice my English, and also get more knowledge about Canadian Culture.

I think would be important for me to get more information about post-secondary studies when I arrived to Canada. I feel some people doesn't have enough information about post-secondary options.

## Participant #10, Red River College

Roles:

- *The Converted Volunteer*

I came to Canada four years and two months ago, in September of 2015.

I have a bachelor degree in Economics and Finance from my country and I never worked, before I had to leave my country few months after finished school. We went to a refugee camp in [country]. I volunteered for almost two years at the refugee camp as a teacher for small children and also as a nurse.

I have been working for more than a year as a child care assistant in a day care, and also I volunteer for some newcomers organizations here in Winnipeg and I want to start volunteer at the [local hospital] because I want to be a nurse.

I didn't really have an idea about what career or job I am going to have here in Canada. The only thing I knew was that I was in a safe place, far from the war and I was also sure that I didn't want to work as economist or something related with finance or economy.

I studied economics and finance but never worked in that field. During the time I was at the refugee camp, I enjoyed too much teaching children, then I thought I liked and that's way after few time to arrive to Canada I took the courses to become a childcare assistant and I started working in that field. But recently I realized that that I what most like is being a nurse, that's why I am taking the English courses to get the level they ask to enter here at the Red River College.

I think I have been attracted by two career options since coming to Canada: teacher and nurse.

I like to teach and I really enjoy working with children, the problem is as an educational assistant your salary is really low and is too much work, I just got married and I don't have children yet, but I think when I have my own kids will be hard for me after work attend my family. As a teacher is a long waiting list to enter in to the program and after you finish there isn't a job for you, you have to wait and start as casual in call. I think nurse is a better program for me.

When I was at the refugee camp in Ethiopia, every day we received injured people, especially children who required intensive care and a lot of patience to take care of them, there I enjoyed that volunteer job very much and I feel that it is what I like most. I really like helping people, especially children to heal their wounds, both physically and emotionally, I think I have a lot of patience and compassion for injured people. Every time I remember those very hurt children and how with their faces they showed you the gratitude for healing them, that's when I think, that's what I want to do. Sorry but I am very emotional.

Every course I have taken here at the Red River College has had a component called English for work and I have taken some skills test and always the test show me I am good for nurse.

Since I registered for the courses, they told me which level I need to enter into the nurse program and all the requirements. With all the information is really easy to know the path to become a nurse.

I think all the information that you receive from the government and all the organizations who help newcomers and refugees is quite wide and enough to help you to figure it what you want to do and the steps you need to get there. In my case always had enough information, but you have to update it because is always changing and always are new rules and information.