



## MEDIA RELEASE

### THE INSTITUTE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP'S LATEST COLLABORATION HAS CANADIANS TALKING ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CITIZEN

**TORONTO, ON – February 16, 2012** - The Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) continues to expand the conversation on citizenship with its latest collaborative project, *Canadians on Citizenship*, the country's first national survey that asks 2,376 Canadians what it means to be a Canadian citizen.

Three themes emerged from the survey that dispel many myths surrounding Canadians' beliefs on citizenship. The first shows Canadians have a consistent definition of what it means to be a good citizen - being involved in the community and accepting those who are different are seen as very important parts of that definition. Second, Canadians have a confident, comfortable attitude towards citizenship and its current legal requirements. The third demonstrates that Canadians - regardless of whether they're Canadian or foreign-born - hold similar views, including the notion that someone born outside of Canada can be just as good a citizen as someone born in Canada.

To help put a face to the results, the ICC worked with actor and producer, Zaib Shaikh (a member of the ICC's Board of Directors), to host a roundtable discussion with seven members of its new citizen programs to collect their opinions and stories related to the themes that emerged from the survey; [video interviews from the session can be found here](#).

"Canada's future depends on the successful integration of new citizens through meaningful inclusion in all aspects of Canadian life," said Gillian Hewitt Smith, Executive Director & CEO, Institute for Canadian Citizenship. "This survey and our interviews show a Canadian population – new and established – united by a commitment to community and to Canada; a powerful statement about the nation we've become, and our potential for future success."

This is just one of the many exciting things the ICC has been working on:

- Last month, the ICC launched an easy-to-use [online resource](#) that connects new citizens to volunteer resources and opportunities across the country.
- The [Cultural Access Pass](#) program is continuing to engage and connect with even more new Canadian citizens: registration has increased by 72.5% year-over-year with up to 150 new citizens joining the program each day.
- Over the past six months, the ICC's [Building Citizenship](#) program has welcomed 575 new Canadian citizens through its special citizenship ceremonies and expanded its national network of volunteers to include new citizenship committees in Montreal, Markham and Red Deer, bringing the total number of committees to 29.

The ICC partnered with the Environics Institute, Maytree Foundation, the CBC and RBC to produce *Canadians on Citizenship*, because of a common desire to reach out and engage Canadians (join the conversation on Twitter [#goodcdncitizens](#)).

**[More information about the survey, including an infographic and summary report can be found here.](#)**

## ABOUT THE ICC

The Institute for Canadian Citizenship is a national, non-profit organization that engages Canadians in citizenship through innovative programs, campaigns and partnerships designed to ensure new citizens are welcomed and included as equals, to create meaningful connections among all Canadian citizens, to foster a culture of active, engaged citizens and to celebrate what it means to be Canadian. Our Building Citizenship program brings together new and established Canadians at community citizenship ceremonies; our Cultural Access Pass (CAP) offers new citizens the chance to visit more than 1,000 attractions across Canada for free for a full year from the time they're sworn in; and our annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium fosters a debate on the future of Canada's civic culture. The ICC was founded and is co-chaired by the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul. The ICC is supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). For more information, visit [icc-icc.ca](http://icc-icc.ca). You can also follow us on Twitter ([@ICCICC](https://twitter.com/ICCICC)).

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