



MEDIA RELEASE

ALL ABOARD! VIA RAIL CANADA AND THE INSTITUTE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP COLLABORATE TO HELP CANADA'S NEWEST CITIZENS EXPLORE OUR COUNTRY *New citizens to receive an exclusive VIA offer through the ICC's Cultural Access Pass program*

TORONTO, ONTARIO – July 3, 2012 – VIA Rail Canada and the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) have collaborated to provide new Canadian citizens, who are members of the ICC's Cultural Access Pass (CAP) program, with a one-time, exclusive travel offer: a 50 per cent discount on the lowest available fare, any class, one way or round trip, no blackout periods, for CAP members and up to four of their children under the age of 18.

The Cultural Access Pass program fosters inclusion, introducing our country's newest citizens to Canadian culture and experiences by providing them (and their children) a year of free access to more than 1,000 Canadian attractions from museums and historic sites to national and provincial parks (even offering access to volunteer and employment resources). With an average of almost 100 registrations per day, more than 50,000 new citizens have become Cultural Access Pass members.

"We are thrilled to join the Institute for Canadian Citizenship to bring train travel to our newest fellow Canadians," said VIA Rail President and CEO, Marc Laliberté. "Travelling by train is a truly unique experience, one that connects travellers with Canada's historical, cultural and natural beauty. We look forward to welcoming many new Canadian citizens on board as they discover all of the wonderful experiences this country has to offer."

VIA Rail's significant travel offer complements the Cultural Access Pass's ability to engage new Canadian citizens with their country by discovering many of its remarkable attractions. With services from Vancouver to Halifax, VIA Rail connects some 450 communities across the country, giving CAP members plenty of travel experiences to choose from.

CAP members are an engaged audience, interested in exploring their new home from coast-to-coast. In a recent ICC survey, 80 per cent expressed a desire to travel within Canada over the next year, listing their top Canadian travel destinations as Atlantic Canada, Vancouver, the Rocky Mountains, Montréal and Ottawa.

"Our relationship with VIA Rail is a dream come true to someone like me who was once a new Canadian wishing to discover a new country," said The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Institute for Canadian Citizenship's Co-Founder and Co-Chair. "The opportunity it presents for our Cultural Access Pass members is truly wonderful."

Gillian Hewitt Smith, the ICC's Executive Director & CEO adds: "Now, not only are we able to open doors to cultural attractions and parks, we can also provide new citizens with a wonderful way to travel. CAP is only possible because of organizations like VIA Rail Canada who work to meaningfully include new citizens in Canadian life."

CAP's ability to welcome and engage new citizens was recognized by the Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism as well as the Honourable Steven Fletcher, Minister of State (Transport); both announced this exciting offer during Canada Day celebrations in Canada's Capital Region and Vancouver.

With the vital support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Cultural Access Pass is introduced to every new Canadian citizen at the time of their citizenship ceremony (approximately 170,000 people per year). As the diversity and value of CAP experiences increase, so too will the pace and rate of new registrations - this year alone, the ICC estimates an additional 35,000 new members!

CAP is generously supported by the Canadian Museums Association and the RBC Foundation. Details about the Cultural Access Pass program, including the list of participating attractions as well as full details about the VIA Rail Canada offer, can be found here: culturalaccesspass.ca.

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 citizenship and 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. You can also follow us on Twitter ([@ICCICC](https://twitter.com/ICCICC)).

ABOUT VIA RAIL CANADA

As Canada's national rail passenger service, VIA Rail Canada's (viarail.ca) mandate is to provide safe, efficient, environmentally sustainable passenger transportation, in the country's two official languages. Every week, VIA operates intercity, regional and transcontinental trains linking 450 communities across its 12,500-kilometre route network. Winner of the 2011 RAC Safety Award, VIA transports over four million passengers annually. Since 2007, the Government of Canada has provided VIA with nearly one billion dollars in capital investment funding. Follow the evolution of current projects at viarail.ca/transformingvia. Join the Evolution Blog at viaevolution.ca. Follow VIA on Twitter [@VIA_Rail](https://twitter.com/VIA_Rail). Visit VIA on Facebook at facebook.com/viarailcanada.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Jess Duerden
Institute for Canadian Citizenship
(416) 593-6998 ext.225
jduerden@icc-icc.ca

Mylène Belanger
VIA Rail Canada
(514) 871-6137
mylene_belanger@viarail.ca