

## Mentor Champion

### **I.S. employee honoured for helping new Canadians gain confidence in adopted homeland**

#### **Are You Interested in Becoming a Mentor?**

With the start of a new year around the corner, mentorship can easily be built into your development plan. There is plenty of support offered to mentors, including an orientation session.

Individuals who are interested in becoming mentors should have at least five years experience in their field and be able to commit approximately 24 hours to a mentor relationship over a four month period.

#### **More Information:**

[Calgary Regional Immigrant Employment Council \(CRIEC\)](#)



**Mentor Champion:** TransCanada's Jeff Kelly (right) with Rui Zhu, whom Jeff has helped prepare for meeting the challenges of entering the workforce in a new country.

For Calgary-based Jeff Kelly, being honoured for helping new Canadians succeed in an unfamiliar business environment was unexpected.

Jeff, the technical lead in the IS PMO's office recently received the distinction of 'Mentor Champion' from the Calgary Regional Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC).

The council recognized Jeff for his time commitment to building the confidence level and business skills of three individuals new to Canada, as part of that group's mentorship program.

Jeff has been a volunteer at CRIEC since 2010.

"It's definitely rewarding just to learn about another culture," Jeff reflected in a recent interview after learning about the award. "However it is just as gratifying to watch mentees grow and improve their skills in the process."

One of those mentees, Rui Zhu from Beijing, China, is one of the beneficiaries of Jeff's efforts. Jeff has helped Rui better understand the business culture in Calgary, while polishing his interviewing skills and building his professional network.

What Jeff and Rui discovered mutually in the mentorship process was that cultural differences were getting in the way of Rui finding work.

"He was looking for employment in the field of computer modeling and simulation and the job titles were confusing to him," Jeff said. "Once we identified the roles that interested Rui, we were able to target his search."

"Together, we revised his resume and cover letter and did mock interviews."

### **Cultural differences**

Cultural differences also showcased themselves as Rui was preparing for the interviews. For example, he was concerned about asking the person interviewing him when a decision would be made on a successful applicant for the position.

He thought it would be impolite to do so.

When Jeff explained it would demonstrate his level of interest in the position, Rui decided to give it a try.

"As a result of Rui's learnings, he is more confident now and he feels prepared to find meaningful employment."

### **Mentorship**

Jeff is not only helping Rui and others like him, but he is helping himself by honing his business skills.

Specifically he is learning to be a leader while fine-tuning his communication skills.

"For a person in a junior or intermediate position, those are skills that you may not otherwise have the opportunity to develop," Jeff said.

Successful mentors also need to be encouraging, supportive, flexible and empowering.