



MANITOBA  
COUNCIL FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATION

MCIE Annual Conference:

# Empowering Team Manitoba

Wednesday **May 14**, 2025 | **Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology** (Henlow Campus)



	<b>Location: MITT Delta Room, 130 Henlow Bay, Winnipeg, Manitoba</b> (free parking see last page)) <b>Facilities Sponsored by: Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)</b>
7:45 – 8:30	<b>Registration: Conference App Sponsored by iCent</b> <b>Breakfast: Sponsored by MITT</b>
8:30 – 9:15	<b>Introductions and Greetings</b> Robert Daudet, President, MCIE – Master of Ceremonies MITT Elder – Land Acknowledgement and Blessing Neil Cooke, President, MITT – Welcome to MITT Minister Renée Cable, Advanced Education and Training – Greetings from the Government of Manitoba Larissa Bezo, President, CBIE – Greetings from the Canadian Bureau of International Education Chris Sabiston, Flywire – Greetings from the Main Conference Sponsor: Flywire
9:15 – 10:15	<b>Keynote: The Power of the Collective</b> Cordella Friesen, President and CEO, YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

## Conference of the Manitoba Council for International Education (MCIE) – May 14, 2025

10:15 – 10:30	<b>Break</b>			
10:30-11:45	<b>Plenary</b> Ashley Dunlop, Economic Development Winnipeg, Panel Discussion: <i>Spotlight on Manitoba Industries &amp; Opportunities</i> <i>Bill Ryzniczuk, Manitoba Agriculture: Industry Development Specialist – Labour, Industry Development Branch</i> <i>Marie Hacault, Tech Manitoba: Youth and Talent Initiatives / Industry Engagement</i> <i>Debbie Tabor, Manitoba Aerospace: Director of Workforce Development</i>			
11:50-12:50	<b>Lunch: Sponsored by Flywire - Delta</b>			
	<b>Delta</b> (capacity ~100+)	<b>Room 115</b> (main floor; capacity ~ 30-35)	<b>Room 110</b> (main floor; capacity ~ 25-30)	<b>Room 200</b> Senior Leaders (by invitation only)
1:00-2:00	CS#1 Prem Modha & Livia Castellanos IDP Education (IS data trends MB & Canada)	CS#3 Christine de Rocquigny GuardMe (Student Support)	CS#6 Gary Gervais Heartland Int. English School (Language Learning)	CBIE#1 – Senior Leaders Stream
2:05-3:05	CS#2 David Wilson CBIE (Global Campaign Initiative)	CS#4 Jonathan Sherman BorderPass (Immigration Law – CPD hours)		CBIE#2 – Senior Leaders Stream
3:10-4:10	Set up Delta room for reception	CS#5 Brad Havixbeck Global Affairs Canada (Philippines Opportunities)	CS#7 Naomi Fujiwara, U of M Yuko Sakurai, RRC Polytech (GSO – Lessons Learned)	CBIE#3 – Senior Leaders Stream
4:15-6:30	<b>Cocktail Reception: Sponsored by ICEF – Delta Room</b> <b>Sponsor greetings - ICEF</b>			

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## Conference of the Manitoba Council for International Education (MCIE) – May 14, 2025

### **Keynote:** *The Power of the Collective*

**Speaker:** Cordella Friesen – President & CEO, YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

This session is about the incredible power of the collective and of relationship. The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg remains a part of the national and international communities within the YMCA World Alliance and the YWCA movement. The positive mobilization of community worldwide is already demonstrated locally and is critical to Manitoba's future.

### **Speaker Bio**

*Cordella has had a rewarding career that has spanned both the non-profit and government sectors over the past 25 years. She has always had a very close relationship with international education including in her role at the Y as a large employer of youth, international students, newcomers as well. This relationship extends at a personal level having hosted four international students in her home. Cordella considers herself a radical optimist and deeply believes in the power of the collective.*

### **Plenary:** *Panel Discussion: Spotlight on Manitoba Industries & Opportunities with Reps from Key Sectors*

**Moderator:** Ashley Dunlop, Director of Talent & Workforce Development, Economic Development Winnipeg

**Panelists:** Bill Ryzniczuk, Manitoba Agriculture: Industry Development Specialist – Labour, Industry Development Branch  
Marie Hacault, Tech Manitoba: Youth and Talent Initiatives / Industry Engagement  
Debbie Tabor, Manitoba Aerospace: Director of Workforce Development

A moderated panel discussion with representatives from key industries in Manitoba (tech, agriculture, aerospace, manufacturing) to discuss the state of the industry in Manitoba and opportunities for careers and international graduates in these fields.

### **Intended Takeaways**

- Be able to speak more confidently about workforce opportunities in Manitoba's economy across a variety of sectors

## Conference of the Manitoba Council for International Education (MCIE) – May 14, 2025

- Gain insights to guide prospective and current international students in their program and career decision-making
- Develop new connections with industry leaders in Manitoba

### Moderator Bio

*Ashley Dunlop has 10+ years experience in international education at The University of Winnipeg and is currently head of Talent & Workforce Development at Economic Development Winnipeg, the city's lead economic development agency*

### Concurrent #1: Changing Demand and Perceptions of Canada: The Latest Data for Manitoba and Canada

**Co-Presenters:** Prem Modha - Associate Head of Partnerships, Special Projects, Canada, IDP Education

Livia Castellanos - Vice President External Affairs, Canada, IDP Education

This session will showcase global policy updates, student demand trends across Canada with a focus on Manitoba, and also discuss the latest IDP student survey results, revealing changing perceptions of Canada as a destination country following recent policy changes.

### Intended Takeaways

- Utilizing student demand through search results and survey responses, attendees will better understand Canada's shift in popularity as a study destination along with changes in provincial demand.

### Speaker Bio

*Prem joined IDP in 2014 after working as a Student Recruitment Officer for the University of Winnipeg where he travelled across Canada, the UK, and Middle East promoting the university and programs to prospective students, parents, and building relationships with various stakeholders in those regions. He brings over 15 years experience within the international post-secondary education sector and has continued to grow and expand his role with IDP Education. Currently he works to expand and support client partnerships across Canada through student placement, digital marketing, and data analytics solutions.*

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### **Concurrent #2:** *Empowering Team Manitoba: A Call to Action in Canada's Global Campaign Initiative (GCI)*

**Presenter:** David Wilson - Director, Government Relations and Public Policy, Canadian Bureau for International Education

As Canada works to restore its global reputation as a top study destination, Manitoba has a unique opportunity to position itself as an education hub with strong academic institutions, a welcoming community, and economic potential for international students. The CBIE-led Global Campaign Initiative (GCI) is a national effort to stabilize international enrolments, enhance Canada's competitiveness, and drive economic recovery through international education. But Manitoba must play an active role. This session will explore how Manitoba institutions, government, and stakeholders can leverage the GCI to amplify their own international recruitment strategies, highlight the province's unique value proposition, and ensure that Manitoba remains a key player in Canada's international education sector.

Attendees will leave the session feeling energized about how they can contribute to a unified national movement while strengthening Manitoba's visibility and competitiveness on the world stage.

#### **Intended Takeaways**

- Understand the objectives of the Global Campaign Initiative (GCI) and its importance to Canada's international education recovery.
- Identify Manitoba's strengths and how they align with the national campaign.
- Learn how institutions, government, and industry partners can work together to strengthen Manitoba's presence in international education.
- Discover actionable ways to participate in and benefit from the GCI, including digital and grassroots advocacy.
- Be inspired to collaborate across sectors to promote Manitoba as a premier study destination.

#### **Speaker Bio**

*David Wilson leads CBIE's government relations and public policy efforts, advocating for policies that strengthen Canada's international education sector. As part of his national outreach, he is engaging with institutions, governments, and industry leaders across Canada to promote the Global Campaign Initiative (GCI), ensuring that stakeholders understand its importance and can actively contribute to restoring Canada's position as a top study destination.*

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### Concurrent #3: Collaborative Strategies for Holistic International Student Support

**Presenter:** Christine de Rocquigny - Manager Strategic Partnerships, GuardMe

This session aligns with Empowering Team Manitoba by exploring how strong partnerships between schools and insurance providers enhance the student experience, contributing to Manitoba's reputation as a top study destination. By ensuring comprehensive support from pre-arrival to graduation, institutions can strengthen their commitment to student well-being, safety, and academic success.

#### Intended Takeaways

- Understand the critical role of holistic well-being in student success and well-being.
- Learn how collaboration between institutions and insurance providers enhances student support services.
- Explore best practices for integrating insurance solutions into student services.
- Gain insights into emerging trends and challenges in international student support.

#### Speaker Bio

*Christine has a strong commitment to international education and a talent for building meaningful relationships. With over 15 years of experience in the field, Christine has cultivated a deep understanding of the international education landscape, leveraging her expertise to develop strategic partnerships with educational institutions, industry leaders, and associations at local, national, and global levels.*

### Concurrent #4: Navigating Immigration Law in 2025: Trends, Challenges, and Strategies

**Presenter:** Jonathan Sherman, Head of Sales and Partnerships, BorderPass

Join us for an insightful discussion on the evolving landscape of immigration law in 2025. This presentation will explore key trends in study permits, best practices for preparing a strong application, common reasons for refusals, and effective strategies for appealing denied applications. This session will provide valuable guidance to navigate the complexities of the immigration process.

#### Intended Takeaways

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- By the end of this presentation, participants will gain the knowledge and tools to effectively support applicants, minimize the risk of refusals, and navigate the appeals process to maximize their Pre-Approved Letters (PALs).

### Speaker Bio

*Jonathan Sherman is the Head of Strategic Partnerships at BorderPass, where he supports over 30 Canadian colleges and universities and works closely with the company's immigration legal team. Through this role, he has developed deep insights into study permit trends, refusals, and appeals, informed by BorderPass' work of filing more immigration appeals than any other firm or platform in Canada. His close collaboration with legal experts and daily exposure to real-world cases give him a unique, behind-the-scenes perspective on what drives application success.*

### Concurrent #5: International partnerships: opportunities to connect Manitoba to the Philippines

**Presenter:** Brad Havixbeck - Deputy Director, Manitoba Regional Office, Trade Commissioner Service, Global Affairs Canada

Following up on his recent and comprehensive visit to the Philippines, and participation in various international education events on the ground, the purpose of this session would be for Brad Havixbeck to give an overview of the Philippines education market and the opportunities identified for Manitoba institutions. Brad will first present and share key takeaways from his time in the Philippines, and the session will end with a Q&A.

### Intended Takeaways

- Understand the education system in the Philippines and learn about partnership opportunities for Canadian institutions.

### Speaker Bio

*Brad Havixbeck is a seasoned professional with extensive experience in international trade and commerce. He currently serves as the Deputy Director and Trade Commissioner at Global Affairs Canada, where he specializes in agriculture, processed foods, fish and seafood, and wine, beer, and spirits. Brad has been instrumental in facilitating trade and business opportunities for Canadian companies abroad, leveraging his deep understanding of global markets and trade regulations.*



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*Before joining Global Affairs Canada, Brad Havixbeck had a notable career with the Province of Manitoba. He worked in various capacities, contributing significantly to the province's trade and economic development initiatives. His roles involved promoting Manitoba's industries, facilitating trade missions, and supporting local businesses in expanding their international presence.*

*Brad's experience with the Province of Manitoba provided him with a strong foundation in trade policy and economic development, which he has effectively leveraged in his current role at Global Affairs Canada. His work helped to strengthen Manitoba's trade relationships and opened new opportunities for the province's businesses on the global stage.*

### **Concurrent #6:** *Does language matter any more in international education?*

**Presenter:** Gary Gervais, Heartland International English School

Language programs across Canada and around the world are shrinking or shutting down. What role do language programs and language proficiency play in the new international education landscape?

#### **Intended Takeaways**

- Participants will acquire some ideas to help them consider the importance of language to their international programs and marketing.

#### **Speaker Bio**

*Gary Gervais is owner and President of Heartland International English School. Gary is also the current president of the Languages Canada Board of Directors, a former MCIE President and board member, a former trustee in the Louis Riel School Division and a former English teacher on the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme.*

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**Concurrent #7:** *Success stories and best practices from 2020-2025 using the Global Skills Opportunity (GSO) to fund International Outbound Mobility especially for underrepresented groups of undergraduate Canadian students in Manitoba post-secondary institutions.*

**Presenters:** Naomi Fujiwara, University of Manitoba and Yuko Sakurai, Red River College Polytechnic

In 2020, the government of Canada called for funding proposals to post-secondary institutions in Canada in order to reduce barriers to participate in international outbound mobility opportunities, further internalize University and Colleges communities, and build a stronger international network between Canada and abroad. Five institutions in Manitoba; Canadian Mennonite University, Red River College Polytechnic, Université de Saint-Boniface, University of Manitoba and The University of Winnipeg received GSO funds to enhance the experiences, skills and international connections of domestic students, especially those from underrepresented groups through work and study abroad between 2023 and 2025. At the University of Manitoba, over 70 participating students were in one or more of the following underrepresented categories: Indigenous students, students from low-income background, students living with disability and others who are visible minority, 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or practice minority faith/religion. At Red River College Polytechnic, over 90 participating students were in one or more of the following underrepresented categories: Indigenous students, students with low-income background, and students with disability, as well as other equity-deserving groups. Success stories from GSO alumni, lessons learned and best practices from coordinators at Red River College Polytech and University of Manitoba will be featured.

### Intended Takeaways

- how GSO funds have contributed to increased access to international opportunities, especially for the underrepresented group of domestic students in Manitoba
- how GSO was shaped to strengthen internationalization of the University and College communities in Manitoba
- best practices developed by Manitoba institutions to increase an awareness of and opportunities for international outbound programs

### Speaker Bios

*Naomi Fujiwara, Student Mobility Coordinator, University of Manitoba*

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*Naomi Fujiwara has been working at the University of Manitoba (UM) for nearly 20 years in various units including the Registrar's office and Asper School of Business prior to joining International Centre in 2012. She joined International Centre as an International Student Advisor, then in 2014, took on a role in the Student Mobility and Exchange Programs where she has dedicated herself for the management and development of outbound mobility opportunities for students and the UM community.*

*Yuko Sakura, International Student Support Coordinator, Red River College Polytechnic*

*Yuko Sakurai has been working in the field of international education since 2019. She began her career supporting international students in the K-12 sector before transitioning to post-secondary education in 2022. Yuko currently serves as an International Student Support Coordinator at RRC Polytech, where she helps international students adjust to life and academics in Manitoba. Beyond her work with inbound students, Yuko has contributed to the development of an outbound student mobility program, aimed at creating impactful international learning experiences for Canadian students. She is passionate about building meaningful, cross-cultural opportunities that enrich the student experience.*

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## PARKING



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## 130 HENLOW BAY PARKING MAP

