New Web site Presents Canada's Diversity Story

Friday, September 24, 2004 – Canadian Policy Research Networks announces the launch of a new Web site on the changing face of Canada – ***Diversity Gateway***.

The brainchild of CPRN's Family Network, Diversity Gateway provides accessible data, history, resources and a quick route to CPRN's policy relevant research and learning on diversity issues.

The Canadian identity has changed radically over the past 40 years or so. Almost one in five Canadians today was born outside Canada. Our changing immigration policy has created one of the most ethnically diverse societies in the world.

Yet, while Canadians report more than 200 ethnic origins, almost 40% of us identify ourselves first and foremost as ethnic Canadians. It's a number that is growing steadily. It is also a measure of our success in making new citizens feel a part of a common project of nation building.

Canadian diversity is a product of policy as well as history. Governments have worked to shape Canada – in law and in practice – as a pluralist democracy with respect for diversity, linguistic duality and the culture and rights of Aboriginal people.

We are not there yet. Racism, discrimination and other barriers can still stand in the way of full inclusion of immigrants, visible minorities and Aboriginal people. Yet, much has been accomplished and there is reason for optimism.

The story of how Canada's "diversity model" developed and continues to take shape is the focus of CPRN's ***Diversity Gateway***.

"Diversity Gateway demonstrates what we have achieved, and also helps us confront the challenges ahead," says Beverly Boutilier, Assistant Director of the Family Network. "It's a place for thinking about the kind of country we are now, and the kind of country we want to be."

Diversity Gateway should appeal to: students, parents, teachers seeking organized Canadian content about the role of diversity in the making of Canadian society; Canadian and international policy communities looking to relate diversity research to policy and practice; and interested persons in the general community seeking high quality and accessible information about diversity.

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The site, launched today at http://www.cprn.org/en/diversity.cfm includes:

- "Diversity at a Glance", a statistical snapshot, a kind of history in numbers of Canada's changing make-up.
- "Origins", tracing the evolution of Canada from Imperial Dominion to pluralist society, from a white, British Nation, to a country based on respect for diversity.
- "Research in Brief", presenting the results of selected CPRN research reports in a range of shorter formats, and
- "CPRN Reports", presenting CPRN research related to diversity in full.

In the year to come and beyond, the Diversity Gateway will grow, with the addition of a historical module on the evolution of Canadian citizenship and new components on "Defining Diversity", "Youth and Diversity" and "Diversity at Work". There will also be additional statistical information and research briefing kits.

"We hope to make the Diversity Gateway a "one-stop" point of access for diversity issues, useful to a wide cross-section of users, including youth and students of all ages," says Boutilier. "We also hope to contribute to a continuing national conversation around these important questions."

RBC Financial Group, through its charitable arm, the RBC Foundation, generously supported the building of the Diversity Gateway.

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