

# Preface

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**T**his book is the result of two gaps in post-secondary education in Ontario. The first is the lack of post-secondary programming developed to address the crucial knowledge and skills needed to work with immigrants and refugees in a social work setting. The second gap is the dearth of appropriate course materials for educational programming in this area.

In 2007, Seneca College played a role in addressing the first gap by starting the Social Service Worker – Immigrants and Refugees Program. This two-year diploma program is designed specifically to prepare social service workers for front-line service working with immigrants and refugees. With this book, Seneca is attempting to help to address the second gap of appropriate course materials for students in this field. Other reading materials available are mostly theory-based, and most often are written for university-level students. We, therefore, set out to produce a book that is accessible and that blends a foundation of theory with the front-line expertise of workers in the field to address the needs of immigrants and refugees and the merits and challenges of related laws, policies, practices and social conditions.

The editor of this volume deserves special thanks. As the Program Co-ordinator for the Social Service Worker – Immigrants and Refugees Program, Soheila Pashang tirelessly ensures the success of the program and diligently watches that it continues to change and grow to give students the preparation they need to work in the sector. Dr. Pashang recognized the need for this book and set about to make it happen.

The writers of the articles also deserve special thanks. A look at the biography of each author will affirm that they represent the knowledge and skills needed to provide social services for immigrants and refugees. In this book, the author's bring together a balance of theory and practice to help us recognize and manage the many challenges in the sector and to plan for the future.