

this is a killer question," he says.

Tung Chan, CEO of the non-profit immigrant-services organization SUCCESS, says many of his clients were shocked when they heard about the UBC study, but the findings are not new for those working with recent immigrants. SUCCESS counsellors have long advised clients to adopt English-friendly equivalents of their names, which sends a signal to Canadian employers that they're adapting to the new country. The paradox immigrants face over needing Canadian experience to get a job is a tougher problem. "Employment counsellors hear that a lot from the people we help," Chan says. "We've been harping on that one."

And yet we shouldn't confuse favouritism for English names or Canadian experience with racism, according to Kelly Pollack, executive director of the newly formed Immigrant Employment Council of B.C. (IECBC). As she describes it, Canadian employers are more guilty of sloth than of prejudice. When an employer sees a foreign name on a resumé or no work experience in Canada, they're likely worried that there may be some language barrier or culture clash – which means more work on their part to find out if that's the case. The easy solution, says Pollack, is to simply skip to the next resumé. It's not fair, but it's not exactly racial discrimination.

Pollack thinks the social-services world hasn't given employers the tools they need to find valuable, underutilized new immigrants and integrate them into the workforce – something IECBC plans to remedy. For example, the council is looking at mimicking a program tried in Toronto that sets up new immigrants with internships to get that first Canadian experience. Career Bridge targets new immigrants with professional experience and sets them up with paid internships, lasting from four months to a year in a range of unregulated professional sectors. At best, interns are hired at the end of their placements; at worst, they can now list "Canadian experience" when searching for their next job.

"The reality is that the face of our workforce has changed," Pollack says. "It is time for us to start to implement some better ways of addressing that."

– Peter Severinson

The Germans are Coming

Hey, look who's buying up our vineyards!

"Ooh, I had the Riesling the other day at Il Giardino. It's fabulous," says a statuesque blond woman, to no one in particular. I'm standing at the back of a crowded room at Bacchus Restaurant & Lounge in Vancouver's tony Wedgewood Hotel. The occasion is the launch of the Vineyard Collection – \$100-million worth of winery properties, ranging from just under 3½ hectares to almost seven hectares, being put up for sale across the Okanagan. Prices start at \$2.1 million. As part of the launch, Sotheby's International Realty Canada, marketer of the properties, is sampling various wines produced by Holman Lang, one of 10 wineries parcelling off its land. The Riesling is the Lang Farm Reserve Riesling 2007, which won Best White at the 2009 All Canadian Wine Championships.

Keith Holman, proprietor of Holman Lang, gets up to speak. "You know, the Europeans were the first people, as far as international buyers, who saw the Okanagan through non-native eyes," says Holman, a third-generation Okanagan farmer. He singles out Germans as being first to realize the area's potential. When Guenther Lang emigrated from the motherland in 1980 and purchased a vineyard on the Naramata Bench, he effectively launched the cottage wine industry in B.C. Holman bought Lang's vineyard in 2007 and has since expanded to 20 holdings and "a

couple hundred" acres of grapes.

But producing wine isn't cheap, hence the real estate play to finance further expansion. "I've got enough properties on the Bench," Lang says when we talk later. "I can maximize my dollars for sale on those properties and buy property cheaper somewhere else."

Enter Sotheby's Christa Frosch. The daughter of German-born developer Karl Frosch, she lived and worked in Frankfurt for five years (the Frosch family also has a winery in Germany). "We have sommeliers who work out of our head offices in New York and London, and all they do is sell private collections of wine," she explains. "I had this idea: why not do the same thing with vineyards?" Top of her list of potential buyers? Germans. "They understand land. And they want a safe investment. They're not into high risk." Frosch says she's planning a tour this fall – in conjunction with one of her developer contacts in Frankfurt – that will bring prospective buyers over to the Okanagan.

As for the threat of a deteriorating real estate market, both Frosch and Holman are dismissive. "In terms of vineyard lands, there's very little of it available," says Holman. "If you had 200 or 300 miles of it, you might be in trouble. But when you've got a micro area like this, with great views and great grapes, the sky is the limit."

– Matt O'Grady

