



Epocal Honoured with 2015 Employer Excellence Award for Immigrant Recruitment and Integration Programs

Ottawa-based developer of innovative diagnostic tests recognized for longstanding commitment to hiring and cultivating skilled immigrant employees

OTTAWA, March 4, 2015 – Epocal, Inc., a provider of best-in-class technologies that support blood gas and electrolyte testing at the point of care, has been selected by Hire Immigrants Ottawa as the recipient of its 2015 Employer Excellence Award. The award, which recognizes innovative workplace programs to recruit skilled immigrant employees, was presented today at the Employer Council of Champions Summit.

Ottawa-based Epocal is a subsidiary of Alere Inc., the Massachusetts-based global leader in rapid diagnostic tests.

In honouring Epocal with the award, Hire Immigrants Ottawa cited the company's commitment to breaking down employment barriers for immigrants, from hiring to retention, including: standardizing interview procedures to focus on candidates' qualifications, encouraging mentoring programs for new hires, ensuring flexibility with regards to holidays and cultural observances, accommodating cultural and religious dress practices, subsidizing English language training courses, and providing a forum for employees to share cultural issues and milestones across the company.

According to David Bird, General Manager, Epocal, the company's culturally diverse employee base has evolved organically since its founding in 2001. "At Epocal, we have seen the positive results and the enrichment of our organization in the hiring of skilled immigrants, and are delighted that our commitment to diversity is now being recognized with an Employer Excellence Award. The breadth and depth of knowledge and experience within our organization could not have been achieved without hiring internationally educated and trained candidates."

Epocal also strives to connect new hires with employees from their native countries. Gideon Mensah, a native of Ghana who recently joined Epocal as Finished Goods Quality Control Technician, welcomed the opportunity to meet with a Ghanaian employee, Frank Adofo, during his interview. "It was very helpful to speak with someone from my country during the interview process," said Gideon. "Hearing his perspective on the work environment and culture at Epocal helped reassure me about joining the company and having a mentor and friend here on my very first day took a lot of the stress out of starting a new job."

About Hire Immigrants Ottawa

Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) is a community-based initiative that brings together employers, immigrant agencies and other stakeholders to enhance employers' ability to access the talents of skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area.

About Epocal

Founded in Ottawa in 2001, Epocal's epoc™ Blood Analysis System is used by hospitals globally to measure blood gases, electrolytes and metabolites in critical care settings at the patient beside. The handheld system provides improved efficiency and results that reflect the patient's immediate condition. Epocal was acquired by Alere Inc. in 2013. For more information on Epocal, please visit www.epocal.com.

About Alere

Because **Knowing now matters™**, Alere delivers reliable and actionable information through rapid diagnostic tests, resulting in better clinical and economic healthcare outcomes globally. Headquartered in Waltham, Mass., Alere focuses on rapid diagnostics for infectious disease, cardiometabolic disease and toxicology. For more information on Alere, please visit www.alere.com.

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