

Catholic Centre for Immigrants, Ottawa

Annual Report 2016-2017

**Annual General Meeting
November 29, 2017**

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
President’s Report	3
Executive Director’s Report	5
Integration and Support Services (Settlement Department)	7
Youth Program (Settlement)	8
Mental Health Program	9
Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA)	10
Maison Sophia Reception House (MSH)	11
RAP Program	11
Housing Program (RAP)	12
Children Program (RAP)	12
Client Support Services Program	14
The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic (ONC)	17
Community Connections Program	18
The Youth Program (Community Connections)	19
Matching Program	20
Community Integration Network (CIN)	21
Pastoral and Sponsorship Programs	22
CCI Sponsorship Agreement Holder	23
Ontario Refugee Resettlement Program – Syria	24
Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa	25
Career Transitions for International Medical Doctors and other Health Professionals	26
Communications	28
Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council	29
Treasurer’s Report	31
Related Organizations (CCIF & CC8)	32

President's Report

The Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) deals in human capital: the knowledge, social, personality and creative attributes that produce value. That value is manifested in the dedicated, compassionate and professional work of CCI staff and, in turn, they nurture it in our newcomer clientele. Today, CCI is known worldwide for excellence. Led by Executive Director Carl Nicholson, this organization has garnered a high level of confidence by our clients, the community, our peer organizations, and by local, provincial and federal funders.

Over the past year, the organization's financial situation has continued to be secure and stable. Prudent planning has ensured that expensive roof repairs and other building maintenance costs incurred this year did not adversely impact our finances. The Board's Audit Committee manages our legal risk checklist, which is an instrument that ensures Board and organization business obeys applicable laws and acts in accordance with ethical and professional practices.

Both the CCI Board and staff are anticipating a major shift in senior management positions in the next few years as retirements loom. Work is underway to formulate a succession plan that will ensure continued effective organizational and board leadership. The plan includes elements of strategic and human resource planning that will ensure CCI is structured to meet current and future challenges. We have also begun to examine how we should protect, preserve and celebrate our corporate identity.

Our Board has also undergone some changes over the past year. We bid farewell with gratitude to Alfonso Movilla who, as our treasurer, has provided his expertise and experience in a humble and astute manner. He will be missed. We welcomed Russell Gibson, a long time member of the Catholic Centre for Immigrants Foundation Board; Deacon Charles Fink, who represents the Archdiocese of Ottawa; and we have welcomed back Armin Nourozi, who was a previous Board member and treasurer.

It is time for the CCI Board to adapt our processes to adapt to the expectations of new generations of leaders and to meet current and future Board challenges. For the first time, we advertised for those from the community interested in serving on our Board. This process involved examining résumés, holding interviews, and utilizing a matrix of skills and experience.

Our Board is fully voluntary and our members are responsible for steering the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure there are adequate resources to advance the CCI mission.

*"There is a reason why peoples of the four corners of the globe are here now.
It is because we need each other."*

*Albert Dumont, Algonquin Elder
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg*

In recent times, there has been a surge of xenophobia (the fear and hatred of foreigners and strangers) as characterized by Great Britain's decision to leave the European Union, and by the

protectionist policies and decisions emanating from the newest administration in the United States. While Canada has been steadfast in maintaining a more diversified viewpoint, it would be prudent to recognize the potential for similar feelings here. As a nation, we must continue to celebrate inclusivity and respect for each other - all of us, all of the time - because we really do need each other.

This is my last report as CCI Board president. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve this organization, the staff, and the people who benefit from our programs and expertise, as well as those who have volunteered precious time to assist in fulfilling our work.

Larry Hill
November 2017

Executive Director's Report

Last year we reported to you we had received 1,106 refugees in the last three months of the fiscal year and as you will understand these refugees and refugee issues in general have dominated our work in this fiscal year.

Following is a summary of our activities during the past fiscal year 2016/2017.

During the course of this fiscal year our permanent staff complement increased from 85 to 105 and provided Integration and Support services to 4,301 clients in one-on-one sessions and 3,232 clients in groups. Our budget decreased \$8,071,023 to \$7,603,142. We accommodated 1,013 people at Maison Sophia House (MSH) and found housing for 863 of them, while our Integration and Support services housing team supported 715 clients with their housing needs.

Our Mental Health support program provided 250 direct client/sessions serving 90 clients and families. The Youth program supported 300 young people using 90 volunteers. The Settlement Online Pre-Arrival program served 327 people through online workshops or self-guided courses.

The Client Support Services program assisted 2,511 Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) while our Career Transitions program for internationally trained health professionals served 118 people, 62 of whom found jobs in the health sector and eight of whom got residency positions.

Our Matching program created 40 matches between newcomers and volunteers. Our Pastoral program introduced 78 families (262 individuals) to their faith community and helped organize sponsorships for 84 people through 21 sponsoring groups.

Our Ontario Refugee Resettlement program delivered 20 sponsorship information or training sessions and prepared 246 G% applications, while the Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa is now 100% complete all 97 Tibetans have arrived in Ottawa.

The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) continues to help us plan and collaborate as a community for the welcome of newcomers and had a successful Welcome Ottawa Week in June 2016.

More than 1000 people volunteered to help us in some capacity and we ended the year with net revenue of \$48,623 while our sister organization, the Catholic Centre for Immigrants Foundation, had net assets of \$785,685. The Canada Centre, another sister organization, ended the year with net assets of \$2,809,897.

Following are some additional highlights of our work:

These include:

- Participated along with the City, our LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) partners and several other stakeholders in the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council
- Provided partnership assistance to Carty House, a home for vulnerable refugee women.

- Continued our work with the Ottawa Police Service, assisting them in their efforts to become the employer of choice for all.

We also continued several successful partnerships, for example, with Carty House and the Vanier Community Service Centre to name a few. Our partnership with the Local Agencies Serving Immigrants (LASI) continues to thrive, we continue to sit on the Board and Executive of World Skills and the Executive of Refugee 613.

Our sister organization, The Catholic Immigration Centre Foundation, also had a reasonably successful year. During the year the Foundation contributed \$285,190 to CCI's work ended the year with a surplus of \$44,685.

None of this would be possible without commitment and effort from many people. First let me say many thanks to our staff for doing a great job, for making a difference.

I also want to thank the many agencies, organizations and volunteers who we collaborated with to make this year a success. We could never have done it without you.

Thanks also to the Board. Our Board members take their task seriously. They meet regularly, work very hard, and provide us with excellent guidance and direction. This year more than ever.

Thanks as well to our three church partners' les Filles de la Sagesse d'Ontario, les Soeurs de la Charité d'Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Ottawa who continue to provide us with generous assistance.

A special thanks to our funding partners. On behalf of all of us, I thank them for all the many ways in which they assist us, and for the opportunity to work together.

Finally, thanks to the many volunteers and donors give us their time, energy, commitment, encouragement, money, and inspiration.

Following is a brief presentation of highlights of department accomplishments.

Integration and Support Services (Settlement Department)

The Settlement Department works with newcomers to help them adapt and integrate into their new environment. The Department provides newcomers with: information on settlement services, assessment of settlement needs, referrals to community resources to meet immediate, intermediate and long-term needs, orientation to housing, transportation, etc., solution-focused counselling to support challenges with settling in Canada, and services bridging between settlement organizations to ensure maximum help. All services offered in several languages, including both official languages.

Highlights:

- One-on-one sessions to 4,301 clients.
- 284 group sessions attended by 2,227 IRCC eligible clients as well as 174 group sessions attended by 995 MCI-eligible clients.
- Top 5 languages spoken by clients: Arabic: 35%; French: 12%; Somali: 6%; Creole: 5%; Farsi: 3%. Top 5 countries of origin of clients: Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Iran, Congo.
- Immigration category clients: Refugees with permanent residence status 50%; Naturalized Canadians: 14%; Refugee Claimants: 13%; Family Class: 9%; Economic Immigrants: 7%; International Students: 4%; Temporary Foreign Workers: 3%
- Information and orientation to Canadians about private sponsorship of refugees
- Many refugee claimants from Haiti assisted with their H&C applications.
- Significant programming to meet the needs of the new permanent residents from Syria. Staff who speak Arabic and French were hired. In a short period of time more than 327 families of new, permanent residents from Syria assisted in transition from the RAP program to Ontario Works. This effort was made in cooperation with the Client Support Services (CSS) Department and the City of Ottawa. We had the cooperation of many settlement and non-settlement organizations such as hospitals, educational institutions, police, landlords, and particularly where language or cultural interpretation was required.
- In partnership with COSTI, the Settlement Department delivered orientation and information services to 132 students through the International Student Connect Initiative at the University of Ottawa, and the Orientation to Ontario workshop to 223 clients.
- 49 volunteers/students contributed 2,996 hours to help respond to the high demand for settlement services. At the same time they received training on social services.
- The Department worked with a large network of partners. Some of these are: Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, Ottawa Catholic School Board, Language Assessment Centre at YMCA, Connecting Ottawa, Community Legal Clinics, Legal Aid Ontario, The City of Ottawa, Employment Ontario, Ottawa Police Service, Refugee 613, Interval House, Matthew House, Carty House, Ottawa Food bank, Ottawa Public Library, Saint Paul University, University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, Community Health Centres, Ottawa Community Loan Fund, World Skills, La Cite, CESOC, and the Vanier Community Service Centre.
- The Department transitioned to a new database - OCASI Client Management System (OCMS). This system helps staff record and retrieve client information and is aligned with our funder's information requirements.

Housing Support Program

The Housing Support Program has been providing housing services to clients in partnership with the City of Ottawa and many local agencies since 2001. The program also works closely with the Client Support Services Department. Services include: assistance with rights and responsibilities, maintenance support, information and referral services, advocacy, crisis intervention, eviction prevention services, information sessions, income support, as well as assistance with shelter and housing placement.

This year the Housing Support Program served 269 households (715 individuals). 1,408 individuals were provided with emergency or short-term food support through our food pantry partnership with The Ottawa Food Bank.

Challenges:

- Significant increase in non-status clients needing assistance with their refugee claims and shelter placement. These clients are extremely vulnerable and have many barriers to accessing services. Each case requires many staff hours in order to assist them.

Youth Program (Settlement)

Highlights:

- Delivered 64 group activities to 376 clients. Regular activities included: mentoring, intercultural cooking, English conversation/discussion, peer support, life skills, employment supports, homework help/school support (keeping youth newcomer in school), Saturday Drop-in Program (conflict resolution skills, recreational information, youth journalizing).
- Coordinated the Express English Summer Camp, attended by 116 teenagers, mostly Arabic-speaking from 14-19 years of age. The components of the program were English as a Second Language and development of social skills and understanding of Canadian culture. This activity was funded by the Community Foundation of Ottawa.
- Partnered and collaborated with several service providers such as the YMCA, Matthew House, Refugee Hub, Employment Ontario, and Carleton University.

Challenges for the Settlement Program

- Increase in the proportion of senior citizen clients.
- Working with clients to overcome the isolation of the immigration experience.
- Family separation and integration.
- Dealing with the unique issues of Francophone newcomers and immigrant youth.
- Online resources/research.
- Managing a large number of high needs clients versus staff exhaustion. High demand of services versus number of staff.

Mental Health Program

The program provides mental health support, case management, counselling and psychotherapy, and crisis intervention in individual, couples and group formats to help clients overcome pre- and post-migration stressors. It provides accessible care that is culturally and linguistically sound.

In November, 2016, CCI and the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic established a formal partnership to: help reduce wait times for mental health care; facilitate access to mental health services; and deliver trauma-informed and culturally-sensitive health care to people with complex mental and physical health needs. The program aided clients with advocacy and support to help ease their access to financial assistance, disability support, and social housing benefits. This partnership improved client care through coordinated psychotherapy and psychiatric consultation and service delivery.

Highlights:

- More than 90 refugees and newcomers struggling with mental health and settlement challenges were served.
- Supported more than 15 sponsors and families who care for refugees with complex mental health needs.
- Provided information and helped internationally-trained mental health professionals connect with regulatory bodies and potential employers.
- Co-chaired the OLIP Mental Health Sub-committee to help identify gaps and provide recommendations to the OLIP Health and Wellbeing Sector Table, increase capacity and facilitate access to culturally sensitive mental health care services.
- Delivered professional development seminars and workshops to CCI departments to enhance employee wellbeing and overall interdepartmental communication.
- Provided daily support and consultation to CCI staff to help facilitate service and ensure successful counselling/treatment engagement and crisis intervention.
- Delivered a workshop at the Ottawa Royal Hospital to health care providers about cultural issues surrounding mental health services to Arabic-speaking clients.
- Counselling in-land refugee claimants who had survived war, trauma and torture. Refugees were provided with counselling assessment reports testifying to their vulnerability to curtail the impact of court hearing process.

Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA)

CCI and World Skills are co-providers in Ontario for the Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) Program. The program delivers online courses to new immigrants who are in Canada or who intend to come to Canada.

Highlights:

- Intake Appointments: 327
- Clients enrolled in Job Search Strategies: 70
- Clients enrolled in Professional Communication (soft skills): 58
- Clients enrolled in Working with Others (soft skills): 41
- Clients enrolled in Self-Guided courses: 150
- This year, 57 clients have been successful at finding jobs. Most of them have found work in their professional fields. Some have found jobs within weeks of landing in Canada.

Challenges:

- Our main challenge remains the time frame for delivery. Some clients join SOPA very close to their landing date and do not have the time needed to complete their courses. Working with the available technology has also been difficult. Finally, not having access to some information prevents us from responding sometimes to clients' demands in a timely manner (we have no access to certificates of completion and to clients' evaluations; this could help us understand how to improve our course delivery).

Opportunities:

- Expanding the network of alumni who arrive in Ottawa. It would also be desirable to enlarge this network to former clients based in Toronto and other cities in Ontario.
- Connecting previous clients to new clients in a Mentoring relationship.
- Working more closely with employers. This could be very helpful to our clients.
- Finally, we believe building a stronger database and professional development opportunities could support a higher quality of delivery and reporting of the program.

Maison Sophia Reception House (MSH)

Arriving in Canada for the first time can be a lonely, frightening experience for newcomers. This is when a welcoming hand is most appreciated and support services and programs are most needed. Such services are provided at Maison Sophia Reception House.

Located at 204 Boteler St., Reception House is a temporary accommodation for Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) through Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and homeless immigrants and refugees claimants through the City of Ottawa. During their stay at Reception House (3-4 weeks on average), newcomers are provided with information, counselling and a warm, friendly environment as well as food, shelter and clothing.

Reception House serves its clients through several major programs. These are:

- Temporary accommodation.
- Orientation and an introduction to Canadian life.
- Attend to GARs immediate and essential needs.
- Help residents find appropriate and affordable housing.
- Special life skills programs.
- Improve clients' abilities to function effectively in Canadian society, including accessing and referring them to mainstream services.
- Multicultural programs for the many of the children for whom Reception House is their first Canadian home.
- Health related issues and proactive support program while settling in the community.
- Basic orientation on health issues, income support entitlement (rights and obligations), housing, transportation, life skill information and urban living, etc.

Highlights:

- Provided services to 1,013 clients.(GARs: 791; Secondary Migrants (GARs): 154; City: 68
- Placed 863 clients in permanent accommodation. (GARs: 791; City: 72)
- Top three nationalities: Syria: 580 (61.4%); Congo: 128 (13.5%); Iraq: 56 (5.9%).

RAP Program

Highlights:

- Funding for Children's Programs at Reception House has been secured and extended for another three years with a private family foundation.
- Long-term support services were provided to GARs as they settled in the community through the Life Skill Support Program and the Community Integration Support Program.
- Life Skill Support Program provided intensive short-term, hands-on training to 280 high-need GARs families. Counsellors conducted 1,116 home visits.
- Residents enjoyed a Christmas celebration on Thursday, Dec. 22 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- In collaboration with Bruyere clinic, an information session on health and settlement needs was offered to Syrian women with children in March at Reception House.

- We hosted many group visits to Reception House including the Canadian Foreign Officers (Visa Officers), Group of Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA), IFH Team, and various IRCC officers.
- Participated in several research projects on the Syrian influx such as Finding Housing for Syrian Refugees, Syrian Refugee Research Initiative.
- Worked with the City of Ottawa and others in planning for the smooth transition of Syrian GARs from Federal income support to Ontario Works.
- Toured Shepherds of Good Hope, offered services to their single refugee claimants living in the shelter.
- We experienced increased landings of GARs in October and December 2016 and we used hotels to temporarily house these GARs for a period of three weeks.

Housing Program (RAP)

The average length of stay at Reception House was 17.1 days for GARs.

Newcomers to Ottawa continued to encounter challenges in their search for permanent housing in 2017. The vacancy rate in 2016 decreased to 3% from 3.4% in 2015 and 2017. Average rent for a 1- 2- and 3-bedroom apartments continued to be a major challenge for clients.

In spite of the challenging housing condition, we placed 863 clients into private, permanent housing units (791 GARs and 72 city clients).

We faced more challenges in housing placement with Ontario Work clients as they received less financial support from the government.

Children Program (RAP)

- Number of children: 221; Boys: 99; Girls: 122
- Average schooling level: Primary
- Number of volunteers: 4

Unexpected Benefits

This year all of our volunteers were past residents who had participated in the TLC Program. Their presence was a positive addition because the children were able to relate to them and understand that they, too, are able to move on from RH, enter school, become engaged in the community, learn English, and volunteer.

As a result of last year's Syrian influx, more and more volunteers have shown an interest in giving their time to help newcomers settle in Canada, with a particular interest in donating items such as toys and books to children.

Progress and Lessons learned

The TLC Program continues to grow and progress smoothly in accomplishing its goals in each of the four key activities: Orientation/Education, Culture Exposure, Recreation, and Personal Development.

Social Development: We often welcome children who have social development challenges for various reasons including not having had previous schooling due to financial restrictions or parents not viewing schooling important (especially for girls), so they are required to stay at home and take care of their siblings. In the TLC Program we are able help them by providing one-on-one support with volunteers, and a safe classroom setting in which they can develop their social and interaction skills.

Education: Children attending TLC often come with minimal or no education. We assess their level of literacy and teach them the alphabet, how to write their name, and we read to them. We also have class time for working on English grammar worksheets and in some cases, the children are able to write a few sentences in English and even complete a fill in the blank English test.

Culture Shock: 65% of the children enrolled in the TLC Program this year came from Syria. While there is a big culture difference between Syria and Canada, all of the children felt safe and loved Canada and wanted to learn more about the culture and begin their new lives here. All the assistance they received from volunteers, staff, and other residents made them feel welcomed.

Trauma: This was a great challenge to overcome for many of the families and children at Reception House. Coming from a country in the midst of war, many of the children were able to show us pictures of their friends who were killed during the war. This loss was real and painful for them to overcome, but having the children participate in the TLC Program enabled them to be fully engaged in fun and recreational activities and create new friendships to help them move forward.

Client Support Services Program

CSS provides integration services to Government-Assisted Refugees using a client-centered case management approach. With additional funding to support the large influx of new arrivals, CSS maintained its standards to provide enhanced settlement experiences for GARs by working with the community and coordinating efforts to give GARs broader access to basic services such as health, mental health, education, language training and employment among others.

Highlights:

- CSS assisted 2,511 GARs, including 1,823 new clients.
- More than 70% of new arrivals (1,350) were Syrians; 40% were large families (6-9 members); 40 % were children (0-12); 22% were young adults (13-24); and we received over 250 GARs with severe health and mental health conditions, including disabilities.
- 1,794 initial assessments, check-ins and exit surveys were performed.
- 15,200 case management activities and referrals to long-term settlement services and other Ottawa community resources were completed.
- More than 700 outreach activities were made including new partnerships, networking and advisory committees.
- 5,224 GARs attended more than 1,300 individual and group information sessions. Topics were related to health, positive parenting in Canada, basic banking, budgeting, public transportation, education system, among others.
- Most new GARs had their initial medical assessments done and were referred to health care providers for physical and mental health, dental care, severe disabilities and other acute medical conditions. All was achieved with the coordinated effort from the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic, Community Health Centres, Refugee613 and others.
- More than 1,200 GARs, including Syrians (250 cases), transitioned from Federal RAP Assistance to Provincial Ontario Works. Many families and single clients faced a drastic reduction of income support after the transition.

Challenges:

- 850 clients (mainly women) were identified as facing multiple barriers such as isolation, lack of childcare, disabilities, multiple family members with disabilities, among others. Many had to be wait-listed for services such as language classes and childcare, mental health, special equipment for clients with severe disabilities, etc.
- Increased need for outreach and advocacy for clients with severe medical and mental health conditions (and their caretakers).
- Ongoing housing issues such as bed bugs/insect infestation, GARs accessing city shelters after month 13, breaking lease agreements due to separations.
- Increased need for life skills training for clients coming from rural areas, clients with limited language skills and clients with disabilities.
- Most women with large families face multiple barriers, including isolation, due to gaps in access to services, such as lack of childcare spaces in language programs and multiple family members with disabilities among others.

- High caseloads coupled with demanding and multifaceted needs and constricted office space.
- Family Reunification was a big priority for GARs. The despair expressed by clients not knowing what was happening with their family members, whether they will come or not, and the lack of specific information related to their cases, was very significant.

Opportunities and Best Practices:

- A smooth transition from Federal RAP to Provincial Ontario Works was achieved with coordinated efforts between CSS, Ontario Works Management, and Settlement Services.
- Clients with varying needs and busy schedules benefited from the program's mobility and flexibility. The geographical location assignment of caseworkers to Syrian GARs was an added strategy to ensure effective practices. Clients were followed up effectively by caseworkers assigned to neighbourhood locations. Partnerships were quickly established with local agencies to build capacity to help Syrian GARs in their neighbourhoods. Local community volunteers assisted with translations for handouts. In some locations, groups met on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.
- During this period, CSS continued to collaborate with community partners to address the gaps and challenges in existing services such as health, settlement, language, housing and employment. Strengthened partnerships, special events, services and activities and new initiatives continue to take place. These efforts not only build the capacity of the community to serve GARs, but also empower GARs to settle and integrate into their new communities.
- During this period, CSS benefited from a large number of volunteers eager to support GARs, especially Syrians. The volunteers assisted clients and the program in activities such as daily life skill needs, assisted with the coordination of workshops and event planning, relayed information via phone, sent invitations, and provided instructions regarding health appointments and so much more. Many also assisted with additional life skills trainings to foster independence with helping them understand and use public transportation.
- CSS faced endless requests from the public, the media, and partners. At times, the pressure for prompt responses was overwhelming. Yet CSS not only managed unseen numbers of clients but also managed countless individual and community offers of assistance, services, interpretation, and donations as well as contributing with information and ideas for ways to fill gaps and build capacity, feedback, data, success stories, promotions, recruitment, and presentations.
- **Syrian Welcome Fund:** This one-time support was made possible through corporate donations and managed by the Community Foundation of Ottawa. It provided temporary financial relief to GARs, including Syrian refugees with special needs, in the areas of supportive counselling, rent supplements, transportation, and the acquisition of special equipment and devices for clients with severe disabilities. Financial relief was made available only after all other options had been exhausted.
- The fund supported a full-time mental health counsellor who provided counselling to GARs, including Syrian refugees, with moderate to serious mental health needs. This was a temporary measure to cope with service gaps, language barriers and significant waiting

lists. Thirty individuals received Supportive Counselling Services benefiting about 135 family members.

- 44 clients (13 families) benefited with living subsidy support to help with Month 13 transition from RAP to Ontario Works assistance, to obtain medical devices and medications (after exhausting government support), rent supplement, and protection fund for damage in rental units.

The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic (ONC)

The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic is a partnership between Somerset West Community Health Centre and CCI Ottawa. It provides comprehensive and extensive health screening and unique services to our refugee clients. This fiscal year ONC continued to see a high volume of newly-arrived Syrian refugees. The initial mandate of this clinic was to provide short-term primary healthcare services to GARs, however, in order to ensure equality in care, ONC is slowly planning for expansion so it can provide services to other categories of refugees as well.

With the arrival of Syrian refugees, ONC also saw a number of privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and supported them with healthcare access. This prompted us to really focus on our expansion, and on our partnership with CCI.

ONC and CCI's counselling program formalized the relationship and developed an MOU to share work space and increase the ability to provide mental health counselling to refugees. The newly-renovated space allowed for a counselling room, now utilized by CCI, as well as a psychiatrist, who provides on-site services to refugees on a regular basis. This became an additional component in the circle of care that refugees receive: primary care provider, psychiatrist, and counsellor/psychotherapist all able to communicate seamlessly and conduct case consultations to ensure a holistic approach to care. This further strengthens this model of bringing together health and social services under one roof.

ONC and CSS also worked to ensure clients have interpretation support for their specialist's appointments. ONC always provides interpretation for internal medical appointments. But once the clients are connected to a permanent primary care provider, ONC can no longer provide interpretation. However, with the surge of Syrian refugees, ONC was able to support the CSS team to provide interpretation to clients (for the specialist appointments) even when the client was no longer with ONC. This provided an opportunity for the CSS team to engage with ONC staff even more to deliver healthcare services to the refugee population.

As a result we were able to provide 231 individuals with interpretation support. That translated to 450 hours of interpretation service. The languages that were most requested were Arabic, Somali, Swahili, French, and Dari.

Challenges:

- Increased need for case management due to long wait times to receive case management service and long-term mental health care elsewhere.
- Increased need for trauma-informed therapy/counselling.

Community Connections Program

The Community Connections team focused their efforts on creating:

- Opportunities for newcomers and people in the community- at-large to interact and learn from each other.
- Opportunities for involvement of formal and informal volunteers to assist newcomers in their journey to integration.
- Opportunities for newcomers to become actively involved as volunteers and participants in community events.
- Opportunities to help newcomers feel at home in Ottawa.

In addition, during the past 12 months, activities and resources were deployed to assist with the resettlement of more than 1,300 refugees from Syria.

Specifically:

- Close collaboration and coordination with volunteers and agencies that wanted to help.
- Significant increase in activities at seven locations to provide easier access to services and closer coordination. This included many activities for youth and children once the families were settled in their new homes.
- A custom tailored set of workshops and conversation circles to assist Syrian refugees with very limited English/French and negligible understanding of the Canadian workplace.

Highlights:

- The team worked with the City of Ottawa's "I love to..." program and obtained additional places for children to participate in sports activities at no cost. Six hundred newcomer children benefited.
- Many volunteers, who initially signed up for short-term assignments, have become pillars of support for Community Connections initiatives. They anchor events, provide informal mentorship, lots of language practice and help us in the hunt for employment for clients with partial knowledge about the Canadian workplace environment. We are grateful for the support of community partners and volunteers.

Challenges:

- Ottawa is a difficult job market for people without specific and well developed skills. Mentorship, learning a language, learning about the Canadian workplace, internships and volunteer placements are helping our clients to become job ready but it is an intensive process and sometimes there are many competing priorities in their lives.

Opportunities:

Integration is a lengthy process of mutual learning and accommodation. It is difficult to demonstrate results in a short time span. Clients tell us the Community Connections program

helps them to feel at home in Ottawa and, in some cases, has led them to their first job. We will continue to gather evidence that creating positive relationships is not just “nice to have” but an essential factor in building welcoming and harmonious communities.

The Youth Program (Community Connections)

This program is a joint effort between three departments in the agency: Settlement Services, CSS and Community Connections. We pool our resources to offer support and services to newcomers who are 14-24 years old and take into account their unique needs and perspective. The coordinators provide support to 90 active volunteers and more than 300 youth participants.

Regular activities include: day-long programs during March Break, summer camp, homework clubs, recreational sports nights, and field trips.

Highlights:

- This year, in addition to all regular activities, the Youth Program took on the challenge of providing specialized programming for female participants. The initiative has proven to be an effective way to reach young people who otherwise might not be able to participate in some of our events. It has also allowed us to reach out to parents to help them understand how it is possible to accommodate a variety of cultural norms and improve opportunities for their children.

Challenges:

- It is difficult to address the needs of highly diverse groups of participants. On the other hand, it is difficult to allocate resources for small pockets of participants. We try to find a balance by creating several layers of activities within each event so there is something for everyone who participates. Some youth become mentors, others help with interpretation and making others feel at home.

Matching Program

The Matching Program had an eventful year. There were 40 matches between newcomers and volunteers. There were also numerous collaborations with various volunteer organizations, enabling volunteers to reach CCI's clients in many capacities.

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, people in Ottawa stepped forward to volunteer their time and donate what they had to give. The Matching Program and its volunteers helped to bring people and resources together, everything from homemade soup and homemade quilts to books, baby bundles and bicycles.

Highlights:

- Newcomers who were matched in 2016 were, with their volunteers, helping in 2017. For example, one of the matches helped organize the Syrian children's choir that participated in a "concert for peace" in January 2017.
- Matches participated in the launch of Skate Day Canada 150 with the Governor General at Rideau Hall. The newcomers also toured Rideau Hall and were very moved by the portraits of Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, former refugee and Governor General Michaëlle Jean, a woman of colour. They were also excited by the various medals that the Governor General awards to students of merit.
- One of the volunteers helped his match apply for the funding to pay for the football fees for one of the children, a very talented young football player. He has had the joy of watching his match's team win the football championship in this region.
- The Matching Program celebrated Thanksgiving with a traditional meal. More than 70 people, volunteers and newcomers came together to eat and give thanks.
- One of the volunteers helped get a Syrian man involved in wheelchair basketball.
- A volunteer took on a third match and involves the children from all three matches in activities around the city.

Challenges:

- Many of the Syrians are reluctant to use public transportation (variety of reasons related to habit, culture, war experiences, etc.) and volunteers encountered resistance in getting out and about. Most of the families are too large to fit into the volunteers' cars, so this resulted in activities outside the home being limited to walking distance, which with families with small children, is not too far.
- The combination of high, complex needs and the low level of English of newcomers is very challenging for everyone. Some families need more than one volunteer because of the variety of needs in the family. This reduces the amount of families the program can reach.

Community Integration Network (CIN)

CIN works closely with 100 organizations to provide Community Connections services in Ontario. These are the services that help newcomers to feel at home in Canada and encourage participation from the community-at-large to ensure a welcoming environment.

CIN continues to be a central resource to offer broad-based feedback to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, for Settlement Workers in the Schools (SWIS), Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP), and Community Connections services. It is a useful process to link the funder and the service providers to highlight opportunities, challenges and potential service improvements.

The CIN team delivered two days of professional development workshops and networking for 240 new front-line workers delivering Community Connections services in Ontario. Participants evaluated the sessions as relevant and useful to their work.

In addition, CIN offered a French only professional development and networking session. Feedback from our Francophone colleagues was extremely positive. The opportunity to meet in person helps them to network and seek advice regarding services for clients and strategies to manage the challenges inherent to their relative isolation when working in an “Anglo” environment.

Middle managers and program supervisors had the opportunity to attend a day-long interdisciplinary meeting where they presented some new ideas, exchanged advice with colleagues in similar circumstances and refreshed their contact books for future reference.

Highlights:

The CIN team was able to respond to the need for additional training for SWIS workers and, with additional funding from IRCC, 80 staff attended two days of intensive training and sharing of ideas to assist them in their daily interactions with school staff, parents and students who many times have complex needs.

Challenges:

It was a challenge to manage the fine balance between our colleagues’ expectations and budget and time constraints.

Opportunities:

Feedback from our colleagues, who find the services quite helpful, and the funder, who continues to support this program, tells us we are on the right track. We will continue to develop resources to enhance the delivery of services for newcomers and, hopefully, contribute to building a welcoming community in that way.

Pastoral and Sponsorship Programs

Pastoral Care of Newcomers

The Pastoral program helps clients of all faiths find the appropriate faith community for their needs.

Highlights:

- 78 families (262 people) from 11 countries assisted in joining their local faith community
- As many of the families were Iraqi and Syrian, our focus was working with mosques and the orthodox church communities of St. Paul Syriac Catholic Church and St. Peter and St. Paul Melkite Catholic Church.
- One of the highlights was the introduction of newcomers from Malaysia. St. Patrick Basilica committee members helped the family find housing and furnishings that were donated by the church. They also helped them find work through a church contact.
- We had the opportunity to participate in a joint venture in Almonte between the Catholic parish, the Anglican Church, the United Church as well as members of the community who had formed community sponsorships as well as Groups of 5.

Sponsorship Program

Under the umbrella agreement with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa, 84 newcomers were sponsored by 21 parishes. They were 26 Syrian families, 3 Burundi families, 3 Iraqi families, and 1 Palestinian family.

There has again been a focus on Syrian refugees. And we have received many requests from Syrian families who were themselves sponsored.

Highlights:

- A highlight was the ecumenical collaboration between Catholic parishes and Anglican churches that formed teams to sponsor Syrian refugees. St. George's Catholic and Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Anglican Church are examples of this ecumenical spirit where finances were combined and settlement support was given to the newcomer family.
- Another highlight was when a Nunavut parish contacted us to provide funding for a sponsorship while the Ottawa parish provided the volunteers who helped the Syrian family settle.
- Three parishes sponsored more than one Syrian family in the one-year period.

Parishes that sponsored:

St. Patrick, Fallowfield, St. Louis Marie de Montfort, Holy Redeemer, Holy Name of Mary, St. Patrick Basilica, St. Basil, Notre Dame de Lourdes, St. Joseph, St. Sebastien. Notre Dame Cathedral, Ste. Genevieve, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Patrick Basilica, St. Paul Syriac, St. Isidore St. Martin de Porres, Sacre Coeur, St. Paul Syriac (Les Filles de la Sagesse)

CCI Sponsorship Agreement Holder

A SAH is a refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holder; an organization that has signed an agreement with IRCC to sponsor refugees from overseas to come to Canada as permanent residents. A SAH forms, trains, coordinates and supports multiple sponsoring or constituent groups to do the work of resettlement of refugees. A SAH is responsible for the necessary paperwork for a refugee sponsorship to be submitted to IRCC and monitors a case's progress as it is being processed and then during the settlement period. A SAH is officially responsible for each sponsorship.

During 2016-2017, the Catholic Centre for Immigrants became an official sponsorship agreement holder. We were allocated six sponsorship spots from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). We are proud to announce that with the assistance of Constituency Groups we have sponsored six new refugees and are waiting for their arrival.

Ontario Refugee Resettlement Program – Syria

The goal of the ORRP-Syria program is to facilitate the settlement and integration of Syrian and other refugees by providing them with information, tools, resources, and community support to fully integrate in the life of the province. ORRP provides and supports a variety of services within the agency including:

Refugee Sponsorship Support

- Number of Sponsorship Information Sessions: 20
- Number of groups (G5) that prepared applications: 246
- Number of G5 Sponsorship Applications Accepted: 86

Housing Support

- Number of clients who needed housing support: 301
- Number of housing workshops: 13
- Number of clients attending workshops: 280

Case Management

- Number of clients who needed Settlement Support: 663
- Number of Settlement Workshops: 29
- Number of clients attending Workshops: 822

Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa

Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa is a Community Sponsor working with CCI as co-sponsor since 2013 to bring 97 stateless Tibetans from northeastern India to Ottawa.

All 97 have now arrived.

Highlights:

- TRPO still has formal responsibilities for 6 individuals in their first year in Canada.
- The Mayor proclaimed May 21, 2017 Tibetan Community Recognition Day in Ottawa.
- A Thank You party was hosted on that day by TRPO and the newcomers in honour of all volunteers, mentors, donors and supporters.
- Many newcomers have opted to move to Toronto to live with their relatives and friends in the large Tibetan community there. TRPO has given them a good start in Canada.
- Adult employment is close to 100%.
- TRPO has collected roughly \$150,000. Earlier arrivals have made significant donations. The cost per person is about \$1,500.
- Any remaining funds will be used to assist newcomers to access education and training.

Background

TRPO is the local organizer for the national non-profit Project Tibet Society, established to bring 1,000 displaced Tibetans to five cities and Canada from five settlements in India, keeping people from the same settlement together as much as possible.

As co-sponsor in Ottawa, CCI provides settlements services. The CCI Foundation provides tax receipts for donations. The Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre provides its services.

TRPO has a website (<http://trpo.aum.ca>) where its newsletter can be found.

Career Transitions for International Medical Doctors and other Health Professionals

The Career Transitions Program provides sector-specific employment preparation, counselling services and employer outreach to assist international medical doctors (IMD) and other health professionals secure alternative employment in the health sector that makes effective use of their skills. The Career Transitions Program is delivered in partnership with LASI World Skills and is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

The Career Transitions Program is approximately 30 hours in length and covers topics such as Canadian business culture and health sector jobs, transferable skills, retraining possibilities, action plans, how IMDs can market themselves, writing effective résumés and cover letters, succeeding in job interviews, and ongoing support with résumés, cover letters, interview preparation, job search and career guidance.

Highlights:

- 206 IMDs applied to the Career Transitions Program
- 118 IMDs participated in the Career Transitions Program
- 62 IMDs gained employment in the health sector
- 40 IMDs received volunteer positions in the health sector
- 24 IMDs pursued continuing education
- 13 IMDs accessed mentoring component of the program
- The Career Transitions team contacted over 70 employers in the Ottawa region

We are proud to inform you eight clients got residency positions this past fiscal year.

Challenges:

- Increased regulation and certifications required in Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, Personal Support Work, Medical Office Admin and other roles that previously did not require certification or training specific to Canada.
- Decreased capacity for observership roles for clients in favour of medical students, etc.
- Decrease in some training opportunities, specifically the Ottawa Hospital Clinical Research Best Practices Training which is no longer open to the Career Transitions participants or general public.
- Increasing number of Canadian born IMGs competing for, and enrolling in, bridging programs in Canada. Increasing number of Canadian-born IMDs applying for and obtaining residency placements. Lumping Canadian and Foreign born IMGs together creates some obvious disparities in language, cultural competency and possibly technical training between applicants.

Opportunities:

- Recent changes in physician-assisted death might result in new organizations and opportunities for health care workers in hospice and end-of-life care.

- Increased funding and attention to long-term care, community programming, and private home care for a growing aging population.
- Possible opportunities with Indigenous health care programs due to increased political and media attention and funding.
- Increased awareness and attention in mental health care services for newcomers that is culturally appropriate and provided in a variety of languages.
- Introduction of medical cannabis and the supporting clinics and services are now available to patients which are growing exponentially and require staffing. In some cases specifically targeting and recruiting internationally trained health professionals

Communications

The Communications Department is responsible for managing CCI's brand and ensuring the conformity of all CCI documents with branding standards; assisting fundraising and donor engagement; maintaining and updating the CCI website and social media channels, monitoring media and coordinating media calls, producing newsletters, annual reports and other materials.

This year, CCI hired a new communications coordinator in January. Although a lot of work is ongoing, here is what the department embarked on in the last quarter of the fiscal year.

Website Highlights:

As we became more familiar with our new website, we saw a few opportunities to enhance it.

- Regular stories posted to the home page from a variety of departments
- A new page that allows individuals and organizations to book a guest speaker
- A resource page that publishes historical documents and reports.
- Updating all photos to comply with provincial accessibility guidelines
- Embedding donation forms into our website

Outreach:

- Monthly e-newsletter created
- New Facebook page for the agency that focuses on awareness of our work and issues
- New agency brochure as well as card inserts on all programs.
- A new donor-centric annual report.

Fundraising:

Communications handles the writing and production of all fundraising materials.

Internal Communications:

We started to make headway in engaging other staff about the role of communications and fundraising for the agency. Whether it's producing a poster, proofing a document, creating a graphic, etc., our goal has been to ensure other managers see the Communications Department as a resource/service for everyone keeping in mind that it is a one-person department, so there are choices to be made.

Tracking:

We created a variety of tracking documents in order to measure the impact of Facebook, our website, our e-newsletter. Some of this work is done with collaboration with the fundraising team. The Communications Department is also involved with the fundraising department to measure our audience/donors. It's important to know how many brochures we hand out in a year, how many visitors come to the website, how many people click on a Facebook story, etc., as it will guide us on future content decisions. The tracking of communications analytics is relatively new at CCI but is being built into the communications mandate.

Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council

During the past year, OLIP reached out to new audiences, increased existing partners' involvement and ownership in advancing shared goals, and helped to bring new depth of understanding into key critical areas of action -- namely interpretation, equity and anti-racism, employment.

Highlights:

Leadership Development and Engagement

We are implementing several refinements to the OLIP governance structure and process, including the addition of a new table to bring together top executives of key organizations.

We also began promoting inclusive boards of our key partner organizations, starting with the Champlain LHIN. We are encouraged that our recommendation was accepted.

Outreach and Partnership with Media

We formalized our collaboration with CBC and for the first time this year, leveraged neighbourhood newspapers as a platform to reach out to residents.

Bringing the Message of OLIP to New Audiences

We sought to bring the message of OLIP to new forums with the aim of strengthening support for the work of OLIP. The OLIP Secretariat made high level presentations to:

- Future of Health Breakfast Speaker Series hosted by the LHIN and Algonquin College
- The Board of the Champlain LHIN
- The Rotary Club
- Politics at the Pub event series

Greater Involvement of Existing Partners

A greater understanding of the value-add of OLIP and a growing trust in OLIP's process has led to new types of involvement by partners in key sectors. For example:

- We are piloting a new arrangement with the Ottawa Employment Hub, where they will pay for a part of our Partner Relations Officer's time to leverage OLIP's Economic Sector Table to fulfill their mandate of planning for Ottawa's labour market.
- The Champlain LHIN is contributing to the cost of the 4th Biannual Ottawa Immigration Forum to promote community learning and reflection on immigrants' health.
- IRCC Communications and Marketing Department used their discretionary resources to fund the Immigrant Heritage Walking Tours and provide in-kind design and communications support for the Walks.
- OLIP and the Children and Youth Initiative are working with the Pinecrest Queensway CHC to increase the graduation rates of students living in low-income neighbourhoods, many of whom are immigrants of children of immigrants.

Increasing Depth of Shared Understanding into Critical Areas

We have embarked on several research initiatives that will expand OLIP partners' understanding on:

- The importance of planning for interpretation to support access to critical human services such as health and mental health by immigrants \
- The need to understand the integration of immigrant seniors and children.
- Mending the gap between immigrants' high qualifications and employers' concern of not finding skilled labour.

Challenges and gaps in the resettlement of refugees

In addition to the above three strategic results, the year also saw growth in OLIP's core activities of engaging sectoral partners, promoting cross sectoral collaboration, hosting the annual Welcoming Ottawa Week, and continuing on our path to scale up the Equity Project.

Treasurer's Report

The Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) had a successful year. Total revenue was \$7,603,142 and total expenses were \$7,554,519. This resulted in a net operating surplus of \$48,623.

At March 31, 2017, CCI had total assets of \$2,513,152 and total liabilities of \$1,330,167. The difference between these two amounts was \$1,182,985 that represented our net assets or equity. Net assets included the Building and General Reserves that provide for future building expenses or general contingencies. The balance of \$409,234 was unrestricted.

Analysis of our balance sheet indicates that at year end our short term position was strong as we had \$1.96 in current assets and \$1.94 in liquid assets for every \$1.00 of current liability. Our long term position was also strong as our liabilities were only 52.93% of our assets.

We wish to thank the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa, les Soeurs de la Charité and les Filles de la Sagesse, for their continued support of our organization.

On behalf of the CCI Finance Committee, I would like to thank my fellow committee member, Luise Czernenko-Reid for her assistance and continued support throughout 2016.

I am also very grateful to the staff of the CCI Finance Department; Lucila Spiegelblatt, Anna Szymanowicz and Dianne Webb. Without their diligence, dedication and hard work, CCI would not be able to continue to deliver on its mission to assist newcomers to Canada.

I also wish to recognize the work of the CCI, CC8 and CCI Foundation Board, our volunteers and our staff for their dedication in supporting CCI activities.

Yours truly,

Russell H. Gibson
Treasurer

Related Organizations (CCIF & CC8)

The Catholic Centre for Immigrants Foundation

The CCIF develops and implements programs to raise funds for the work of the Catholic Centre for Immigrants. Although a separate corporation with its own Board and other structures the Foundation is an integral and important of the CCI family.

Highlights:

- Raised \$384,561, contributed \$285,190 to CCI programs and ended the year with net assets of \$785,685.

8069697 Canada Centre

8069697 Canada Centre is a charity that owns and manages two buildings (219 Argyle Street and 204 Boteler Street) and is a part of the Catholic Centre for Immigrants, Ottawa family.

Highlights:

- The Canada Centre contributed \$140,000 to CCI programs and ended the year with net assets of \$2,809,897.