

*Catholic Centre for
Immigrants, Ottawa*

Annual Report 2014-2015

Annual General Meeting

December 2, 2015

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President's Report

Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) is all about human capital, the knowledge, social, personality and creative attributes that produce value. That value is manifested in the diligence and hard work of our staff and they in turn nurture it in our newcomer clientele. Led by Executive Director Carl Nicholson, CCI has engendered a high level of confidence by our peer organizations, the community as well as by our municipal, provincial and federal funders.

This past year our Board of Directors has ensured that resources were in place for current operations while anticipating future directions. We did this by making certain that budgets were stable and realistic as well as by taking carefully measured risks. An example of this is our decision to continue the Community Cup after formal funding ended earlier this year. Our prudent financial approach has earned a high level of trust from our funders, and has allowed CCI to continue to weather an environment of consistently decreasing funding.

“I am the master of my fate and I am the captain of my soul.” – Nelson Mandela
This quote by Nelson Mandela has always conjured feelings of resilience and promise, particularly in the face of considerable obstacles. It has been increasingly difficult for the Catholic Centre for Immigrants to maintain control of our working environment. With our main funder rewriting the rulebook for those seeking entry to Canada, a new focus on pre-arrival services, ever-diminishing funding and changing oversight measures, the winds of change have pummeled us and threatened to drive us off course.

It is in the spirit of mastering our fate that CCI staff and the Board of Directors have begun looking at new ways of working with the new entry processes for immigrants. Using our collective skills and abundant experience, we have started working to establish new strategic imperatives to both preserve current organizational capabilities as well as create capacities for new ones. In order to prepare for change, we already have positioned dedicated human resources and communications positions. We have been renovating our internet presence in order to increase effectiveness and provide a foundation to support innovation. And on our Board we are seeing changing faces with the kinds of skills we believe we will need to meet both current and future governance demands.

Then we began seeing desperate and heartbreaking images of those fleeing conflict and persecution in the Middle East and North Africa. As the largest number of refugees since World War II surged into Europe, the previous federal government signaled preparations to welcome only modest numbers over several years. Our own community responded quickly with enormous concern and started rallying in much the same way they did 36 years ago for the Southeast Asian refugees. Then the government changed and so did the numbers of potential newcomers along with a contracted timeframe. This immediately increased pressure on our CCI staff to plan for the anticipated influx.

All of this has pushed our strategic telescope out of focus for a time. It has also served to remind us that we need to maintain our current capacities in the face of new and emerging immigration issues.

We continue to be one of the first destinations for those who want advice or information about effective newcomer orientation into our communities. Our incredible staff has, day in and day out, worked to maintain a supportive and nurturing environment for those of us who have arrived here seeking peace and opportunity. The Catholic Centre for Immigrants is collectively stepping up to meet these challenges and indeed be masters of our fate, and captains of our soul.

Larry Hill
President

Executive Director's Report

I am pleased to provide you with the following summary of our activities during the past fiscal year (2014/2015).

Over the course of this fiscal year our permanent staff complements increased from 75 to 76 and provided integration and support services to over 4250 clients while our budget increased by \$63,489.00 to \$5,422,309. We accommodated 553 people at Maison Sophia House (MSH) and found housing for 457 of them, while our integration and support services housing team supported an additional 459 clients with their housing needs. Our Mental Health support program provided 524 direct client/sessions serving 105 clients and families. We also introduced 78 families (247 individuals) to their faith community and helped organize sponsorships for 47 people through 13 sponsoring groups. In our Career Transitions Program for internationally trained medical doctors we served 94 people, 83 of whom found jobs in the health sector and 15 of whom got residency positions. Our Community Connections program designed and delivered 140 group activities involving 1100 people and recruited, trained and supported 90 volunteers. The Community Integration Network team organized and delivered professional development for over 120 frontline staff from across the province. This year the Community Cup program organized many community engagement activities as a way of expanding social networks for newcomers and hosted a spectacular Community Cup event which was attended by over 2500 people. 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 2014. Over 700 people volunteered to help us in some capacity and we ended the year with net revenue of \$4,807.00 while our sister organization the Catholic Centre for Immigrants Foundation had net assets of \$597,058.00. The Canada Centre, another sister organization, ended the year with net assets of \$2,530, 632.00.

This was also a year of continuing adjustments in terms of budget and programming as Citizenship Immigration Canada (CIC) our most important partner and funder continued the process of aligning its settlement programs with the evolving immigration policy. However we fortunately were able to find other generous supporters.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Citizenship Immigration and International Trade (MCIIT) of the Government of Ontario for extensions to our Career Transitions program for International Medical Doctors and to Newcomers Settlement Programs. We also thank the City of Ottawa for its support for our housing programs and for capital funding to carry out some much needed repairs. Special thanks go as well to the Canada Centre who provided us with a generous grant.

At the Board level we also had a busy year including:

- Approving our budget and audited financial statements
- Approving the establishment of communications and human resources functions in the agency

- Organizing and participating in our 60th anniversary celebrations
- Approving our Alumni project, our effort to reconnect with everyone we have served or who has helped us in the past 60 years.
- Providing the staff with good strategic advice and direction as we proactively respond to the many policy and operational changes in our environment.
- Beginning discussions on our strategic plan, including our business model

Following are some additional highlights of our work:

These include:

- Participating along with the City, our LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) partners and several other stakeholders in Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council
- Applying in partnership with 6 other agencies for funding to deliver online pre arrival services
- Implementing a research project with Axiom Consulting to determine International student interest in purchasing online advice re gaining permanent residency in Canada
- Participating on the Board of the Ontario Counsel of Agencies Serving Immigrants
- Working with a local group, the Tibetan Refugee Project Ottawa (TRPO) to prepare to sponsor and welcome some 100 Tibetans to Ottawa over the next 3 years
- Providing partnership assistance to Carty House, a home for vulnerable refugee women.
- Continuing the redesign of our website as a step in reshaping our online platform
- Continuing 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 the Vietnamese Center, the Vanier Community Service Centre and Carty House 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’.

Our sister organization, The Catholic Centre for Immigrants Foundation, also had a reasonably successful year. During the year the Foundation contributed \$134,719.00 to CCI’s work ended the year with a small deficit of (\$10,234.00).

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. 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.

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 who 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 Integration and Support Services program (formerly the Settlement program) works with newcomers to help them adapt and integrate into their new environment. Using a case management approach, our one-on-one, family orientation, and group sessions offer information, orientation, interpretation, translation and documentation, counselling, housing search, life skills training, peer group support, daily drop-in service, advocacy and referrals to other community services. Services are offered in several languages including both official languages.

Highlights:

- We provided one-on-one sessions for needs assessment, referrals, information and orientation to 4,250 newcomer clients.
- Delivered 93 group sessions to 2,559 participants on topics such as physical and mental wellbeing, becoming a Canadian citizen, money and finances, immigration sponsorships, community resources, legal information, how to obtain Canadian experience, education system in Canada, finding your first job, cultural competency, housing rights, Orientation to Ontario.
- Our Volunteer Income Tax Program filing provided a service to 441 clients.
- Through our partnership with the Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa, the Settlement department assisted 35 incoming Tibetans
- In partnership with COSTI, we delivered four group sessions to 55 international students at the University of Ottawa on topics such as, "Income Tax", "Community participation and recreation", "Labour market and Canadian place culture" and "Personal finances and budgeting".
- The Settlement department works daily with a large network of partners. This year we increased our partnerships to enhance our referrals for employment for clients who are looking for their first job in Canada or whose CLB is 5 or lower.

- Top 5 languages spoken by clients: Arabic (23%), Spanish (10%), Somali (8.8%), Farsi (5.6%), French (4%).
- Top 5 countries of origin of clients: Iraq (8.9%), Somalia (10.3%), Iran (6.2%), Congo, (8.3%), Haiti (5.6%).

Housing Support Program

We provided generalised housing support service which includes: understanding your rights and responsibilities, maintenance support, information and referral services, advocacy, crisis intervention, eviction prevention services, as well as assistance with shelters and housing placement.

The Program served 228 new households (459 Individuals), as well as 210 returning households (439 individuals). Our food pantry served 1823 individuals with emergency or short-term food support.

Mental Health Support Program

The Mental Health Support program serves vulnerable refugees and immigrants. The program provided referrals and counselling in individual, couple and group formats to help clients overcome pre and post migration stressors. It provides accessible care that is culturally and linguistically sound.

The program delivered 524 direct client/sessions serving 105 clients and families. 57 clients required a case management approach. This program was delivered with the assistance of three Masters Level students in partnership with Saint Paul University and trained volunteer interpreters.

Youth Program

This program is collaboration between three CCI departments: Integration and Support Services, Client Support Services and, Community Connections. Target clients are newcomers who are 14 to 24 years old. The Youth program delivered 74 group activities with the participation of 231 newcomer youth clients. Regular activities include: Mentoring Youth program, which matches mentors to youth for four months according to their field of study, weekly one-on-one tutoring services for youth from grades 7 to 12, weekly workshops with emphasis on the Canadian education system and summer employment. We have partnerships and collaboration with several service providers.

Challenges:

- Because Citizenship and Immigration now provide most of their services by phone/electronically and there are no longer face-to-face services in Ottawa, there is increasing demand on our settlement counsellors for information about their services. In order to manage this demand we are making more referrals to the legal service community.
- Finding ways to take preventive measures for youth at risk, specifically those with conflict with the law, or school drop-outs before a problem arises.
- High demand for mental health support, with long wait times to receive case management services and long term mental health care elsewhere.

Opportunities:

- With our Mentoring Youth and Youth in Policing initiatives, we continue our effort to match mentors to newcomer youth according to their field and to reach out to newcomer youth before they drop out of school or engage in conflict with the law.
- With the expected mobilization of Canadian citizens and community/religious groups to privately sponsor refugees from countries experiencing political turmoil, our Settlement department is prepared to provide settlement services that promote their integration and adaptation to Ottawa and help them to navigate the Canadian System.

A Success Story:

A.A. is a 32-year-old GAR client from Somalia. He came to see our Settlement worker because he needed help to find a job in Ottawa, to understand his options in education and to complete the documents required to bring his spouse to Canada under the one year window.

Complicating or unique factors: He was a businessman in South Africa. He had a store with his brother, who was killed by the South African police. He lost his business and his brother. In May last year, his only child; a six year old boy, drowned in a lake in Ethiopia. Although he had many setbacks in his life, he is a very patient and optimistic person. He often comes to talk to our settlement counsellor about his life. Our settlement counsellor has provided not only information and orientation and referrals, but also emotional support and counselling.

Results or outcomes of the service(s) received: The client is very happy, because his wife arrived in March 2015. He found an apartment. Also, now he is studying ESL, and he hopes he can go to college in the near future as a mature student. He is working as a cleaner in one of the local universities in the city.

Quote: "I am very grateful for all the help I received from CCI".

Maison Sophia Reception House

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. We provide such services at Maison Sophia Reception House (Reception House).

At Reception House, we have the honour of hearing beautiful, inspiring and sometimes heart-wrenching stories. There are many smiles, many tears, and most of all, so much hope.

Located at 204 Boteler St. Reception House provides temporary accommodation for Government Assisted Refugees and homeless immigrants & Refugees. During their stay at Reception House (normally 3 to 4 weeks) newcomers are provided with information, and counseling in a warm friendly environment as well as food, shelter and clothing.

Reception House has several major programs. These are:

- Temporary accommodation;
- Orientation and an introduction to Canadian life
- Attending to immediate & essential needs;
- Helping residents finding appropriate and affordable housing
- Special life skills programs
- Improve clients' abilities to function effectively in Canadian society including accessing & referring to mainstream services.
- Multi-cultural programs for the many children for whom Reception House is their first Canadian home,
- Specialized health services and proactive support program while settling in the community.

Highlights:

- Reception House provided services to 553 clients.
- Provided accommodation for 476 Government Assisted Refugees and 77 homeless immigrants
- Placed 457 clients (369 GARs and 88 City clients) in permanent accommodation
- Provided Community integration services to 741 clients
- For this fiscal year, the majority of Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) came from: Iraq: 165 (34.7%), Congo: 112 (23.2%), followed by Bhutan: 52 (10.9%), and Somalia: 28 (5.9%).
- Secured a funding for "Homelessness Program" from the City for another two years until March 31st 2017.
- Secured a new funding for "Matching Program" from a private foundation for two years until March 31st 2017.

- The Life Skill Support Program provides basic life skills coaching to high need clients and families (369 GARs) in their home setting to enable them to live independently including training them to utilize services in their community. This service was expanded to include at least one home visit for all RAP clients.
- Hosted a variety of group visits to Reception House for education & training purposes

Clients Support Services Program (CSS)

Through advocacy, outreach, and cooperation from many agencies and using a client centered-case management approach, the CSS program enhanced the client's resettlement experience by reducing barriers and expanding the capacity to access resources in the community, including special programs for youth, seniors facing isolation and employment for clients with limited language skills.

Highlights:

- The Program assisted 804 clients, including 436 new clients (40% Arabic speaking).
- 575 initial assessments, check-ins and exit surveys were performed.
- 3062 referrals were done to other long term settlement services and community resources within the Ottawa community.
- Over 80 information sessions were provided to over 1,200 clients.
- 200 new partnerships and outreach activities were made including advisory committees.
- First Employment Pathway Event for GAR clients, in partnership with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and World-Skill
- 388 GAR clients had their initial medical assessments through the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic and 2090 health services were provided in total.

Challenges:

- Ongoing need for life skills training for clients coming from rural areas, clients with limited language skills and clients with disabilities.
- High number of clients with serious medical and mental health needs which requires interpretation, escort services, advocacy and outreach to local medical resources.
- Long wait list for mental health services is one of the biggest challenges which delay the client's integration process.
- The limited coverage from the Interim Federal Health program for certain medical needs, put a strain into the client's life as they continuously face financial hardships.
- Lack of Language Training for clients with vision impairments
- Housing (repair, upkeep & insect infestation)

Children’s Program: “Transitional Learning for Children”

Highlights:

- Number of children enrolled: 94
- Number of volunteers: 5
- Volunteers and placement students from Algonquin College have greatly enhanced the TLC program because it gives the children the opportunity to learn from and work with other individuals with whom they can practice their communication skills.
- Through their testimonies, the children who participated in the program have benefited from being introduced and exposed to Canadian culture the school system. They report limited culture shock when they enter the Canadian school as they are already aware of classroom discipline, asking for things by saying please and thank you, and learning to accept and communicate with other children who come from a culturally different background than their own.
- Following up with the children and their families once they depart from Reception House enables me to continue to monitor the progress of the children while they are enrolled in school and identify areas that need to be addressed while also witnessing the benefits of the TLC program

Challenges:

- Language barrier – inability to communicate freely with parents as a result of them not speaking English.
- Short length of stay – the duration of stay of the children is limited and sometimes difficult to fully observe desired outcome of the program.
- Communication with teachers in the schools – this is an ongoing problem as we need to have consent from parents in order to speak with their child’s teacher, but once they move out from RH, parents do not make it a priority to consult with the school and allow access to RH.

The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic (O.N.C)

The O.N.C. is a partnership between Somerset West Community Health Centre and the CCI, which provides comprehensive and extensive health screening and unique services to our refugee clients. This year the ONC put out a call for providers when one of our former physicians took a maternity leave. As a result, we got two interested physicians who have started providing services at the clinic on a regular basis. The clinic is open 5 days a week but a provider is present Tuesday to Friday. Currently, we have 3 physicians (plus 1 on maternity leave) and 1 nurse practitioner who are providing the following services at the clinic:

- Initial medical assessment: a thorough check-up of their current health status. We provide screening for parasites also test for latent tuberculosis (TB) infection.
- Tuberculosis clinic: a continuous and busy clinic. This year 9.4% of patients were reported to have latent TB infection. We provide follow-up appointments and follow patients for 6-9 months and monitor the treatment for latent TB infection.
- Well Women clinic: provides for our female patients the opportunity to receive health education (example: contraceptive and cancer) and receive preventative screening. Most of our female patients tell us that they have never had this kind of an exam before.
- Immunization clinic: this is a routine clinic as a lot of our patients come to Canada without any record of previous immunization.

This year was one of the busiest years compared to the past 2 years. This year we served 519 patients. As our clinic is a temporary health clinic for our patients, most of our patients are connected to a primary care provider within the first year they are seen at our clinic.

In addition to the interpretation service that is provided at the clinic, two of our physicians were also able to provide services in French and Arabic.

Highlights:

- Top Five Language served at the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic:

- Arabic	161 (31%)
- Swahili	86 (16.5%)
- Nepali	53 (10.2%)
- Farsi/Dari	38 (7.3%)
- Somali	34 (6.6%)
	35

- Number of new clients: **519**
- Number of clients referred to primary health care provider in the community: 183
- Number of immunized children: 138
- Number of clients referred to various services:

- 168 of 519 (32.4%) patients were referred to an optometrist
- 146 of 519 (28.1%) patients were referred to a dentist
- 23 of 519 (4.4%) patients were referred to a mental health counselor
- 123 of 519 (23.7%) patients were referred to specialty care in the community

Housing program

Highlights:

- The vacancy rate in Ottawa increased to 3.2 in 2014 from 2.9% in 2013, but did not make Housing Placement less challenging as this vacancy rate for rental accommodation has affected primarily for the up market units and has not improved the availability of affordable units.
- The average rent for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom unit was \$936, \$1,134 and \$1,415 respectively, while the shelter allowances remained unchanged.
- In spite of the challenging housing condition in term of affordability in the City of Ottawa, we managed to place 457 (369 GARs and 88 City clients) into permanent accommodation in the community, an increase from total placement of 365 from previous year.
- We faced more challenges in housing placement with Ontario Work clients as they received less financial support from the government.
- The average length of stay at the Reception House was **20 days** for GARs, down from 24 days in previous reporting year.

Community Participation Department

Community Connections Program

The community connections team provides three main areas of support for newcomers to Canada.

1. Activities for newcomers and people in the established community to interact and expand their social network.
2. Activities for newcomers to practice English and French in day-to-day situations while they acquire information about life in Canada.
3. Opportunities for newcomers to become actively involved as volunteers and participant in community events.

The team delivered 140 group activities with a total attendance of 1,100 people (many attended more than one activity).

They also recruited, trained and supported 90 active volunteers and delivered 40 group presentations where at least 1,000 people learned about the program.

Community Engagement activities received very positive feedback from participants. Our big goal, to help newcomers become ACTIVE, PRODUCTIVE, CONNECTED in Canada seems to be shared by the community-at-large and our numerous clients.

Highlights:

- **The Conversation Cafés.** These are sessions where people new to Canada and experienced volunteers meet to listen to guest speakers who bring information about different aspects of life in Canada and then, all participants have conversations to explore their own experiences, exchange ideas and learn about useful resources while practicing English or French. They happen at least once every month
- **Open Doors Ottawa.** Community Connections organized small groups of newcomers and volunteers to tour facilities which were open to the public on this program. The ratio of volunteers to newcomers was almost 2 to 1
Newcomers were very appreciative of the opportunity to see the various places they were able to see. It was a big success because newcomers expressed that they would have never been allowed in these buildings in their own countries and they would like to be invited every year so they can see different places.

*From a client who went to “Open Doors with the Community Connections team
The whole experience was really cool but what I liked the most was the Bytown museum, so much interesting facts and seeing the nearby canal was a real bonus.*

I wanted to see the parliament hill building from the inside, the Supreme Court and the famous cathedral I don't know its name but I know it is in the list. Maybe next time I will see them.

Anneke was really the sweetest tour guide ever, she was so patient with us especially with the kids, and she is really nice, friendly and quite knowledgeable. We were really glad having her as our guide. Although it was the 1st time I saw her, I felt really comfortable with her warm kindness. I would like to thank her do much for the great day.

Challenges:

- Integration is a lengthy process of mutual learning and accommodation. It is difficult to demonstrate results in a short time span. Clients tell us that the Community connections program helps them to feel at home in Ottawa and, in some cases, has led them to their first job here. 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.

Opportunities:

- We are enhancing the program activities that help our clients to find jobs. We are also exploring the possibilities of social media as a vehicle to create broader networks of support.

The Youth Program

This program is collaboration between three departments in the agency: Integration and Support Services, Client Support Services and Community Connections. We pool our resources to offer support and services to newcomers who are 14 to 24 years old and which take into account their unique needs and perspective. The coordinators provide support to 50 active volunteers and over 100 youth participants

Regular activities include:

- Day long programs during March Break and a Summer Camp.
- Homework Clubs with many regular participants
- Recreational Sports Nights
- Lots of field trips
- Partnerships and collaboration with several service providers.

Highlights:

- A Summer Employment Café engages youth in activities to help them find employment. With collaboration with WorldSkills, all youth found summer employment gained experience, skills and confidence.

Community Integration Network (CIN)

CIN works with close to one hundred organizations providing 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.

Highlights:

The “Community Connections Activities Template” piloted last year is now the “Community Connections Group Activities Tool” (CCAPT). It includes a template and several pages with examples and additional information.

- Our colleagues tell us that CCAPT is a useful tool to help them to examine their activities through the lens of the settlement logic model and to “park” some of the information needed to complete the new narrative reports.

The CIN team delivered two days of professional development workshops and networking for one hundred and twenty new front-line workers delivering Community Connections services in Ontario. Participants evaluated the sessions as very 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. CIN continues to be a central resource to offer broad-based feedback to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) 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.

Challenges:

- Shrinking budgets for anything that is not direct services to clients, makes it difficult to implement longer term strategies.
- Managing the expectations of our colleagues.

Opportunities:

- CIN is exploring several on-line venues for creating communities of practice.
- Feedback from our colleagues, who find the services quite helpful, and the funder, who continues to support this program in spite of shrinking budgets, tells us that 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.

Matching Program

The Matching Program started in December 2014. With a mandate of “help the newcomers who need it the most,” the first months of the program were busy with setting

the parameters of the program. By March 31, 2015 there were 18 matches, involving 19 volunteers and 45 newcomers.

Highlights:

- The terrific response from former and current CCI volunteers who were very happy to get involved in one-on-one volunteering again. Volunteers who had been involved in the old Host Program shared stories of ongoing friendships and looked forward to making new ones.
- Another highlight was having the new matches participate in the Community Connections' skating program and museum outings.
- A highlight of a different nature was the reaction of some of the volunteers, who felt very humbled by the confidence their newcomer friends placed in them and by the enormity of the adjustment that so many people go through when starting life over in Canada.
- The introduction of the Matching Program has given me the opportunity to do outreach with other settlement agencies and shelters. Also, through our volunteers we are creating greater awareness and understanding of the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in our community.
- One of the matches was between a first-time volunteer who happens to be a Jesuit priest studying here in Ottawa and newcomer from Burma who has been in Canada for 5 years. Due to serious physical and mental health issues the newcomer has difficulty getting out of the house, going to school or participating in activities in the community. During the first meeting, without having any notion of the volunteer's background, the newcomer asked in his limited English if the volunteer could help him read the Bible. It appeared to be a match made in Heaven ☺ As the weeks went by the volunteer became involved in many aspects of his new friend's life, taking him to doctor's appointments, helping him prepare for his Citizenship test, spending time with his family and listening to him talk about his painful past and his hopes for the future.

Challenges:

- Finding the right window of opportunity for the initial introduction of the matches, at a time and place that is convenient for everyone involved.
- Organizing outings is also challenging for the volunteers, as many of the newcomer families are very large (6 to 12 people). It is not possible to all go in the volunteer's car and not everyone has bus passes. Some families are better served with more than one volunteer, due to diverse needs.

The Community Cup

The 10th annual Community Cup was held on June 28th, 2014 in Brewer Park to Learn, Play, Connect and Celebrate. The event succeeded in creating a welcoming community

by connecting cultures, ethnicities and generations to volunteering and sports and facilitating networking opportunities to build professional and social networks.

Highlights:

The Community Cup attracted over 2500 community participants and observers; 40 sponsors and partners including sport partners; over 700 soccer participants (adult and youth, 40% newcomers and over 40 nationalities represented); 40 new Canadians received their Canadian Citizenship; 27 community organizations, 63 planning team volunteers; and 140 event day volunteers.

There were many opportunities for newcomers and non-newcomers to integrate and network at the event including playing soccer (all skill levels accepted), become a volunteer for either a planning TAG team or event day or they could simply bring their families and friends to enjoy a day in the park and get informed. Community members and organizations could also be part of the community tent, entertainment or sports demonstrations, become a food vendor or provide necessary equipment for the event.

Challenges:

It is quite challenging to deliver such a large event with minimal staffing and limited resources But....

Opportunities:

It creates the opportunity for more than 200 volunteers to participate at all levels of planning and delivery. We build a welcoming community as newcomers and established residents work together for the common good.

Testimonial:

“Working in the team definitely gave me a better picture of what it’s like to be well educated and have ample professional experience, but to have difficulty landing employment opportunities due to a lack of experience in Canadian positions. It was something I had thought about in the abstract, but it is eye opening to see in person and really made me strongly respect those who just don’t give up on the search, who are constantly looking for ways to network and make their talents known.”

The Pastoral and Sponsorship Programs

The pastoral and sponsorship programs at the Catholic Center for Immigrants focus on newcomer integration into local communities through co-operation with many faith communities. We work with CCI’s partners in order to encourage the many various forms of participation in our common goal of welcoming all immigrants to Ottawa.

The Pastoral Program

Pastoral program staff with the support of both settlement and Reception House staff collaborate to help interested clients of all faiths find the appropriate faith community for their needs.

Highlights:

- 78 families (247 people), from 19 countries were assisted in joining their faith community.
- We worked with 12 faith communities including: the Bahai Centre; Seventh Day Adventist; the Anglican diocese; the Islamic Information Center; Several Baptist churches; the Buddhist temple; several Pentecostal Churches; the Presbyterian church; several Roman Catholic parishes, Mosques; the Syrian (St. Peter and St. Paul) church; the Burmese Baptist church; and the Ethiopian Orthodox church

The Sponsorship Program

Using the sponsorship agreement between the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa and Citizenship Immigration Canada we promote the involvement of faith groups and others in the private sponsorship of refugees; and seek to obtain the support of these groups for CCI's mission.

Highlights:

- Under the umbrella agreement with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa 47 newcomers from 2 countries of origin were sponsored by 13 different sponsorship groups.
- This year our focus has been on the sponsorship of Syrians. One of the highlights was the arrival of a Syrian refugee family sponsored by Martin de Porres church. The church community was the first church community to sponsor and to receive a Syrian Christian refugee family from Lebanon. The deacon and the sponsorship team are a resource for many other churches that also sponsored Syrian refugees in the Archdiocese of Ottawa.
- Another highlight was the connection with have through COR (Coalition in Ottawa for Refugees) to work ecumenically. We connected with St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Refugee committee whose Iraqi refugee family arrived this past year. This is the second sponsorship referral to St. Andrew's church through our contact the JRS (Jesuit Refugee Services) in Damascus, Syria. The refugee family arrived and we made referrals to our settlement department at CCI for an Arabic speaking settlement counselor as well as referrals in the community for doctors and dentists

Tibetan Resettlement Project Ottawa (TRPO)

“Two-thirds completed – one-third to go!”

- TRPO is a “Community Sponsor” working with CCI as the co-sponsor to bring 96 stateless Tibetans from northeastern India to Ottawa between 2013 and 2016.
- TRPO is the local organizer for the national non-profit Project Tibetan Society, which is bringing 1,000 stateless Tibetans to 5 cities in Canada from 5 settlements in India, keeping people from the same settlement together as much as possible.
- The Tibetans become permanent residents on arrival, but there is no government funding.
- TRPO has a volunteer Board of 12, each with an area of responsibility such as employment, mentoring or in-kind donations. The Board is assisted by about 24 active volunteers and mentors, who provide the human contact with new arrivals and help them settle.
- As co-sponsor, CCI provides settlement services, and makes the services of Reception House and the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic available to the Tibetans. The CCI Foundation accepts donations for the Tibetan project and provides tax receipts.
- Since mid-2013, the project has collected about \$125,000, and has access to a rainy-day fund of a further \$50,000 if needed. Recently, the earlier arrivals made significant donations.
- New arrivals get free housing for up to three months, during which time they get a small allowance for living expenses and help to get work. After that they should become self-supporting, but the term can be lengthened if they need ESL courses before getting a job.
- The supply of free housing through Canadian and Tibetan hosts has now been largely exhausted, so funds are now going into renting apartments (particularly for families with children).
- Newcomers get furniture and kitchenware, bedding and winter clothing through in-kind donations organized by the project.
- The average cash expenditure per person was under \$1,000 for the first half of the project, but may double for the second half.
- As of November 2015, 62 Tibetans sponsored by the project have arrived in Canada; 8 of them have moved to other cities for work. In short, 44 adults and 10 children are living in Ottawa.
- Remarkably, all the adults except the mothers of infants are working. Some jobs are full-time, while others are only part-time or on-call (with uncertain hours). Many are in the service industry or with small manufacturing companies.
- A total of 34 Tibetans are still to come. They have already been sponsored by the Ottawa project and are to arrive before May 2016.

- Successfully managing the final third of the project will be a challenge because Syrian refugees will soon arrive in Ottawa in numbers, putting a strain on both settlement services and jobs.
- TRPO has a website (<http://trpo.aum.ca>) where its newsletter and information on how to help can be found.

Bridging Programs

Career Transitions Program

The *Career Transitions Program* provides sector-specific employment preparation, counseling services and employer outreach to assist international medical doctors (IMD) in securing 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.

Career Transitions 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 for employment
- Writing effective résumés and cover letters
- Succeeding in job interviews
- PLUS: Ongoing support with résumés and cover letters, interview preparation, job search and career guidance.

Highlights:

- 132 IMDs applied to the Career Transitions Program
- 94 IMDs participated in the Career Transitions Program
- 83 IMDs gained employment in the Health Sector (Program Target was 40 employed clients)
- 32 IMDs received volunteer positions in the Health Sector (Program target was 25)
- 44 IMDs pursued Continuing Education (Program target was 13)
- 27 IMDs accessed Mentoring component of the program (Program target was 12)
- The Career Transitions team contacted over 90 employers in the Ottawa region

We are proud to inform you that during 2013-2014 fiscal year 15 clients got Residency Positions

Challenges:

Marketing

The three main challenges faced by the Career Transitions Program continue to be a lack of adequate promotional materials. Considering that our main competitors when approaching potential employers are well resourced staffing and recruiting agencies, this is a considerable challenge. While the job development services we provide are free and are to the advantage of employers, this information is not being conveyed to employers through the existing materials, which are largely out of date or no longer accurate.

It has also been mentioned by clients and employers that the Career Transitions website (linked from the CCI webpage) is also out of date and in need of refreshing. Many of the links do not work and much of the information is a decade out of date. As a tool to recruit and register IMGs, an information resource for the clients, or a point of contact for potential employers, the website is largely ineffective.

Recruitment and Accessibility

Changes to CIC's skilled workers program and the introduction of the Express Entry program, has had an impact on the program, specifically our ability to recruit IMGs. The number of IMGs reaching out directly to the program has slowed recently. As a result the reliance on referrals from other agencies and service providers in the community has increased. It may become increasingly difficult as shifts continue in immigration policy and trends, to maintain the level of client recruitment that we have maintained in the past.

Another recent trend has been the issue of access for IMGs with small children. There have been repeated withdrawals, primarily by women with children, from the program due to the workshop schedule (evenings 6-9PM). Several requests for an earlier day-time schedule have been made in order to accommodate those clients who do not have readily available childcare. This issue is worth considering when the increasing number of female participants is taken into account.

Opportunities:

- Formal partnership with Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre

Success story/Client testimony:

Safieldin was a client in the Career Transitions program in 2013 and after completing the program pursued a Master's at Royal Roads University. In order to apply, Safieldin required a reference letter to submit to the Admissions Office. After receiving a letter of recommendation from Career Transitions staff, Safield Ibrahim wrote the following:

I am really very happy for your kind and positive respond to me, for the strong recommendation and the nice words you said about me to the RRU admission department, I will never ever forget this favor from you, you have help me to change my life and my family too, God bless you and your family and protect you and give long life full of joy and happiness...

With my profuse thanks,

Safieldin

Solomon was also a client in 2013 and after obtaining a job offer and request for interview sent the following message to job developers:

Let me tell you good news. I have got the job offer for the research program coordinator at Ottawa u and also interviewed for the position with [the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic] yesterday. Thank you for your support. Solomon

Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council

OLIP is a community-wide collaborative initiative with the mandate to strengthen Ottawa’s capacity to attract, settle, and integrate immigrants. OLIP is hosted by the Catholic Centre for Immigrants on behalf of LASI. The OLIP partnership is focused on facilitating community-wide implementation of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. This is done collaboratively using a supportive governance system that stimulates reflection and enables actors to plan together and strategize about ways of instigating leadership.

Highlights:

- We undertook a review of accomplishments of OLIP partners in the period September 2011 – August 2014. All sectors have advanced significantly on their implementation plans, as shown in the chart below

Sector	Number of Priorities Addressed in the Sept 2011 – Aug 2014 Period	Number of Actions
Economic	5 priorities	13 collaborative initiatives
Language	4 priorities	5 collaborative initiatives
Education	4 priorities	4 collaborative initiatives
Settlement & Integration	6 priorities	11 collaborative initiatives

Health & Wellbeing	4 priorities	11 collaborative initiatives
In Total	23 priorities addressed	44 collaborative initiatives

- More than two thirds of collaborative initiatives involve at least two sectors
- Following are a few examples:
 - Internships as a strategy for enabling employers to tap into immigrant talent
 - Internal capacity development for organizations to improve equity and access
 - Collaboration between universities to support the settlement and integration of international students, with great leadership being provided by the City of Ottawa
 - Enhanced and coordinated interpretation services to support access to services
 - Language classes as platforms for disseminating information / orientation for newcomers
- OLIP is assisting the local health sector plan for improvements in the quality and standards of language interpretation to support access to health care.
- OLIP has arranged for our partners to have access to new data, including the national Immigrant Database (IMDB). We expect to produce a first data and measurement report in 2017.
- WOW saw another year of roaring success. The number of events grew from 35 events in 2014 to over 50 events in 2015. WOW attracted private sector organizations as event hosts and benefitted from primetime coverage by the CBC Ottawa throughout the whole week. WOW also saw a greater participation by francophone organizations and more diversity among the WOW ambassadors and their nominees.
- The following quotes from respondents to the [2015 WOW Evaluation Survey](#) summed up the success of this very popular, public engagement initiative:
 - “Huge increase in visibility over last year – WOW is really on a roll – very exciting”*
 - “WOW is growing- it has easily tripled since its inception 3 years ago” [Actually it has quintupled!]*
 - “I love how you brought so many organizations together” Congratulations on a great week! I’m already looking forward to next year’s WOW. Thank you for inviting me to help out!”*

“WOW caused me -- and others around me -- to deliberately stop and critically reflect on the impact we can have on each other, even though gestures we tend to see as small or insignificant”

- As the kick-off event of WOW, the 3rd Ottawa Immigration Forum set the tone for this year’s success, with over 200 attendees, including prominent presence of government executives, local and national media, immigrants, and representatives of partner organizations. During the Forum time, the #2015WOW was the top trending hashtag in Canada.
- One year ahead of our targeted time, the Ottawa Equity Project has defined its first shared action strategies: (1) Joint Planning for Greater Employment Equity that will improve organizations’ hiring, retention and promotion of immigrants, ethnic minority residents, and racialized residents; (2) Establishment of a Parallel Equity Project for Francophone Organizations; and (3) Communication and awareness development to disseminate the learning emerging both from the core Community of Practices and from the new action initiatives. We expect that the new path will be fully operational in 2017.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for the year ended March 31, 2014

The Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) had another successful year. Total revenue was \$5,422,309 and total expenses were \$5,417,502 this resulted in a net operating surplus of \$4,807.

At March 31, 2015, CCI had total assets of \$1,573,803 and total liabilities of \$548,647. This result gave us net assets of \$1,025,156. Net assets include Building and General Reserves to provide for future building expenses or contingencies. The actual amount that is unrestricted is only \$300,677.

Analysis of our balance sheet indicates that at year end our short term position was good as we had \$3.76 (up from \$3.59 in 2014) in current assets and \$3.74 (up from \$3.56 in 2014) in liquid assets for every \$1.00 of current liability. Our long term position was also good and remained relatively flat with a 3.09% increase from 2014 as our liabilities were 34.86% (down from 37.95% in 2014) of our assets.

We wish to thank the Ottawa Archdiocese, 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 2015. I am also very gratefully to Anna Szymanowicz and the staff of the CCI Finance Department; Lucila Spiegelblatt, Dianne Webb and Velinka Nevrencan. 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 and CCI Foundation Board, our volunteers and our staff for their dedication in supporting CCI activities.

Yours truly,

Alfonso Movilla
Treasurer

Related Organizations

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 \$175,732, contributed \$134,719 to CCI programs and ended the year with net assets of \$597,058

8069697 Canada Centre

8069697 Canada Centre is a charity that owns and manages 2 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 \$2,530,632.