

# **Catholic Centre for Immigrants Ottawa**

**Annual Report 2017-2018**

**Annual General Meeting December 5, 2018**

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## President's Report

This is my first report as the President of the Board of the Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI). It is an honour and a privilege to be part of the Board to help deliver CCI's mandate through our talented staff.

Given the current global conversation on immigration, I want to share my personal story to highlight the impact organizations, such as CCI, have on welcoming and helping newcomers integrate into our communities.

I came to Canada as a government-assisted refugee. In 1979, as turmoil grew in Iran, my mother (who happens to be my hero!) moved to India with two young boys. She hoped things would settle down in a few months and that we would be able to return. That did not happen, and 11 years later we were fortunate to be accepted as government-assisted refugees.

We arrived in Winnipeg in November, 1990. As you can imagine, it was a bit of a cultural and climate shift! The immigration centre in Winnipeg helped us overcome this shift – hosting us at a reception house for a few weeks. They helped us find a home and enrolled us in school. They supported my mother's efforts to retrain and enter the workforce. Like it is for other immigrants, it took time to truly integrate in our community and to feel that this is our country. Was it easy? No! Is my story unique? No! Am I fortunate to be Canadian? Yes!

Here I am, 28 years after arriving in Canada, with two young children of my own and working with CCI. Now that's full circle. I ask myself – how can I pay it forward and help new immigrants integrate in our community, achieve their dreams and succeed as citizens? How do I learn from our Canadian and global history and culture to continue to shape the future of Canada as a welcoming nation that utilizes diversity to continue its success?

I believe these questions are integral to, and at the heart of, CCI's mission and have been for the last 64 years.

Under the strong leadership of Executive Director Carl Nicholson and the senior leadership team, CCI staff continues to deliver exceptional service to our clients and continues to garner confidence from the community, our peer organizations, and from local, provincial and federal funders. CCI's financial situation continues to be secure and stable due to sound financial and operational management. I encourage you to read the full annual report for our accomplishments this past fiscal year.

Thank you, CCI staff. You are the true heroes whose hard work makes a real impact on our clients.

As a voluntary Board, we are fortunate to continually attract talented and passionate members. Larry Hill, our recent President, exemplifies this and we appreciate his contribution and leadership. We look forward to his continued support and guidance on the Board. The Board also welcomes its most recent members, Christine Aubin and David Tobin.

During the next year, there are many opportunities and choices, including succession planning at our senior leadership and Board level, and strategy development to ensure CCI's continued success and relevance. The Board and its committees are working with CCI's senior leadership team on these challenges.

Finally, in an environment where differences are used to drive divisions for self-interest, our mandate has never been more relevant. As Jacqueline Woodson says, “diversity is about all of us, and about us having to figure out how to walk through this world together.”

At CCI, we continue to collaborate with all stakeholders to figure out how to walk through our community together.

Armin Nourozi

# Executive Director's Report

Every year, we provide thousands of newcomers with programs and services to help them settle and integrate into our community.

During the course of this past fiscal year, our permanent staff complement changed from 105 to 98. They provided integration and support services to 4,954 clients. We did this work with the help of approximately 1,000 volunteers.

Our budget increased from \$7,603,142 to \$8,002,567. We accommodated 561 people at Maison Sophia House (MSH) and found housing for 447 of them while our Integration and Support Services Housing Team supported 683 clients with their housing needs.

The following is a summary of some of our activities during the 2017-2018 fiscal year:

- Our Client Support Services Program served 1,856 Government-Assisted Refugees, marked its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and upgraded its technology in order to better serve our clients.
- Our Mental Health Program provided assistance to 127 clients.
- The Children's Program at MSH provided programs and services to 94 children.
- In Community Connections, our drop-in programs to help newcomers learn English were well attended. More than 650 adults and young people were provided a full slate of activities, field trips and other services.
- The Matching Program organized 30 matches, reaching 130 newcomers.
- Our Pastoral Program helped 84 families connect with the faith community of their choice while our Sponsorship Program, working with the Archdiocese of Ottawa, helped 15 parishes sponsor 51 refugees.
- The Youth Program delivers services to more than 300 young people. Over 120 newcomer youth participated in our first youth soccer league.
- Our Ontario Refugee Resettlement Program had 227 clients access pre-employment preparation services while 106 youth attended a March Break job camp. 481 clients received case management services, with 2,800 one-on-one activities throughout the year.
- Career Transitions for International Health Professionals worked with 151 clients. Fifty-six clients found employment in the health sector while six of our foreign-trained physicians received residency placements across Canada.

Additional highlights include:

- Participated in the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council with several other partners, including the City of Ottawa and the Local Agencies Serving Immigrants.
- Continued to sit on the National Settlement Council, Ottawa Police Service Board and the IRCC Deputy Ministry Advisory Committee.
- Partnerships continued with Carty House, a home for vulnerable refugee women.
- Continued our successful partnership with the Vanier Community Services Centre.
- We continue to sit on the Board and Executive of World Skills, LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) and the Executive of Refugee 613.

Our sister organization, The Catholic Immigration Centre Foundation, also had a successful year. During the year, the Foundation contributed \$338,228 to CCI's work and ended the year with a surplus of \$27,368. Thanks as well to the Canada Centre for its generous donation of \$140,000.

None of this could have been accomplished without the continued commitment and effort from many people.

First, to our staff, thank you for doing such an exemplary job, for making a difference in the lives of so many people, for creating a welcoming community.

I want to thank the many volunteers and donors who give us their time, energy, commitment, encouragement, money and inspiration.

Thanks to our Board. Our Board members take their task seriously by meeting regularly, working very hard, and providing us with excellent guidance and direction.

A heartfelt thank you 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 support.

A special thanks to our funding partners such as the IRCC, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the City of Ottawa, Pathy Foundation and CC8.

A thank you to the numerous agencies, organizations and companies whom we partner with throughout the year.

On behalf of everyone at CCI, thank you for all of the ways in which you assist us and for the opportunity to work together. Together, we are all creating a more welcoming community.

Following are brief presentations of highlights from the individual departments and programs.

Carl Nicholson  
Executive Director

# Integration and Support Services (Settlement Department)

We work with newcomers to help them adapt and integrate into their new community. We provide newcomers with information on settlement services, assess settlement needs, and provide referrals to community resources to meet immediate, intermediate and long-term needs. We help them with housing, transportation, education and more while providing solution-focused counselling to help overcome the challenges of settling in Canada.

## Highlights:

- We served 4,954 individual clients who came from 134 countries with 79 different first languages spoken.
- 354 group sessions attended by 2477 clients.
- We provided services to 658 refugee claimants.
- Top 5 languages spoken by clients: English: 26%, Arabic: 15%; French: 10%; Spanish: 5%; Farsi: 4%.
- Top 5 countries of origin of clients: Syria, Congo, Haiti, Burundi, Somalia
- Immigration category of clients: Permanent Residents 47%; Naturalized Canadians: 18%; Refugee Claimants: 15%; Family Class: 9%; Economic Immigrants: 7%; International Students: 4%; Temporary Foreign Workers: 3%.
- Provided information and orientation to Canadians about private sponsorship of refugees.
- In partnership with COSTI, we delivered 44 Orientation to Ontario workshops to 730 clients.
- 30 volunteers/students contributed 4,460 hours to help respond to the high demand for settlement services. At the same time, they received training on social services.
- 11 immigration lawyers and immigration consultants offered pro bono services to 1,596 clients.
- We 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.

## Challenges for the Settlement Program

- Increased numbers of refugee claimants.
- High number of clients who needed helps with mental health issues.
- Assisting newcomers with family reunification as the sponsorship process is long and frustrating.
- Finding affordable and suitable accommodation for newcomers.
- Lack of space for counselors, volunteers and clients.

## Housing Support Program

We have been providing housing services to clients in partnership with the City of Ottawa and many local agencies since 2001. The program works closely with the CSS and Reception House. 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.

**Highlights:**

- Served 261 households (683 individuals), and provided nine workshops on housing rights and responsibilities.
- 1,071 individuals provided with emergency or short-term food support through our food pantry in partnership with The Ottawa Food Bank.

**Challenges:**

- Significant increase in non-status clients who required financial and shelter support services. The shelters in Ottawa are full and the private housing market has a very low vacancy rate, making it extremely difficult to secure affordable housing for clients.
- A large number of clients had to deal with pests such as bed bugs, these pests are very difficult to treat and clients experience hardship due to the repeated treatments required.

## **Youth Program**

**Highlights:**

- Delivered 20 group activities to 203 participants. Regular activities included: conflict resolution skills through series of workshop, life skills, art program, employment support, healthy cooking on a budget workshops, integration activities through sports, individual counselling, settlement services, mentoring, and peer support program.
- Worked in collaboration with the Mental Health Program in providing workshops with 8 different topics for conflict resolution skills for youth between the ages of 14 and 24. Also, worked closely with the Boys and Girls Club to provide weekly activities to Girls Group for easier integration and adaptation.
- Partnered and collaborated with agencies such as Employment Ontario, Refugee Hub, Boys and Girls Club, Somali Canadian Youth Centre, YMCA, PQCHCY Youth, Vanier Community Service Centre, Ottawa University.

## Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA)

CCI and World Skills are co-providers of the Ontario Settlement Online Pre-Arrival Program. Our main purpose is to support qualified/professional newcomers to be better prepared before they arrive to Canada. We offer online courses to help them develop job search strategies and participate effectively in the Canadian workplace.

### Highlights:

- Total of 829 clients registered for services, an increase of more than 250% from the previous year.
- 323 clients enrolled in job search strategies online courses.
- 164 clients enrolled in soft skills courses focused on Canadian workplace culture.
- 321 clients enrolled in self-guided courses related to working effectively in a Canadian environment to achieve career success.
- 152 clients successfully obtained employment, 127 of them found jobs in their own fields. Some clients got jobs before arriving in Canada while others were hired a few weeks/months after landing.
- Expansion of staff, due to the increased demand for services.
- Multiple webinars were organized and delivered to clients throughout the year.
- Hosted our first Alumni Networking event which was well attended and a great success.

### Challenges:

- Time frame for delivery continues to be a challenge. Some of our clients join too close to their landing date and are not able to complete all of the course materials in time.
- Technology can be a challenge – particularly when meeting with clients using our online platform. There can be audio issues and poor internet connections.
- High number of intakes at once caused a backlog of clients who were not able to receive immediate services. This resulted in the need for training current staff on intake procedures and adding a part-time intake counsellor.

### Opportunities:

- Potential partnerships with other organizations to offer mentoring opportunities for our clients.
- Connecting with alumni from Toronto to create partnerships with organizations there, where the majority of our clients are located.
- Expanding services to include French-speaking clients.

## **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 Reception House. We provide temporary accommodations to Government-Assisted Refugees through IRCC and homeless immigrants and refugee claimants through the City of Ottawa. Newcomers are provided with information, counselling and a warm, friendly environment as well as food, shelter and clothing. We help clients with orientation to life in Canada, finding affordable housing, offer special life skills programs, refer them to mainstream services, provide programming for children and provide health related services and referrals.

### **Highlights:**

- Housed a total of 561 people. 420 were Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs), 75 were secondary migrants. An additional 66 people were referred to us by the city.
- Helped 447 people find housing.

### **RAP Program**

#### **Highlights:**

- Top three nationalities of Government-Assisted Refugees were Syrian: 135 (40%), Congolese: 24 (40%) and Iraqi: 46 (15%).
- Quickly referred many Government-Assisted Refugees to proper healthcare services.
- Provided basic orientation on health, income support entitlement (rights and obligations), housing, transportation, life skills information, urban living, etc.
- Provided long-term support services through the Life Skills Program. This program provided intensive, short-term, hands-on training to 169 high-needs families.
- Counsellors conducted 590 home visits to cover topics such as shopping, public transportation, neighbourhood services, banking and budgeting, personal health and safety, building safety, and Canadian society.
- Hosted a group visit to Reception House for educational and training purposes with regard to the RAP and settlement services in Ottawa for Canadian Foreign Officers (Visa Officers), and IRCC officers.

### **Housing Program**

#### **Highlight:**

- Average length of stay at Reception House was 24.8 days for Government-Assisted Refugees.

#### **Challenges:**

- The housing vacancy rate is very low and it is difficult to find suitable housing. We expect the vacancy rate to get worse in 2018-2019 and for rents to increase.
- There weren't many units available to house larger families.

**Opportunities:**

- CCI's brand is recognized as the agency of choice to help with housing placement.
- We have a good track record with the Syrian influx of 2016.
- Staff are confident they can deal with a future increase of Government-Assisted Refugees and refugee claimants.
- Shorten housing placement time for Ontario Works clients, with residents now qualifying for Housing First housing allowance.

**Children Program****Highlights:**

- Number of children enrolled: 94
- Boys: 51, Girls: 43
- A very wide range of age groups
- Countries of origin: Congo, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Eritrea
- Average length of stay: 25 days
- Average schooling level: primary level
- Number of volunteers: 5
- Children learn English quickly

**Challenges:**

- Language barrier. Many do not speak English.
- Children are not at Reception House long enough to fully determine program outcomes.
- Getting parents to sign consent forms so that we can communicate with the children's teachers once they're in school.
- Need to involve the parents more in the programs and services offered to their children. Often, parents are so busy with their own settlement needs that specific needs of children can be overlooked. We are looking at ways of improving this.

# Sponsorship Program

At CCI, our sponsorship program trains, coordinates and provides information sessions to different groups involved in the sponsorship process. This program also manages CCI's Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAW) which allows us to directly sponsor refugees from around the world. The program works closely with the Settlement Department in order to connect all sponsored refugees to proper programs and services.

## Highlights:

- 15 refugees arrived in 2017-2018 under the Group of Five sponsorship program. In addition to helping the groups prepare their sponsorships, we also met with the refugees after they arrived in Ottawa and connected them with the necessary CCI programs and services.
- As a Sponsorship Agreement holder, we organized sponsors for 12 refugees. We are still waiting for them to arrive.
- Conducted monthly information and training sessions for sponsors.

## Challenges:

- The number of families seeking our help was substantial. Many were concerned with the long waiting list and processing time.
- Managing sponsors' expectations can at times be difficult and stressful especially if they are former refugees who are anxious to sponsor their family members.

## Client Support Services Program (CSS)

We help Government-Assisted Refugees during their first year of resettlement and integration. We deliver a mobile, intensive case management service that recognizes their complex needs. We also engage other community services to help respond to these needs. We provide integration services by using a client-centered case management approach. We work with the community to provide GARs broader access to basic services such as health, mental health, education, language training and employment among others.

### Highlights:

- Provided services to 1,856 Government-Assisted Refugees.
- 54% of new clients were single cases.
- Top 3 countries of origin: Syria, Iraq and DR Congo.
- Celebrated our 10th anniversary in 2017 and the CSS Regional Coordination Project went national. The program has grown from six sites in Ontario to 12 nationwide. The network is hoping to grow to 23 sites within the next two years.
- Lucila Cabrera was honoured for her long-term dedication to CSS. Paul Soubliere was welcomed as the new leader for the program.
- The office was reconfigured to address staff safety.
- Improved access to employment services was sustained and 10 per cent of Government-Assisted Refugees gained employment within their first year in Canada.
- The Syrian Welcome Fund helped a large number of Government-Assisted Refugees with housing subsidies, mental health services, as well as accessible vehicles/devices for people with disabilities.

### Challenges:

- 80% of clients had minimal to no English, high health needs, and housing challenges.
- Case workers were kept busy with the high number of clients with disabilities (and their caregivers) who face long wait times for specialized services.
- Clients' stress levels were high as their main preoccupation was family reunification. They didn't know if, or when, their family members would make it to Canada.
- Signs of worker fatigue was visible and attributed to the Syrian influx and continued high caseloads. This led to two self-care presentations.

### Opportunities:

- We envision improved outreach and access for clients thanks to our office reconfiguration and purchase of laptops that will allow case workers to be more mobile.
- Reduction in the duplication of reporting as we improve our use of new technology.
- We will be engaged in efforts to improve our database in order for it to serve as a better, more practical case management tool for front-line workers.
- We see working more closely with private sponsorship groups who are helping newcomers deal with issues we address every day.

## The Ottawa Newcomer Clinic (ONC)

The Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre is a community based initiative dedicated to providing holistic services that promote the health and social well-being of refugees and immigrants. The centre encompasses three different programs, the Ottawa Newcomer Clinic, Multicultural Health Navigators and Ottawa Language Access.

### Highlights:

- Total number of clients served: 775
- We expanded our services to include privately sponsored refugees and refugee claimants, in addition to the GARs.
- The Champlain Local Health Integration Network provided an increase to our base funding. We now have funding for a 0.9FTE Nurse Practitioner (as opposed to 0.3FTE), and 1.0FTE Medical Office Assistant (previously there was no MOA position), and an increased operational budget.
- Our growth has also attracted two additional physicians who provide services on a fee-for-service basis. This enabled us to serve more clients.
- We have been extremely fortunate to have a psychiatrist to provide psychiatric assessments on site. Before this service, our clients had to wait 9-12 months to get an initial assessment. We now are able to get an assessment within 2 months at the earliest.
- CCI and South West Community Health Centre continue to partner to ensure our clients have access to culturally appropriate counselling services with CCI's psychotherapy services. This partnership is a unique collaboration and wraparound care to some of the most vulnerable populations in our community. Our clients have access to their primary care provider, psychiatrist and a mental health counselor all under one roof. This is a model that includes a circle of care that is holistic, comprehensive and collaborative.
- ONC was invited to six national and international conferences this year to present on the success of the wonderful collaboration between health services and CCI.

# Community Connections

Our team generates opportunities for newcomers and people in the community-at-large to interact and learn from each other; opportunities for enhancing their job search skills and support to find employment; opportunities for newcomers to improve their English in a friendly and informal manner, and opportunities to help newcomers feel “at home” in Ottawa.

## Highlights:

- Started delivery of services at multiple locations, making it easier for people to participate/learn.
- Partnered with the City of Ottawa, the Boys and Girls Club and many other organizations. This allowed us to make better use of existing resources and help more clients.
- Piloted and refined ways to help newcomers gain employment.

## Challenges:

- The sheer volume of work was daunting at times.

## Opportunities:

- Mental Health is an ongoing issue for our clients. We are going to pilot a new approach to help clients maintain their mental health and positive outlook by focusing on their mental well-being rather than their potential deficits.

## Youth Program

The Youth Program provides programs and services to youth, ages 14 to 29. Programs and services aim at promoting positive engagement for smooth community integration.

## Highlights:

- More than 300 youth participated in workshops and other programs, an increase over last year.
- First season of the youth soccer league featured 10 teams with more than 120 newcomer youth.
- Job facilitators helped dozens of young newcomers land their first part-time job.
- Our weekly program for girls at Donald Street continued to be a success.
- More youth involvement in community youth services, events, work and educational opportunities.

## Challenges:

- Young people tend not to show up on time. It’s hard to make up the time as many have curfews, which, if missed, parents will complain and/or will not allow them to return.
- Integration is a challenge as young people tend to stick with their own community.
- Sticking with their own groups means their English skills are not always developing as quickly as they could.

- Young newcomers are usually integrating more quickly than their parents which creates stress between the two generations.
- Access to transportation during the summer: Low numbers will participate in programs if OC Transpo tickets are not available.
- In our jobs segment, young newcomers struggle to understand the Canadian hiring process, applications, training, and value of volunteering.

### **Opportunities**

- There are talented young people who can act as mentors in future programs.
- More counselling/mental well being programming. The youth wellbeing program was well received.
- Opportunity to develop more youth events that involve the whole family.
- Creating new partnerships and developing opportunities for employers in the city to hire our youth through internships. This will provide mutual benefit to both the youth and the employers.

# Matching Program

We provide one-on-one support to help newcomers adjust and integrate into life in Canada by introducing recent immigrants and refugees to established members of the Ottawa community. Matches between newcomers and volunteers can be one-on-one, family-to-family, or one volunteer with a newcomer family.

## Highlights:

- There were a total of 30 matches reaching some 130 newcomers.
- Increased collaboration with CCI's Youth Program with a number of our young volunteers getting involved in the youth activities.
- Many of the matches continued on well past the 6-month commitment. Friendships grew and some of the newcomers went from needing support for English to asking for support for job search.
- One volunteer asked to be matched with a family with children close in age to her son. They had a great time exploring Gatineau Park and playing with water guns on Canada Day.
- Two young mothers matched went looking for work together with the volunteer actually taking a job alongside the newcomer, in part to help her with her first Canadian work experience.
- A volunteer matched with a family of three generations had a great time introducing them to winter in Ottawa, taking them to the Governor General's winter celebration at Rideau Hall as well as bringing them to the Skating Buddy Program.
- Among the matches on the ice was a young blind man skating with his volunteer.
- A deep friendship formed between a retired volunteer and a newcomer father. The volunteer is mostly at home (he's in his 80s) and the newcomer visits him almost daily to work on his English, discuss job opportunities and talk about Canadian history, among other things.
- A volunteer, who is a former newcomer, became very close to her match, a family of three from Syria. They visited each other's homes and the volunteer helped the newcomers discover services in their neighbourhood, such as the library, the early childhood education centre and parks. The volunteer helped with getting the baby into daycare so that the mother could start school, as well as helped with the father's resume, with which he got his first Canadian job!
- We enjoyed two potlucks, Thanksgiving and the New Year. People enjoyed learning about new traditions and sharing their own.

## Challenges:

- We still had a long list of newcomers on the waiting list.

## Opportunities:

The hiring of a second Matching Program staff member will help us recruit more volunteers and reduce that waiting list.

# Seniors Circles Program

CCI Ottawa is 1 of 7 organizations receiving funding from Employment and Social Development Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program as part of the Keeping Ottawa Seniors Connected collective. The goal is to help reduce social isolation among seniors by offering weekly English conversation practice and monthly social events. This was Year 2 of the program.

## Highlights:

- 600 seniors practised and improved their conversational English language skills.
- More than 1,000 seniors were engaged through community outreach, networking and presentations, as well as through our weekly and monthly activities.
- 100 seniors have taken on leadership roles during our weekly meetings and special events and now volunteer with the program.
- Quarterly CommuniTEA events have grown in popularity and are now attended, at various locations, by dozens of seniors and volunteers.
- Strengthened partnerships with the KOSC collective, Ottawa Community Housing (OCH), and City of Ottawa programs and services for Seniors.

## Challenges:

- The biggest challenge was to keep some Seniors Circles running with low attendance while we reached out to engage new seniors to meet our targets. Three Seniors Circles had to be cancelled after a cycle (between 8 and 12 weeks) due to very low attendance.
- Seniors Circles outside of Ottawa Community Housing buildings, such as the Emerald Plaza branch of Ottawa Public Library and Somerset West Community Health Centre, suffered during the winter because of extremely cold days and icy-road conditions.
- OC Transpo's decision to discontinue paper bus tickets created a lot of distress for seniors since they are unable to obtain and/or reload a PRESTO card.
- Coordinating human and material resources for up to 10 Seniors Circles running each week has been a good challenge to face.

## Opportunities:

- There is an opportunity to continue Seniors Circles after ESDC funding ends.
- Thanks to the commitment of a handful of seniors, we are going to pilot different models of volunteer-led Seniors Circles.
- Future partnerships with mainstream organizations working with seniors, such as The Good Companions, and settlement services agencies, such as Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO), will support the continuation of Seniors Circles.
- After having developed audio and visual materials to aid participants in their English conversation practice, we're looking into uploading the resources to the web so that other organizations and grass-roots groups can access and use the helpful materials, which were created based on seniors' needs and feedback.

# Community Integration Network (CIN)

We are funded by IRCC to facilitate coordination for settlement programming under the Community Connections stream in the Ontario Region. This includes Settlement Work in Schools, Library Settlement Partnerships and other activities under Community Connections and Welcoming Communities.

In consultation with IRCC and in collaboration with the Service Provider Organizations, CIN improved connections to communities and public institutions and contributed to consistent, innovative and coordinated settlement services through the creation of standards, tools, resources and program coordination to support the effective delivery of Community Connections activities. The theme for the year was, “Addressing Complex Needs.”

## Highlights:

- Direct beneficiaries were the SPOs that enhanced their capacity for quality service delivery, expanded their service networks and learned from sharing best practices with their colleagues. Indirect beneficiaries are the newcomers who benefit from improved services.
- According to participants in CIN activities, this project is helpful in a number of ways, namely: It improves the efficiency and effectiveness of connections between different services in the Welcoming Communities stream. It offers timely and knowledgeable support for emerging issues. It helps to clarify and articulate that belonging, connecting and community engagement are more than social niceties. In our view, the project has met or exceeded most targets within the contractual agreement and has been useful to IRCC and to the SPOs by providing timely information and feedback on emerging issues and by providing resources and ideas to address them.
- Documenting and sharing innovative ways to manage complex needs and situations was welcomed by program managers and will continue for 2018-19.
- Exploring use of technology such as tablets to improve service delivery.
- An interdisciplinary meeting for Managers took place on September 25, 2017, in Toronto. Theme for the day was “Sharing ideas for youth and families with complex needs”. Participants followed a process to: establish and rank priorities, brainstorm possible ways to deal with top priorities, and review supports that CIN could offer and possible actions for the year ahead.
- **Professional Development Sessions (English) to Enhance Community Connection Activities:** Each session consisted of two days of workshops and presentations for front line workers to explore issues related to the quality of services for clients.
- **Professional Development Sessions with a Focus on Youth Services:** Consisted of two days of workshops and presentations for front line workers with a youth focus. Sessions were designed to explore emerging challenges and possible solutions, as well as new and existing ways to deliver services. Evaluations received from participants confirmed that they improved their knowledge and expanded their professional networks.
- Updated CIN website, [www.cin-ric.ca](http://www.cin-ric.ca), and CIN wiki pages. Number of visits to the CIN website: 48,915 in total.
- **Virtual Training for Community Connections Sector:** We coordinated the production of three training videos and three audio recordings. A subject matter specialist and a videographer were hired to work with staff and create the videos.

## Pastoral Program

We help clients of all faiths find the faith community to serve their needs by working with staff at Reception House and in the Settlement Program.

### Highlights:

- 84 families (286 people) from eight different countries were introduced to the faith community of their choice.
- We made a connection between a Blended Visa Office Referred Program family from Colombia, whose sponsors are Grace International Church, with a faith community called Sa Grada Familia, a Spanish faith community. We worked with the sponsors at Grace church and found Spanish speaking volunteers at Grada Familia to help the newcomers become familiarized with the Ottawa transit system. Both churches made the transition a smoother one for our newcomer family.
- We introduced a single mother and her four young children from Burundi to the Catholic parish at St. Joseph Church. The family was welcomed by members of the church community who provided links to services in the Vanier area where the family lives. A needs assessment was done for the family to determine how many services they required. This was done with help from our CSS team. Our connection with Helping With Furniture placed this young family on a priority list to ensure they received furniture and other household items.

## Sponsorship Program in Partnership with the Archdiocese

We work with sponsorship groups who are using the Archdiocese of Ottawa Sponsorship Agreement. We help these sponsors prepare and submit applications. We also support sponsorship groups as they prepare for the arrival of sponsored refugees and ensure sponsored refugees are supported quickly and appropriately with programs and services at CCI.

### Highlights:

- We worked with 15 parishes who sponsored 51 refugees from Syria, Burundi, Eritrea and South Sudan.
- A religious community that provided funding for a Syrian refugee sponsorship was connected to Good Shepherd Church. This enabled the refugee committee to continue to support its sponsorship commitment to a Syrian family member at their parish.
- The Franciscan Missionaries, which has supported our Sponsorship Program for several years, made a major contribution that enabled one of our Catholic parishes to continue in their mandate of social justice.
- A Sri Lankan man, who was here as an asylum seeker and taken care of by St. Joseph Church, successfully won refugee claim status. Many thanks to the chair, Louise Lalonde, who was instrumental in helping this newcomer navigate this difficult claim.
- Blessed to have many skilled volunteers who, with their resources and experience, dedicate themselves to helping welcome and integrate newcomers into our Ottawa community.

Here's a quick glance at the churches that sponsored a family.

St. Isidore, Holy Redeemer, Holy Redeemer, Annunciation, St. Bernard, Good Shepherd, St. Paul Syriac, St. Clement, Our Lady Fatima, St. M. Mary, St. Patrick's Basilica, Holy Cross, St. Joseph, Holy Spirit, St. Georges, St. Patrick.

# Ontario Refugee Resettlement Program – Syria (ORRP)

The goal of the ORRP-Syria program was 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 ended June 30, 2018.)

## Highlights:

### Pre Employment Preparation

- 227 clients accessed the pre-employment preparation services that were provided off-site and after hours. This helped make for shorter commutes for clients.
- 106 young adults participated in the March Break Career and Employment Camp.
- 26 employment workshops were delivered, 13 young adults successfully found jobs.
- Connected clients to job fairs organized by various partners in the city.

### Case Management including Housing

- 481 clients received case management services, providing more than 2,800 one-on-one activities through out the year.
- Supported clients with services and referrals based on their individual needs, including children's education, language trainings, health, transportation, financial and employment among others; and helped them to understand how to navigate through the Canadian systems (on education, health, employment) to ease their access.
- Coaching, escort, interpretation and referrals were provided, as well as information on building social network support, involvement in local community initiatives and volunteering.
- Carried out capacity building initiatives to increase awareness on refugee needs including housing, and ease of access to services from community resources.
- Helped clients find affordable housing, and provided assistance with repairs and maintenance requests and processes, including writing letters to landlords and other service providers.
- Assisted clients with the process of lease termination, especially when safety issues arose.
- Referred clients to other financial assistance programs, food banks, second hand furniture, houseware, clothing, etc.

### Mental Health Component

- The Mental Health Program provided assistance to 127 clients, including 42 individuals and 17 families, with unique mental health and adjustment challenges.
- 14 individuals have participated in Syrian Parents Wellbeing Workshops.

### Sponsorship Component

- About 100 individuals received information and training for sponsoring refugees under the refugee private sponsorship program; 18 group applications were sent to case processing centre.
- 62 groups received one-on-one services with understanding about the process, eligibility, forms and financial requirements for sponsoring refugees under the private sponsorship program.

### Community Coordination

- 195 local planning and coordination meetings attended.

- 41 new partnerships established with mainstream service providers.
- 362 volunteers recruited and trained.
- 473 refugees matched with volunteer support from various CCI programs.

An evaluation of the program is under way and we will be happy to share the final outcomes next year.

# Career Transitions for International Health Professionals

We help internationally trained health professionals integrate into un-regulated healthcare roles. We help doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, laboratory and research professionals transfer their skills and experience and enter the Canadian healthcare sector. Since 2008, we have supported over 930 health professionals. We provide 36 hours of in-class training, opportunities in mentorship and volunteering, as well as ongoing resources and support. We also work with community stakeholders and employers to fill the needs of their organizations.

## Highlights:

- 151 clients applied for services to the Career Transitions Program.
- 100 clients accessed significant components of the program, 82 completed the workshop training.
- 61 clients began meaningful volunteer and mentorship placements in healthcare.
- 56 clients obtained employment in the healthcare sector.
- Our clients had access to 228 additional hours of training and mentorship, thanks to our work with Living Healthy Champlain, the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Emerging Health Leaders of Ottawa and Algonquin College.
- Six of our foreign-trained physicians received residency placements across Canada.
- Revamped and upgraded the program's curriculum materials, including a 200-page client workbook, and website resources.

## Challenges:

- Lack of credential recognition, the high cost of medical exams and the long process for licensing continue to be barriers for many foreign-trained professionals.
- Bridge programs for licensing are admitting more Canadian foreign-trained professionals for coveted placements in their programs. Canadian professionals who receive their medical training overseas have a distinct advantage in language, professional network and exposure to the health care system over those of their newcomer counterparts.
- Similarly, in residency, many of the limited placements for internationally-trained physicians are filled by Canadian-born applicants who have a distinct advantage due to their education, network connections and lived experience in Canada's healthcare system.
- Lack of capacity in hospitals and health centres to provide observership roles and meaningful volunteer opportunities in health care occupations.

## Opportunities:

- Establishment of harm-reduction and supervised injection sites provide opportunities for clients to work front line in the community in a clinical setting.
- Medical cannabis clinics and producers continue to expand and are actively recruiting foreign-trained health professionals for clinical roles, research, and quality control.
- Increasing awareness of the importance of language and cultural competency for healthcare providers is creating a greater demand for diverse workforce who can better communicate with patients in the growing seniors and newcomer populations.

- Expansion of programs and employment for medical interpreters, multicultural health care system navigators for patients, and peer facilitators benefit both our health professionals and the patients and organizations they serve.
- Awareness of the unique needs for improved access and availability for culturally sensitive mental health support has resulted in new programs and training to help health professionals transition into mental health, often working within their language and cultural groups.
- Fee for services for clients from Quebec or other provinces. The Career Transitions Program is for Ontario residents only, and over the years, we have seen an increased number of clients from the Gatineau area seeking support but who cannot have access to the program.
- The Career Transitions team works tirelessly to help clients integrate into the labour market and advance in their careers. With efforts focused on raising the program's profile and promoting the value of foreign-trained professionals, we hope to see greater engagement with area employers and new community partnerships. The program continues to look for opportunities to be reflexive and provide services where they are needed most.
- Currently, additional funding could be spent on strengthening our marketing brand and materials, as well as increase our capacity for outreach in the community. Pre-arrival online services are in demand. Providing health professionals with information and resources prior to their arrival would be a huge benefit to clients.
- The program provides four enrollment start dates each year, however this could be increased. More frequent start dates would allow clients to maintain momentum and reduce the amount of time spent waiting for services.

# Communications

The role of communications is to raise awareness about CCI in the community, partner with the fundraising department to generate fundraising documents, and ensure consistent branding across all of our digital and print platforms and throughout our programs.

## Highlights:

- Moved internal and external e-newsletters to our new e-mail platform. Produced 12 e-newsletters for an audience of approximately 6,000 people.
- Received training on the new donor database for the purpose of better tracking donations made through the e-newsletter and for acting as a back-up to the data person.
- Continued to evolve the website to accurately reflect the organization's mission and services offered to newcomers.
- Ensured new content was created on a monthly basis. This content was shared on our website and social media platforms. Contents included stories about specific programs, clients and opinion pieces about immigration and settlement in the community.
- Facebook likes grew by an average of eight people a week. Produced content for the Twitter accounts held by the Youth Program and Career Transitions.

## Challenges:

- More time needed to create a long-term communications strategy as well as a set of communications protocols for other departments.

## Opportunities:

- With training on the new database, there is an opportunity to tailor our monthly e-newsletter to specific audiences.
- Employed the services of two volunteers who have helped create content for the website.

## **Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership Council (OLIP)**

We are a multi-sectoral partnership involving 60 local organizations working on a shared vision and common priorities designed to build local capacity to attract, settle, and integrate immigrants in five sectors: education, economic integration, health and wellbeing, language, and socio-civic integration. Partners include: City of Ottawa, local universities and colleges, the four school boards, employers and employer associations, settlement, social, and health service providers, and regional planning bodies.

### **Highlights:**

The last year has seen a strong momentum of growth and depth for OLIP, with expanding collaborative leadership across sectors that is making a tangible difference. The following are some of the highlights:

- Validated our progress in the first period of action on the Ottawa Immigration Strategy – 100% response rate to our survey on collaborative initiatives and face to face discussion on how we fared on specific priorities. Our finding was that we are on track, partners are happy with the pace of progress and there are clear ideas on challenges to address.
- Organizing for collective impact on increasing the graduation rates of students living in low income, many of whom are immigrants. We have three-year funding to study this.
- Strengthened alignment with Champlain Local Health Integration Network, City of Ottawa, Local Employment Planning Council, Chamber of Commerce and Local Agencies Serving Immigrants.
- Created the OLIP Leadership Group to provide a forum for community leaders to discuss common challenges encountered when working to make organizations and our community more inclusive.
- Collaborative leadership requires common knowledge, at both strategic and granular levels. We have put in the effort to know our community, to shed light on common areas of focus, and to bring attention to challenges and gaps.
- On Nov. 20, 2017, OLIP hosted its 4th Biennial Ottawa Immigration Forum (OIF), in collaboration with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network, the Local Employment Planning Council, the University of Ottawa's Centre on Governance and the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce.

### **Welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW) 2017 Highlights**

- Largest yet, with 73 engaging and fun events hosted by over 50 organizations and civic groups.
- The City of Gatineau joined for the first time, co-hosting a bus tour for newcomers with the City of Ottawa.
- We had more events, dialogues, more participation by newcomers, and more stories by immigrants in 2017 than in previous years.
- 90 % of the WOW 2017 evaluation survey respondents said that WOW activities contribute to building newcomers' sense of belonging.
- 100% of the respondents to the WOW 2017 evaluation survey said that WOW events themes and content were useful to immigrants' integration.

## Treasurer's Report

CCI Ottawa enjoyed another successful year. Total revenue was \$8,002,567 and total expenses were \$7,761,395. This resulted in a net operating surplus of \$241,172.

As of March 31, 2018, CCI had total assets of \$3,030,498 and total liabilities of \$1,606,341. The difference between these two amounts was \$1,424,157 that represented our net assets or equity. Net assets included the Building and General Reserves that provide for future building expenses or general contingencies and an amount of equity invested in fixed assets. The balance of \$608,832 was unrestricted.

Analysis of our balance sheet indicates that at year end our short-term position was strong as we had \$2.01 in current assets and \$1.99 in liquid assets for every \$1.00 of current liability. Our long-term position was also strong as our liabilities were only 53.01% 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 Russell Gibson, who acted as Treasurer until the end of June 2018. I am also very grateful to the staff of the CCI Finance Department — Lucila Spigelblatt, Anna Szymanowicz and Dianne Webb, our financial advisor. Without their diligence, dedication and hard work, CCI would not be able to continue to deliver on its mission to assist newcomers to settle and integrated into Canada.

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

Yours truly,

Luise Czernenko Reid  
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 CCI. Although a separate corporation with its own Board and other structures the Foundation is an integral and important part of the CCI family.

#### **Highlights:**

Raised \$451,108, contributed \$338,228 to CCI programs and ended the year with net assets of \$813,053.

### **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 \$2,923,719.