



Calgary Immigrant Women's Association Annual Report 2014-2015

Growing Potential



Our Mandate

- Vision:

Empower immigrant women. Enrich Canadian society.
- Mission:

To engage and integrate immigrant women and their families in the community.
- Values:

Integrity. Equity. Empowerment. Relevance. Collaboration.

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Message from the Board of Directors



**Sarah J. King
D'Souza Q.C.**
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Director



Dr. Rose Kadri
Director



June Read
Director



Bin Wu
Director



Alice Lam
Director



Mark St. Pierre
Director

As Chair of the Board, I am pleased to share with the community the results and benefits of CIWA's efforts to engage and integrate immigrant women and their families living in Calgary.

CIWA Board is comprised of volunteers from a number of different professions who have board governance experience. The Board maintains a clear focus on supporting the agency and community we live in. We are a policy-focused Board with sound and transparent governance approach committed to adding meaningful value to the agency and exercising due diligence through responsible governance and financial stewardship.

Our business is guided and driven by four committees that provide leadership in the areas of governance, human resources, finances and programs and services. In the past year, the Board focused on enhancing governance capacity as follows:

- Creating effective recruitment processes
- Aligning Board policies with the new Bylaws
- Enhancing organizational performance measures
- Ensuring the financial health of the agency
- Mapping CIWA programs and identifying gaps
- Managing risk in all areas of agency work

We are in the process of creating a comprehensive fund development strategy to guide the long-term plan to create a sustainable future for the agency. Our goal is to secure inclusive and efficient services for all immigrant women in Calgary.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Board members for their contribution to and leadership of the agency. CIWA staff and volunteers worked together with our community and funding partners to provide support for clients so that they can successfully integrate into our community.

The Calgary community is enriched by newcomers arriving with hopes and dreams for a brighter future. Thank you all for supporting our efforts to make their dreams become reality for them and for us all.

Sarah J. King D'Souza
Board Chair

Message from Senior Management

This past year was busy, exciting, rewarding and filled with daily challenges that made us focus on high efficiency approaches to serving clients and managing the agency.

Our programs and services continue to achieve excellent results for our clients in the areas of literacy and language training, childcare, family support, youth services, seniors' supports, health, employment, counselling and inter-generational initiatives. Our client numbers are consistently increasing due to the compliment of diverse and inclusive gender specific supports for immigrant women.

CIWA has become a national leader in innovative best practices to support low literacy immigrant women. Last year, we were recognized for this work through the Council of the Federation Literacy Award by Canada's Premiers for the outstanding achievement, innovative practice and excellence in literacy.

Cost effectiveness of our programs rests on the long-term partnerships with community stakeholders based on trust and mutual respect. This approach provides in-kind value of over two million dollars and offers community based programming in 134 community locations for thousands of immigrant women who otherwise would not have access to our programs.

Interpretation and translation services at CIWA provide numerous community partners the opportunity to have their program materials translated in multiple languages in order to become inclusive of newcomers' needs. Agencies engage CIWA interpreters in their daily work with clients, contributing to the idea that immigrant families require our collaborative community effort to get their integration needs met in a timely and inclusive fashion.

Over 1000 dedicated volunteers provide day to day support for our staff and clients. All our clients fleeing family violence have access to immediate emergency housing and provision of support services to ensure their safety and the safety of their children.

We finished this past fiscal year with a budget of 9.7 million dollars and 30 funding partners supporting the agency. We thank them all for investing into gender specific services for immigrant women and supporting our mandate. Investment into services for immigrant women, by extension, supports the wellbeing and academic success of their children.

We thank our Board of Directors for guidance and direction through innovative strategies. All our community and employment partners deserve our admiration for their contribution to our agency. CIWA staff and volunteers share our daily responsibilities with commitment and determination. Our clients' successes remind us every day of the value of our work for their integration and make us proud of newcomers' contributions to the Calgary community.



Top row: (from left to right) Michael Wyman, Joan Chernoff, Jennifer McColl, Beba Svigir, Eva Szasz-Redmond
Bottom row: Maria MacMinn Varvos, Rekha Gadhia, Shokoofeh Moussavi

Statistical Overview

17,910 clients served (individual and group services)

Immigration Categories

- Independent (27.69%)
- Family Class (20.55%)
- Citizen (19.25%) *childcare clients*
- Refugee (12.83%)
- Live-in caregiver, investor and others (12.13%)
- Temporary foreign worker (5.34%)
- Refugee claimant (1.33%)

149 countries

Top six countries

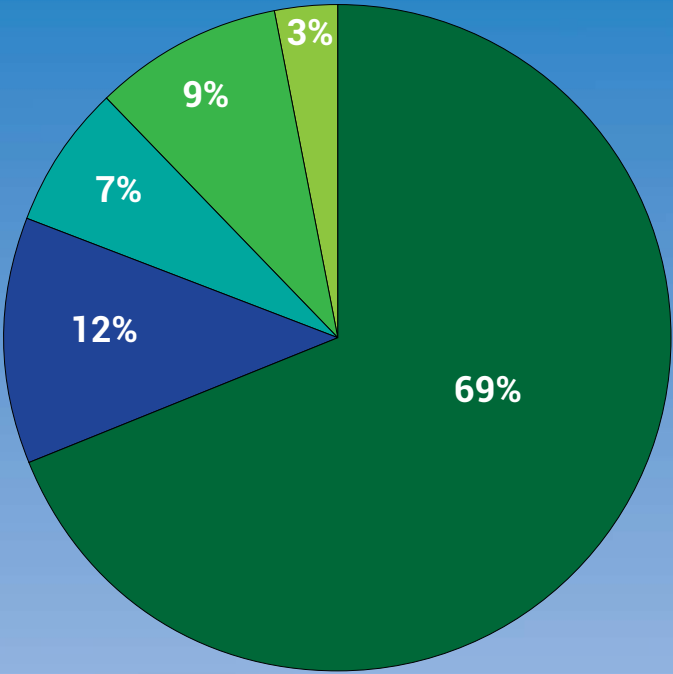
- Philippines
- China
- India
- Pakistan
- Iran
- Ethiopia

141 languages

Top six languages

- Filipino (Cebuano, Tagalog, Ilocano)
- Mandarin / Cantonese
- Spanish
- Arabic
- Amharic / Tigrinya / Oromo
- Persian / Farsi

Operating Revenue Sources



- Government of Canada
- Government of Alberta
- United Way
- Other Funders and Revenue
- City of Calgary - FCSS

CIWA Programs

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

- Intake, Settlement and Referral Services
- New Friends and Neighborhood Groups
- Integration Program
- Filipino Community Development Program
- Volunteer Program
- Breast Health Initiative for Newcomers
- Find Me a Home Project
- Legal and Tax Clinics
- Financial Literacy for Immigrant Women

LANGUAGE TRAINING AND CHILDCARE

- Pebbles in the Sand Program
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program
- Language Training Program (formerly LINC)
- Language Support Services
- SMILES Childcare
- Technological Literacy Curriculum
- Building Skills and Expertise for Working with Struggling Adult ESL Learners

FAMILY SERVICES

- Cross Cultural Parenting Program
- Family Conflict Program
- One-on-One Counselling for Immigrant Women
- Civic Engagement for Immigrant Women
- Healthy Families Program
- Youth Program
- In-Home Support Program
- Hand in Hand Parent Link Centre
- Victim Supports Outreach Program
- Grandma's Kitchen
- Empowered to Achieve: Culture. Confidence. Connection.
- Immigrant Girls Against Gender Violence
- Victims of Forced Marriages Awareness Project

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Bridging the Gap for Foreign Trained Accountants
- Links to Success: Skills Enhancement & Internships for Young Immigrant Mothers
- Office Administration Program for Immigrant Women
- Labour Market Bridging for Volunteers: Interpretation and Translation Clinic
- Employment Skills Preparation for the Retail Industry for Low Literacy Immigrant Women
- Employment Skills Program
- Low Literacy Modular Employment
- Childcare Training for Low Literacy Immigrant Women
- From Margins to Engagement for Low Literacy Immigrant Women
- Building Futures for Low Literacy Immigrant Women in Calgary

Growing Potential for Families

Karuna Sedhain and Brajesh Dev left their native Nepal behind with the hopes of pursuing their dreams and growing their family in Canada. The couple faced financial hardships, despite having professional jobs in their home country. Upon connecting with CIWA, Karuna and Brajesh joined the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program. They are the epitome of what a HIPPY family represents – a family who wants to provide the best start for their children by learning how to prepare them for success in Alberta’s education system.

As part of the HIPPY Program, Karuna and Brajesh received weekly in-home parental literacy and English language enhancement training, as well as Canadian school system referrals and family literacy support. To strengthen the family, both parents were equally involved in the program and supporting the successful education of their preschool-aged son Kaavya. Karuna and Brajesh also applied what they learned in the program to support the learning and development of their two year old daughter, Kaastub. The couple attended workshops hosted by the Cross Cultural Parenting Program (CCPP), which helps immigrant parents cope with challenges related to parenting in a new country and culture. Through HIPPY, the couple also attended group meetings and learned about employment opportunities available for parents after completion of the program.



Growing Potential for Youth

Purnoor Tak is a young woman committed to making a difference in her community. Through the Civic Engagement for Immigrant Women program, Purnoor has had the opportunity to further engage in the community as a mentor and provide guidance, information and friendship to other immigrant youth. The program helps immigrant women achieve full and equal civic participation in Canada.



Youth Central recognized Purnoor as one of the finalists for the ConocoPhillips Youth Distinction Awards in the category of leadership.

As a mentor, Purnoor is an advocate for diversity, citizenship and multiculturalism. Purnoor’s dedication to community leadership is very commendable. Apart from being a youth mentor, she leads the Wellness Committee at her school, writes for the *Youth Are Awesome* blog, is a member of the Mayor’s Youth Council, and volunteers with the Calgary Public Library. Last year, Purnoor spent a month in India advocating to parents and village leaders about the importance of education for girls. She has already started fundraising to build a new school in the area she visited. In February 2015, Calgary based

Growing Potential for Seniors

Nadiia Marchenko from Ukraine arrived in Calgary on Christmas Day 2010 with very little in the way of English language skills, but with high hopes for a good life in Canada. As a widow, Nadiia settled to live with her son, daughter-in-law and her two grandchildren. After two years of patiently waiting to enroll in English classes, she joined the Language Training Program at CIWA. The program helps immigrant women learn English in a classroom setting through reading, writing and pronunciation training, supported by one-on-one mentoring and access to information technology.



Nadiia was also connected to One-on-One Counselling for Immigrant Women. This program provides immigrant women with the opportunity to become involved in the community and develop a sense of belonging through individual counselling, group counselling and education sessions, and peer discussion groups. As Nadiia’s English skills improved, so did her confidence. She grew from being a regular group participant in Grandma’s Kitchen - a CIWA program that enables seniors to enhance their self-esteem and healthy living while making new friends - to facilitating exercise activities for her peers. Nadiia is grateful for all that CIWA has done to help her integrate in her new home.

Growing Potential for Professionals

Jelyn Samson remembers the exhilaration of successfully bridging her past experience from the Philippines with her first job in Canada after completing the Links to Success: Skills Enhancement & Internship for Young Immigrant Mothers program. The program works with young immigrant and refugee mothers to develop a long-term career plan and gain Canadian work experience in order to find meaningful employment.

Initially, Jelyn’s work experience placement included a data entry internship at Robert Half. Based on her skills, she was quickly promoted to a Senior Sales Administrator. During her work placement, Jelyn enhanced her knowledge and skills and gained valuable work experience. She is now employed with Hays Specialist Recruitment Canada Inc. as their National Administration Coordinator. In her new job, she now has the opportunity to give back to CIWA by hiring interns from the program she graduated from. We were happy to see Jelyn attend the recent graduation of Links to Success as a new employment partner that provided work experience for one of our clients.



Growing Potential for Partnerships

Partnerships continue to define our service delivery approach and add value to every initiative at CIWA. This past year, we actively collaborated with 288 community organizations to support clients in our programs. Last year, CIWA offered collaborative programs and services in 134 community locations. Our partnerships have enabled us to enhance supports for our clients and increase our capacity in reaching out to multi-barriered immigrant women across the city. We build partnerships by investing our resources in the collaborative community initiatives that have cross-sectoral approach to support diversity and inclusion of immigrants. CIWA staff participate in 33 external committees that include multiple stakeholders and organizations from the community. Through those joint initiatives, we support and promote the enhancement of settlement and integration, employment, language training, childcare and family services necessary for the successful integration and full participation of the immigrant families in our community.

Growing Potential for Communities

CIWA supports other community organizations to deliver services to immigrants in the area of their expertise and expedite the integration, independence and active engagement of immigrant families in Calgary. Our trained and certified community interpreters - alumni of the Interpretation and Translation Clinic - continue to receive high accolades from the many organizations that have relied on their interpretation and translation expertise over the past year. Our clients obtain certification in community interpretation through Cultural Interpretation Services for Our Communities (CISOC), located in Ottawa . Through assignments for agencies like the Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Police Services, Calgary Public Library and Calgary Catholic School District, our clients not only provide translation and interpretation services in 32 languages but also strengthen relationships with stakeholders and the community. Program alumni also work with The Princes' Youth Business International, a global not-for-profit organization which exists to support under-served young entrepreneurs. Our pool of interpreters and translators consists of 82 certified professionals offering services in 32 languages: Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Bhutanese, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Polish, Portugese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrinya, Telugu, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese.

In providing interpretation and translation services to organizations within the community CIWA is supporting the growth of educational, medical, legal and social services in Calgary.

Growing Potential for Volunteers

During the past fiscal year, over 1000 volunteers contributed 25,860 hours to CIWA. Volunteers provided support in 42 different areas of agency business, including board governance, administrative and legal support, group facilitation, mentoring, childcare, arts & crafts and special events.



Fatemah Abolghasemi

Fatemah came to Canada from Iran in 2013 and started volunteering shortly after. She has supported the agency in different capacities, which enables her to further enhance her skills and take on more responsibilities. As a New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups Facilitator, Fatemah helps immigrant women practice English, learn about their community and build friendships.



Fatima Custodinho

Originally from Portugal, Fatima is one of CIWA's longest serving volunteers. Over the past decade, she has faithfully supported CIWA's busy reception desk by connecting immigrant women to appropriate programs and services. Fatima has consistently been coming in on her day off from work to support CIWA. Since 2003, Fatima has also provided interpretation support and helped with arts and crafts groups.



Nusrat Sharmin

Nusrat came to Canada from Bangladesh and started volunteering in 2010. In line with her ambition to become a social worker, Nusrat volunteers in various positions supporting youth and seniors' programs. Nusrat was also part of the 2013 International Women's Day organizing committee, which enabled her to enhance her public speaking and event planning skills and promote gender equality in the community.



Azucena Martinez

Azu came to Canada in August 2012 as an international student from Spain. Because Azu enjoys learning and helping in every possible way, she volunteers in all areas of the agency, which includes supporting the Youth Program, assisting with special events and providing administrative and interpretation support.



Joyce Gao

Originally from China, Joyce became a CIWA volunteer in 2013 after moving to Calgary from Victoria. Her main reason for volunteering was to gain experience in working with people from diverse backgrounds. As a volunteer, Joyce supports the front desk, provides interpretation support and assists with tax clinics.



Stephanie Harder

Stephanie is originally from Nova Scotia. Since 2013, she has provided administrative support to the agency. More recently, Stephanie has started providing in-class support to immigrant women attending the Language Training Program. Stephanie has worked hard for this opportunity as it supports her ambition to become an ESL teacher.

Growing Potential for Staff

Of the total number of staff currently employed at CIWA, 45 are former clients. We believe in setting an example of empowering immigrant women to reach their full potential. By hiring individuals who bring incredible skills and experiences from other countries, and providing them with equitable employment opportunities, we create an organization of diversity and innovation.



Helen Zou

Helen is originally from China. She graduated from the Bridging the Gap Program in 2011 and is now the Financial Assistant at CIWA. In her position, she is excited to be able to apply the skills she learned through the program to support her team. Helen's role includes accounts payable and receivable, processing cheque requisitions and assisting with employee expenses and travel claims.



Anna Ermakova

Anna came to Canada from Russia in 2008. She is a graduate of the Office Administration Program and currently works as the Administrative Assistant for the Language Training Program. In her role, Anna provides information about language classes to potential clients, helps students register for LINC classes and maintains student records.



Paw Ler

Paw is originally from Myanmar. She graduated from the Childcare Training Program in 2010. Paw is currently employed as a Childcare Worker at CIWA. In her role, Paw plans engaging children's activities such as story time, singing songs, learning rhymes, and arts and crafts. Her work enables immigrant women to access services that support their integration.



Michelle Sari

Michelle, originally from the Philippines, attended the Filipino program in 2011. Now, as the Coordinator of the program, Michelle provides Filipino families with the kind of support she once received. She was instrumental in organizing a fundraising event for victims of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 and connecting with the Office of the Mayor of Calgary to provide volunteer opportunities for clients.



Titi Memar

Titi immigrated to Canada from Iran in 2009. She first came to CIWA seeking settlement related support and now works as a Settlement and Outreach Counsellor. In her role, Titi assists newcomers by providing information related to financial literacy, education, tenancy, immigration policies and family law. She supports volunteer lawyers in CIWA Legal Clinic.



Fiona Fairley

Fiona, originally from the United Kingdom, graduated from Interpretation and Translation Clinic in 2012. As an alumna, Fiona first worked as Program Assistant for two years. Now, she is Employment Counsellor at CIWA. She assists clients with job search and career planning, and prepares outreach and networking events such as Networking Breakfast Meetings.

Milestones

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS AT CIWA

Shokoofeh Moussavi, originally from Iran, came to Calgary in 1988. Before deciding to immigrate to Canada, Shokoofeh lived in Belgium for 4 years. She holds a Bachelor of Social Science degree from the University of Tehran.

Upon arriving to Calgary, she searched for an immigrant serving agency to help her build new connection in the community and found CIWA. In 1990, she was hired as the Coordinator for the New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups Program. She had always known that her passion lay in helping immigrants integrate into their new homes. As a result, she transitioned into a management position for the Settlement and Integration Department in 1999. Shokoofeh was instrumental in developing legal and tax services for immigrant families as well as creating partnerships in the community to support vulnerable clients.

In addition to supporting the many clients over the past 25 years, Shokoofeh has mentored numerous staff in her department and at CIWA. More than 35 practicum students and staff pursued designations as Registered Social Workers and Masters of Social Work under her supervision and leadership. Shokoofeh represented CIWA on the Settlement Practitioner Training and Accreditation Committee of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies for several years assessing and certifying professional accreditations of settlement counselors across the province.

During her 25 years of service at CIWA, Shokoofeh received many accolades from professional organizations and the community. In 2002, she was the recipient HomeFront's prestigious Jerry P. Selinger Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to domestic violence prevention. Her dedication to helping clients and addressing settlement needs in the community was also recognized in 2010 with Canada's Citizenship Award.

Thank you, Shokoofeh, for your 25 years of commitment to CIWA!



Awards



Council of the Federation Literacy Award
CIWA Low Literacy Programs



The Bill Hearn Freedom Award
Azita Afsharnejat - CIWA Staff



**U of C Continuing Education
Contemporary Women's Scholarship Award**
Reka Santha and Angelica Flores Jimenez
CIWA Clients



Gerda R. Bloemraad Scholarship Award
Aiman Saeed and Hien Hoa Nguyen
CIWA Clients

Events

Youth Forum



CIWA's third annual Youth Forum was held on Valentine's Day 2015. The theme of this year's event was 'Building Communities, Empowering Youth, and Celebrating Daughters.' The event promoted cross-cultural awareness and understanding between immigrant and mainstream youth, as well as their families. Speeches and performances were held throughout the day while youth and their families participated in interactive booths.

Daughters' Day



Caitlin Prater-Haacke



Sheliza Kassam



Sara Abdelrahim

At this year's Youth Forum, three young and exceptional community builders were awarded Daughters' Day Awards. These awards celebrate the lives, contributions, and achievements of daughters based on appreciation of gender equity in our society. The annual event was created in Edmonton and raises awareness about gender discrimination as well as recognizes daughters who are making a significant contribution to their communities.

International Women's Day



CIWA hosted the 2015 International Women's Day celebration in partnership with Awo Taan Healing Lodge, Calgary Public Library, Discovery House, The Women's Centre, University of Calgary, Mount Royal University, YMCA Calgary and YWCA Calgary. The theme of this year's celebration was 'Equality for Women is Progress for All. Make It Happen'. Over 1000 people had the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women while learning about the economic, political and educational barriers women still face. Events were held at Cardel Place and Calgary Public Library's Fish Creek, Signal Hill, Country Hills and Saddle Towne locations.

Funders and Donors

Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Employment & Social Development - Service Canada
Status of Women Canada
Justice Canada

Alberta

Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour
Human Services
Calgary Region Child & Family Services
Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Support
Community and Business Services
Innovation & Advanced Education
Culture
Gaming & Liquor Commission



The Sam & Betty
Switzer Foundation
through Hippy Canada



RBC Foundation®



**Gerda R. Bloemraad
Scholarship Fund**



A&W • Alberta Government Student Engagement Initiative (Speak Out Forum) • Alberta Foundation • ATB Financial • Avison Young • Bank of Montreal • Burns Memorial Fund • Foundation • Catholic Women's League - Sacred Heart Parish • Cenovus Energy • Centre for Crescent High School • Deaf and Hear Alberta • EFW Radiology • EnCana Cares Foundation • Gerda Bloemraad • HIPPY Canada • Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire • International Association (Walk in Closet) • Marks • Pizza Hut • Plains Midstream Canada • Possibilities In Motion Jager Photography • Strategic Group • Subway • Target • Terralog Technologies Inc. • The Benevity The Filipino Channel • The Salvation Army • Tim Horton's • TransAlta • Travel Alberta • University of

• Numerous individual

Government: Prevention of Violence and Bullying • Alberta Mentorship Project • Asian Heritage Callow & Associates Management • Campbell McLaurin Foundation • Canadian Women's Family Literacy • CIBC • City of Calgary • Conference Board of Canada • ConocoPhillips • eOne Films • Forex Cargo • Foundations for the Future Charter Academy, South Middle School • Fitness Holdings Inc. • Kids Up Front • Knox United Church • Laricina Energy Ltd • Making Changes Foundation • Propellus • RnR Wellness • Shirley & Greg Turnbull • Sinopec Canada • Stephanie Community Impact Fund • The Calgary International Children's Festival • The Cure Foundation • Calgary Continuing Education • Winners •

and anonymous donors •

CIWA Team



Each year, CIWA staff support and encourage immigrant women and their families through a variety of programs and services. The team is made up of dedicated staff members who appreciate their diverse work environment. We are committed to doing our best, and bringing our experience, expertise, passion and focus to our roles each day. We are also keen to have fun and work together. Annually, we get together for Staff Appreciation events and fundraising activities like National Denim Day for the CURE foundation and United Way campaign.

Thank you from the CIWA Team!

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