Building Cultural Connections

Annual Report

ICA Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

2016-17
The Board of Directors of the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) is hugely grateful for the support, collaboration, partnerships, and awards provided to ICA during the past year. We are proud and humbled by the outpouring of community giving which enabled our operations, recognized our significant achievements, and assisted with resettlement efforts of newcomers. On every benchmark the organization surpassed its operational objectives and remained financially sound while reaching new service heights.

In pursuing our goal of building community-cultural connections, ICA is honoured to have partnered and collaborated with:

- Island Health in providing health care to newcomer refugees
- Island Health and Camosun College in providing dental screening and teeth cleaning to resettled refugee children
- UVic Office of Community-University Engagement (OCUE) in the Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership Advisory Council
- The Canadian Media Guild and CBC broadcasters in live reading of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol
- Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee in Global Cafés
- Members of the Safe Harbour Program in diversity initiatives
- Masjid Al-Iman Mosque and Imam Ismail Nur in support of the Community Partnership Network (CPN) seminar Understanding Cultural and Faith Practices of Syrian Refugees and Middle Eastern Cultures
- Google in the Google Translate app and We Speak Translate project
- The BC Manufacturing Sector in the Refugee Training and Employment Program
- Victoria Foundation in celebration of their 80th anniversary
- United Way of Greater Victoria and the Victoria Foundation in supporting settlement for refugees and coordination of activities
- Vancity Community Foundation in providing funding support for refugee initiatives
- Canadian Red Cross in receiving and settling Syrian refugees and providing funding for resettled refugees
- Island Health in providing health care to newcomer refugees
- Island Health and Camosun College in providing dental screening and teeth cleaning to resettled refugee children
- UVic Office of Community-University Engagement (OCUE) in the Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership Advisory Council
- The Canadian Media Guild and CBC broadcasters in live reading of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol
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- Masjid Al-Iman Mosque and Imam Ismail Nur in support of the Community Partnership Network (CPN) seminar Understanding Cultural and Faith Practices of Syrian Refugees and Middle Eastern Cultures
- Google in the Google Translate app and We Speak Translate project
- The BC Manufacturing Sector in the Refugee Training and Employment Program

ICA’s significant achievements were recognized by our Greater Victoria community and the Board, and I congratulate:

- Paulina Grainger, Arts and Outreach Coordinator, British Columbia Multicultural Award
- Sharmarke Dubow, Facilitator of Refugee Volunteer Support Services, for Community Leadership Award, Leadership Victoria
- Jean McRae, CEO, for Longevity of Leadership Award, Victoria Foundation
- Sharmarke Dubow, Facilitator of Refugee Volunteer Support Services, for Community Leadership Award, Leadership Victoria
- Jean McRae, CEO, for Longevity of Leadership Award, Victoria Foundation
- Sharmarke Dubow, Facilitator of Refugee Volunteer Support Services, for Community Leadership Award, Leadership Victoria
- Jean McRae, CEO, for Longevity of Leadership Award, Victoria Foundation

Finally, the Board remains immensely impressed by the service levels and service quality attained through the actions of the amazing management team and would like to thank and acknowledge the work of Winnie Lee, Brian Burgess, Sabine Lehr, Todd Kitzler, Elie Kozma, Meghan Mergaert, Deb Hamblin and Elaine van Niekerk, and I am particularly grateful to CEO, Jean McRae, for her leadership in capacity building.

Cathy Hunter
President

We started the year with two hundred and fifty newly arrived Government Assisted Refugees in temporary accommodation. The first group of Syrian refugees arrived within one week and the privately sponsored arrived throughout the year. An unprecedented level of volunteer and public interest in refugee work in general, and ICA’s work in particular, meant much media attention and much attention from funders, donors, and groups of private sponsors of refugees; all of whom wanted to be involved with helping refugees. Both new and existing staff members were learning the ropes from each other and from colleagues in Vancouver. As the refugees transitioned to permanent housing, they also moved into Settlement Services, Settlement Workers in Schools, LINC classes, childcare and youth services. Our interpretation services were overwhelmed with demand for Arabic speakers. Partnerships built over the years with VIHA, the Canadian Red Cross, and the school districts were put to the test. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada was proactive in providing funding to help us hire new staff, and expand programming to meet the increase in demands. Further funding opportunities allowed us to add employment services programs. ICA’s budget increased by almost two million dollars. Another six hundred thousand dollars was donated to the private sponsorship program. Our staff contingent grew by twenty-six percent. We secured an additional satellite space to make way for the expanded program delivery. We brought on two new computer servers and twenty computers for staff and client usage. We convened and participated in Local Immigration Partnership planning meetings and service coordination meetings at the local, island, provincial and national levels. New programs were developed and executed. The overwhelming donations and offers of help were coordinated with the support of the United Way of Greater Victoria and the Victoria Foundation.

There are a multitude of people to thank: the staff of local hotels who worked so hard to help the newcomer refugees feel at home in their temporary accommodation; the staff and volunteers of the Canadian Red Cross; the VIHA staff who have guided the refugees through the medical system; the schools who have embraced the newcomer children; the two local universities and Camosun College which provided scholarships, extra classes, and donations; the many members of the Community Partnership Network who have actively helped in the welcoming efforts; the staff of ISS of BC and IRCC in Vancouver who helped us navigate the details of the - new to us - RAP systems; the many individuals who stepped up, organized, and raised funds to privately sponsor refugees, and then contributed many hours and days to assist the families once they arrived; and, the employers who came forward to offer employment. Within ICA’s staff everyone has worked exceptionally hard this year to meet the demands. ICA is fortunate indeed to be able to count on the dedication and hard work of our staff. The board members worked on creating the necessary policies to frame the new programming and ICA’s volunteers helped in classes and accompaniment.

This has been an exceptionally rewarding year for our organization. We have been able to make a difference in the lives of the many immigrants who access our services and, in addition, we have been able to bring refugees from precarious circumstances to become members of our community. We have all felt the impact of that and are grateful to be part of such an important effort.

Jean McRae
Chief Executive Officer
In reflecting on this past period from April 2016 to March 2017, it has been a whirlwind of a year at ICA. The resettlement of refugees has continued to be a priority. The pace and workload continues to be fast and furious yet rewarding all in the same breath.

**During this period, we have served 245 government assisted refugees (GARs) and 216 privately sponsored refugees.**

The majority of the GARs have moved from resettlement services to settlement services. Services for Arabic speaking clients have increased dramatically, in our LINC classes, Settlement workshops/orientations, childcare services, one-on-one support, youth programs, and Employment services. The majority of people in this particular refugee group had low levels of English which placed an extra emphasis on interpretation services and added pressure in meeting client needs and demands. However, the challenges that arose over this past year did not deter our remarkable staff members who strived to ensure clients’ needs were being met to the best of their ability.

A major contributor to the success of the work of ICA in supporting newcomers has been the strength of our partnerships. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all community partners and organizations that have helped in the settlement and resettlement of newcomers in the Greater Victoria area.

Notable partnerships in supporting the initial wave of Syrian refugees who arrived in March 2016 include:

- Island Health providing support to Syrian newcomer refugees with post arrival medical screenings as well as a Nurse Practitioner (NP). The NP worked out of ICA’s offices twice a week for the first half of this fiscal year to provide medical clinics for clients that fit the eligibility criteria. With the high medical needs of this refugee group, this partnership was vital to the well-being of refugees upon their arrival to Victoria.
- Victoria Transit Commission in providing free monthly bus passes to refugees in their first year of landing in Victoria.
- Pacifica Housing, CRD Housing, and Greater Victoria Housing Society, in providing affordable housing options for refugees.
- 4 Points Sheraton, Accent Inns, and Hotel Zed, in providing temporary accommodation.
- Red Cross, the Fig Mediterranean Deli, School District 61, 62, & 63, Westshore Parks and Recreation, VanCity, and Saanich Parks and Recreation in providing their services to the refugees during their initial stay in temporary accommodations.

Partners that have provided support over this past year also include, but are not limited to: Camosun College, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, Greater Victoria Public Library, Sport for Life, Kid Sport, BCTechnology for Learning Society, RefugeePartners.com, BC Alliance of Manufactures, and members of the Community Partnership Network.

My sincere appreciation goes out to the staff of ICA who work tirelessly day-in and day-out to support newcomers. The majority of our staff have extensive cross-cultural experience as an immigrant, refugee, survivor of torture and/or war, children of immigrant parents, and visible minorities. These personal experiences bring a profound sense of empathy and commitment in the work they do for our clients. There have been many challenges and an equal number of rewards, especially as we witness the successful integration of the clients we serve into their new communities. I am proud to be part of a solid team of dedicated and committed staff in supporting newcomer immigrants and refugees into Canadian society.

Winnie Lee
Director of Operations
ICA’s Settlement Program has assisted 2512 unique clients during this past year. Settlement workers provided support to these individuals and families as they make their adjustment to life in Canada. Every client who comes through ICA’s doors meets with an intake and settlement worker. In most cases, our settlement workers and other staff have multiple points of contact with each incoming client. Newcomers often benefit from a series of one-on-one meetings with a settlement worker and may also participate in a variety of other services offered by ICA: orientation sessions, short term group sessions, topical information workshops, one-on-one employment support, and English language training. Providing services under one roof at our Immigrant Welcome Centre and throughout the Greater Victoria school districts enables us to offer support to newcomers in a holistic manner.

Our SWIS workers worked closely with all three school districts in the Capital Regional District to help 521 newcomer students and their families settle and integrate into their school and community.

This year saw an increased number of Government Assisted Refugees through the IRCC funded Resettlement Assistance Program. As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, there were a number of constituent group members that have sponsored refugees, which also resulted in an increased number of Privately Sponsored Refugees residing in Victoria. Services for Arabic speaking clients have increased dramatically. This particular refugee group had low levels of English which caused high needs and high demands and more pressure on our Settlement Workers. However, Settlement Workers worked diligently in providing the best possible service to all of our clients during this hectic time.

We have also been able to continue supporting clients ineligible for federally funded programs through top-up funding provided by the Province of British Columbia. This top-up funding has helped temporary foreign workers, refugee claimants, and naturalized citizens to access general settlement services as well as limited LINC classroom seats.

78% of our clients served this past year were permanent residents or had received approval in principle for permanent residents; 13% were naturalized citizens; 16% were refugees; 7% were temporary foreign workers or live-in caregivers; and the remainder were made up of persons with other immigration statuses. The top five countries of birth were China, Syria, Philippines, India, and South Korea. The top five languages spoken by the clients we served were Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese, Spanish, and Tagalog.

We are very proud of the services provided during this period as we have exceeded our client targets. Our staff-base is made up of key members who have a substantial track record working in the immigrant settlement sector, and their experiences speak volumes in providing the high quality of service to our clients. Much thanks to our dedicated team for such a memorable year.
The Refugee Sport for Life program funded by the Victoria Foundation in partnership with Sport for Life Society and Kids Sport Greater Victoria connected 83 children and youth to local physical activity programs and sporting equipment. Physical literacy as an outlet and integration tool proved successful for these young newcomers and their families.

The summer theatre program for girls led by Dr. Yasmine Kandil inspired twenty young refugee girls and women through participatory theatre approaches to build community, make friends, and deepen self-expression.

Over the summer 32 refugee children and youth enhanced their English language skills and gained confidence to enter the Canadian school system through the Culture and School Confidence through Conversation program, funded by the Canadian Red Cross.

Fourteen programs served almost 200 children and youth, including six new programs developed to support resettled refugee children and youth integrate into their new community. Themes focused on developing leadership building social connections; exploring arts and recreation; and building language and learning skills.

The Summer Remix program focused on recreation and leadership where newcomer youth were oriented to Victoria's natural surroundings. A partnership with Power To Be enabled the youth to participate in a two-night camping trip - a first for many youth.

The end of 2016 was celebrated when all 12 participants in the Youth Employment Training program found local employment.

Three new programs emerged in early 2017. The CoRe program helped refugee youth build resilience and coping strategies, the Musica program improved children’s emotional growth and self-expression through music based activities, and the Connecting Hearts through Arts Program empowered young women through creative means.

The team has deepened its understanding of young newcomers’ changing needs, specifically with resettled refugees, and strives to ensure the programs are strengths-focused. Young immigrant and refugees’ tenacity, courage, and commitment to shape their lives in Canada continues to inspire the Youth Services Team.

Deepest gratitude to the staff, students, and volunteers in the Youth Services Team who have worked tirelessly over the past year, and who continue to be an open ear, a lending hand, and a sturdy shoulder for the newcomer children and youth as they integrate into their new community.
ICA’s Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program is a settlement language training and orientation program for new immigrants from a beginning literacy level of English to advanced levels. The Government of Canada funds the LINC program with some additional funds for some IRCC ineligible clients coming from the Government of British Columbia.

ICA’s LINC program is particularly suited to new immigrants who need childcare in order to attend class. Children ranging in age from six months to five years are enrolled in our LINC childminding service.

There are 33 classes and at any given time we have around 500 students attending classes. There are waitlists for all classes as well as the childminding service. In the LINC program, students develop the English language skills required for everyday life in Victoria and Canada with help and guidance from our highly skilled instructors. In addition, LINC learners increase their knowledge of Canada, Canadian systems and culture to help them attain citizenship; how to access services and resources; and increase their knowledge and understanding of others from different cultures. At higher levels, learners also develop the language skills necessary to reach their employment goals. As of the end of March, 2017, there are around 92 refugees in our LINC classes with 15 more awaiting class placement. All of them are waiting for childminding spaces to be able to attend class.

This year the ICA LINC program has implemented a new progression and exit assessment system. The new assessment system is called “Portfolio Based Language Assessment” (PBLA). The PBLA is a major shift in the way assessments are done moving away from standardized tests to ongoing in-class assessment.

The success of this past year’s program would not have been possible without the hard work of all members of the Language Services team and the many volunteers who assisted in the program, contributed their expertise, and made the students and their children feel welcome and comfortable.

LINC: LANGUAGE SERVICES

LINC: CHILDCARE CENTRE

Our licensed Childcare Centre at ICA provides quality childcare to the children of our clients attending English classes or Settlement workshops. It is our priority to provide a space where the children feel safe to explore, to learn, and to be part of a community. While it is not our mandate, we also aim to help support the children gain the skills they need to transition into the Canadian school system. We are able to work towards this goal in our play-based centre where we provide childcare for children from the age of 6 months up to 5 years old. These children enjoy programs delivered by a professional childcare team who provide many opportunities for learning through free-play, art, stories, cultural celebrations, interactive activities, and circle times.

This year we have provided care to almost 60 children. The majority of these children have been refugee children who have come into our care with very little English and who had just recently come to Canada.

As their first experience in their new country, we have had many opportunities to support the parents as well as the children settle into our program and their new lives here in Victoria.

Through our funder we are able to provide the children with healthy, nourishing snacks. This year our morning group of children participated in a weekly music class with a professional music teacher and our afternoon children enjoyed professional music classes that were offered to us through the Victoria Conservatory of Music as well as through the West Coast Reach Association. Three times this year our children have had their teeth checked by a dental hygienist right in our childcare center. The majority of these children received a fluoride treatment to help protect their teeth until they can receive further dental help. We were able to accommodate a behavioral interventionist twice a week who joined our group to support one of our children. We were also able to provide some support with Speech Therapy thanks to one of ICA’s volunteers who had a long career as a speech therapist. We worked with the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children’s Health who came to our center to assess children in our care and offer ongoing support.

This has been a very busy year full of change and many new experiences to navigate. The hard work and unwavering dedication of the childcare team made it possible to support our new families. We look forward to the challenges and triumphs that lay ahead in 2017-2018.
Newcomers participate in lessons on health and safety, take English language training (ESL), and learn how to interact in the Canadian Workplace and how to avoid pitfalls. Most classes are conducted in English, for extra English exposure and practice, and are translated into Arabic. Language support is provided throughout the program and into the workplace. Twelve very enthusiastic participants have been selected for the program and we look forward to following them on their journey to their first job in Canada.

The 2016-17 year has been a time for significant growth to the services and staffing in employment. While the Employment Program of BC has continued to support and serve the majority of clients seeking employment and training, our two new programs, the Refugee Training and Employment Program and Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants, has helped to bridge the gap for many newcomers.

The Refugee Training and Employment Program is an 8 week program for resettled Syrian Refugees. The program, in partnership with the British Columbia Alliance of Manufacturers (BCAM) and funded by the BC-Canada Job Fund, provides training and a guaranteed job offer in the manufacturing sector at the end of the 8 weeks of full-time preparation. Newcomers below their education and skill level, and need both financial help and information pertaining to their sector in Canada.

The program provides funded skills and academic upgrading, occupational specific language training, career preparation, and enables newcomers to gain valuable Canadian work experience through practicums and work experiences.

The Employment Program of BC (WorkBC) continues to serve the majority of our clients. Over this past year, 322 clients registered for case management services while the program itself saw 428 newcomers seeking assistance. Those not eligible for WorkBC were referred to other employment services, including: settlement employment services, mentorship, the Federal Internship for Newcomer’s program, and employment workshops on a variety of topics. Job seeker numbers were up from the previous year bringing the total numbers of newcomers clients served in employment programs to over 500 for the last fiscal year. This has been a busy and challenging year for the employment staff. Their professionalism and expertise in providing high quality services has created remarkable results and speaks volumes to their dedication. Much appreciation goes out to each and every member of the employment team whose support continues to change lives by assisting newcomers to integrate into the Canadian workplace.
The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) is a program that supports Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) resettle in Canada. ICA’s previous fiscal year marked the first arrivals of GARs through RAP.

On February 29, 2016, and over a one week period, we welcomed 154 refugees, made up of 40 families, fleeing the war in Syria. In addition to the first arrivals, marking the end of the 2015-2016 fiscal year, we were able to welcome 91 additional GARs composed of 28 families during this last one. Since the launch of the program ICA has welcomed a total of 245 GARs or 68 families.

GARs are financially supported by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for 12 months upon their day of landing in Canada. IRCC’s allowances can be described as a Federal Income Assistance program similar to BC Employment Assistance wages with the exception of the Interim Federal Health Program (IFH) and a startup Bonus. GARs have access to medical funding via IFH and in addition to the BC Medicare for services such as some dental care and eye care. In brief, the RAP program starts from initial reception at the airport until GAR’s are housed into permanent shelters. After GAR’s are placed in temporary accommodations/hotel sites they are run through a series of orientations to assist with the integration process to Canada. This includes a meet and greet and needs assessment, introduction to general safety guidelines within accommodations, individual client intakes, financial orientations, basic orientations to Canada, individual assessment and referral, housing search, special needs assistance (if required), medical screening, and finally a settlement action plan and transition to settlement services at ICA. Once they have been placed in their permanent shelter they are matched with a volunteer through our refugee volunteer matching program to assist with community integration. The RAP team consists of a Manager, Housing Coordinator and 2.5 RAP Worker positions with the possibility of adding more workers in the near future. Accomplishing all the components of RAP is something that involves support from many community members including Island Health, Greater Victoria school boards, partnering hotels, ICA volunteers and interpreters, recreation facilities, the private housing market and public housing societies such as Pacifica, CRD, and GVHS in addition to all ICA staff, and other service providers across the island in Duncan and Nanaimo as well as ICA community members.

Since the launch of the program, housing rental costs are continuously increasing and GAR benefits remain the same posing exceptional challenges in the permanent housing process. This has influenced the focus of housing on targeting other surrounding cities or towns in addition to Greater Victoria. Regardless, our Housing Coordinator and leadership team continuously make efforts to be innovative with our outreach strategies.

ICA’s RAP contract was extended into the new fiscal year with the hopes of welcoming 50 additional GARs in 3 months. We will continue applying best practices learned over the past year and streamline processes to work with clients, community members, and current staff to increase our knowledge and deliver the best possible assistance to GARs. RAP workers and all of the ICA staff team and volunteers have been able to create supportive and welcoming environment for GARs and continue to as we move forward being a RAP Service Provider Organization.
The end of fiscal year 2016/2017 marked 18 months since ICA first became a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH), authorized by the Government of Canada to facilitate the resettlement of refugees to Canada through private sponsorship groups. At the end of March 2016, it had been unclear whether it would be possible to sustain the high level of sponsorship interest that had marked the previous six months. ICA is heartened to have experienced continued high interest in the program, albeit at a more balanced pace, throughout the past year. During that year, ICA welcomed an additional 48 persons to Victoria. This brings the total of privately-sponsored refugees who have arrived since September 2015 to 73.

During the past year, the first 25 newcomers finished their sponsorship year. With the help of their sponsors and additional settlement support through ICA, they managed the transition well. All of them work full-time or part-time, and the majority pursue further studies – either to refine their English, prepare for postsecondary studies, or to recertify in their occupation.

Starting in November 2016, ICA has been able to respond to the request by Constituent Groups for regular peer-to-peer support meetings. The bi-monthly CG meetings have been well attended and serve as a venue for ICA to provide updates on changes to the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program at the federal level, or changes to internal practices and procedures. CGs also take advantage of the opportunity to learn from other groups that may have found creative solutions to challenges common to all sponsorships. ICA is fortunate to have received a grant from Innoweave to carry out developmental evaluation of the PSR program. Two coaches are working with ICA to engage a few privately-sponsored newcomer families and CGs in a learning project with the goal to optimize management of the PSR program as it matures.

Over the past year, global interest in the Canadian Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program has continued to grow.

Several countries are now looking to Canada to receive advice on launching their own community sponsorship programs. ICA is grateful to all Victorians who have responded in such large numbers and have made a difference in the lives of people displaced by violent conflict. We continue to look for sponsors as family members in Victoria from a range of nationalities try to bring their loved ones living as refugees in different parts of the world to safety.
The Community Integration Program was implemented in September 2016. The program objective is to improve the ability of resettled refugees to integrate into the community by enhancing the capacity of community stakeholders, service providers, and refugees themselves.

**RESEARCH AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Research was conducted on issues affecting refugee resettlement including the Interim Federal Health Program and dental services, housing, the Provincial Language Service Line for health care providers, and the Canadian - BC Job Grant, Refugee Fund. The research assisted the ICA employment department to create a successful partnership with the BC Alliance for Manufacturing for a Canada-BC Job Grant. Additionally, research on the Provincial Language Service Line has encouraged the South Island Division of Family Practice to cover the costs of interpretation service for family physicians with refugee and immigrant patients. Resources were developed for ICA staff and community stakeholders on community assets for refugee resettlement and post-secondary options for refugee students transitioning out of high school.

**WE SPEAK TRANSLATE**

From September 2016, through the end of March 2017, the Community Integration Program has been collaborating with Google Translate to launch the first of its kind initiative utilizing the Google Translate App for refugee resettlement and new immigrant inclusion in the Greater Victoria region. The We Speak Translate project launched in April of 2017.

**COMMUNITY INTEGRATION**

**BUILDING AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

Promotional videos were created highlighting the contributions of two community partners and their efforts assisting in the resettling of Syrian refugees. Social media and ICA e-newsletter (Tapestry) contributions highlighted challenges and successes in refugee integration sustaining the refugee agenda in the minds of the Greater Victoria community. Training was delivered to Island Health public health nurses to improve their capacity to provide culturally sensitive health care to resettled Syrian refugees.

**REFUGEE READINESS TABLES**

The Community Integration Coordinator was involved in refugee readiness tables on matters of health, employment, education, and housing of resettled refugees to Greater Victoria. The opportunity to connect with community stakeholders allowed for the development of tangible strategies to support essential sectors integrate resettled refugees.

**CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY ASSETS**

In partnership with the BC Technology for Learning Society, over 140 desktop computers were distributed to ICA clients including resettled refugees and new immigrants. A partnership with Refugee Partners culminated in donated items valued over $10,000 for refugee families throughout the month of December 2016.
POLICE & DIVERSE COMMUNITIES: ANTI-BIAS TRAINING

This project was created as a collaboration between the Victoria Police Department and ICA to explore the relationship between the police and ethno-cultural community members as a way to build trust and reduce the likelihood of discrimination. Issues, gaps, and barriers related to cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity were identified and created into scenes that were workshopped and presented at police training and community sessions.

It was funded by the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of International Trade.

“I was so surprised to see police acting and challenging their status quo. Bravo! They are reaching out to the community. The seminar addressed very sensitive issues in a very safe way. Everyone could feel included, acknowledged, and respected.” – Community Member

“I truly believe a lot of growth, respect, and trust has been created between the two groups...I think a conversation has been started, one that will hopefully spread throughout the community.” – Police Member

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

ICA Volunteer Services focuses on building connections between the Greater Victoria community and immigrant and refugee newcomers. Through their experience at ICA, volunteers are enriched with greater awareness of the immigration and settlement process, and obtain greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures. Given this, volunteers are better able to assist newcomers in achieving their goals.

Newcomers gain greater insight into Canadian culture, norms and systems, become connected to people and services in the community, and are also afforded an opportunity to practice speaking English in a supportive and welcoming environment.

These connections and insights enable newcomers to participate in the broader community more independently and gain increased capacity to meet personal goals.

Over this past year, we offered a wide range of volunteer positions in the following areas: Board of Directors, Career Mentoring, Citizenship Classes, Conversation Buddy Program, Conversation Circles, Daycare, Employment Services, Income Tax, Legal Consulting, Life Skills Classes (e.g., cooking, parenting), Office Support, One-on-One and Family Matching (Community Connections), Outreach Fairs, Peer Support Groups, Pen Pals, Photography, Settlement Services, Special Events, Teacher’s Assistants in English Language Classes, Teacher’s Resource Room, and Youth Services Programs.

It was a particularly active and exciting year for our Community Connections Program which contributed to the resettlement of Government Assisted Refugees, and majority of whom are from Syria. This program helps refugees to Canada overcome the stress of moving to a new country by giving them the opportunity to learn more about Canadian life and culture, practice English socially, and establish friendships and support. The program provided individual and family matching for newly arrived Government Assisted Refugees as well as immigrants in general who were not newly arrived.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to each of our 200 volunteers for their commitment of time, energy and enthusiasm.

For this, we are truly grateful.
ARTS AND OUTREACH: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

in partnership with the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OCTIP) to organize a two-day workshop on Addressing Human Trafficking. Held in December 2016, this in-depth workshop brought together more than 40 regional stakeholders including law enforcement, First Nations, government, health providers, women’s groups, youth organizations, academics, cultural and faith groups, community service providers, and immigrant settlement agencies. This workshop provided participants with the tools, knowledge, and resources to effectively prevent, and respond in a coordinated manner, to the issue of trafficked persons in the Greater Victoria region.

ARTS AND OUTREACH: INTER-CULTURAL ARTS

PERSPECTIVES ON FAITH & IDENTITY: A DIALOGUE CLOSE TO HOME

Following on the success a 2015 youth driven film project by the same name, ICA received additional funding from BC Gaming to coordinate in-depth conversations with young adults around the subjects of cultural identity and spirituality. Each dialogue session started with the screening of the original 20 minute documentary created in 2015, followed by global café style conversations facilitated by the five young filmmakers whose stories were featured in the film. Numerous personal stories and experiences were shared with the hope of increasing understanding on the issues of race, ethnicity, faith, inclusion, and acceptance.

"It was a heartfelt, inclusive, thought-provoking, and inspiring event. We need to continue having these important conversations!" – Youth Participant

"As an immigrant in Canada, many of the topics that were discussed were immensely relevant to me, especially in a time where so many people focus on stereotyping and cultural and religious divisiveness. Discussions on appreciating individual differences and finding a sense of connection is much needed!" – Youth Participant

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

The Community Partnership Network (CPN) is a network of local businesses and organizations coordinated by ICA. The CPN is dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in Greater Victoria. The 2016-17 year saw the CPN continue to grow with more than 30 new organizations joining the network.

CPN DIVERSITY TRAINING AND EDUCATION

CPN members continued to take advantage of opportunities to learn and engage with ICA’s diversity education program. A number of cross cultural competency workshops were delivered to a range of CPN members, including: Corrections Canada, Sport for Life Society, Cedar Hill Recreation Centre, Victoria Conference Centre, Greater Victoria Police Services, among others.

In addition to the diversity workshops offered throughout the year, ICA and the CPN worked in partnership with the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OCTIP) to organize a two-day workshop on Addressing Human Trafficking. Held in December 2016, this in-depth workshop brought together more than 40 regional stakeholders including law enforcement, First Nations, government, health providers, women’s groups, youth organizations, academics, cultural and faith groups, community service providers, and immigrant settlement agencies. This workshop provided participants with the tools, knowledge, and resources to effectively prevent, and respond in a coordinated manner, to the issue of trafficked persons in the Greater Victoria region.

CPN THRIVING WITH DIVERSITY SEMINAR SERIES

Thanks to funding from the United Way of Greater Victoria, the CPN was able to deliver two Diversity Seminars for CPN members. More than 150 CPN and community members attended these half day learning sessions. The first seminar "Police and Diverse Communities
ARTS AND OUTREACH: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Theatre Project” was hosted in June 2016. This engaging seminar utilized transformational theatre to explore relationships between ethnocultural community members and police. The second seminar, “Understanding the Cultural and Faith Practices of Syrian Refugees” was held in February 2017 at the Pacific Opera Victoria Centre and featured a panel discussion that included the local Imam from the Masjid Al-Iman.

GREATERTHERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY PROGRAM (GVLIP)

Building on the work of the CPN, the Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership (GVLIP) continued to develop its community-based partnership and put in place key elements of the framework for a regional immigration strategy. Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the GVLIP received key research undertaken and completed in partnership with the UVic Faculty of Social Sciences. Strategic planning consultant Keith Jones guided the GVLIP through the key steps that saw the development of a strategic framework and action plan. In Spring 2017, the GVLIP issued a Challenge Paper to more than 350 community stakeholders to gather their feedback on how the GVLIP can best develop.

SAFE HARBOR PROGRAM

Safe Harbour is a province-wide program coordinated by the BC Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA). Safe Harbour offers basic online and face-to-face diversity training to local businesses and agencies. In 2016-17, Safe Harbour continued to undergo a restructuring of its service delivery model and is now offered on a fee-for-service basis.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP NETWORK MEMBERS

APRIL 2016 - MARCH 2017

*Denotes new CPN members in 2016-2017
- 1Up Single Parent Resource Centre
- Accent Inns
- African Eloquence Project
- African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island (AHAVI)
- Archipelago Marine Research Group*
- BalletVictoria
- Batchelor Stamm Law Corporation
- Bayanhan (Filipino) Cultural and Housing Society
- BC Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
- BC Families in Transition
- BC Ministry of Finance*
- BC Muslim Association of Victoria
- BC Public Service - Ministry of Attorney General
- Beacon Community Services
- Becon Support Services
- Belfry Theatre
- Better Choices Staffing Ltd.
- Black History Awareness Society
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria
- Brentwood and Peninsula Physiotherapy
- British Columbia Justice Institute
- Burnside Gorge Community Association
- Camosun College
- Camosun College International
- Canada Safeway
- Canada Safeway Pharmacy
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Corps of Commissionaires
- Capital Mental Health Association (CMHA)
- Capital Regional District (CRD)
- Central Saanich Police Services
- Cerelina Day Spa
- Chartwell Ross Place Retirement Residence
- CHEK TV
- Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Centre
- Children’s Museum of Victoria Association
- Chinese Women’s Association
- City of Light Church
- City of Victoria
- City of Victoria Parks and Recreation
- City of Victoria Youth Council
- Coastal Counselling and Consulting Services
- Collaborative Journeys
- Coma Communication
- Community and Environment Consultant
- Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria
- Community Living Victoria
- Community Options for Children and Families Society
- Comox Valley Multicultural Society (Associate Member)
- Cook Street Village Activity Centre
- Correctional Services of Canada - William Head Correctional Facility
- Corrections Canada-Parole Division*
- Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (CCIR) *
- Cridge Centre for the Family
- Cultivate Counselling Services*
- Department of Defense- Esquimalt
- Designature
- Development and Peace International
- Didi Society
- Douglas Magazine/Page One Publishing
- Ethno Concepts
- Exceptional Wealth Mgt. Canada*
- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association
- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association*
- First United Metropolitan Church
- For the Love of Africa
- Fort Victoria RV Park
- Francophone Immigration Program
- Garth Homer Society
- George Jay Elementary School*
- Glen Lyon Norfolk School
- Global Village Store
- GMG Consulting Services
- Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Victoria for Peace & Intercultural Celebrations
- Greater Victoria Police Victim Support Services
- Greater Victoria Public Library
- GT Hiring Solutions
- Harbour Towers Hotel
- Heart and Hands Health Collective
- Here! Magazine
- Here! Magazine*
- Home Depot
- House of the World- Immigrant/ Women Co-op*
- HP Advanced Solutions Inc.
- Immigrant Employee Support Networks (IESN)*
- In Depth Group*
- Independent Living Housing Society
- Indigenous Perspectives Society
- Integra Support
- Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA)
- Intrepid Theatre*
- Island Health-Public Health Nursing*
- Island Savings Credit Union
- Island Tranz and Queerislandz Centre
- James Bay Community Project
- James Bay New Horizons
- James Bay United Church
- Justice Education Society of BC*
- Kanakas Total Gardens
- Kathi R. Thompson, Intercultural Training*
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP NETWORK MEMBERS
APRIL 2016 - MARCH 2017

• Kenyan Cultural Association
• La Société Francophone de Victoria
• Laurel Point Inn
• Lifetime Networks
• Literacy Outreach
• Literacy Victoria
• Little Friends Day Care*
• Marion Machine Company*
• Mary Manning Centre
• Mary Winspear Centre
• Mason Street Farm
• McAllister Marketing
• Ministry of Education
• Modo the Car Co-op*
• Multiracial Families Project
• NEED2
• NexGen Hearing
• Oak Bay Police
• Options for Children and Family Society
• OUR EcoVillage
• Ovarian Cancer Canada
• Pacific Coast Community Resources
• Pacific Opera Victoria*
• Pacifica Housing Society
• Pearson College*
• Persian Business Network*
• Phoenix Human Services Association
• Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society
• Primcom Ventures Ltd.
• Ptarmigan Music and Theatre Society
• Public Works and Government Services Canada*
• Quadra Day Village Association*
• RCMP Sidney and North Saanich
• Ready to Rent
• Recreation Oak Bay*
• Red Cross - Pacific Coastal Region
• Red Seal Recruiting Solutions
• Remax Camosun College
• Royal Bank of Canada - Uptown Branch
• Royal British Columbia Museum (RBBCM)
• Royal Canadian Navy
• RT Prime Manufacturing
• Saanich Municipality
• Saanich Parks and Recreation
• Saanich Police Department
• Saint Bakhita Anakdiar Peace Foundation
• Saint Elizabeth Health Career College*
• Sandler Training*
• Seniors Serving Seniors Association of BC
• Shaw Communications*
• Sheikhinah Homes Society
• Sidney and North Saanich Memorial Park Society
• Silver Threads Victoria and Saanich
• Skilled Trades Employment Program (STEP)

• Songhees First Nation
• Sooke RCM
• Sport For Life*
• Stopping.On*
• UVic Peter Gustavson School of Business*
• Vector Marketing*
• Sooke School District
• South Island Catholic Schools
• Spiritual Assembly of Bahai Saanich
• Spiritual Assembly of Bahai Victoria
• STS Pain Pharmacy Services
• Success By 6
• Ten Thousand Villages
• TheYou in You Consulting
• Township of Sidney
• United Way of Greater Victoria
• University of Victoria, Human Rights and Equity Office
• University of Victoria, Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (ISICUE)
• University of Victoria, International and Exchange Student Services
• University of Victoria, International Office
• University of Victoria, School of Child and Youth Care
• VanCity Savings
• Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA)
• Victoria Chinese Seniors Association
• Victoria Hospice
• Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)
• Victoria International Development and Education Association (VIDEA)
• Victoria Iranian and Persian Society
• Victoria Micro Lending Society
• Victoria Police Department
• Victoria Real Estate Board (VREB)
• Victoria School District #61
• Victoria Women’s Sexual Assault Centre
• View Street Pharmacy
• WestShore Chamber of Commerce
• Westshore Parks and Recreation
• Westshore RCM
• Westshore Yoga
• Young Parents Support Network

FUNDERS 2016-2017

• Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (formerly Citizenship and Immigration Canada)
• BC Ministry of Children and Family Development
• BC Ministry of Finance – Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch
• BC Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism
• BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
• BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction - Employment Program of BC
• BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General - Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons
• United Way of Greater Victoria
• Service Canada
• Canadian Red Cross
• Capital Regional District
• J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
• VanCity Community Foundation - Innoweave
• Victoria Foundation
• Wheeler Family Foundation
• The Hamber Foundation
PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

- Accent Inns
- Anglican Diocese of BC
- BC Alliance for Manufacturing
- BC Housing
- BC Technology for Learning Society
- BC Transit
- The Belfry Theatre
- Camosun College
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation – Union members
- Canadian Red Cross – BC & Yukon
- Capital Regional District
- Compost Education or Lifecycles
- Fernwood Community Association
- The Fig Mediterranean Deli
- First Metropolitan United Church
- Frontrunners
- Global Village Store
- Google Translate
- Greater Victoria Housing Society
- Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee
- Here! Magazine
- ISSofBC
- Island Health (Vancouver Island Health Authority)
- Landlord BC
- Masjid Al-Iman
- Market on Yates
- McAllister Marketing
- North Park Bicycle Shop
- Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OCTIP)
- Pacific Opera Victoria
- Pacifica Housing Society
- Power to Be
- Queen Alexandra Centre for Children’s Health
- Refugee Partners
- Royal BC Museum
- Royal Roads University
- Saanich Parks and Recreation
- School Districts 61, 62, & 63
- South Island Multicultural Outreach Counselling Program
- Sport for Life Society
- Thrifty Foods
- University of Victoria
- VanCity
- Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees
- Victoria Conservatory of Music
- Westshore Parks and Recreation

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- REVENUES $5,999,534
- GRANTS & CONTRACTS $5,845,760
- OTHER INCOME & INTEREST $26,582
- FEES FOR SERVICES $100,453
- FUNDRAISING $26,739
- EXPENSES $5,742,617
- STAFF $4,011,650
- OPERATING EXPENSES $1,727,923
- FUNDRAISING $3,044
The Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria helps individuals and organizations to connect across cultures. We provide information, support, and tools to help immigrants reach their goals. By engaging people through networks, education, and arts programming we create a welcoming community.