

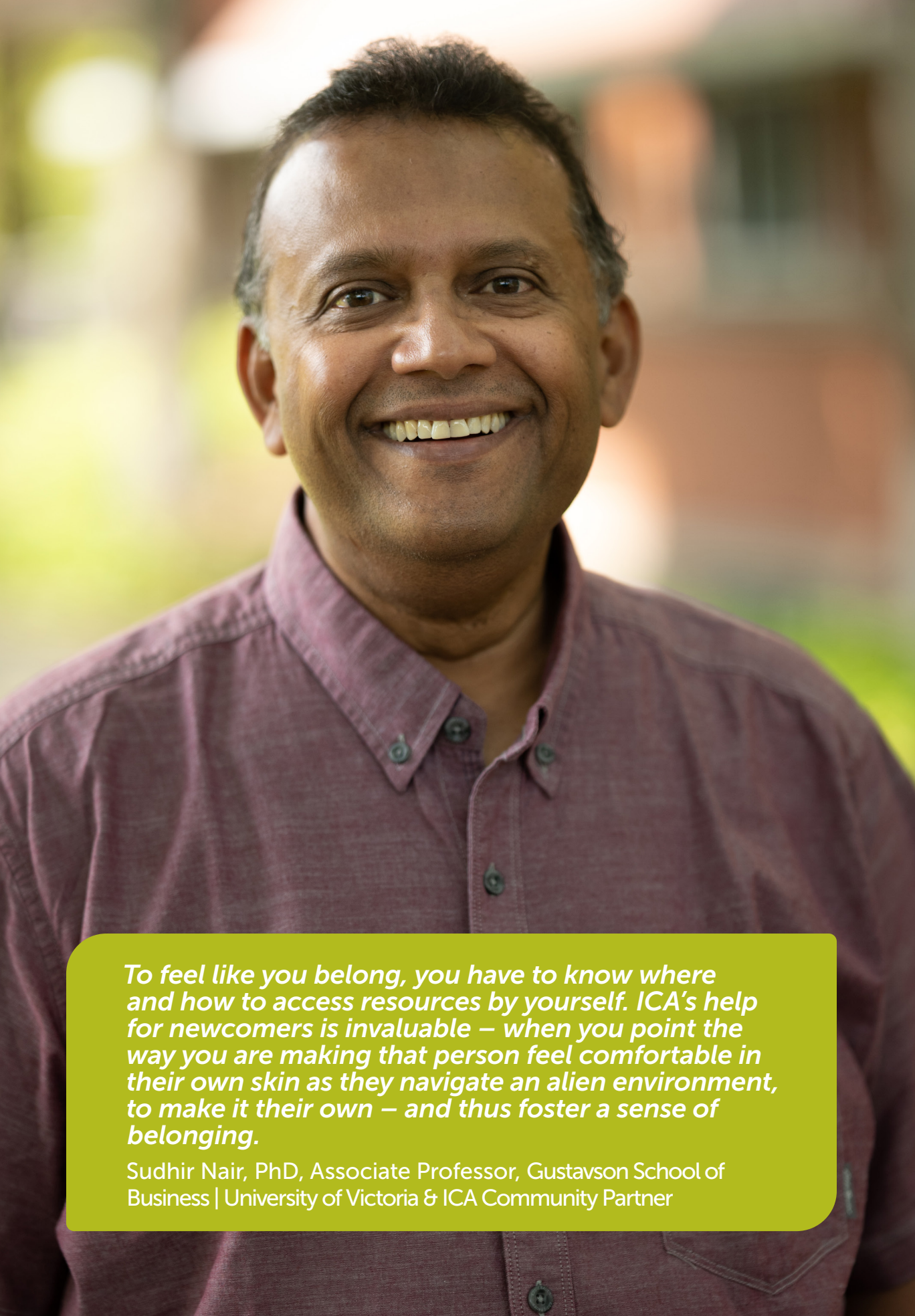


Inter-Cultural  
Association  
of Greater Victoria

# Impact Report

2022 / 2023





## Letter from CEO & President

Belonging is a seemingly simple word that evokes images and feelings of being with those who honour and value you; those who care for and love you; participating and sharing the skills and talents that are uniquely yours, and doing so in a way that contributes to the overall wellbeing of yourself and those around you.

Creating a sense of belonging is at the core of everything we do at ICA. With over **30** programs and services, we served **2786** clients last year and worked alongside more than **500** partners, community agencies, and amazing donors like you. Together, we made a lasting impact on so many people.

Whether fleeing the war in Ukraine, persecution for personal identity or to further one's education, ICA is here to support each newcomer who walks through our doors and to build connections that support a strong, thriving community.

In this year's Impact Report, we share the inspiring stories of our clients, partners, and supporters. By reading these stories, we hope you can see how ICA has positively impacted newcomers in the community. Looking ahead, we remain committed to creating a community that is a place of welcome for all.

***We are proud of our past accomplishments and expect even more demand for our services in the future. You can help!***

ICA envisions a future where everyone can thrive, prosper, and find belonging. But we can't do it alone. We need your continued support to make this vision a reality. Together, we can build a stronger and more inclusive community.

Thank you for your unwavering support. Let's continue to create a community of safety, equity, and belonging.



**Shelly D'Mello**  
CEO



**Toby Louie**  
Board President

*To feel like you belong, you have to know where and how to access resources by yourself. ICA's help for newcomers is invaluable – when you point the way you are making that person feel comfortable in their own skin as they navigate an alien environment, to make it their own – and thus foster a sense of belonging.*

Sudhir Nair, PhD, Associate Professor, Gustavson School of Business | University of Victoria & ICA Community Partner

Cover Image:

Patience Batamuliza with sponsor, Robin Stevenson





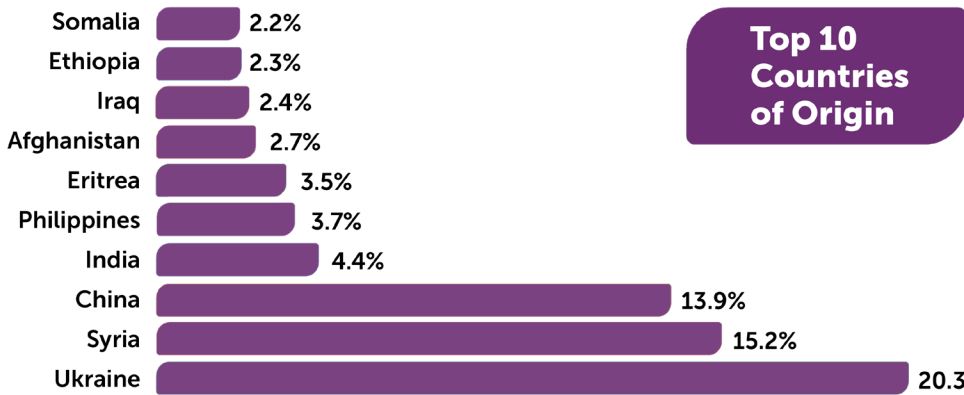
Photo: LINC Year End Potluck, Beacon Hill Park

*ICA helps to ensure that immigrants have a strong sense of belonging, worth, identity and are valued, contributing members of society.*

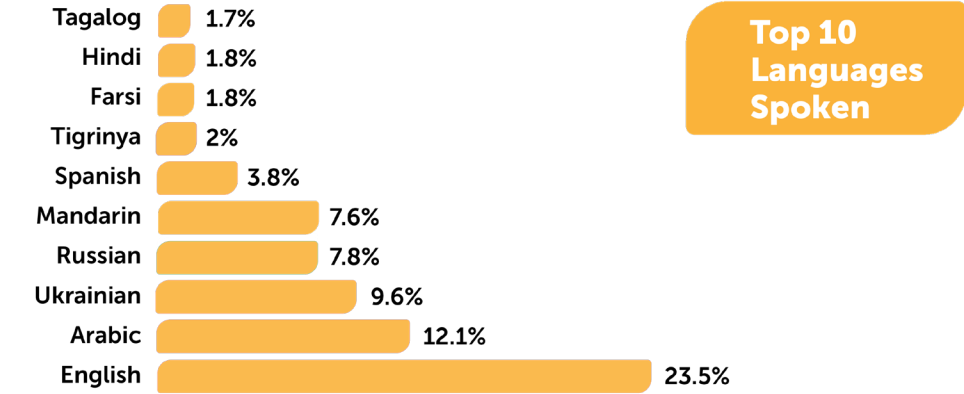
# Who We Serve

Last year ICA saw a **31%** increase in clients seeking settlement services including displaced Ukrainians.

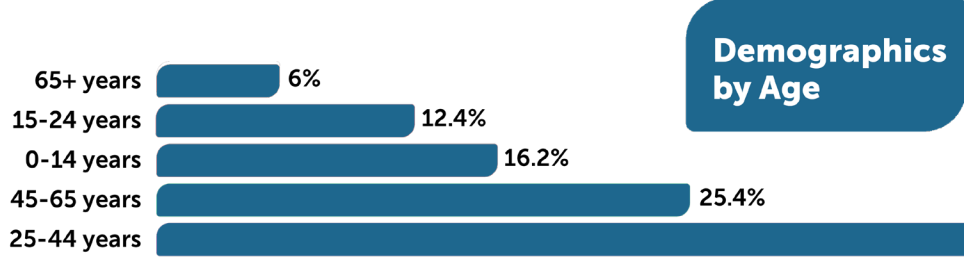
## Clients Served: 2786



**Top 10 Countries of Origin**



**Top 10 Languages Spoken**



**Demographics by Age**





*I'm thankful for those who donated and helped my family come to Canada and helped us find our freedom. If those people didn't help us, I wouldn't have my basic rights of freedom. Even one dollar can help people's lives.*

Sediqa, ICA's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

## Welcoming / Safety / Inclusion / Belonging

ICA's commitment to welcoming newcomers dates back five decades to 1971 when the organization was founded to host Folk Fest and bring diverse communities together.

Our work to provide direct support to refugees began in 1975 with the arrival of people fleeing the war in Vietnam. In 2015, our commitment to working with refugees deepened with the Syrian crisis when we became a **Sponsorship Agreement Holder** and began our **Private Sponsorship of Refugees** program. ICA is also a **Resettlement Assistance Program** provider, to resettle Government-Assisted Refugees in partnership with Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada.

Over the last 8 years, ICA has welcomed **1026** refugees and in 2022/23 supported **538** displaced Ukrainians to Greater Victoria.

**538**  
displaced  
Ukrainians

**1026**  
refugee  
arrivals since 2015

**51%** of clients have  
refugee backgrounds  
or displaced Ukrainians

We are working closely with local Ukrainian associations to provide on-the-ground support and create a coordinated response for Ukrainians arriving on Vancouver Island.

The success of welcoming refugees to Greater Victoria is due to the dedication of hundreds of community sponsors and donors and the compassion and empathy of local service providers and businesses. And the skills, talents and determination of refugees to rebuild their lives here, brings this success and cultural vibrancy back to the community.





Photo: Farzan Esmailzadeh, 2023 Victoria Pride Parade

*Many from the LGBTQ2S+ community have fled their home countries due to persecution or discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. They arrive in a new country hoping for acceptance and safety, but the journey does not end there.*

*At Q+ Crew, I have found the sense of community and belonging that I was hoping for.*

Farzan Esmailzadeh, Q+ Crew Participant

## Welcoming / **Safety** / Inclusion / Belonging

When a newcomer walks through the doors at ICA, they find a safe and inclusive space with caring staff ready to help them navigate their new home.

ICA's staff speak more than **41** languages, and many come from refugee or immigrant backgrounds. With more than **110** staff from different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds our staff become the cultural navigators bridging the customs and social norms of home cultures and those of Canadian society. Staff become trusted allies to access supportive community services. The importance of this can't be underestimated, especially for the many immigrants and refugees who arrive here on their own.

**30+**  
client  
programs

**41** languages  
spoken by  
ICA staff

**110+**  
staff from diverse  
backgrounds

When newcomers experience domestic violence or are navigating issues of gender identity or sexual orientation, language and culture are critical.

ICA recently created a position specifically designed to develop programs and staff training, to support newcomers dealing with gender-based violence which has increased significantly since the onset of COVID-19. What this means is we identify the best place to get counseling or emergency housing, go with them to appointments to be a support and interpreter, and help create safety plans. All of this is done by skilled, compassionate ICA staff members.

This is just one example of how ICA's diverse staff can help people feel safe and have a sense of belonging in their new community. By being someone newcomers can trust and confide in, they are able to address complex challenges and move forward with greater success.



**1000**

people received  
our Bystander  
Intervention Training

**28%**

increase in client  
services

**628**

students improved  
their English language  
skills in LINC classes

**\$500k**

bequest received

**330**

workshop and training  
sessions delivered

**250+**

dental services  
provided to clients



**700+**

clients supported  
by our Settlement  
Workers in Schools  
program

**46%**

increase in volunteer  
hours in support of  
ICA programs

**255**

clients received  
employment  
program support

**2786** Newcomers  
Receiving Settlement  
+ Support Services





## Welcoming / Safety / **Inclusion** / Belonging

From a warm welcome to increased safety, ICA's services support newcomers through all stages of integration and settlement in their new community. But to reach this goal there must also be true equity and access to services like housing and healthcare.

Our Employment Services programs such as the **Game Changer** youth employment program and the **Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants** offer specialized support that bridge the skills that newcomers bring to the labour market with the needs of local employers.

**115** attended  
**employment  
summit**

**90+**  
**GVLIP  
partners**

**7** specialized  
**employment  
programs**

*The staff at ICA have given me such dedicated support and guidance, it made an enormous difference.*

*In the two weeks after graduating from ICA's Game Changer program, I had nine interviews and was offered a job as an intern architect. Thank you, ICA.*

Yasmin Hassan, Game Changer program graduate

Access to services and job opportunities alone is not enough. The Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership (GVLIP) works with over **90** community leaders and organizations across the region to address hiring practices and racism in the workplace, improve access to healthcare services, housing solutions, and better educational opportunities. The challenges the region faces are complex and multi-faceted requiring input from newcomers, service providers and all levels of government to create lasting solutions.

This is just one way ICA is building partnerships and leading efforts that will help everyone in the long term.





*When I first arrived in Canada, it was the people at ICA that gave me the sense of community and belonging I needed to start making my life here.*

Ash Moosavi, Academic Program Manager, University of Victoria

## Welcoming / Safety / Inclusion / **Belonging**

Learning a new language isn't easy but, for newcomers it is critical to opening doors to employment, developing community connections, accessing services and deepening their sense of belonging.

Our highly skilled Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) team ensures newcomer students develop strong language skills that help them become full participants in the community.

Each week, ICA conducts **35** English language classes with more than **650** students annually.

These classes also help orient students to civic life in Canada including an understanding of Canada's treatment of Indigenous Peoples and the importance of reconciliation.

The classroom experience helps build confidence, and empowers newcomers to advocate for themselves, and develop community relationships.

But belonging is also so much more.

**23**

**language  
teachers**

**35**

**language  
classes** weekly

**650+**

**language  
students**

When we welcome newcomers into the community, we must all work together to increase their safety, support their skills and understanding of how to navigate new systems, and embrace the vibrancy of cultural differences. With your help, we can create equitable pathways for immigrants and refugees to be contributing members of the community where they are valued.

When you know you can show up as your true self and are valued by your social group, workplace, and community, you become the best version of yourself.

Together, we all flourish.





*I got to speak my truth to a packed theatre, doing my best not to let it impact me in negative ways. I let the pain out, left it on the floor and really made people think about our reality. But it was healing cuz through resilience, Kkanada, I'm still alive.*

Alex Taylor-McCallum  
Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth Artist performing at im:print 2022

Photo: im:print 2022 by Leon Fei

## ICA Arts

The power of storytelling and shared human connection through the arts has been part of ICA's work since the early days of FolkFest and the Luminara Lantern Festival. We have used the arts to bring people together to reduce racism and increase understanding across different cultures.

Following on from the success of **im:print 2019**; in October last year, we staged **im:print 2022**, a powerful, intersectional theatre production that explored challenging topics through Indigenous, immigrant, refugee and settler storytelling. More than **800** people attended six incredible performances at the University of Victoria's Phoenix Theatre.

*"I'm so pleased to have seen last night's performance, powerful, thought provoking and an example of how the arts can invite people in to tackle difficult social challenges and conversations. Please extend my gratitude to the entire cast and support team for creating and performing such impactful theatre."* Audience Feedback

*"I saw the last im:print in 2019 and I wasn't expecting you to top that! Such a strong show this year, wow. A lot more Indigenous content, which is great to see. That young Indigenous man's performance in the beginning was so powerful. All white people should see that!"*

Audience Feedback

We are working to develop our arts for equity programming with client centered programs alongside opportunities to engage the whole community through collaborative arts projects such as **im:print 2024**.

### Arts Program Objectives:

- Support entrepreneurs for diverse & immigrant artists.
- Showcase immigrant stories & highlight the assets they bring.
- Support clients with arts enrichment projects.

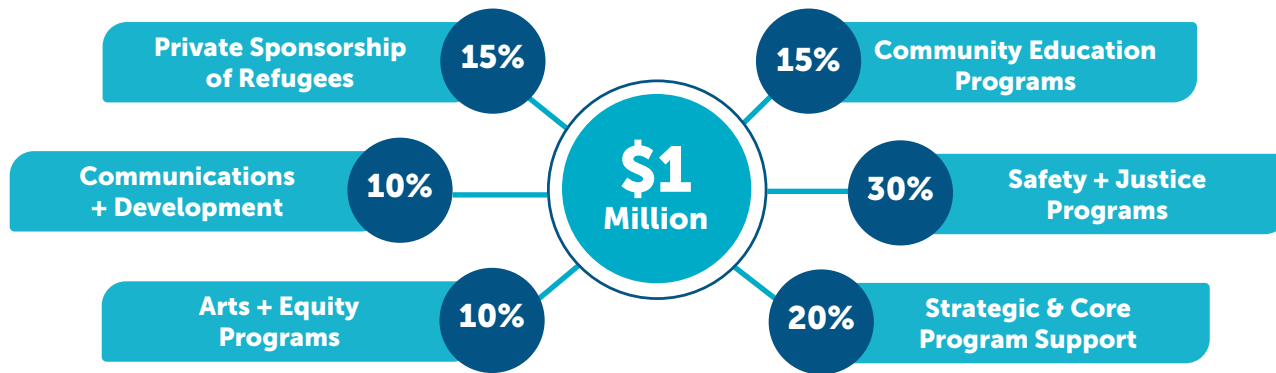
We look forward to sharing more with you as we develop final plans for this exciting program!



## Finances

Providing top notch support to newcomers is ICA's top priority. Our work is largely funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Province of BC. However, many critical services are not fully funded which is why ICA counts on the support from donors like you.

This year we need to raise **\$1 million** from individuals and foundations to fund the following crucial services:



### ICA Budget: 2023/ 2024

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>10,926,296</b>
Federal	7,882,674
Provincial	1,528,309
Grants	543,559
Fee for Service	196,300
*Donations & Other Income	755,454
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>10,929,296</b>
Immigrant & Language Services	6,309,587
Refugee Services	1,360,205
Employment Services	1,315,563
Arts & Community Engagement	1,535,941
Strategic & Core Program Support	405,000

\*Includes \$500,000 bequest

## You Can Make A Difference

Imagine a community where every newcomer feels like they truly belong, where their contributions are valued and celebrated. This is the vision that drives ICA's work.

When you support ICA, you contribute to a more inclusive, diverse, and welcoming community. Your gift directly impacts our private sponsorship program, education, and arts programming, helping newcomers successfully make Greater Victoria their new home.

Your generosity fosters greater understanding, creates stronger cross-cultural connections, and ensures that immigrants and refugees have the support they need to thrive.

With your help, ICA can continue to be a helping hand, a listening ear, and a tireless advocate for immigrants and refugees throughout Greater Victoria.

### Here's how you can make a difference:

- **Make a one-time or monthly donation today using the enclosed envelope or by giving online.**
- **Donate through your donor advised fund.**
- **Make a gift of stocks or mutual funds.**
- **Remember immigrants and refugees by naming ICA in your will.**

Thank you for believing in the power of our mission. Together, we can create a community where everyone feels like they belong.

For more information about how you can make a difference, please contact us:

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Phone: 250.388.4728

Web: [icavictoria.org](http://icavictoria.org)

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**Join us in working  
together for a  
community where  
everyone belongs.  
[icavictoria.org](http://icavictoria.org)**



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