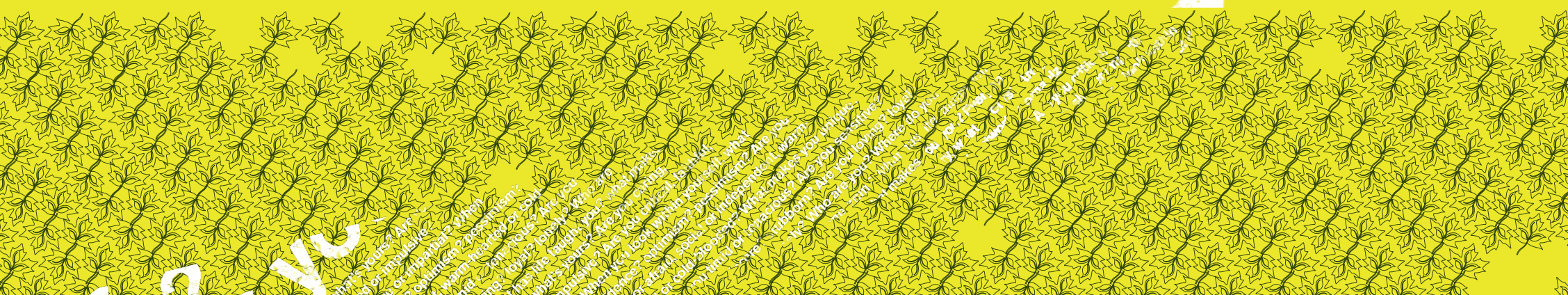


Everyone has a story, what's yours?
Are you caring, trustworthy, organized or impulsive?
Are you critical, faithful, decisive or impartial?
When you look within yourself, what do you see?
confidence? optimism? pessimism?
Are you courageous or afraid,
social or independent,
warm-hearted or cold-blooded?
What makes you unique?
Are you timid or tenacious?
Are you sensitive? sincere? stubborn?
Are you loving? loyal? lonely?
Who are you?
Where do you come from?
What has life taught you?

what
makes
you,
you?

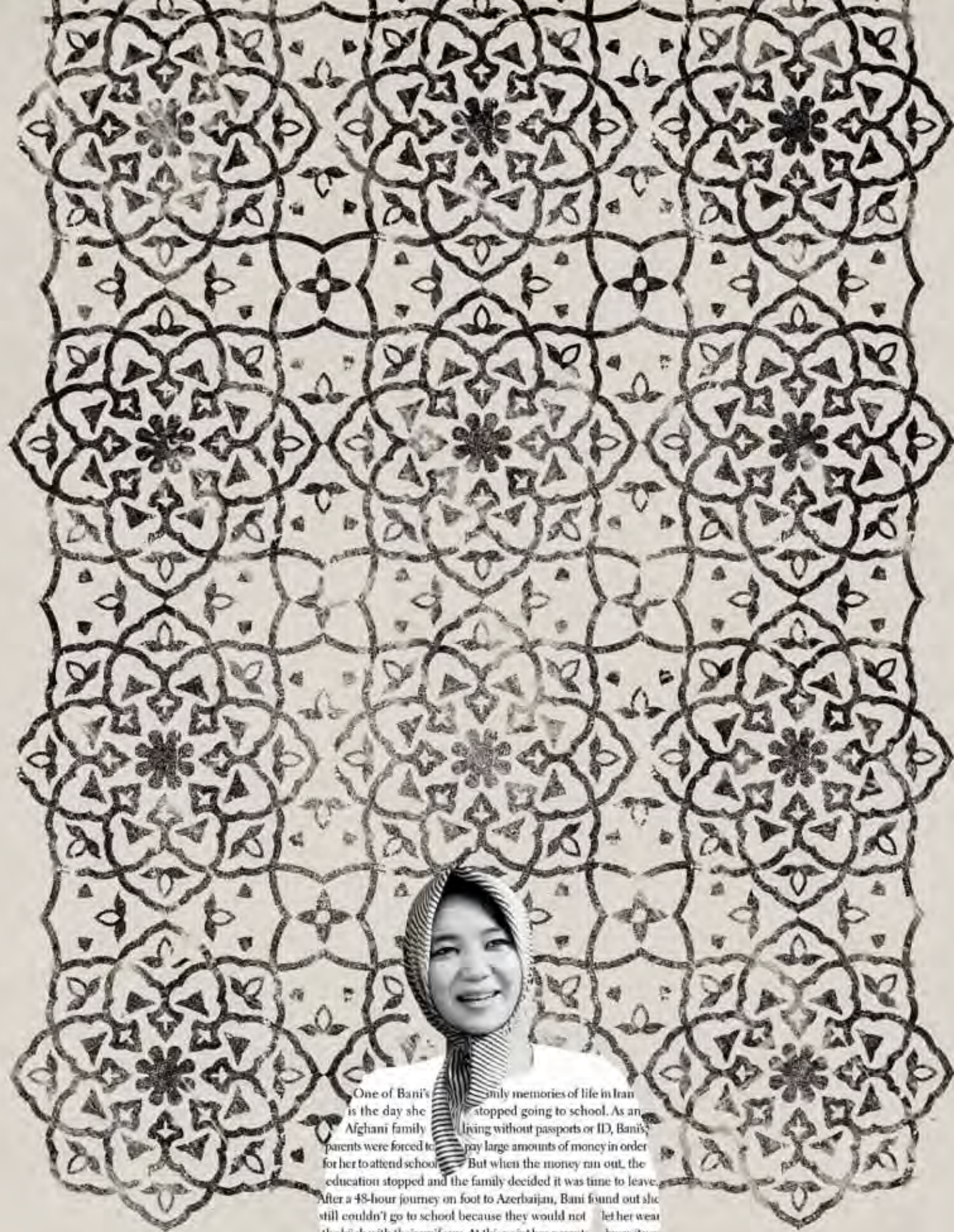


the quiet
artist
contends
that
although
she never
had a
strong
cultural
background,

she has
created
one.



It was 1967 when Lyn fell in love with the exotic western beauty of Calgary. And while Lyn and her husband had spent years calling everywhere from Australia and the US to Mexico and England "home", Lyn couldn't help but feel like she still didn't have one. But roots were eventually firmly planted in Bragg Creek, where Lyn would fall in love for a second time. Only this time it was with her craft. In 1975, Lyn signed up for a weaving class and what started off as a hobby, soon became a calling. Now a Fibre Instructor at the Alberta College of Art and Design, **Lyn loves to encourage students to experiment in their work, believing there is no wrong way of creating.** Contributing heavily to the cultural fabric of our community through her own work as well as her involvement with various craft guilds and councils.



One of Bani's only memories of life in Iran is the day she stopped going to school. As an Afghan family living without passports or ID, Bani's parents were forced to pay large amounts of money in order for her to attend school. But when the money ran out, the education stopped and the family decided it was time to leave. After a 48-hour journey on foot to Azerbaijan, Bani found out she still couldn't go to school because they would not let her wear the hijab with their uniform. At this point her parents knew it was time to take her to a place where she was free to learn. Canada. Life in Canada felt like a dream to Bani. And despite starting Grade 11 with just a Grade 5 equivalent, she knew that her biggest difficulties in life were already behind her. She pushed herself, chipping away at the course requirements, working full-time on top of her hectic school schedule until her own dream became a reality. Bani happily received an acceptance letter to the University of Calgary. She has proved that you can take away her passport, but you can't stop her from

reaching her destination.



Teaching, it was what she knew and what she loved.

And when Radhika left her position as an assistant professor in Chennai India, she simply looked at Canada as a new classroom.


And while she had Masters degrees in both accounting and law, when the eager teacher arrived in Lethbridge, she was told she had to start her education all over again.

Humbly, she signed up for Accounting 101, quickly proving that she was well beyond the beginner level when she started teaching the class after the instructor went into early labour. But as the years passed,

Radhika discovered that her gifts extended well beyond the classroom.

After being diagnosed with diabetes, Radhika helped establish the Lethbridge and District branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association where she was a director from 1985 to 1991.

Throughout her 28 years in Canada, Radhika has taught us all about how to give back.



He's staff. He's an athlete. And an inspiration too. When Eric Chu arrived in Canada in 1998, the quiet boy from China immediately got to work carving out a successful life for himself in a new country. It was during his first year of high school that Eric discovered the Mosaic Family Resource Centre, which literally opened the door to a decade of meaningful volunteer work for him. Over the years, Eric has supported the agency through everything from photography and graphic design to extraordinary computer support. He has the focus. He has the generous spirit.

Once an immigrant Services Calgary volunteer, and now a valued member of our staff, Eric is constantly showcasing his knowledge and hard work as a Network Technician.

Whenever asked to lend a hand, the big hearted guy who wants other immigrants to find success, proudly lends two.



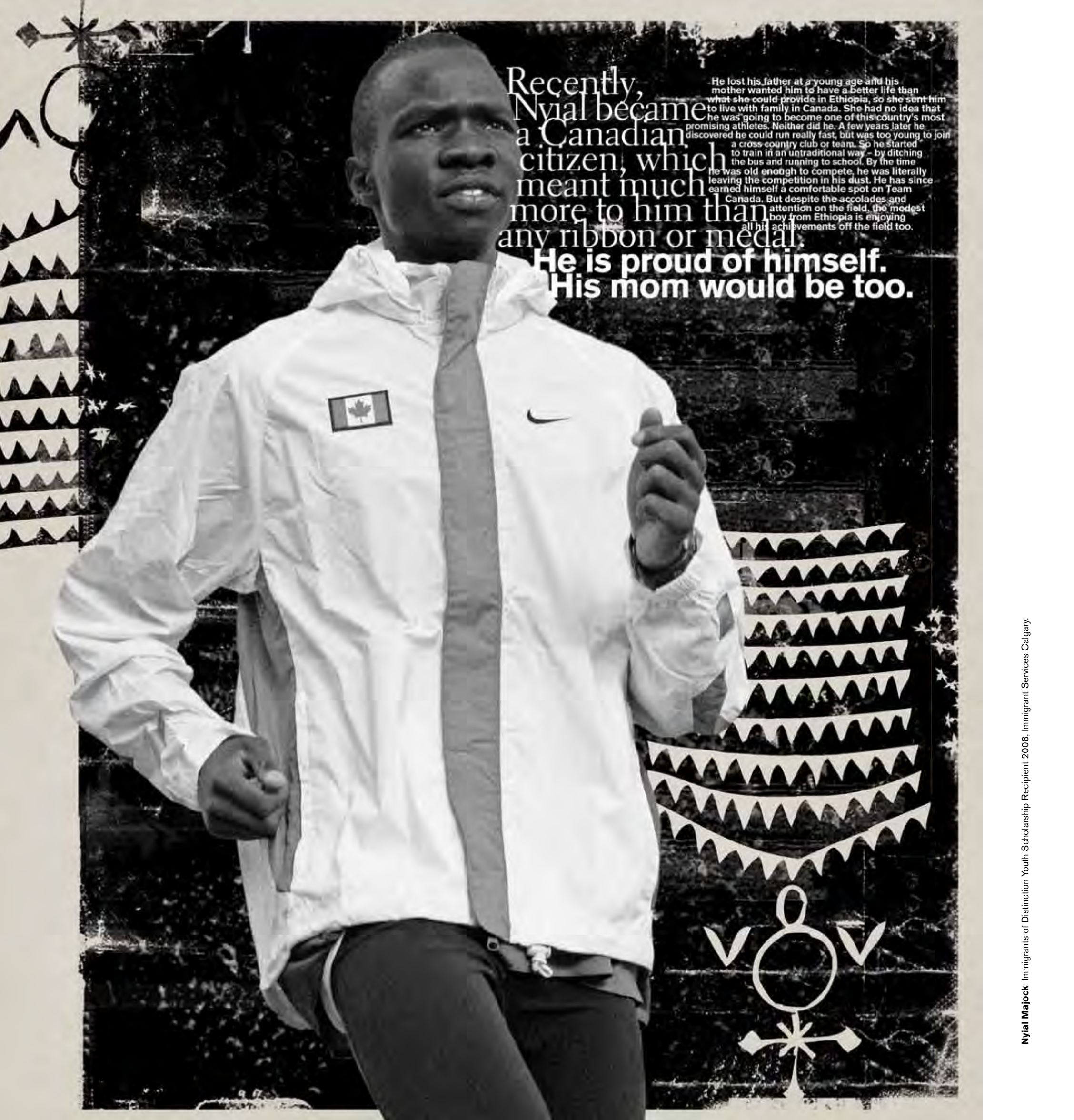
Six years ago, Shayna emigrated from Beijing, China and began her Canadian adventure. Since then, she's been on full throttle – a young woman who leads by example. Along with fierce concentration skills and attention to detail, this joyful, easy-going student's love of dance catapulted her to the vice-chair and art director of the Calgary Youth Performing Arts Association. Concentrating on Chinese traditional folk dance, contemporary, ballet and hip hop, she recently represented Team Canada in the 2008 World Championships of Performing Arts in Los Angeles, receiving the title of Overall Championship of Variety Arts and taking home two bronze medals. She was even crowned Miss Teen Calgary World in 2010.

"In China, students are pushed to work hard as early as in Grade 1," she explains, **"the habit of completing my homework before I start doing anything else, helped me develop and strengthen a good work ethic."** And she volunteers. Whether she is helping feed the homeless at St. Mary's Hall, teaching children to read through the Calgary Public Library, or performing at 40 seniors' homes a year.

**Shayna decidedly
pays
it forward.**



We have facilitators and educators and counselors and interpreters, but sometimes we could all just use a little bit of fun. That's what Mark has provided, and he enjoys it just as much as the kids do. Maybe more. He is spontaneous, likeable, reliable and full of energy. He sings. He tells stories. He makes funny faces. He dances. He really becomes a big kid when he walks through the door, into their world, and taught them a break for a room full of preschool kids, who have found themselves in a new world, with new people, speaking a new language. For just a few hours a week, he has walked through their door, into their world, and taught them how to find new ways to play. His recent travels through Latin America have enhanced his appreciation for culture, language, and people and while his work as a forest firefighter has taken him to British Columbia he looks forward to volunteering again upon his return.



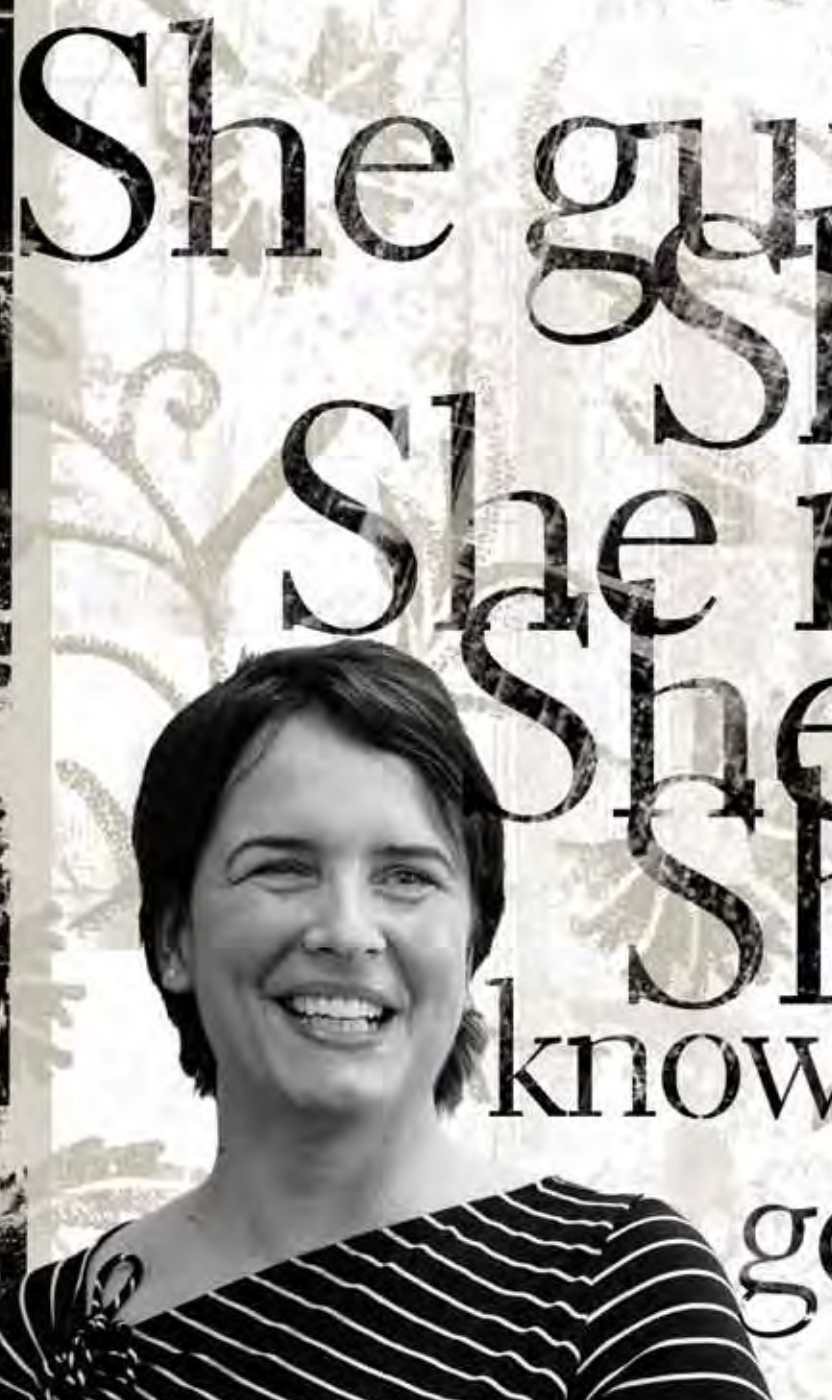
Recently, Nyial became a Canadian citizen, which meant much more to him than any ribbon or medal. He is proud of himself. His mom would be too.

He lost his father at a young age and his mother wanted him to have a better life than what she could provide in Ethiopia, so she sent him to live with family in Canada. She had no idea that he was going to become one of this country's most promising athletes. Neither did he. A few years later he discovered he could run really fast, but was too young to join a cross-country club or team. So he started to train in an untraditional way - by ditching the bus and running to school. By the time he was old enough to compete, he was literally leaving the competition in his dust. He has since earned himself a comfortable spot on Team Canada. But despite the accolades and attention on the field, the modest boy from Ethiopia is enjoying all his achievements off the field too.

celebrating the achievements of outstanding work in the community

Peter is an immigration lawyer, former Immigrant Services Calgary board member and an incredibly generous person that can see things in a new light.

It was this new thinking that led to the inception of the Immigrants of Distinction Awards, an annual award show celebrating the achievements of outstanding work in the community. He knew that people could only give so much money and so much time. That at a certain point we'd have to get creative in how we create change. In his many years as a board member, he has seen the awards show go from a small intimate affair to a televised event hosting 600 people. Peter believes that recognizing the individual is hugely encouraging. "We are awarding them with a sense of self, purpose and motivation. An award is placed in their hands on one special night, but it will be with them forever."



She guides.
She listens.
She interprets.
She informs.
She smiles,
knowing that
it cannot
get lost
in translation

First impressions. Sanja understands just how important they can be. In 1997, she left Croatia with just a one-way ticket to Vancouver. Alone, afraid, and hesitant to speak the language, she approached the customs officer at the Vancouver airport who said two powerful words to her.

“Welcome home.”


That was her first experience in Canada – one that may have affected her decision to become the first point of contact at Immigrant Service Calgary. Answering phones is a small part of her job, but she has an enormous amount of responsibility when it comes to making clients feel welcome. Sanja greets everyone respectfully, remembering that they too left interesting lives behind. That they too are alone, afraid, and hesitant to speak the language.

Having emigrated with his family to Calgary from Afghanistan at a very early age, Ali is well aware of his origins. His friendly and caring manner suggests a belief in the essential goodness of people. Yet regrettably, he's witnessed his share of racism and bigotry.

That's why Ali has always been a big believer in education as a doorway out of ignorance and poverty – a great equalizing ground, based on the merits of hard work and will. In fact, he cites going to high school as a turning point to when it all started to fall into place for him.

Luckily, it also happens to be when it fell into place for those lucky enough to know him. Since enrolling in the Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods (YIN) project for immigrant youth at age 15, Ali has helped his peer YIN participants in various programs – not the least of which was teaching them to roller-skate. Why? Because this active, young man believes in giving back to a society that's given him what he describes as "enough." With a clear sense of purpose, he's clarified his goals for the future, including graduating from college and training to become a mechanic in the Registered Apprenticeship program.





The boy
who once
had his
head in the
clouds is
now a man
with two
very firm
feet on the
ground.

Growing up, Tadeusz Dabrowski was a kid with his head in the clouds. But life in Poland became incredibly difficult when he and his family became refugees during the Second World War. They were forced from their home and separated from their father who was actively involved in an organization that was assisting prisoners in an extermination camp. Towards the end of high school, Tadeusz realized that he was going to end up in the place that he dreaded most – the military. But he had one shot at freedom – to get an education. Knowing that geologists had some career freedom, Tadeusz's mother picked up some geology textbooks for her son, hoping they'd interest him. Fortunately, they did. Tadeusz immediately began pouring through books, and with each page he turned, he felt like he was getting closer to freedom. After working tirelessly to get into university, Tadeusz spent another six and a half years getting his masters, then a doctorate degree in hydrogeology. Not seeing a future in communist Poland, Tadeusz came to Canada with his wife. Now a successful engineering consultant who has spent over 48 years contributing to his field, Dr. Dabrowski is much more than an immigrant who overcame adversity. He is a proud father, a humble leader and a very gracious award recipient.

A successful entrepreneur, a wife,
a mother and grandmother,
Bea has great pride in her accomplishments
since moving to Calgary in 1974
from her homeland of Ghana.

As a matter of fact,
she has lived in Calgary longer
than she has in any other place in the world
and feels more at home here than anywhere.

As many newcomers will attest,
it pays to have a good work ethic to survive.
In the early days,
she worked at the Calgary Catholic School Board
and cleaned offices in the evenings in addition
to her full-time job.

Of course, there was the sideling hair care business
she had in the basement of her home.

This small business would flourish
as she built up a clientele large enough to open
Bea's Braiding and Weaving in 1993.
She participates in cultural events like Carifest,
the Calgary Women's Show and Atrikadey,
festivals which celebrate our city as a community of
fun, work, love, peace and creativity
for Calgarians from all walks of life.

**I'll treat people
with respect**

"I believe these values have helped
me to become the successful
business woman I am
today."



Giving back to the community makes it stronger

Originally hailing from Alexandria, Egypt, Monir is happy to live in Calgary. He takes the utmost delight and pride in his kids and stresses to them the importance of a good education. He moved to Banff once he

completed his agronomist (agricultural engineering) degree in Egypt, and later moved to Calgary with his wife, Mona for the economic opportunities that are all around us.

He volunteers for Immigrant Services Calgary (where his wife also works, so it's pretty much a family affair) for our Immigrants of Distinction awards and believes in the power of helping others. "Giving back to the community makes it stronger," Monir adds, "Never turn your back to anybody needing help."

Monir's honest and hard-working qualities are treasured at Immigrant Services Calgary. He is a natural leader to whom everyone goes for advice. And he looks for those same qualities of honesty and hard-work in others.

On his roots, Monir remarks, "they give me the sense of belonging and it is the base for future improvement in life."

“I am
empathetic
and really
enjoy
helping
people”



Magdalena was born in Warsaw but has lived in Canada since she was 7. She remembers Poland to be very glum under the regime of the time. Though her father was an engineer, he often had to take jobs as a migrant worker, sorting tulip bulbs in Holland, to make ends meet. Life was very difficult and opportunities were scarce – her family sometimes having to wait in long ration lines. Magda has these early life experiences indelibly stamped on her personality.

“Although I like to laugh and am drawn to people who are light hearted and joyful, there is still part of me that is very somber and serious.” she says, “children soak up the energy of their environments.” This duality has helps Magda be the Settlement/Integration Counsellor she is. She learned to speak English, French, Polish and Spanish and got her Masters degree in Peace and Conflict Resolution in Austria. She’s successful at her job and brings a richness of global experiences.

“I am quite sensitive towards others’ needs.”

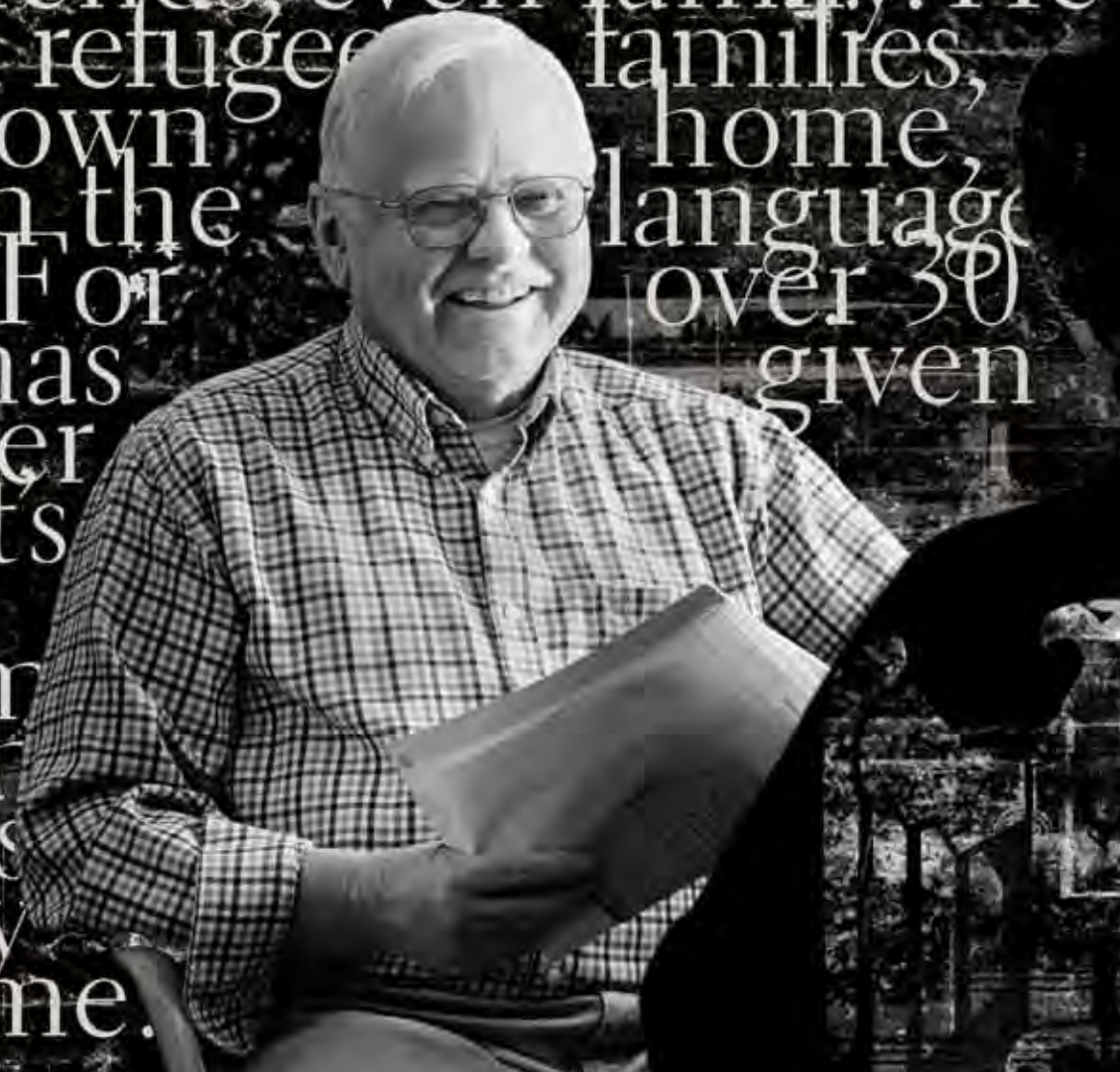
“What matters is that my actions can trigger a greater



Although originally from Taiyuan, Shanxi, China, Annie feels she comes from many different homes – China, Toronto, Windsor, and of course, Calgary. But no matter where she calls home, she starts each day with a willingness to achieve, captivating everyone with her creativity and drive. **She's succeeded socially and academically at several different schools as her parents positioned themselves in life. Annie admits she even sometimes surprises herself.** So far, her academic high school average is near perfect and includes achieving the highest academic average in Grade 9. She's received multiple accolades for her achievements in various national and provincial mathematics competitions and is highly regarded by her teachers and diverse peer group. An inspiration to her peers, teachers and community, Mei Mu Zi Zheng (her actual name) always gives 100%. Then she even gives a little more through volunteering in her community in several ways: as a dancer with the Calgary Youth Performing Arts Association and the Queen Elizabeth Chinese Dance Club; raising money for the victims of the Taiwan and Morakot typhoons, and helping World Vision raise funds for starving children in Africa.

impact”

Helping someone do their taxes is a nice thing to do. Helping 400 people do their taxes is almost overwhelming. But Donald knows that if you don't speak the language, you won't get your taxes done properly, which means you won't get the benefits you're entitled to. He is so dedicated that he is often at the agency before the doors are even open. But his work doesn't end there. As a former corporate manager who used to hire people himself, he also helps clients revise resumes and prepare for their own job search, all the while making them friends, even family. He has co-sponsored refugee families, offering up his own home, while they learn the language and find a job. For over 30 years, Donald has given and given, never questioning what's in it for him. His only problem is finding enough chairs to seat his extended family at Christmas time.



A life full of opportunity and rewards, Pakiza Basharat was both a teacher and a newscaster in Pakistan. Throughout her 20 years dedicated to passing on the rich history of her country to Pakistani children, Pakiza grew proud of the noble work she was doing. And when she wasn't working, she was always surrounded by family and good friends. Her life was good, whole and rich. But like many other immigrant families, Pakiza and her husband knew that in order for their children to have opportunities, they would have to sacrifice theirs.

According to our religion, teaching is a noble profession. It makes me proud to know that I was able to transfer something good to the children.

Pakiza is now volunteering with Immigrant Services Calgary, supporting her children in university and taking classes at Bow Valley College, hoping to one day teach again. It may not be the life she once had, but with the help of her family at Immigrant Services Calgary, she is doing everything she can to make it **good, whole and rich again.**



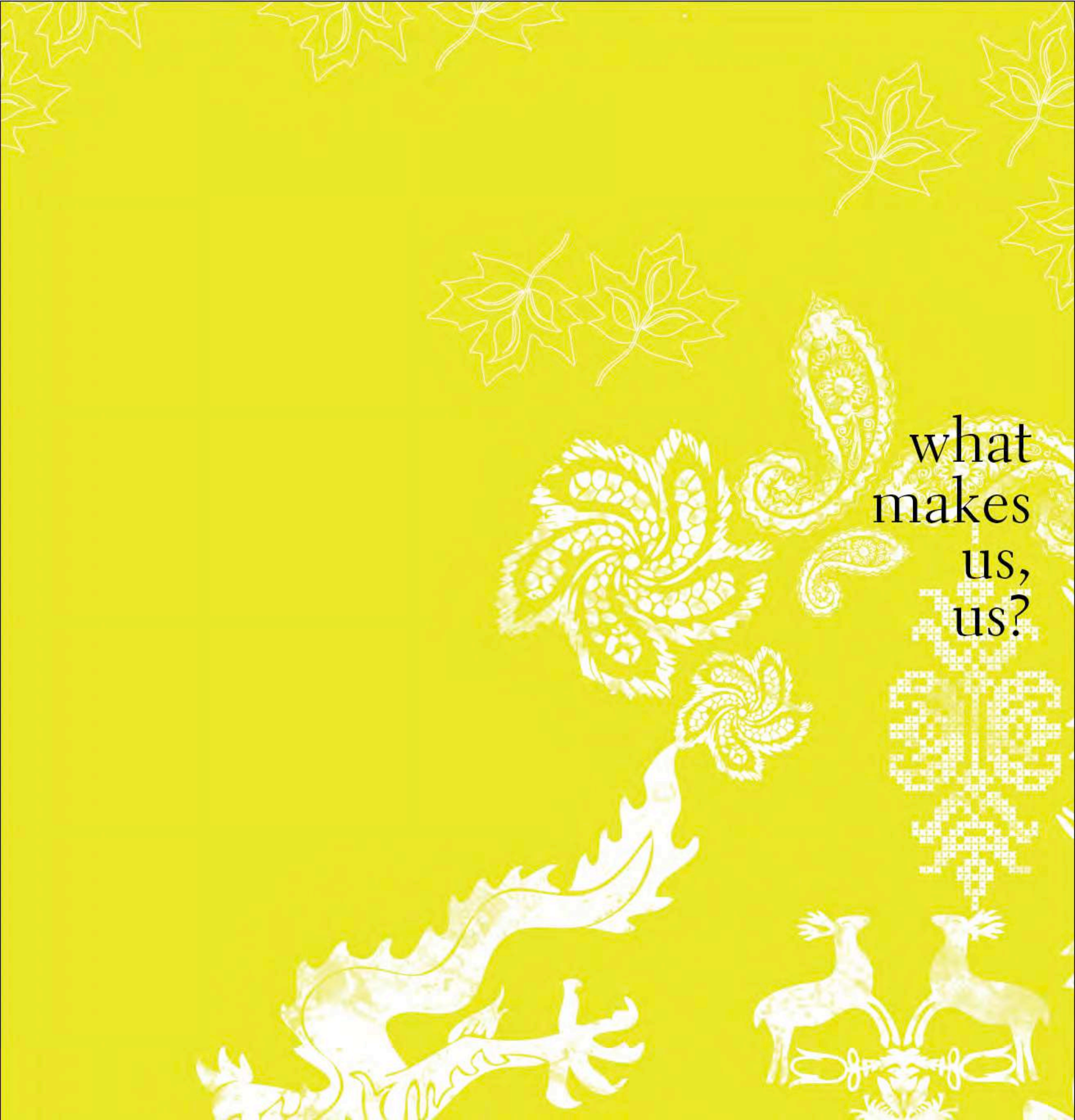
“I think the appreciation of the mosaic of cultural values is at the heart of the Canadian culture.”



Shiraz, born in Afghanistan, didn't have to wait to immigrate to Canada to begin making a difference – he worked for immigrants and refugees with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees as an Assistant Social Services Officer at home. A man of faith, he has deep compassion for the plight of the world's children:

“I had the pleasure of working with UNICEF for over seven years,” he explains, **“To work for families; mothers and children in particular.”**

His language skills – speaking Persian and Pashto have made him an invaluable asset to Immigrant Services Calgary for the last 20 years. He's a team leader who has seen it all and maintains a good nature and appreciates the simple things. Happiness to him is a loaf of bread on your table with your family, in a peaceful environment. He can appreciate these things because he has three children of his own.



what
makes
us,
us?

We are dedicated.
We are committed.
We are hopeful.
We are giving of our time,
our energy
and our resources.
We are partners, donors and helpers.
We are children, seniors and clients.
We are staff and volunteers.
We are one voice that speaks for thousands.
We are immigrants.
We are Calgarians.
We care for, support and reach out to our community.
Our story is their stories.
We are Immigrant Services Calgary.

What makes us us? We are
dedicated. **We are committed.** We are
hopeful. We are giving of our time,
our energy and our resources.
We are **partners, donors**
and helpers. We are children, seniors and
clients. We are staff and volunteers.
We are **one voice** that speaks
for thousands. **We are immigrants.**
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Immigrants and their families will have equal opportunity to participate fully in an open, inclusive Canadian society.

Immigrant Services Calgary is dedicated to ensuring that immigrants and their families have the opportunity to become full participants, both as beneficiaries and contributors, in Canadian society.

Immigrant Services Calgary is committed to the values of equality, inclusion, diversity and accountability.

Vision

The immigrants and refugees who walk through our doors every day are incredible individuals enriching Canada with their diverse backgrounds, experiences and talents.

In every conversation that we have with a newcomer, we are reminded that we live in a prosperous and beautiful country where opportunities are unparalleled. By providing services in more than 70 languages and a supportive environment to ask questions and find answers in, we are helping newcomers access these opportunities.

Mission

Immigrant Services Calgary is one of Alberta's longest serving and most comprehensive settlement agencies. Under the name of Calgary Immigrant Aid Society, the agency was established in 1977 to work with immigrants and refugees making Calgary their home.

As the agency has grown over the years, the spirit of Immigrant Services Calgary has continued to remain the same. Recognizing that immigrants and refugees bring unique strengths and benefits to the Calgary community, Immigrant Services Calgary believes that through guidance and encouragement, equality and inclusion, immigrants and refugees become important members and contributors to the Calgary community.

Values

Settling in Canada, finding employment, accessing language training, sending children to Canadian schools, becoming a part of the Calgary community – each of these tasks is riddled with complex questions for immigrants and refugees arriving in Canada.

We share in the process of making connections because we recognize that both immigrants and the Calgary community become richer through and because of the experience.

1977 – 2010

Immigrant Services Calgary is one of Alberta's longest serving and most comprehensive settlement agencies. Over our 33 story-filled years, we have been providing programs and services to newcomers in Calgary.

- 1977 Immigrant Services Calgary, under the name of the Calgary Immigrant Aid Society is established as the first settlement agency in Calgary.
- 1978 Two staff begin providing full-time services to immigrants arriving in Calgary.
- 1979 50,000 refugees arrive in Calgary. Immigrant Services Calgary leads an interagency meeting of more than 30 community groups working together to assist refugees. Immigrant Services Calgary grows to four full-time staff to meet service demands.
- 1981 The Settlement Program begins receiving funding from the provincial government.
- 1982 Public education and outreach by the agency continues to increase through the support of the Federal Government. Immigrant Services Calgary begins offering the Citizenship Program.
- 1984 Immigrant Services Calgary receives the Agency of the Year award from the United Way of Calgary and Area.
- 1985 The Immigrant Language Vocational Assessment Referral Centre (ILVARC) is established.
- 1986 Research into immigrant family resettlement leads the agency to begin providing family programming.

History

We have never stopped changing and adapting, working with our funders and the community to deliver programs and services that best fit the needs of our beneficiaries. We're proud of our history and of our continued growth.

- 1993** The Carver model of governance is officially adopted by the agency's Board of Directors.
- 1994** The Mosaic Family Resource Centre is established to meet the individual and collective needs of the family as they make Calgary their home.
- 1997** The Immigrants of Distinction Awards is launched to recognize the important contributions that immigrants make to the Calgary community.
- 1998** The Calgary Multicultural Healthcare initiative is launched to develop a framework for accessible and equitable health care.
- 2002** Immigrant Services Calgary receives the United Way of Calgary and Area's Spirits of Gold Diversity Award.
- 2003** Career bridging services begin to be provided by the agency to assist newcomers in overcoming challenges to participating in the workforce.
- 2007** Immigrant Services Calgary celebrates 30 years of working in the Calgary community.
- 2008** Immigrant Services Calgary welcomes the new Chief Executive Officer. Immigrant Services Calgary begins providing services to Temporary Foreign Workers to meet the unique needs of this population.
- 2009** Funding from the Provincial Government and the City of Calgary enables the Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods and After School Programs to commence.
- 2010** Immigrant Services Calgary launches new website.

Thank you for being an important contributor to our vision. Working together by providing financial support to us in the year 2009 – 2010 totaling over \$7,506,137.00, you help us to provide support to new immigrants, refugees and temporary foreign workers and their families as they begin the journey to make Canada their home.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Thank You

Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Alberta Employment and Immigration
United Way of Calgary and Area
Public Health Agency of Canada
Calgary and Area Child and Family
Services Authority
City of Calgary (FCSS)
Alberta Justice
Others
Immigrants of Distinction Awards
Fundraising and Casino
Service Canada
Status of Women Canada
Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
TD Canada Trust
Calgary Learns
Nexen Inc.
The Calgary Foundation
Alberta Lottery Board

The efforts and successes of the past year have added to our established history of care and compassion. We look forward to building on these accomplishments in the future.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Agency Highlights

Volunteers

585

Countries of Origin of Beneficiaries

159

Languages Spoken by Beneficiaries

135

Total Beneficiaries Served

20,401

Languages Spoken by Staff and Volunteers

86

Volunteer Hours

24,183

Workshops for Beneficiaries

406

During the year 2009 – 2010, Immigrant Services Calgary showed that when we face challenges united we can succeed and grow.

Report from the Board

R.W. (Bob) Robinson

Ph.D, R. Psych.
Chair, Board of Directors
Immigrant Services Calgary

Despite the recession that affected Calgary, Canada and the world, Immigrant Services Calgary diversified programming, grew our client base and continued to provide valuable and necessary services to newcomers around Calgary. Our programs and services reached an evermore wide ranging clientele, and we saw a significant increase in both the number of volunteers and the number of hours they dedicated to the agency.

The work we do at Immigrant Services Calgary is both important and far reaching. We know that by 2031, Statistics Canada has predicted that one in four Canadians will be foreign born. We are prepared to meet the challenge, to continue with our mission of ensuring that newcomers have the tools and support they need to become full participants, both as beneficiaries and contributors, in Canadian society.

In the past year the world has experienced some very imposing hardships in addition to the major recession now affecting most countries. The powerful earthquakes in Haiti and Chile were tragedies made all the more poignant by the very personal impact they had on our citizens who once called those countries home. These disasters were truly terrible, but the aftermath demonstrated the solidarity of Canadians when faced with such daunting circumstances. I was truly impressed with the outpouring of resources, goodwill and help in the face of such tragedy, and with the way that Canada responded collectively to provide support.

The multicultural mosaic that defines Canada is growing and evolving, and it is our mission to make the future a bright one. The Canada we envision is one where people can cultivate their diverse identities, learn from each other and support each other in a multicultural future. The first step

to that success is ensuring that newcomers have the resources and information they need to truly make Canada their home.

Immigrant Services Calgary provides the stepping stones to success for newcomers, from successful settlement to assistance as they search for employment and a place to call home. We have carefully cultivated programs that help immigrants, refugees and temporary foreign workers in the often complicated transition from their previous communities to ours, and now theirs, too. Our extensive range of programs empowers us to continue working together with an ever-increasing number of newcomers. From settlement assistance to language assessments and referrals, career and education planning to mentorship opportunities and specialized programming for children, youth, adults and seniors, our programs are constantly evolving to meet the specific needs of our clients.

Thank you to our funders and supporters who make the important services and programs we offer at Immigrant Services Calgary possible.

On a personal note, I wanted to thank Din Ladak, our outstanding CEO, for the energy and vision he brings to the leadership of Immigrant Services Calgary, and I equally wish to acknowledge the Senior Management Team who translate that vision

to action in partnership with our dedicated staff and exceptional volunteer corp. After a two year stint as Board Chair I am transitioning to the role of Past Chair. I will look back with pride and appreciation to my Board colleagues for providing the guidance and stewardship that has nurtured the growth of our agency. And I will look forward to bright times for the new Canadians, their families and the communities we serve.

Growth and accomplishment in the face of adversity are two characteristics among many that describe Immigrant Services Calgary.

Report from the CEO

Din Ladak

B.Sc., BSW, MSW
Chief Executive Officer
Immigrant Services Calgary

Our aim has been to foster identity and dignity, as well as a sense of community and a singularity of purpose in an organization as diverse as Immigrant Services Calgary. The agency has continued to excel in providing programs and services to newcomers in and around Calgary. Thanks to the generosity of funders and donors; our dedicated and hard working staff and volunteers have spurred innovation and reached many under-served communities. The scope and scale of our agency has widened in response to need: we have added new programs, increased our staff and experienced growth in the number of people we serve. We have delivered successful outcomes. These achievements serve to showcase the importance of the services we provide, and the growing support we are receiving from the community. We are witness to the success of our efforts to build a Calgary that is accessible and inclusive for immigrants.

The face of Canada is changing and we are excited! Our vision of a diverse and pluralistic Canadian community was confirmed with a new report from Statistics Canada that predicts big changes in the next twenty years. In Calgary alone, the number of citizens born outside of Canada is expected to rise from 24% in 2006 to 30% in 2031. Accordingly, we are planning strategically for our growth, not just for the present, but for the future. How can we best help Canada's future citizens become full participants in Canadian society? How can we help them maintain their identity and dignity? In the 2009 – 2010 year, we have helped to further this goal by working with the leaders of tomorrow, immigrant youth: youth who have modeled their utmost leadership in helping to create a better world.

One of our biggest accomplishments over the course of this year has been the development and introduction of several outstanding programs that empower today's immigrant youth to take a strong lead in building a new community, a new city, and a new Canada. The Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods Program was introduced to engage marginalized immigrant youth between the ages of 13 and 16. The program offers mentorship, sports, after school activities and the chance to build valuable life skills. On another note, one of the Anti-Racism and Human Rights

Project's greatest achievements was the youth driven Racism and Human Rights Awareness Conference, the first of its kind in Calgary. The conference was met with great success and earned unanimous commendation from youth participants, field experts as well as government partners and community leaders. The Multicultural Youth Action Project educated more than 80 immigrant and refugee youth between the ages of 13 and 19 about civic engagement and volunteerism, motivating them to contribute to Canadian society and promote positive social change through action projects that benefited the Calgary community. The Mosaic After School Program that was initiated in 2009 reached children from 6 to 12 years of age. Through homework help, outdoor recreation, art and drama activities, life skills education, leadership development and field trips, the Mosaic After School Program provided a valuable link between family, school and community with a long-term goal of helping children between the ages of become successful and active community contributors.

On March 19th, at the 14th Annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards, we honoured five truly exceptional immigrant youth, who have also been profiled in these pages. Their vast and stellar accomplishments are second to none

and give us much confidence about the leadership they will offer future generations.

It has been over two years since I started with Immigrant Services Calgary, and I continue to be astounded by the vision and dedication committed to the agency by our stakeholders. By embracing the increasing plurality of Canada, we all have the opportunity to learn from each other, to grow and enrich our society. When I walk down the halls of the agency, I see evidence of the changing face of Calgary and of Canada in the smiles of the people we serve. We have a colourful future that we are building step by step, and it is our goal to ensure that all new Canadians achieve success, inclusion, respect and civic participation. It is with the hard work of everyone involved with Immigrant Services Calgary that we can make this vision a reality, a Calgary where everyone can let their true colours shine. Thank you to our volunteers, staff, Board of Directors, funding partners, supporters and most of all to the people we serve at the agency. We have remained one, at a time when it mattered most.

Your support helps us succeed.

The Settlement and Language Bank Centre assists new immigrants and refugees to successfully settle in Calgary and integrate into Canadian society.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Settlement and Language Bank Centre

In the year 2009 – 2010, the Settlement and Language Bank Centre continued to provide a comprehensive array of services to help new immigrants make Calgary their home. Few Calgarians could escape the debilitating effects of the deepening world recession in 2009. The downturn in the economy has impacted the livelihood of new immigrants more severely than the mainstream population. Faced with a diminished and challenging job market and limited personal resources, newcomers turned to Immigrant Services Calgary in record numbers. Our staff and volunteers responded to the challenge and met the overwhelming demand with a positive attitude and professional services.

The Language Bank provided newcomers with access to affordable certified translation and interpretation services in over 86 languages. The dedicated staff and volunteers worked hard to provide certified translations of documents like birth certificates which helped our beneficiaries with their transitions into Canadian life and the Canadian job market. Interpretation services helped newcomers overcome language barriers when accessing government and community services in Canada.

Settlement counselors provide services to newcomers in their first language. Settlement services include information, orientation, referrals, advocacy, and workshops.

We were able to offer employment bridging services for the first time in the past fiscal year. A unique feature of this service is to provide new immigrant job seekers with meaningful connections to Calgary employers. Over 100 employer connections were made, including the establishment and continuing expansion of new collaborative partnerships with Corporate Calgary.

Building stronger community relations remained one of our top priorities in the past year. We adopted a “walk into the community” strategy to bring our services to the doorstep of under-served clients:

- A notable achievement was the establishment of a new partnership with the Calgary Housing Company to have Immigrant Services Calgary settlement counselors onsite to provide services to the residents, especially the house-bound women in the housing compound
- We are working with the Calgary Public Library to provide citizenship classes and various workshops for immigrants and newcomers in the community.
- We actively contributed to the Immigrant Connections at Service Canada, the first ever immigrant resource fair held at Marlborough Mall, where local residents were able to learn about immigrant-serving agencies in Calgary and gather information on settlement and integration services in one convenient strategic location.

The **Temporary Foreign Worker Settlement Pilot Project** has completed its second year of service helping temporary foreign workers settle into a fulfilling and productive life in Calgary. Temporary foreign workers obtained a wide range of services in their first language, from information on Labour Market Opinions, entry visas and work permits to getting advice on immigration matters to receiving supportive counseling concerning the handling of lay-offs and violations of employment standards. A total of 515 clients were served in the year 2009 – 2010.

Our **Connecting Immigrant Seniors Project** completed its second year of services to immigrant seniors. Highlights for the year included a variety of workshops pertaining to health, well-being, and social and life skills. The unique characteristics of the program included life skills classes where immigrant seniors learned and obtained practical skills useful for everyday living, as well as leadership development, where seniors were given opportunities to facilitate classes and mentor other immigrant seniors. In the past year, the program served more than 200 seniors from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds.

The **Multicultural Youth Action Project (MYAP)** targeted immigrant and refugee youth between the ages of 13 and 19, bringing them together every weekend to

engage in fun and educational activities. The goal of MYAP was to educate youth about civic engagement, provide an enabling environment to identify and address systemic barriers in the community, and motivate them to contribute to Canadian society. The MYAP successfully reached over 50 newcomer youth in the reporting period, and had a group of 10 mentors who also served as inspiring role models with positive values and lifestyle. The highlight for the year was the Kick-Off Event at the Kahanoff Centre, which was attended by dignitaries from the political and business sectors as well as community partners and the media.

Our **Anti-Racism and Human Rights Outreach Project** focused on human rights and racism awareness, and on the prevention and reduction of racism and human rights violations. The project reached newcomers as well as immigrant-serving and ethno-cultural organizations in the greater Calgary community. These characteristics gave the project a holistic nature and enhanced its effectiveness in reducing racism and human rights violations in Calgary. One of the project’s achievements was helping to facilitate and organize a youth driven racism and Human Rights Awareness Conference, the first of its kind in Calgary. The conference was very successful and was highly praised by youth participants, government partners and community leaders.

Settlement Services

New and returning beneficiaries served

4,492

Number of settlement services provided
(including one-on-one meetings and workshops)

28,196

Countries of origin

134

Languages spoken by clients

112

Language Bank Services

Languages spoken by clients

42

Number of translations

1,304

Number of interpretations

604

Leading Countries of Origin (%)

China Iran

23 3

Colombia Russia

10 3

Ethiopia Sudan

5 3

India Afghanistan

5 2.5

Pakistan Eritrea

5 2

Beneficiaries Served by Settlement Services 2005 – 2010

2005 – 2006 8% growth

3,041

2006 – 2007 12% growth

3,417

2007 – 2008 5% growth

3,586

2008 – 2009 14% growth

4,086

2009 – 2010 10% growth

4,492

ILVARC provides one-stop comprehensive English assessment and referral services for immigrants and refugees in Calgary.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment-Referral Centre (ILVARC)

The Centre assesses eligibility for services for the federally sponsored Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, refers individuals to language training opportunities, and helps them further their educational, vocational and career aspirations. The Centre links beneficiaries to different training opportunities, as well as to a variety of other services such as settlement, employment related programs and services and financial resources. To address the wide range of needs identified by beneficiaries, ILVARC collaborates with relevant service providers in the community and is guided by the Advisory Committee.

During the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year, both assessment and counseling service streams experienced a very high demand for services which was impacted by various factors. The most predominant factors were the downturn in the Canadian economy as well as an increased demand for particular assessments from service providers, which resulted in longer waiting lists. ILVARC's dedicated staff are beneficiary centred and are committed to high standards of practice and continuous quality improvement. Challenges are addressed on an ongoing basis and efficient client prescreening, intake and service provision as well as offering temporary extended hours of operation remain a hallmark of ILVARC.

ILVARC's increased human resource capacity helped us address the waiting list and provide timely access to needed programs and services. This included additional assessment and counseling services. As a result of these vigilant measures and strategies as well as the expended resources, the waiting time for appointments has been reduced substantially. ILVARC continued its commitment to staff professional development. To ensure the highest possible standards of service the assessment team members have undergone their full re-calibration in two

assessment instruments. The counseling and assessment teams attended other professional development opportunities in assessment and career development. ILVARC continued enhancing the profile of Immigrant Services Calgary within the community on a local and national scale by the active involvement in various community events and meetings.

ILVARC Services

Assessments completed

7,989

Languages spoken by clients

135

Countries of origin

159

Leading Language Groups served by ILVARC (%)

Spanish	Amharic
13.8	4.8

Mandarin	Russian
10.3	4.1

Arabic	Tagalog
8.8	3.8

Punjabi	Vietnamese
6.9	3.0

Urdu	Farsi
5.7	2.9

Clients Served and number of Sessions by ILVARC 2005 – 2010

2005 – 2006 Clients	2005 – 2006 Sessions
7,506	12,499

2006 – 2007 Clients	2006 – 2007 Sessions
8,166	14,158

2007 – 2008 Clients	2007 – 2008 Sessions
9,371	15,919

2008 – 2009 Clients	2008 – 2009 Sessions
10,234	16,621

2009 – 2010 Clients	2009 – 2010 Sessions
12,304	20,693

ILVARC Referrals 2009 – 2010

Language training opportunities
25,761

Career and employability goals
6,731

Educational opportunities
4,420

Support services
18,990

We are always excited by the skills, ideas and identities that newcomers bring to Canada. A report by Statistics Canada released in 2010 predicted an inspiring future for Canada, for Calgary and for Immigrant Services Calgary. We value pluralism, and we are truly looking forward to the changing face of Canada.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Changing Face of Canada

The people we serve come from all over the world, and we expect that to continue. Every day, we get to meet and work with incredible people with global stories. The world is constantly changing, and so are the beneficiaries, programs and services at Immigrant Services Calgary. In 1980, the majority of the Immigrant Services Calgary beneficiaries came from Southeast Asia and the Caribbean. By 1990, many Immigrant Services Calgary beneficiaries came from Eastern Europe, Latin America and China.

Over the last three decades, we have had the honour of helping individuals and families from all regions around the world make Calgary their home.

As Canada changes, so does Immigrant Services Calgary.

Individuals Born Outside of Canada Population (Projection 2031)

Growth in Calgary's population of visible minorities

15 – 20%

Calgary's population of persons born outside
Canada (from 24% in 2006)

30%

Calgary's visible minority population
(from 22% in 2006)

38%

Canada's population of persons born
outside Canada

25 – 28%

Minority growth will largely be concentrated
in cities.

Canadian Generational Diversity (Projection 2031)

Persons who are born outside Canada

25 – 28%

Visible minorities
(compared to 54% in 2006)

71%

Allophones
(compared to 70% in 2006)

77%

15 and over population who are born outside
Canada or have at least one born outside
Canada parent

46%

Canadian Population Diversity (Projection 2031)

Population of visible minorities

11.4 – 14.4 m

Under 15 years population that
belong to a visible minority

36%

Over 65 years population
that belong to a visible minority

18%

Canadian persons whose mother tongue
is neither English nor French
(compared to 20% in 2006)

29% – 32%

Canada's largest visible minority groups:
South Asians, Chinese

South Asian population
(compared to 1.3 million in 2006)

3.2 – 4.1 m

Canadian Population Diversity (Projection 2031) continued

Chinese population
(compared to 1.3 million in 2006)

2.4 – 3.0 m

Canada's fastest growing visible minority groups
(between 2006 and 2031):
Arabs, West Asians

Arab population
(compared to 276 thousand in 2006)

806 t – 1.1 m

West Asian population
(compared to 164 thousand in 2006)

457 – 592 t

Source: Statistics Canada, 2010 Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population,
Catalogue No. 91-551-X, 2006 to 2031, pages 15 – 26, 27.

The Mosaic Family Resource Centre strives to help immigrant and refugee families develop connections with other families and to the community.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Mosaic Family Resource Centre

Whether the challenge is education, emotional and physical wellbeing, maintaining good nutrition, communicating effectively with family members, or finding fun and safe recreational activities in Calgary, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre acts as a network of tools, resources, and opportunities for families new to Canada.

By supporting men, women, children and teens in navigating the challenges families encounter as newcomers, we promote healthy families and connections to the larger Calgary community.

During the past year, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre has increased its scope of programming through collaborations and partnerships that provide a network of connections for program participants and their families.

In October 2009, the Mosaic Centre hosted an open house to introduce the community to the Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods Program. The open house was attended by 104 people from social service agencies, community organizations and schools.

A telephone call from an international oil and gas company with a Calgary office that was hoping to sponsor a family over the holiday season turned into a collaborative opportunity. Through the generosity of donors, children and parents in the Mosaic Pre-School Program received gifts and grocery gift cards. A party with multicultural food and games for everyone was attended by representatives from the company who dressed up as elves and helped to deliver the gifts to the happy recipients.

In December 2009 the Mosaic Family Resource Centre hosted a facilitator training in "School's Cool", a program and assessment model for Early Childhood and Parent programs. All of our parent and early childhood program staff received certification in this model.

In March of 2010, the Mosaic After School Program entered into a partnership with the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, and began offering the program at this location. This program opened with a registration of 24 participants between the ages of 6 years and 12 years.

The Mosaic Parents and Tots Program has introduced "Parent-Child Mother Goose" and "Baby Rhyme" program models to participating families. Both of these models involve parents and children playing and learning together. During the past year, this program has provided parent-child programming to 103 parents and children between the ages of 12 months and thirty-six months.

This year, the Parent-Child Enhancement Program branched out to provide programming to newcomer families with young children in two offsite locations in addition to our two onsite programs. These programs served over 140 participants from 11 diverse communities

The Multicultural Outreach Connections Program provides supportive counseling for families with young children who are facing extreme challenges and crisis. This program has assisted families in addressing issues related to employment, life as a single parent, poverty and parenting children with challenging behavior.

Our In-Home Support Program provided over 1,000 hours of supportive counseling to immigrant and refugee families in 2009 – 2010.

Healthy Start Calgary provides pre and post natal support for new Canadian parents. The

range of services includes consultation with a nurse, nutritionist and social worker as well as educational workshops, breast feeding support and coupons for milk and healthy food for high-risk low income families.

The Mosaic Multicultural Men's Program served over 300 men through programming and individual counseling sessions that support immigrant and refugee men in addressing issues such as underemployment, family trauma, cultural adaptation and poverty.

Family Literacy Programs delivered in two community locations as well as at the Mosaic Centre provide a foundation in health literacy, financial literacy and support for adult participants who are increasing their conversational English. Children in this program participate in songs, games, and activities with their parents as well as engage in play-based learning activities in the classroom.

Innovative and dynamic programs that involve all family members are the heart of the holistic service approach at the Mosaic Centre. Whether it is in our licensed preschool program, pre- and post-natal program, parent groups, literacy programs, supportive counseling, or the acclaimed Men's Program, our goal is to provide support for the whole family.

The Mosaic Family Resource Centre provides programs and services for a spectrum of family members that reaches from infants to grandparents.

Current Mosaic Family Resource Centre Programs

- Parents and Tots Program
- Mosaic Family Literacy Program
- Parent-Child Enhancement Program
- Multicultural Outreach Connections Program
- Mosaic Pre-School Program
- Multicultural Men's Program
- Youth Inclusive Neighbourhoods Program
- Mosaic Afterschool Program
- Multicultural In-Home Support Program
- Mosaic Community-Based Preschool Program
- Healthy Start Calgary
- Mosaic Toy and Book Lending Library
- Mosaic Summer Literacy Program

Mosaic Family Resource Centre Highlights

Beneficiaries served

2,634

Countries of origin

98

Workshops for clients

267

Languages spoken by clients

79

Leading Countries served by Mosaic Family Resource Centre (%)

China Mexico

24 3.1

India Ethiopia

11.7 2.7

Pakistan Iran

9.3 2.6

Colombia Philippines

6.8 2.2

Sudan Bangladesh

4.4 1.9

Through mentorship, volunteer activities, recreation and the participation of various community partners, Immigrant Services Calgary has worked with school-aged children, youth and professional women to assist them in successfully overcoming challenges and establishing their new homes in Canada.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Supporting the unique
needs of Newcomers

The Integrated Women's Mentorship Program, Mosaic After-School Program and Youth Inclusive Neighbourhoods Program have been valuable and successful examples of how communities can come together to build brighter futures.

Immigrant Services Calgary's **Integrated Women's Mentorship Program** reached new heights in the past year with the development of a new Resource Centre. The Integrated Women's Mentorship Program links established professional women with new immigrant and refugee women.

The Mentors assist them in overcoming barriers to employment and help them realize their full potential in Canada as individuals and professionals.

Integrated Women's Mentorship Program

The program began the year with active participation in the formation and launch of the Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council, an initiative dedicated to expanding and improving mentorship services for new immigrants in Calgary. Faced with increasing demand, Immigrant Services Calgary opened the first ever Resource Centre in March 2010 to provide space and resources for immigrant women and their mentors. The Resource Centre boasts a fully equipped computer lab as well as comprehensive job search and employment-related resources with program staff to offer help when required.

Mentors to the program receive mentorship training that includes topics such as cross-cultural communication and employment barriers experienced by immigrants. This training enhances their understanding of issues facing immigrants, and they are able to learn and meet people from different cultures and backgrounds, as well as strengthen and develop communication, coaching and leadership skills.

The program offers weekly workshops to discuss life and employment issues and mentorship support, which include 24 hours of mentoring over a four-month period on issues facing immigrant women in Canada.

The **Mosaic After-School Program** provides critical hours programming for children 6 – 12 years between the hours of 3 pm – 6 pm when many children are out of school for the day and without effective care. Currently, this program is operating in three community locations in partnership with the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, Calgary Housing Company and Calgary Learning Village Collaborative with a total of 58 registered participants.

Mosaic After-School Program

Many families lack the resources to provide their children with after-school activities during these critical hours, yet what children do during these hours can have a significant impact on their long-term academic and social development. Children are vulnerable to negative influences, and may benefit from specific programs designed to increase their social and cultural integration. To meet these needs, the Mosaic After-School Program provides recreational activities that include live drama, arts and crafts, music, cooking, outdoor activities and homework help. The goals of the program are designed to further the children's self-esteem, social engagement and success. In its first year of operation, feedback from parents and community partners indicated that the Mosaic after school program is providing a valuable link between family, school and community.

The **Youth Inclusive Neighbourhoods Program** targets high-risk youth age 13 – 16 years who are vulnerable to negative influences due to a variety of risk factors. In its first year, the program has provided intervention and preventative programming to over 40 youth. The on-site component of the program includes working with individual youth to develop a customized action plan and team building through recreational activities.

Youth Inclusive Neighbourhoods Program

Community partnerships are a vital component of this program. Our partnership with Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Calgary matches participating youth with a mentor. Through our partnership with Child and Youth Friendly Calgary, youth are provided with opportunities to become active in volunteer projects that help to develop leadership and community involvement. A partnership with Hockey Calgary and Calgary Police Services received national media attention and engaged youth in teamwork and critical thinking skills while they learned about Canada's favorite sport; hockey.

Integrated Approach

Immigrant Services Calgary is one agency with many benefits. We aim to provide a diverse range of services that meet the varied and complex needs of newcomers establishing their homes in Canada. We understand the challenges of settling in a new country, and our goal is to work together with immigrants to help everyone realize the full potential of their new lives in Calgary.

Our Settlement and Language Bank Centre, Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment Referral Centre and Mosaic Family Resource Centre provide comprehensive assistance for everything from orientation to assessment to family guidance and counseling. Our commitment is to make the transition to Canada a comfortable one for all newcomers.

Our Services Include:

Interpretation and Translation

Assessment of English and Literacy Skills

Citizenship Classes

Referrals

Community Development

Career, Educational and Vocational Planning

Temporary Foreign Workers Assistance

Employment Workshops and Information

Canadian School System Preparation Programs

Pre- and Post-Natal Programs

Volunteer Opportunities

First Language Support

Mentorship Opportunities

Parent Support Groups

Youth Programs

Pre-School

Family Literacy Programs

Men's Program

Seniors' Program

Advocacy

Public Education

At our annual gala, awards are presented to outstanding individuals and organizations that have positively impacted the Calgary community in the areas of Arts and Culture, Business, Community Service and Distinguished Professional.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Immigrants of Distinction Awards

The Youth Scholarships highlight the achievements of immigrant and refugee youth. The Hadassah Ksienski Distinguished Service Award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated leadership, innovation, dedication and compassion in the area of immigrant services. Genevieve Balogun, who was posthumously granted the award, exemplified those exceptional qualities throughout her life.

The 14th annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards ceremony was followed by an international reception, the theme of which was "International Marketplace".

Immigrant Services Calgary would like to offer our congratulations to the distinguished award and youth scholarship recipients. We would like to thank all of the nominees and finalists for helping make Calgary a world-class city. Special thanks to our sponsors for helping to make this event possible, and a big thank you to our selection committee volunteers!

2010 Award Recipients:

Arts and Culture Ms. Karin Richter

Business Ms. Bea Twumasi

Community Service Ms. Idrees A. Khan

Distinguished Professional

Dr. Wael Badawy

Youth Scholarship Recipients Ms. Daria

Tilimpea, Mr. Jethro Cheung, Ms. Malithi

Fernando, Ms. Mei Mu Zi (Annie) Zheng,

Ms. Shayna Ding



The Volunteer Program saw many successes in the past year. The expansion of several programs and the achievements of many clients were made possible through the efforts of our generous volunteers.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Our Volunteers

With the launch of the Multicultural Youth Action Project, Immigrant Services Calgary enhanced outreach into the community and expanded services to immigrant youth in Calgary.

Our Employment Coaching capacity has grown. Many individuals received resume and mock interview services. We paired many of the individuals in the Employment Bridging program with Success Coaches. These coaches provided them with real world, valuable and personal experiences. This service has changed the lives of many, and is also a very rewarding experience for the volunteers.

We would like to thank all 585 of our volunteers who consistently impress us with their hard work and dedication. The compassion and care that they bring to the agency never ceases to amaze us.

Volunteer Highlights

Volunteers

585

Volunteer hours

24,183

We would like to thank everyone who contributed financial and in-kind support to Immigrant Services Calgary in the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year. Your help makes our work possible.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Thank You to our Supporters

Alberta Association for Multicultural Education
Alberta Ballet
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Andrea Bosnjak
Anonymous
Anthony Tonkinson
Ashis and Swapna Gupta
Bank of Montreal
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The Print Shoppe
The Westin, Calgary
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Immigrant Services Calgary

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We would like to thank all our staff for their hard work and dedication. They have made a significant contribution in achieving the common goal of Immigrants Services Calgary: to help newcomers make Calgary their home.

Immigrant Services Calgary

Our Staff

Alina Ghita-Visinescu

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Shao Wen Yang

Shiraz Amiry

Simran Grewal

Sissi Zhang

Solomon Nega

Stephanie Shulhan

Sunny Wang

Taylor Chobotiuk

Thao Vu

Vesna Petkovic

Vivian Chan


Vivien Lok

Wendy Auger

Wendy Wen

Ying Mao

Zita Claudia Flores



For over 30 years, we have been a part of this unique community. Our volunteers lend a helping hand where needed, our staff work tirelessly with compassion and wisdom. Our generous partners and donors step up to bolster our resources, allowing our clients to take the wealth of knowledge they gain and become walking advocates for our agency. But try as we might, the need is still great – for support, funding, volunteers and community involvement. So add your voice, time or resources and visit immigrantservicescalgary.ca and be a part of a great story.



Vivien does not perceive any real differences between her culture (Hong Kong) and Canadian culture – people are all essentially the same wherever you go in the world and need care and attention. Something which has become her specialty.

Before she immigrated here for family reasons less than four years ago, she lived in Los Angeles for ten years, where she studied and worked. In LA, she worked in a hospital clinic as a crisis counselor, and in Canada worked in community development and non-profits for a long time. This would serve her well as ISC's Senior Co-ordinator of Settlement. She speaks English, Cantonese and Mandarin and is practical, organized, patient and task oriented.

"Yeah, I do appreciate the concept of volunteerism in Canada," she explains,

"I am able contribute as well as get something back from the community."

It's so much a part of her identity, that she attributes making a difference to others as what, in turn, makes her unique.

In fact, the spirit of volunteerism is her very favourite thing about living in Canada.

In her free time (which is precious little) she enjoys hiking, reading, and writing in cafes.

Oddly enough, it was Dr. Bob Robinson's retirement that inspired him to roll up his sleeves and get to work. Profoundly affected by both his own family's immigration stories as well as the racial strife occurring throughout the 1960s, Bob couldn't help but be drawn into the human and political side of multiculturalism. Believing everyone's story is a unique tapestry, Bob's own life seems to be woven out of decades of tireless work in child health and illness, family therapy, pediatric and immigration. From the head of Calgary Health Region and Chair of Calgary Family Connections to his board involvement with the Society for Persons With Learning Difficulties, the CanLearn Psychological Association and now Immigrant Services Calgary, Bob has led the type of life where you can't separate the man from the work. He sees the world as a global village, and believes that when you give back to one community, one organization, one person, the whole village gets stronger.






As Chair of the
Immigrants of Distinction Awards
and a child of immigrant parents herself,
Andrea helps tell the stories of those who
inspire others.

She gives recognition to those who feel ordinary.
And she ensures that those who thought
it was all for nothing,
find meaning.

She does it all ^{with the}
brightest of smiles
and the
biggest
of hearts.



Chiyu, also known as Tommy, is proud of his Chinese roots, even though his childhood in Beijing was anything but idyllic.

He remembers the struggles growing up, where opportunities seemed few and far between.

His concerned parents decided to emigrate – unselfishly leaving behind everything they had worked for and everything they've built, in the hopes of introducing Tommy to opportunities every child should have. And rightly so, with the move to Calgary, the opportunities began knocking on Tommy's door. And he answered the call.

With a new home came a new way of life. From very early on, Tommy started giving back his time and energy through volunteering – including life-altering stints for the Temporary Foreign Worker program and the Language Bank at Immigrant Services Calgary. As he puts it “the community of Calgary gave me so much, that I felt it my duty to give back. It only made sense.” Tommy is now a University of Calgary Engineering student and continues to “give back” by moonlighting as not only a volunteer but also an interpreter, a translator and, as many youth who have Tommy present in their lives would argue, a mentor.

“the community of Calgary gave me so much that I felt it my duty to give back.”

Wendy's passion for working with families and connecting with people, helps her to maintain focus in the busy world of Immigrant Services Calgary.

The Director of our Mosaic Family Resource Centre comes from a multicultural family background. The daughter of a Danish mother and an Irish father, Wendy has called Calgary home for more than 30 years. Wendy began her career at Immigrant Services by profession, 13 years ago after operating a very successful home-based pre-school program for eleven years.

A proud mother of three grown children, a grandmother, and a long-time advocate for early childhood professionals and children, Wendy continues to dedicate herself to the welfare of all children. "Children and families are at the centre of what I do and I believe that they keep me young in spirit."

"Life is a series of adventures that informs and shapes us; we are never finished learning or growing."

"The best part of Canada is how
diverse
are valued"



And Irfan knows the difference, being born in Nairobi, Kenya and living as a nomad through regions of East and Central Africa. He witnessed the works of organizations like CIDA, Oxfam, World Vision and most importantly, the United Nations, in some very inhospitable places. They opened his eyes to the role he could play in society. That's why he's studying Law and Society at the University of Calgary and applying to law school this year. **"I'm lucky enough to have been placed on a path that has allowed me to give back to this amazing community,"** he explains, **"A journey involving a great deal of civic engagement."** Irfan is a self-described optimist. He works as an Ismaili Muslim volunteer, a senior leader in the Ismaili Volunteer Corps, and an Elizabeth Fry volunteer. As a member of North of McKnight Youth Justice Panel, Irfan contributes to a positive, progressive, rehabilitative means for youth to reflect on their actions. In addition, he is working with the Calgary Police Service as part of their cultural diversity program.

His education went unrecognized with a move to Canada. Poi had skills. He had passion. He had knowledge. But no voice to let others know what they were. He started cleaning restaurants, knowing that it was a means to an end. He graduated from restaurants to Mount Royal University where he completed a diploma in Social Work. He then went on to complete a degree at the University of Calgary and has now completed his Masters of Social Work. When he is not pursuing his own dreams, he is helping others realize their own. As a cross-cultural counselor, Poi uses his knowledge of ethnic culture to understand what immigrants are experiencing, and helps them through loneliness, family violence and mental health issues. He is an ambassador for hope.

An eternal optimist.
Who could possibly look him in the eye and say it's "impossible" when he is living proof that it can be done.



Daria believes her life to be a blessing - so long as she has her family and friends to help her through.

“Ultimately, they are the ones who are always there for you,” she explains, “No questions asked.”

Daria's journey began in Ploiesti, Romania. A happy young girl at 9, her parents decided to immigrate to Calgary for its economic opportunities. Since then, she has overcome the language barrier, excelled academically, and developed a true disdain for apathy. “Apathy should be illegal!” she laughs.

And she lives by that belief - her impressive list of accomplishments and involvement are highlighted by her enrollment in the international Baccalaureate program and she is president of Interact Club (an extension of Calgary Rotarians) and a member of the Mayor's Youth Council.

Recently, Daria travelled to Mexico to build a home for a family in Tijuana. Despite the labor-intensive process, she enthusiastically shared her time with local orphans at the end of each day. “After all, if you have the opportunity to touch even one human life, why wouldn't you take it?”

"Canada is one of
the most valuable countries
in the world for immigrants
and good grants.
Good economic
people system."



When Shariar got top marks in his class in his school in Iran, he knew the die had been cast. With the encouragement of his teachers, he acquired the confidence that led him all the way to university and a lifelong pursuit of knowledge, hard work and dedication. "I am not sure what from my native culture has influenced me," he observes, "but I try to have a schedule for my life. I may change my schedule, but always I have one." And he certainly needs one because he doesn't limit himself to just math, physics and engineering but he also dedicates himself to martial arts and piano. In fact, he's so busy, he wishes he had enough money to spend all of his time doing just those things, instead of having to work. His goal is to always improve mentally and physically.



“Being born
in Canada
was like
winning
the worldwide
lottery,”

As an immigration lawyer, I see glimpses of life through the eyes of people in countries in turmoil. We are ridiculously fortunate...”

Living proof of Canada's multicultural strength, Alicia's father was born and raised in the Caribbean and came to Canada to pursue further education. Her mother's family is of Northern European descent and were some of the first settlers in Minnesota, making their living off the land. Alicia looks like she is from many places because her ancestry actually is.

Born in Ottawa and raised an Albertan, Alicia graduated from the University of Calgary with First Class Honours in English and completed her law degree at the University of Alberta. She went on to become a litigation and immigration lawyer. While practicing law, she has also taught courses at Bow Valley College and volunteered with various organizations. Alicia was first elected to the Board of Immigrant Services Calgary in 2004, has served as an Officer for the last two years, and has chaired standing and task committees.



Luz Adriana Buritica sees every day as an opportunity to be a better person. Amazing, considering the journey's she's already taken.

Adriana and her family emigrated from Colombia in the hopes of a better life. However, the transition wasn't easy – far from it. Her husband struggled to find work as a chemical engineer in Canada, first looking in Quebec, and eventually deciding upon Calgary.

In 2008, a very pregnant Adriana made the move with her husband and their two young children to a new country with no car, no family support, no doctor and struggling to communicate in English. Although it would spell disaster for most mothers, a determined Adriana forged on and survived on her good old-fashioned maternal instincts and common sense.

Adriana and her husband are working hard to learn English. A friend she met shortly after the birth of her third child suggested The Healthy Start Program at Immigrant Services Calgary. Adriana joined this program that has helped her make the most of her life in Canada.

Here she met new friends, learned English, and took part in workshops that were instrumental to her overall well being.



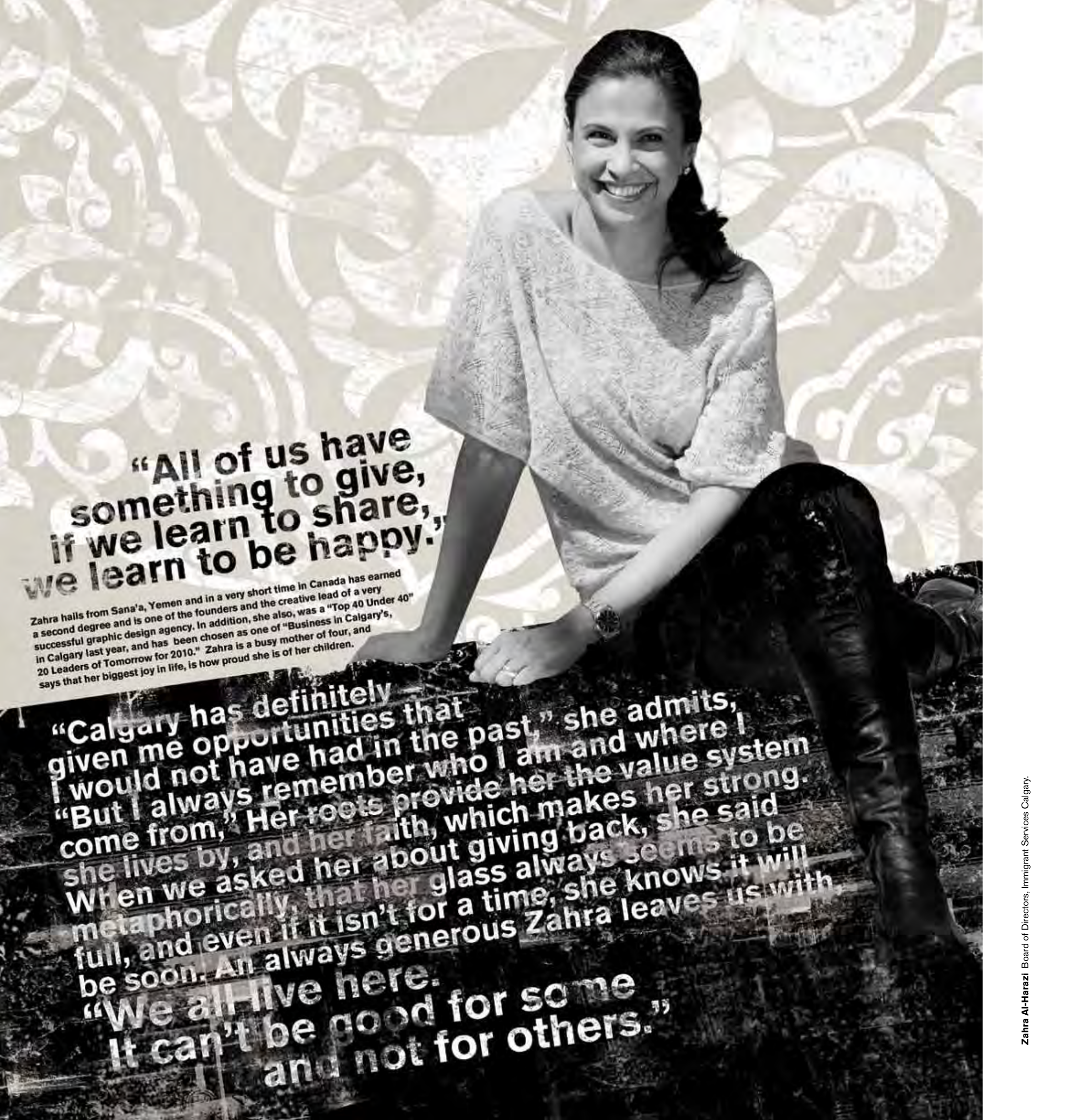
ALTHOUGH one might be poor on the outside, on the inside, they can be Very Rich and satisfying.”

Now residing in Calgary Anne considers herself to have many homes. She was born in the West Indies and has travelled extensively. She has a talent for languages and speaks English, French, Italian and Spanish and is a veteran volunteer as a certified interpreter and translator.

She revels in diversity and believes that there are certain disadvantages to being different and greater challenges to overcome, and yet it is also what makes life more interesting.

She cites perseverance as one of her key strengths, and that it was essential to learning so many languages. “It was unusually challenging for me, Given my background and lack of exposure to the kind of immersion second language English speakers take for granted,” she remarks.

Her advice to other immigrants is to recognize their strengths so they can decide who they are and work hard to find a constructive role they can play in society. But success, she cautions, can mean different things to people. Some choose material wealth, but she’d rather have internal conviction based on her own life philosophy.



“All of us have something to give, if we learn to share, we learn to be happy.”

Zahra hails from Sana'a, Yemen and in a very short time in Canada has earned a second degree and is one of the founders and the creative lead of a very successful graphic design agency. In addition, she also, was a "Top 40 Under 40" in Calgary last year, and has been chosen as one of "Business in Calgary's, 20 Leaders of Tomorrow for 2010." Zahra is a busy mother of four, and says that her biggest joy in life, is how proud she is of her children.

“Calgary has definitely given me opportunities that I would not have had in the past,” she admits, “But I always remember who I am and where I come from.” Her roots provide her the value system she lives by, and her faith, which makes her strong. When we asked her about giving back, she said metaphorically, that her glass always seems to be full, and even if it isn't for a time, she knows it will be soon. An always generous Zahra leaves us with, “We all live here. It can't be good for some and not for others.”

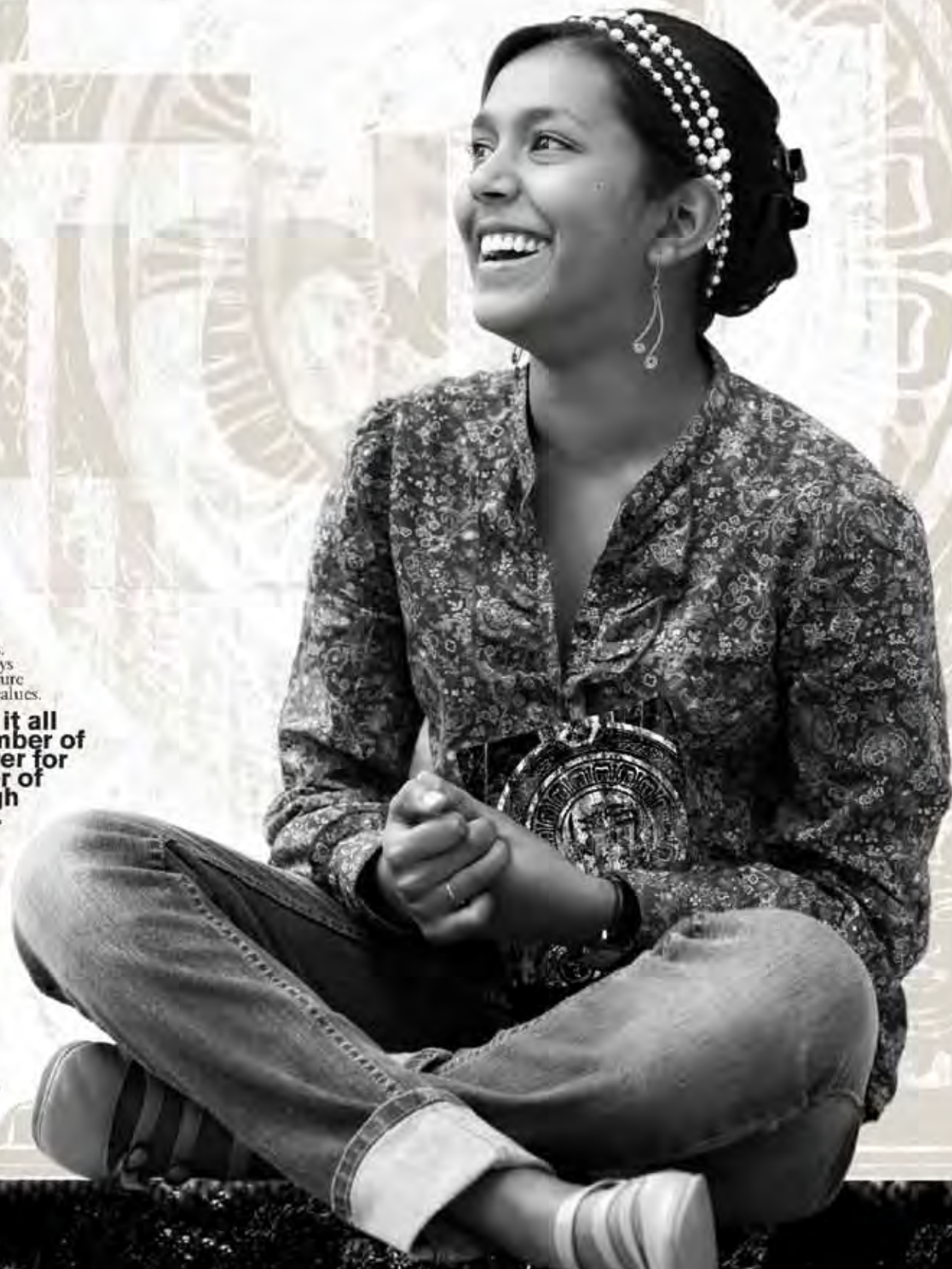
To Malithi Fernando, life is going well but also really fast. "There is so much I want to do," she says, "but there doesn't seem to be too many hours in a day to do all of it." She mentions this is where her family becomes very important – they remind her to slow down.

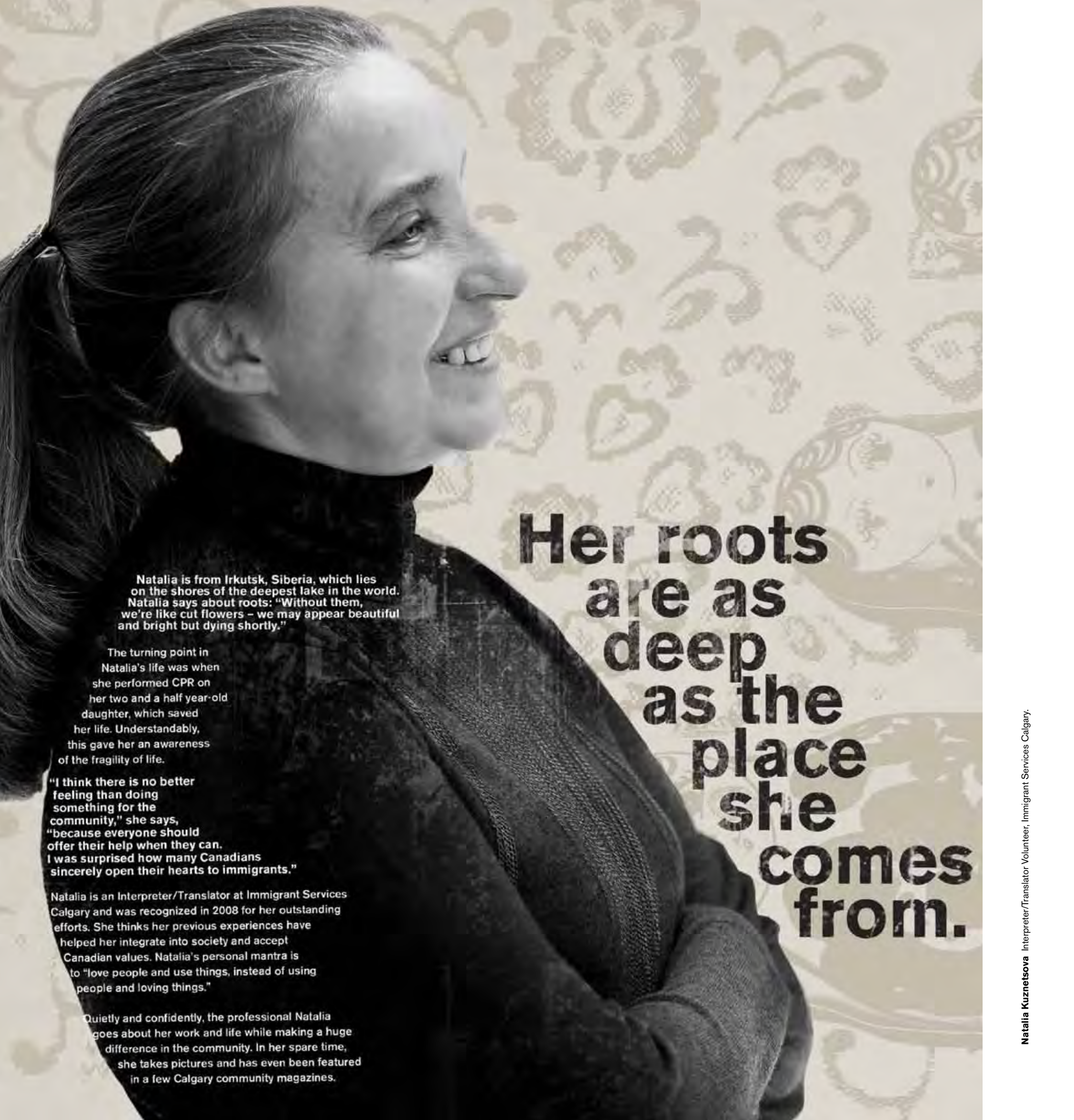
When Malithi's family came to Calgary from Sri Lanka, she took to her new country with gusto by achieving exceptionally high scores in her already advanced placement classes. She emphasizes that education was always a major priority in both my culture and family values.

Most importantly Malithi pays it all forward. She is an active member of several school committees, treasurer for Knights of Darfur, and a member of the executive committee of her high school's Youth Volunteer Corps. Her other volunteer commitments include working with the elderly, planning large-scale fundraisers, and participating in the Reading Buddies program at the Calgary Public Library.

But she never forgets where she's from; as evidenced by her passion for Sri Lankan culture through dance, performing at various Canada and Heritage Day celebrations and recently starring in a theatre production of a Sri Lankan folk tale.

Malithi's dream is to join Engineers without Borders to support their efforts in developing nations.





Natalia is from Irkutsk, Siberia, which lies on the shores of the deepest lake in the world. Natalia says about roots: "Without them, we're like cut flowers – we may appear beautiful and bright but dying shortly."

The turning point in Natalia's life was when she performed CPR on her two and a half year-old daughter, which saved her life. Understandably, this gave her an awareness of the fragility of life.

"I think there is no better feeling than doing something for the community," she says, "because everyone should offer their help when they can. I was surprised how many Canadians sincerely open their hearts to immigrants."

Natalia is an Interpreter/Translator at Immigrant Services Calgary and was recognized in 2008 for her outstanding efforts. She thinks her previous experiences have helped her integrate into society and accept Canadian values. Natalia's personal mantra is to "love people and use things, instead of using people and loving things."


Quietly and confidently, the professional Natalia goes about her work and life while making a huge difference in the community. In her spare time, she takes pictures and has even been featured in a few Calgary community magazines.

**Her roots
are as
deep
as the
place
she
comes
from.**

welcoming anyone who needs a place to go

It's not surprising that Din Ladak is where he is today. Growing up in a small town in Tanzania, he recalls how his parents' home was always filled with guests and families transitioning from one country to another. Din would eventually create a life for himself in Canada, where he would have his first experience with Immigrant Services Calgary in the summer of 1979, and then as the Volunteer Coordinator from 1980 to 1983. Din went on to work as a medical social worker at the Alberta Children's Hospital and then moved on to Hull Child and Family Services. He knew all along that his work with immigrants was far from over. He now sits at the head of the Immigrant Services Calgary table.

In March 2008, Din came across an ad that seemed to jump off the page at him. Immigrant Services Calgary was looking for a new CEO. It was perfect timing for the man who spent his life passionately protecting the value and dignity of every human being that touched his life. Knowing that the agency was strong and successful, Din was convinced that it was time to come back. His values of equality, volunteerism, diversity and inclusion, along with his quest to build on Canada's pluralistic society would all come to fruition.



The humorous adage, "95% of success is just showing up" doesn't really apply to Jethro. Either that, or what Jethro does with that remaining 5% makes the rest of us look regular. A rigorous achiever across a range of studies and disciplines, Jethro still humbly believes nothing to be easy;

everything requires his commitment and dedication.

And since immigrating to Calgary from Hong Kong, Jethro has committed and dedicated himself. Now in grade 12, he maintained the highest marks in his class for grades 10 and 11 and has been awarded "Most Outstanding Student". An accomplished competitive tennis player he has earned provincial championships, which rank him number one in both singles and doubles simultaneously. An accomplished pianist and violinist, he's won first place at the Calgary Kivans Music Festival an astounding 15 times, with additional awards in a variety of classical and contemporary disciplines.


He values the time he spends relaxing and hanging out with friends and family. Not that he gets the opportunity to do so very often because he also gives back – through a variety of volunteer commitments with the Youth Volunteer Corps Steering Committee, Amnesty International, and participation in summer camp programs for autistic children.



Valez Lumi looks like any ordinary Canadian teenager. She loves music. She plays sports. And she likes to hang out with her friends. But when you hear her story,

you realize the girl is truly extraordinary.

Valez was just 7 years old when her family fled their home in Kosovo – a home that was burned to the ground just hours later. Leaving their belongings and happy memories behind, Valez and her family stood in line for three days to get into an Albanian refugee camp. The wait was brutal. While some Albanians were stripped of their belongings and identity, others lost their lives. But Valez and her family endured it all. The humiliation. The three months of uncomfortable life in a refugee camp. And finally, the long trip to their new home, Canada. Valez's eyes light up when she talks about seeing malls and big buildings for the first time. The journey has certainly paid off for the girl who left with nothing. Valez was at the top of her class academically, is an Immigrants of Distinction Scholarship Recipient and an all-round inspiration to anyone who crosses her path. And when dad talks about his little girl – that's when his eyes light up.

A young man with dark hair, wearing a dark button-down shirt and jeans, is sitting on a ledge. He is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a wall with a white, intricate floral or geometric pattern on a light-colored surface. The lighting is soft, highlighting his features and the texture of the wall.

Considering both Iran and Canada home, Sepand is an easy-going, responsible young man. His versatility and positivity have served him in good stead since moving to Canada

His parents decided to emigrate for the unlimited possibilities Canada offers. In fact, he says he's always thrilled by the willingness of Canadians to accept diversity. But Canada is also where he learned his third language – English. He says, "Never limit yourself – you're the only restriction that is placed upon you." Sepand has certainly put his full efforts into volunteering at Immigrant Services Calgary, where he has helped with just about everything! He considers life to be a giant puzzle that he has only managed to solve a portion of. And giving back is equally important to him because he says "we're all in this together." But such are also the demands on someone who desires to be a leader – to be outgoing, reliable, compassionate, to persevere and to rid yourself of ego. For now, Sepand is excited to be turning 18. "A perfect day, for me, is accomplishing something while still having time for something fun."

Parveen came to Canada in 1974 from Pakistan. Her home in Islamabad, like Calgary, was close to the mountains.

After completing her Masters degree in psychology with honors, she taught a post-graduate class in a college before immigrating to Canada.

Like many immigrants, coming to Canada was a profound turning point in Parveen's life. A registered social worker, Parveen has worked for Immigrant Services Calgary for 14 years. She speaks Urdu, Punjabi and Hindi - which proves to be an invaluable asset for someone in her line of work. As a result, she has worked in virtually every unit at Immigrant Services Calgary and is currently a Parent Program Facilitator at the Mosaic Family Resource Centre. She has been presenting cross-cultural parenting, life skills and psycho-educational workshops to the parents which have helped them to navigate through education, health and legal systems. Some parents have commented "this was the best thing that happened to me since I came to Canada".

"My ability to empathize and provide support and comfort people in their time of crisis is my strongest suit."

Conversely, her greatest regret is not being able to care for her parents in their senior years. Parveen fondly recalls the special relationship she had with her parents and how much she cherishes their memories. Her wanting to care for everyone truly knows no bounds.

"I feel so privileged to be working with our diverse clients and assisting them to adapt to Canadian values" she adds, "I'm honored to be sharing their diverse stories and experiences, while supporting them in their time of need."

We are proud of different cultures and treasure our backgrounds


A fairly recent immigrant to Canada in 2008 and born in Mongolia, Sodnom is actually a German citizen. She can speak the languages of all three nations, too. She wasn't always able to speak English – she spoke very little of it when she first began bringing her son Daniel to the Mosaic Preschool. Since then, Sodnom has become one of the most valuable parent volunteers in the program. The teachers describe her as open-minded, willing, needing very little direction. She takes every opportunity to have a conversation in English.

Her husband Simon (whom she met and married in Germany) is originally from Kenya. "We are a happy and harmonious family who are proud of and treasure our different cultural backgrounds," she explains. "Family is the most important thing and always comes first."

She believes Calgary to be a multi-cultural city that offers a range of social-economic amenities and opportunities to individuals and families alike. In her experience, it's a place where one can preserve one's identity in terms of culture and language. A place where giving up and quitting should never be an option.

**Perseverance, tact
and hard-work
ultimately sees
one through.**





Hafeez is anything but your typical guy. For starters, he speaks Persian, Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Urdu, Hindi, English and Pashae. He immigrated to Canada from Afghanistan at the tender age of 14.

Even though he's a self-proclaimed go-getter, Hafeez never takes anything for granted.

Not even the jobs he held with the likes of Dell and IBM. Not the private pilot's license he recently obtained. Not his compassionate ways or his unique listening skills. Not his role as the Executive Assistant to the CEO for Immigrant Services Calgary. **Hafeez is always seeking to get to new heights.**

Hafeez moved to Canada for opportunities that the western world offered.

And although lofty, his ultimate wish is to make the world not only a better place, but a place that's free of poverty. Not only for Canadians, but for everyone. Seeing the person he is, it's not surprising that Hafeez will not rest until his wish comes to fruition.

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