

UNMASKING POTENTIAL

.....
revealing stories of new beginnings

你好 HEJ HEJ SALAM HOI BONJOUR HOLA NAMASTE HEJ SALAMHOLA HALLO
GUTEN TAG GEIA SOY CIÀO GUTEN TAG HEJ SHALOM
HOLA HYVÄÄ PÄIVÄÄ HEJ HELLO SHALOM
NAMASTE HEJ HALLO GUTEN TAG HEJ SHALOM
GUTEN TAG HEJ HALLO BONJOUR
HEJ HALLO SALAM
HYVÄÄ HEJ GUTEN TAG 你好 HALLO HEJ SHALOM
PÄIVÄÄ GEIA SOY SALAM HALLOHOI CIÀO
BONJOUR HEJ CIÀO GUTEN TAG HEJ
HEJ HALLO GUTEN TAG HEJ HEJ

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Thank You to our Supporters

OUR MISSION

IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY

is committed to being a comprehensive settlement agency working together with immigrants and their families to make Canada home.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Jim S. Frideres, *Chair* // Dr. Bob Robinson, *Past-Chair* // Ms. Alicia Backman-Beharry, *Vice-Chair* // Mr. Hanif Kassam, *Co-Treasurer* // Mr. Raymond C.T. Cheung, *Co-Treasurer* // Ms. Elizabeth Gouthro, *Secretary* // Ms. Josephine S.P. Pon // Dr. Philip Behman // Mr. Veenu Narula // Mr. Dongseop (Tony) Kim // Ms. Sunny Delaney Clark // Mr. Yohannes Afework // Ms. Marcy Field, *Recorder* // Mr. Din Ladak, *Chief Executive Officer* //

OUR VISION

Immigrants and their families participate fully in an integrated and cohesive Canadian society.

OUR VALUES

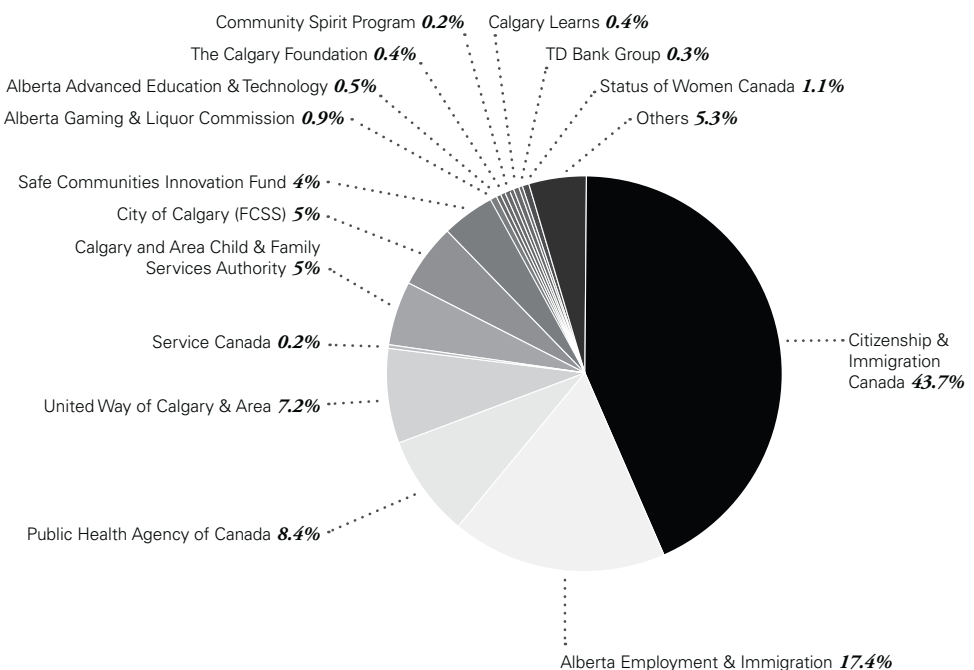
We are passionate, collaborative, accountable, and ethical leaders in settlement services. We believe that people come first. We are committed to quality services for a diverse Canadian community.



Thank you for being an important contributor to Immigrant Services Calgary by providing financial support to us in 2010-2011 totalling \$7,478,954. You helped us provide support for new immigrants, refugees and their families as they begin the journey to make Canada home.

FUNDERS

TOTAL FUNDING IN 2010-2011 FISCAL YEAR



How do you say Hello?

HI

Hola SPANISH

Konichiwa JAPANESE

Dzien dobry POLISH

Yassou GREEK

Sat sri aka PUNJABI

Loi yed SUDANESE

Jambo SWAHILI

Marhaba ARABIC

Salaam FARSI

An-young haseyo KOREAN

Chào bạn VIETNAMESE

Hello ENGLISH

Namaskar BENGALI

Zdravo BOSNIAN

Zdraveïte BULGARIAN

Néih hóu CANTONESE

Bok CROATIAN

Ahoj CZECH

Hej DANISH

Kudual DINKA

Dobar dan GERMAN

Namaste HINDI

Dia Duit IRISH GAELIC

Ciao ITALIAN

Nǐ hǎo MANDARIN

Ce nien ke mal? NUER

Salaam Alaikum PASHTO

Salut ROMANIAN

Pryvit UKRAINIAN

Salām URDU

INTEGRATED APPROACH

IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY is an agency that puts people first. We provide a diverse range of services that meet the complex needs of newcomers establishing themselves and their families in Canada. We understand the challenges of settling in a new country. 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. We are committed to quality services for a diverse community.

Providing assistance in up to 78 languages, Immigrant Services Calgary takes an integrated approach to helping individuals and families settle into life and work in the Calgary community.

Our services include:

Settlement and Orientation
 Interpretation and Translation
 Assessment of English and Literacy Skills
 Community Based Programs
 Citizenship Classes
 Information and Referral
 Community Development
 Career, Educational and Vocational Planning
 Employment Workshops and Information
 Pre- and Post-Natal Programs
 Child Health Initiatives
 Pre-school Programs

Volunteer Opportunities
 First Language Support
 Mentorship Opportunities
 Parent Support Groups
 Youth Programs
 Family Literacy Programs
 Men's Program
 Seniors' Program
 Public Education

HISTORY OF IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY



A New Beginning // A Better Canada.

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 Thousands of refugees arrive in Calgary. Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC) leads an interagency meeting of more than 30 community groups working together to assist refugees. ISC grows to four full-time staff.

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. ISC begins offering the Citizenship Program.

1984 ISC 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.

1993 The Carver model of governance is officially adopted by the agency's Board of Directors.

1994 The Mosaic Family Resource Centre is

2010

For over 34 years, we've been working together with newcomers to make Canada home. Starting as a small agency run by volunteers, we have grown into a large organization dedicated to providing comprehensive programs and services. As one of Alberta's longest serving settlement agencies, we look forward to continuing our story by helping newcomers make Canada home.

established to meet the individual and collective needs of the family as they make Calgary their home.

- 1997** The Immigrants of Distinction Awards are 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** ISC receives the "Spirits of Gold Diversity Award" from the United Way of Calgary and Area.
- 2003** Career bridging services begin to be provided by the agency to assist newcomers in overcoming challenges to participating in the workforce.

2007 ISC celebrates 30 years of working in the Calgary community.

2008 ISC welcomes the new Chief Executive Officer. ISC begins providing services to temporary foreign workers. Women's Mentorship Program begins.

2009 Funding from the Provincial Government and the City of Calgary enables the Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods and After School Programs to commence.

2010 ISC launches a new website with information available in 12 languages, working to provide information to beneficiaries across the world. New funding from the Federal Government allows the MAPLE program to begin serving newcomers.

HIGHLIGHTS

22,702

VOLUNTEER HOURS

647

VOLUNTEERS

692

WORKSHOPS FOR
BENEFICIARIES
& VOLUNTEERS

// 2010-2011

20,327

BENEFICIARIES

151

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF
BENEFICIARIES

78

LANGUAGES SPOKEN
BY STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

REPORT FROM THE BOARD

IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY

2010 was a year of change in Canada and the world – change that was reflected within our agency. It was a year of recovery and hope, one that saw the gradual rebuilding of countries impacted heavily by natural disasters and internal strife. In 2010 Canada welcomed the highest number of immigrants in 50 years (280,636 permanent residents), confirming Canada’s belief that immigrants strengthen our country. New reforms to immigration policy at the federal, provincial and municipal levels are helping to shape the future of immigration. Immigrant Services Calgary continues to change with the times and to provide programs and services that are essential to a new beginning.


It has been 34 years since Immigrant Services Calgary began providing services out of a small office with just two volunteers. Since then we have seen significant growth in staff, volunteers, programs, and beneficiaries. Over the past several years I have seen how Immigrant Services Calgary’s service provision has evolved to fulfill the changing needs of Canada’s immigrant population and worked to help newcomers capitalize on their unique strengths and skill sets.

As the Chair of the Board of Directors of ISC, I hope to continue our strategic growth as an agency that provides comprehensive services to newcomers, helping each of them to create a new beginning that will make a better Canada.

“In 2010, Canada welcomed 280,636 permanent residents – the highest number of immigrants in 50 years.”

Highlight of this year’s efforts include:

- ★ *In 2010 we worked with Calgary’s corporations, non-profit, ethno-cultural, and religious organizations and Calgary communities to continue to cultivate an inclusive, supportive environment within our city.*
- ★ *Calgary’s municipal government worked with the immigrant-serving sector to begin to form a new “Welcoming Community Framework”. Immigrant Services Calgary was proud to participate in the development process.*
- ★ *We had two successful community consultations with partners from across Calgary’s sectors of education, business and not-for-profit that helped open up discussion about overcoming the barriers that immigrants face as they become full participants in Canadian society.*
- ★ *New initiatives such as MAPLE (Multicultural Achievement Program for Learning Employers) demonstrated both the skills and cultural value that newcomers bring to their employers. These initiatives highlight the reciprocal nature of helping beneficiaries access the stepping stones to success. Immigrant Services Calgary plans to continue to bring our services to the community and create more global resources that newcomers can use to help themselves. We are honing our growth by structuring our organization so that we remain flexible and responsive. We are making sure that we can measure our progress in both numbers and stories that reflect the success of building a new home in Canada.*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders, donors, members, staff, volunteers and partners who make our work possible. 

Dr. Jim S. Frideres

*Chair, Board of Directors
Immigrant Services Calgary*

REPORT FROM THE CEO

The past year has been one of growth, change and innovation for Immigrant Services Calgary. From community consultation events, to an exciting election, to growth in programs, we focused on creating visible outcomes for the community. Reach and impact have been our priorities. Our success in 2010 has been to realize the benefits of pluralism and diversity, celebrate the strengths of our newcomers, and to build a future where our agency remains accessible to beneficiaries. We are about new beginnings and an enriched Canada.

Many immigrants come to Canada with a dream: to be an active and successful citizen in a beautiful and inclusive country. Alas, for some, their story of settling successfully into a new country belies their struggle of adapting to new rules, ideas, and culture. It is a struggle that can result in frustration and disappointment due to issues and barriers to accessing resources. People begin to build protective masks to keep going, and a thicker skin to deflect their disappointments.

Immigrant Services Calgary is here to help newcomers unmask and realize their full potential. Our commitment is to help immigrants and their families participate fully in an integrated and cohesive Canadian society. Canada is a country that celebrates the true faces of all of our citizens. Our staff and volunteers work with our beneficiaries daily to reveal their true selves, and to help them realize their true potential, diversity, and accomplishments. We measure our achievement through numbers, and by the success stories of our beneficiaries and of the innovative and creative ways in which they work to help make Canada a better place.



“Our greatest success has been unmasking the potential of immigrants in Calgary.”

Some of these successes have included:

- ★ *Career and mentorship programs that helped many gain relevant work in Calgary or successfully go back to school.*
- ★ *Citizenship classes that have helped many residents become proud Canadians and youth programs that strongly support civic involvement.*
- ★ *Language assessments, language support, educational and vocational opportunities, translations and interpretations that have helped people access community services.*
- ★ *Settlement services that guide those new to Calgary. We have seen more leading edge programs, and a greater number of diverse populations utilize our services.*
- ★ *In 2010 we reached out to Calgary and local communities with great success. In addition to our downtown location that offers comprehensive services for newcomers, Immigrant Services Calgary has expanded services in communities to support underserved newcomer populations.*
- ★ *Our two community consultations created awareness around issues faced by immigrants and refugees such as literacy issues and accreditation.*

I would like to thank everyone who has made our work possible: our generous funders and donors, our co-operative community partners, and our guiding board members, dedicated volunteers and tireless staff. Our stakeholders are essential to our success because with their support we realize daily our potential as an agency. Working in co-operation with our stakeholders, our future will cultivate our true face of pluralism, inclusiveness, equity, achievement, and diversity. It is a future that is being built step by step, hand in hand, by everyone at Immigrant Services Calgary. Our vision is one we share with all.

Thank you for a year that has demonstrated success, diversity, and innovation. 🧐

Din Ladak

*Chief Executive Officer
Immigrant Services Calgary*

HELLO.

*Meet the faces
behind ISC.*



46 LONG NGUYEN



30 ROSA MARTINEZ



49 GRACE HAN



30 FARIBA ESFAHANI



25 RAYMOND CHEUNG



59 ALMAS MAWJI



38 MIKI ASAI



55 KRYSTYNA BIEL



58 MUNIR MAJID



52 PETER ALPHONSE



32 JOSEPHINE PON



39 MAYDA CANJURA



40 SOPHIE DURZI



48 YAAK DUT



22 PUNEET KULLAR



33 CARLOS CORDOBA

60 ALFRED LOMORO
EDWARD24 TINA & RAKESH
SINGH31 ENAYAT
AMINZADAH18 DIN LADAK
CEO54 DR. JIM FRIDERES
Board Chair



“Living in a society with so many different cultures surrounding you is an amazing experience.”

PUNEET KULLAR

MOSAIC – Coordinator/Team Leader

From: I was born in India. I came to Calgary when I was 4 months old and have lived here my entire life. I have been able to practice both of my identities: Canadian and East Indian.

Reflects Cultural Identity By:

My family lives in Canada now and we consider ourselves to be Canadian. We still practice our culture by cooking East Indian food and speaking our first language at home, celebrating cultural festivities, dressing in our cultural attire, and being active members in our community.



On Canada...

Rate the weather: Although I love skiing, the winter weather in Calgary can be really bad at times. We need more sun out here!

Favorite Things: Calgary is an amazing place to live. Everyone is very friendly, the culture is very diverse and the city is vibrant! I really enjoy bike riding in the summer and exploring the beautiful scenic parks that Calgary has to offer.

Hockey: Go Flames Go!

Pride: I am truly proud to be a Canadian. Living in a society with so many different cultures surrounding you is an amazing experience. Celebrating your own cultural festivities and participating in other cultural festivities is an experience of a lifetime. The best part of Canada is all of the different food from around the world that you get to try. Canada sets itself apart from other countries with its core values of respect, diversity, and inclusion.

Is Canada “Home” yet?: Canada is the only home that I have ever known.

ISC: After graduating from the University of Calgary, ISC was my first career “home.” It has been very rewarding – I have grown so much – personally and professionally – in my five and a half years here. Making a difference in someone’s life is a very rewarding job. I have had the privilege of working with young children, and nothing brightens my day as much as a child’s smile. Building relationships with these children and their families is something that I will always cherish. I feel very lucky with the type of work I do and the impact I can make in the lives of children and their families.



TINA & RAKESH SINGH

*Beneficiaries of Settlement Services
– Employment Bridging Program*

From: South Africa – 8 months

Why Canada: Canadian Citizens are warmly welcomed throughout the world. I [Rakesh] visited Canada 20 years ago and enjoyed my month long stay. Circumstances at the time did not allow me to pursue my plans to emigrate – but in 2008 I finally decided that it was time to make the move. We chose Calgary because of Alberta's strong economy. The Calgary to Edmonton economic corridor is one of the strongest in terms of development. We also found that this corridor has the highest GDP per capita and a bright future, stimulated by the oil and gas industry. Calgary also has the most number of sunny days of all the cities in the West.

Reflect Cultural Identity By: Still preparing meals the South African way and practicing South African hospitality.

WELCOME HOME!

We encountered many challenges but persevered, researched and reached out for help when needed. With hard work and dedication one can achieve goals set in Canada.

Barriers faced: 1. The poor response to applications for employment via the internet. 2. The requirement of Canadian experience to be employed. We attended employment workshops/sessions held by ISC which resulted in both of us finding suitable employment within 5 months of being in the Calgary.

Do you ever wear a “mask”? There was and is no need for a facade. Our South African upbringing has groomed us to be outspoken but humble at the same time.

ISC: ISC has invited us to a few work search advisory sessions as well as arranged for a career counsellor to work with us. This resulted in the correct presentation of our resumes. The Safeway “Meet & Greet Session” was most important as we are both now employed by Safeway Canada Inc. We have since, referred a few new immigrants to ISC.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from

1-5: 5 – Enjoyed the weather.

This is the first winter we have experienced with snow and as long as one is dressed warmly, life goes on as normal. I [Tina] had an interview when it was -33C and had to take Calgary Transit to get to the venue. At one point I had to remove my glove to make a call and in less than 2 minutes my fingers began to feel numb. I accepted this as part of my winter initiation. Canada is now my home so I have to enjoy and make the most of the wintry days.

Favorite Things: Calgary – size and diversity. Also views of the Rockies from our lounge.

Describe Hockey in One Word: “Fast”

Pride: We are proud – although we are not yet Canadian citizens, we always refer to ourselves as Canadians when we speak to family in South Africa.

The Future: Very Optimistic – We have a positive attitude, and expectations to make a success of our lives here in Canada. We left behind our families and gave up successful careers in South Africa to pursue our dreams in the country of our choice.



RAYMOND CHEUNG

ISC Board Member – Co-Treasurer

From: Hong Kong in 1994.

Reflects Cultural Identity By:

By maintaining the use of my mother tongue at home, and listening to the ethnic radio station.

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a land of freedom which cannot be found easily elsewhere; it's a land of opportunities that allows immigrants to succeed with their hard work.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 4. The four seasons add a lot of variety to life.

Favorite Things: Friendliness, Politeness of Calgarians/Canadians

Describe Hockey in One Word: Amazing

The Future: I am optimistic as I see my family excel via higher education and with hard work.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: Certainly. It's interesting how my brain has transformed in thinking. I used to think in Chinese, now when in the company of Canadians, I find that I think in English.

Barriers faced: 1. To get the first job. 2. To make new friends.

ISC: I've been on the Board of Directors for last 3 years and am currently the Co-Treasurer of ISC. The agency is so important to many new immigrants as one of the first organizations in Calgary providing comprehensive services to help their family settle.

SETTLEMENT AND LANGUAGE BANK CENTRE



The last year was an extremely successful year at the Settlement and Language Bank Centre. Our expanded services were very well received, extending our reach into population subgroups that included women, youth and seniors. A strong emphasis was placed on a holistic beneficiary-centric approach from program design to service delivery. We believe that settlement is a continuum consisting of acclimatization, adaptation, engagement and integration on both the individual and family levels. Guided by that philosophy, we have continued to focus on family-oriented services, seeking to bring our programs and services into communities where new immigrants live and work, instead of waiting for them to come to us.

SETTLEMENT

Following last year's success, our Settlement Counselors have diversified by reaching out to different schools, faith groups, ethno-cultural associations and corporate partners. Additionally, we have introduced a weekly group orientation session, **Welcome to Alberta**. Our goal is to create awareness of the availability of settlement services at ISC as well as provide a friendly setting for new immigrants to connect to settlement counselors and other newcomers. In the Employment Bridging area, our **Power Breakfasts** and **Success Coaching** have become trademark successes. **Power Breakfasts** provide job seekers with opportunities to network with employers and obtain information on industry-specific trends and opportunities. **Success Coaching** taps into employee volunteerism and corporate citizenship to benefit job seekers by providing them with specific job search guidance as well as emotional and psychological support. Our dedication, innovation and professionalism have established us as a community leader in the immigrant settlement field.

LANGUAGE BANK

The accessibility of affordable, high quality interpretation and translation services is crucial to the successful settlement of immigrants. Our highly trained interpreters have played a vital role in bridging the cultural and communication gaps between mainstream agencies and beneficiaries. This includes helping newcomers overcome language barriers when accessing government services, and improving communication in situations involving law enforcement, such as labor disputes and domestic violence situations.

The translation of official documents into English provides an important stepping stone for immigrants pursuing further education and/or employment opportunities in Canadian society. In the past year, the Language Bank introduced an innovative **Express Document Translation** service to improve the turnaround time. We also invested in new upgrades for translation software and specialized training for our volunteer interpreters/translators. Moreover, operational procedures were streamlined to expedite service delivery. The Language Bank continues to uphold its long and distinguished history of providing trustworthy, culturally-sensitive high quality interpretation and translation services in a timely manner.

Settlement Program Highlights included:

The **Community Initiative & Access Program for Seniors** adopts a holistic layering approach to address the physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs of seniors in their settlement and integration process. This multicultural seniors program offers weekly fitness classes, interest groups, social and recreational activities, information and skill-building workshops, instructive learning, volunteering as well as leadership opportunities. We have been successful in making significant inroads into isolated ethnic communities and in helping seniors reduce isolation, enhancing physical and emotional health, improve family dynamics as well as pursuing active living.

continued >

Settlement Services

Beneficiaries Served	5,453
Hours of Service Provided to Beneficiaries	42,047
Services Provided	10,305
Countries of Origin	152
Languages Spoken by Beneficiaries	123

Leading Countries of Origin of Beneficiaries

China	19.3%
India	9.6%
Colombia	8.0%
Pakistan	5.3%
Philippines	3.3%
Iran	3.3%
Ethiopia	3.0%
Sudan	2.9%
Russia	2.4%
Afghanistan	2.2%

Language Bank:

Languages in Which Services Were Provided	50
Documents Translated	1,314
Pages Translated	2,439
Interpretations	699
Total Beneficiaries Served	1,049

“Our highly trained interpreters have played a vital role in bridging the cultural and communication gaps between mainstream agencies and beneficiaries.”

The **Multicultural Achievement Program for Learning Employers (MAPLE)** is a new national initiative piloted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. This project brings together employers and recent immigrants to create employment opportunities for newcomers especially in small and medium sized enterprises. The objectives of the program include increasing employer awareness of the advantages of a diversified workforce, addressing practical issues and promoting discussions on obstacles faced by internationally trained professionals trying to find meaningful jobs in their fields of expertise. Workshops on improving cross-cultural communication in the workplace have been offered to employers while internships for newcomers are simultaneously solicited. Employers are impressed by the caliber of the talent pool and report being more prepared to hire newcomers.

The **Integrated Women’s Mentorship Program** has continued to reap success and has expanded to include a second phase. Phase I has a focus on outreach, intake and client assessment, the matching of professional immigrant women with mentors as well as employment readiness training for mentees. Phase II puts an emphasis on linking participants with internship and direct hire opportunities. This phase provides specialized training to mentors and mentees to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring partnerships as well as the participants’ personal, occupational and leadership capacities.

In the past year, the program partnered with the Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC) to pilot a mentoring collaborative. CRIEC engaged Calgary employers as mentors while we supplied suitable mentees. The collaboration further enhanced the effectiveness of the program as CRIEC’s diversified mentor pool had facilitated many successful matches. The Integrated Women’s Mentorship Program has been well-received by mentees, mentors and employers alike and demand is expected to remain high in the coming year. 🧐

Individuals and Families Served by Settlement

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Growth</i>	<i>Total People Served</i>
2006-2007	12%	3,417
2007-2008	5%	3,586
2008-2009	14%	4,086
2009-2010	10%	4,492
2010-2011	21%	5,453

What do you like best about Canada so far?



- ☀ Summer – the dry climate. 👍 Mayor & his upbeat attitude. ★ Multiculturalism in this country, freedom & opportunity to chase dreams. 🍁 Diversity, multiculturalism & Canadian way of life.
- 🏔 Mountain backdrop (Calgary) & Metropolitan City (Calgary). 👫 Landscape & people.
- ❄ Diverse culture, people & snow for winter sports. 🏛 Diversity & ‘inclusionary’ policies.
- ⚖ Human rights & democracy. ☮ Peace. 🛡 You don’t have to worry about your safety, so you have peace of mind. ❤ Acceptance and love for diversity.



FARIBA ESFAHANI

MOSAIC – Early Childhood Facilitator



ROSA MARTINEZ

Volunteer ISC Employment Coach

From: Peru. 2 years ago.

Why Canada: I wanted to give my daughter access to a better education. I chose Calgary because it is a growing city with a multicultural presence.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I make an effort to cook more Peruvian dishes and speak Spanish when I am at home. When consulting with new Canadians at ISC, I try to use Spanish where possible to make people feel more comfortable and ensure that they understand the lessons I'm teaching.

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a beautiful, culturally diverse country.

Do you ever wear a "mask"?

No, I've been treated with genuineness and respect

ISC: I have had the chance to help other newcomers through my professional skills as an Employment Coach. ISC means a helping hand to newcomers.

From: Iran. I have been here in Canada since June 2002.

Why Canada: Better life, safe environment, and better future for my sons. Because of my husband's job we came to Calgary, he works in the Oil and Gas field.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: We combine all of the good items from my culture and Canadian culture and try to follow them.

Barriers faced: The language, finding a job and assimilating to the culture were all challenges for me at beginning. I tried and tried to learn English, find a job and get used to the culture.

ISC: There is a lot of opportunity for new immigrants in ISC, such as English Assessment, learning how to face new challenges, and how to find a job. I love to work in such an environment, to help other immigrants.

 **On Canada...**

Rate the weather from 1-5: 2.

Favorite Things: Safe environment. People obey the law. Traveling and seeing new places and the beautiful Canadian nature.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I watch. One word – Challenge.

Pride: Yes, I am proud to be Canadian.

The Future: I feel I can achieve almost anything I want, since I do have a lot of hope and there is a lot of opportunity in Canada to progress.



ENAYAT AMINZADAH

*Executive Management Team –
Director of Operations and Resource Development*

From: Afghanistan, I immigrated to Canada in 1995.

Why Canada: I came with my parents and 9 siblings. It was my parents that chose Canada for all of us, and I am very happy with that choice.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I partake in most of my Afghan-cultural celebrations. It is very important for me and my family to stay connected with my roots (Afghan culture), and live by the values and principles of Canadian Society. Our home is an example of a dual culture (Afghan-Canadian). Half of our living room is decorated with traditional Afghan furniture and artifacts, where the other half reflects the modern western culture in Canada.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from

1-5: 3. It's ok considering its geographic location. I'm not used to the snow, but I love the blue skies.

Favorite Things: Cultural diversity and inclusionary practices. We have friends from different parts of the world, and we enjoy mixing and learning about their cultures.

Describe Hockey in One Word: Canadian

The Future: I'm very Optimistic. I came for the educational opportunities for my daughter, and we are happy to be here and be part of a country which values diversity.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: It is. I feel at home even though I'm still adjusting to the cold winters and short summers.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 5. I love the Chinooks! And of course the beautiful mountains surrounding the outskirts of Calgary, covered in a magnificent white dress!

Favorite Things: I am still exploring Calgary but I do enjoy the fact that I am only 60 minutes away from the mountains.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I am a fan of hockey. This is probably the only sport, besides soccer that I thoroughly enjoy watching. One word... "Addicting"

The Future: I feel very optimistic about my future in Canada. I come from a country where the situation has been unstable due to civil and other wars ever since I was born. It was only after immigrating to Canada that my family and I found a promising future.

Do you ever wear a "mask"?: I was a teenager when I immigrated to Canada with my family. I did experience some challenges and struggled through the initial stages of our settlement in Canada as I come from a part of the world where many aspects of life are different compared to Canadian society.



JOSEPHINE PON

ISC Board Member – IDA Chair

From: Hong Kong. Arrived over 20 years ago.

Why Canada: My parents made the decision because of the uncertainty of the future of Hong Kong after 1997.

Misses most about Hong Kong: I miss the weather – it never snows in Hong Kong. Snack foods sold by street vendors.

Reflects Cultural identity by: I always try to speak my own language when the opportunities arise. I use my cultural knowledge, experiences, and expertise as part of my skill set at work, and share these skills with my colleagues and friends.

Empowering lessons from Hong Kong culture: Work hard. Believe in yourself. Always maintain a positive attitude.

ISC: I am an active board member who is fully involved and engaged with ISC. I offer my feedback and suggestions to assist the agency in achieving its goals and objectives. This is a meaningful place that provides hope and assistance to new immigrants who begin their new lives in Canada and helps them make their dreams come true.



On Canada...

Rate the weather

from 1-5: 3. Generally great summers, but sometimes very cold winters. Overall, the environment, cleanliness and bright summer days are more enjoyable in Calgary than in Hong Kong.

Favorite things:

Multiculturalism, freedom and many opportunities to chase your dreams.

Describe hockey in one word:

Canadian!

Pride: I ALWAYS express my pride as a Canadian to other immigrants and Canadians.

The future: I'm very optimistic.

I work at a major Canadian bank which offers great career potential, and I feel there are lots of opportunities for development in the future for me.

Is Canada "home" yet? Definitely!

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a beautiful place for people who dream of freedom and respect. I feel it is the most multicultural country in the world.



“I have never tried to wear a mask, revealing myself has brought thousands of benefits to my life.”

CARLOS ANDRÉS CÓRDOBA PÁEZ

Beneficiary of ILVARC

From: Colombia. I have been here for 18 months.

Why Canada: I chose to come here in order to find better job opportunities in Alberta, specifically in Oil and Gas.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: My culture is not going to disappear because it is innate to me. I try to talk about my beautiful country, Colombia, and to teach Canadians a lot about the experiences from my past with my family. For example, I am used to sharing Colombian music and preparing some typical Colombian food.

Barriers faced: In the beginning, I saw opportunities instead of barriers. Thus, I have tried to adjust my life in order to enjoy them completely. For example, some people would say the language is a barrier but in my personal case, it is a great new source of knowledge in my life.

Mask: I have never tried to wear a mask. On the contrary, revealing myself has brought thousands of benefits to my life.

ISC: It was the first door in my long path.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: I like the snow on the street, on the mountains, on trees and also when I need to shovel in front of my house. I'd give the weather a rating of 4.

Favorite Things: I cannot mention just one, I have lots. For example the Calgary Zoo, where I have gone several times.

Pride: Absolutely, I am not only proud of myself, but also proud of sharing my engineering experience. Furthermore, I am proud of being part of a country that is on the cutting edge of technology.

The Future: There is no doubt that Canada has the most valuable diversity of people from different countries, thus, it makes Canada a unique country where the prosperity is deeply felt.

IMMIGRANT LANGUAGE & VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT- REFERRAL CENTRE (ILVARC)



Once again, **ILVARC** has experienced a busy and successful year. We continued to expand our services and increase efficiency, providing timely assistance to many new Canadians.

ILVARC provides one-stop comprehensive English assessment and referral services for immigrants and refugees in Calgary. We determine eligibility for the federally sponsored Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, refer beneficiaries to language training opportunities, and help them to further their educational, career, and vocational goals. In addition, we excel in connecting beneficiaries to training, employment opportunities, as well as to needed support services such as financial assistance and settlement programs.

To address the diverse needs and to facilitate meaningful participation of immigrants and refugees in LINC, ESL, and other settlement programs and services, ILVARC works very closely with other service providers in the Calgary community.

2010-2011 brought an on-going demand for assessment and referral services. ILVARC's responsiveness and increased capacity for first language ESL and career counseling helped reduce waitlists for beneficiaries and led to timely access to vital programs and services. There was a greater demand in the area of assessment for specific streams of services, especially from service providers offering Enhanced Language Training

(ELT) programs, and from Alberta Employment and Immigration contracted service providers. The demand continued to rise for the CELBAN assessment (which assists internationally educated nurses in their efforts to become licensed in Canada), as well as for assessments for temporary foreign workers.

During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, ILVARC conducted an increased number of workshops for our beneficiaries. Guest speakers were often engaged to assist with bridging beneficiaries to various professions, and to enhance their networking opportunities and labor market integration. These workshops are exceptionally popular and continue to be in high demand.

In August, ILVARC signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Centre for Education and Training (CET) for the provision of assessment and referral services for the LINC Home Study Canada Program in Calgary. This program uses a correspondence and web-based method of LINC delivery. Adding this option to LINC referral choices improved access to language training for those beneficiaries facing multiple barriers.

To better meet the emerging needs of our beneficiaries due to changing immigration and labor market trends, professional development continued to be one of ILVARC's priorities. The counseling team benefited from a variety of career planning and employment search strategies professional

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Leading Language Groups Served by ILVARC

Punjabi / Urdu / Gujarati / Hindi	15.2%
Spanish	12.5%
Mandarin/Cantonese	11.3%
Arabic	8.7%
Amharic	4.8%
Persian (Farsi, Dari)	4.4%
Russian/Ukrainian	3.9%
Tagalog	3.9%
Tigrinya	2.8%
French	2.6%
Vietnamese	2.6%

development. The assessment team attended professional certification, and training and calibration sessions. The service support staff also benefited from professional development relevant to their areas of work. In addition, the assessment team provided presentations and workshops for beneficiaries and service providers, including a presentation on “What is Literacy and How it is Measured?” at the 2010 ATESL Conference.

The Assessment Team Leader (ATL) accepted an invitation to offer her expertise in the pilot project of the newly developed Milestones Test by the Center for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) on behalf of ILVARC. As well, the ATL was involved in the on-going National Discussion Forum for the implementation of the ELT Placement Assessment (ELTPA), and ILVARC’s ELT Assessment Coordinator attended a national ELTPA (6-10) Inter-Rater Reliability Study.

2010-2011 was also successful in expanded community involvement and outreach activities, as well as developing closer linkages with various service providers, which enhanced communication and referral protocols for our beneficiaries. The provision of off-site information sessions for LINC students regarding post-LINC options enhanced their awareness of available opportunities.

Planning for the provision of ISC services as part of the Human Services Area Collaborative of the Genesis Centre of Community Wellness was of special interest this year. This centre is expected to benefit residents of the north of McKnight communities. Plans are underway to provide access to ISC’s programs and services for the residents of these communities including ILVARC’s assessment and referral services. This initiative, congruent with ISC’s strategic priorities, will enhance its continued efforts to reach out to isolated and under-served populations of immigrants and refugees.

ILVARC also continued its commitment to other community involvement and played an active role in the following events:

★ *ESL Consultation Session conducted by Alberta Employment and Immigration – one of the many held in Alberta – with a broad range of stakeholders and community groups – to discuss the delivery of English as a Second Language in the province and to determine best practices to improve delivery and outcomes of the program.*

★ *A focus group as part of the Public Opinion Research project conducted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. It discussed Settlement Program topics of newcomer needs assessment, and alternative service delivery options for language training.*

★ *The Director and Counseling Team Leader provided input into a research project conducted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the various student intake models used by LINC service provider organizations, and the possible effects of these models on student retention and completion levels.*

Overall, ILVARC experienced a very successful year. We responded efficiently and passionately to continued high demand for our services. We continue to play a prominent role in assisting immigrants and refugees with determining their English proficiency and advancing their linguistic and career goals. 🧐

★ **12,243** Beneficiaries Served

★ **20,491** Sessions

★ **7,422** Assessments Completed

★ **136** Languages Spoken by Beneficiaries of Services

★ **148** Countries of Origin

* Sessions include the number of service units provided to new and repeat individuals.

ILVARC Referrals // 2010/2011

Access Language Training Opportunities	26,519	40%
Advance Vocational/Career/Employability Goals	7,535	12%
Enhance Educational Opportunities	5,938	9%
Access Support Services	25,488	39%
TOTAL	65,480	100%

What's the most popular sport back home?





MIKI ASAI

Volunteer – Office Support Volunteer

From: Japan – been here for 6 ½ years.

Why Canada: To attend post-secondary school. Initially I was thinking about the U.S., but changed my mind because of better opportunities here. As well, tuition was more reasonable in Canada, and the educational institutions had a better reputation. Basically, Canada gave me an impression of safety and stability.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I interact with people from my country and speak my mother-tongue in order to not forget the language. As well, I communicate and share the values and information about my culture. It's shameful but true that I was ignorant of my own cultural history and language when I first came to Canada – now I try to learn more, that helps me. I teach Japanese as a teachers' assistant in educational institutions. I eat more Japanese food and read the news. Cooking. One of the pleasurable curiosities of living in a multicultural mosaic culture is that I can easily find all the essential ingredients for Japanese dishes here in Calgary.

Barriers faced: First is the language, and second is cultural bias based on race and ethnicity. Third would be a Western-centric worldview that has never been experienced in my country. All those are almost equal to one another. I don't think I have overcome any of them yet. I knew I could never become a "Canadian" because of my immigrant status, background identity, and personality. However, I am trying to "assimilate" in this culture as long as I live here. Of course, this doesn't mean I should follow some of the disrespectful behaviors toward certain groups of people – disabilities, minorities and natives. I am still facing a challenge with intercultural communication skills among people with different cultural backgrounds from my own.

Do you ever wear a "mask"? Yes, I still feel the need to wear the mask quite often, and I actually do most of the time.

ISC: Office-support volunteer for former anti-racism program and current employment counseling. Receptionist, event support and writing biographies for award nominees.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 3.7 I love summer here. The dry climate is excellent for me. I am still adjusting to the frequent temperature change, a friend said, "Calgary Weather is like a teaser," I feel that way too.

Favorite Things: Multiculturalism. Freedom.

Describe Hockey in One Word: Exciting!

The Future: I'm very Optimistic. I came for the educational opportunities, and I am very happy to be here and be a part of a country which values diversity.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: Maybe 35%. I don't know if I will live here forever, as I am still studying, but I do really enjoy it here.

WELCOME HOME!

I'm starting to feel like Calgary is the place I will make my home. While I do struggle sometimes with my cultural identity, I feel like I fit in very well in Calgary.



MAYDA CANJURA

ILVARC – ESL/Career Counselor

From: El Salvador. I have been here for about 10 years.

Why Canada: I came to Canada with my husband and my two boys because El Salvador's political situation had been a big concern. El Salvador's war was declared a "revolution" by the United Nations so we decided to leave the country. We were accepted by both countries, but chose Canada because we had heard it was peaceful, politically stable, beautiful and free. We arrived in Winnipeg, then moved to Calgary because the city had beautiful scenery, more job opportunities and the people are more open minded.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I maintain my cultural identity by keeping my values and beliefs, which are transmitted to my children. I always speak with my children in Spanish and try to cook traditional food.

On Canada...

Rate the weather: Winter in Calgary is unpredictable, but I don't mind. I remember when I first came to Calgary, it was summer and it started snowing. I was worried because I was not wearing the proper clothing, and worst of all, I had not bought any yet. I remember looking through the window at work and seeing the falling snow and then all of a sudden, the wind and the snow just stopped. By the time I went out, the storm had ended and I shouted "Oh my God, thank you!" It had turned into a beautiful sunny afternoon.

Favorite Things: My favorite place is Banff. It is one of the most beautiful and gorgeous places in Canada.

Hockey: I sometimes watch hockey. I have never played it. It is a very physical sport.

Is Canada "Home" yet: I consider Canada my home. I live here; I care about the people no matter what religion, gender, color or race.

WELCOME HOME!

Come and join the Canadian Mosaic. Everyone can make a difference and enrich the country.

Barriers faced: The three main barriers when arriving to Canada were the language, understanding the culture, and finding a job. I overcame these barriers by participating in English classes, enrolling at University of Winnipeg to acquire my Bachelor of Arts Degree in Public Administration and participating in workshops related to employment preparation, including networking, and job hunting.

ISC: Immigrant Services Calgary is not just a work place, it is my home. Helping people has always been very important to me. At ISC I have the opportunity to meet wonderful people from many different cultures. I respect and admire my colleagues and I learn from everyone's skills and expertise. Through this I see how amazing the mosaic we have in Calgary-Canada is. As an ESL/Career Counselor is very important to empathize with people, be a good listener and be assertive when helping beneficiaries. I am glad ISC provides me this opportunity.



SOPHIE DURZI

Volunteer Coordinator

From: I immigrated to Canada with my parents and my two sisters from the little Mediterranean island of Cyprus. I have been in Canada for 16 years.

Why Canada: My father chose Calgary because he already had a sister living here.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: My husband and I try to recreate the things we loved about our childhood for our kids. Once my husband and I get home from work, we throw planning out the door and let the evening play out spontaneously. We encourage unannounced visits from our friends, always try to have at least one grandparent around, and stay up past typical Canadian bedtimes.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: It used to be a 3, but now, with 2 small kids, I would have to say a 2. It takes about 10 minutes per kid to get them ready to go outside on a cold day.

Favorite Things: I love a night at the movies followed by eating out at one of Calgary's many fine restaurants.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: Sometimes. When I am in another country, I think of Canada as home. When I am here in Canada, I feel like I still don't quite belong.

"I think Canada is one of those countries where people can remove their masks in a safe and accepting environment."

Do you ever wear a "mask"? No, in fact, I think Canada is one of those countries where people can remove their masks in a safe and accepting environment. People are truly empowered to be themselves.

ISC: I have been with ISC since 2004. ISC has seen me get engaged, married, and have a first and a second child. It is no surprise that ISC has become a second home and family to me.



MOSAIC FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

With a total of 12 different programs for families with children age 0-12 years and youth 13-16 years, **The Mosaic Family Resource Centre** has had a busy and successful year; adding new programs and continuing to expand our community connections with the goal of reaching underserved communities in all quadrants of the city.

The saying “It takes a village to raise a child” is evidenced in the range of programs and opportunities that spans generations at the Mosaic Family Resource Centre. The holistic service model is inclusive of all family members and ensures that from newborn infants to grandparents, there is a place in our centre for everyone.

Mosaic Family Resource Centre Highlights from 2010-2011 include:

Healthy Start Calgary served 95 new mothers and 105 expectant mothers in 2010-2011. In partnership with Alberta Health Services, the program provided professional consultations with a nurse, nutritionist and social worker in addition to perinatal education workshops and a new workshop series titled Baby and You. Additional

benefits of the Healthy Start Calgary Program include transit tickets, milk coupons, Vitamin D drops and coupons for healthy food.

The **Mosaic Pre-School Program** provides child-centered, play-based programming for two groups onsite at the Mosaic Family Resource Centre and one group in the community of Castleridge. A total of 234 children and parents participated in the program during the 2010 program year. This year’s program highlights include a Kindermusik program for children, the continuing support from Murphy Oil Company for our annual Christmas party for parents and children, and our Environmental Awareness and Recycling Project. Through this successful project, participating children raised over one-hundred dollars collecting returnable bottles and cans at our agency. The proceeds from this project will be donated to a cause identified by the children.

This year, our **Preschool Parent Groups** participated in 58 workshops related to cross-cultural parenting, child safety and family health. Parents were also involved in volunteering opportunities, planning special events, operating our toy and book library and providing input for program development.



In partnership with O.S. Geiger School and Col. J. Fred Scott School, the **Mosaic Multicultural Family Literacy Program** served over 150 children and parents in 2010. This program engages parents in their children's learning through shared activities, workshops, discussion groups that promote school readiness for children three to five years of age as well as community connections and continuing learning for all family members.

Mosaic Parents and Tots Program is designed to promote parent-child activities for families with children age 12 months – 36 months. During the past year, 75 families have participated in activities based on "Parent-Child Mother Goose" and "Baby Rhyme Time". These activities maximize parent-child bonding through time spent playing and singing together.

The **Mosaic Multicultural Men's Program** provides information, referrals and individual counseling for immigrant men in addressing issues such as underemployment/unemployment, cultural adaptations, family trauma and poverty. In 2010, this program reached over 200 men from 30 different countries.

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Mosaic Family Resource Centre

Countries of Origin of Beneficiaries	68
Languages Spoken By Beneficiaries	64
Workshops for Beneficiaries	315
Beneficiaries Served	1,582

Leading Countries of Origin

China	17.9%
India	12.0%
Pakistan	9.7%
Colombia	7.4%
Mexico	5.4%
Sudan	5.0%
Phillippines	3.9%
Egypt	3.5%
Korea	3.4%
Iran	3.1%



This year, the **Parent-Child Enrichment Program** provided parenting support and parent-child activities to newcomer families facing challenges in the areas of parenting and adaptation. The program was in three community locations as well as our downtown site. In total, we served 149 parents and children from 21 different countries. Over 30 workshops were presented on community resources, healthy services and parenting in Canada.

The **Multicultural Outreach Connections Program** provided supportive counseling for families with children age 0-7 who are facing extreme challenges related to parenting, poverty, health, and employment. In 2010, this program served over 200 individuals, provided 9 community workshops and 4 cultural competency training sessions.

The **Multicultural In-Home Support Program** provided services in 12 languages to 45 adults and 80 children referred by Calgary and Area Child and Family Services in 2010. This program supports families in strengthening family communication and relationships. With the progress made through the support of an in-home worker, many families were able to close their cases with Children's Services.

The **Mosaic Afterschool Program** partnered with Calgary Housing Company, the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre and the Calgary Learning Village Collaborative to provide afterschool programming

at three sites in Bridgeland, Marlborough and Chinatown. In 2010, this program provided activities for 133 children and youth six to twelve years of age. This program provides an environment that supports young people in the development of positive relationships with peers and adults and promotes the development of leadership and decision-making skills.

The **Youth Inclusive Neighbourhoods Program** provides activities and support for youth age 13-16 years who are experiencing challenges in finding where they fit among their peers and in Canadian society. This program served a total of 104 at-risk youth and their families in 2010. Due to the number of youth referred to this program, an additional programming site was added to maximize supports offered to youth and their families. Community partnerships have provided mentorship matches for many of the youth participants and volunteer opportunities at the Calgary Drop-In Centre, the Mustard Seed and Calgary Interfaith Food Bank. Weekly programming is directed toward enhancing relationships between youth and their parents, peers and communities while recreational activities provide opportunities for self-expression, and team building.

"There are no strangers at the Mosaic Centre, only friends we haven't met yet." 🐾

*What has surprised you
most about Canada?*

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Respect for Diversity • Empty Streets • Nice People • Friendly Helpful People • Justice • People drive old cars • Anything is possible if you put your mind to it • How neighboring cities in this peaceful country could be so violent and hostile in a hockey match. *But I must say that it is quite fun to watch.*



“I have always been surprised by the kindness and generosity of Canadians.”

It was a cold winter night and I was driving alone on McKnight Blvd. Suddenly my old Plymouth started slowing down and the lights began to dim. I felt even more anxious when I noticed a big truck moving closer and driving slowly like me. As my car crawled, the big truck matched its pace. Soon, my car stopped. The engine was dead. At that moment, the truck driver pulled over and jumped out quickly. In the dark, the big man approached while telling me, “I noticed your car was in trouble and wanted to help.” It was -25 degrees. The gentleman pulled a heavy chain from the rear of his truck, and lay under the front of my car on the street’s cold dirty surface to apply the hook. At that moment, a sedan came out from nowhere. It parked about a meter behind my car and a young man approached and offered to help. The truck driver towed me, and the young man protected me by following with his emergency lights flashing. 20 minutes later, my car was parked neatly in front of my house in Monterey Park. I was surprised when I saw both gentlemen leave in a hurry. The dim street lights were just bright enough for me to see the faces of the two gentlemen with big hearts. I thanked them over and over before they drove away.

LONG NGUYEN

ILVARC – ESL/Career Counselor

From: Vietnam. My family and I have lived in Calgary for 27 years.

Why Canada: With the help of the Hungarian church, my sister-in-law sponsored us.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: At home we speak Vietnamese. We also like to teach our children about their culture. We encourage them to know more about the history, geography, economy, and politics of Vietnam. We also join events and ceremonies related to Vietnamese culture organized by the community.

Barriers faced: 1. Language. 2. Obtaining a Job in a professional field. 3. Assimilating into Canadian culture. After attending English classes, academic upgrading and career training, I was able to get a job in a professional field. Learning from schools and classmates, I gradually integrated into Canadian society. I improved my English by reading newspapers, books, watching movies, the news, and most importantly by working. Being with ISC as a Settlement Counselor, and presently as an ESL/career counselor, I learned about cultures of people coming from various countries as well as Canadian culture.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 5. I like winter in Canada. I like watching the snow fall from the sky and cover the ground. It is peaceful because it reminds me of white delicate flowers flying freely, and a vast pure white blanket stretching to the horizon.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I love watching hockey, especially the Flames. One word: 'Great'

Pride: I am proud to be a Canadian. Every time I listen to or sing the national anthem, my heart deepens with emotion and pride for Canadians and how they opened their arms to help my family.

The Future: We are very optimistic about our future in this country. My family has received a good education, jobs with many benefits, and excellent health care coverage.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: Certainly, Canada is my home now. Arriving in Calgary in 1983, my two children were five months old and seven years old. My other two children were born in Calgary. My two older children are working. My third child is attending Law School at the University of Victoria, and my youngest child will be attending the University of Calgary. Canada is truly a land of opportunity. All my family members have been provided for thanks to Canada. We have many Canadian friends and love them dearly. We eat Canadian food, drink Canadian water and we have lived with the protection of Canadian laws. Proudly, we call Canada, 'our home.'

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is the land of opportunity. Here, you will discover your potential. You can get career training, obtain a job in your professional field, gain English skills to help your integration, and enjoy your new life with freedom and democracy.

ISC: I have been working with ISC as a settlement counselor and an ESL/career counselor since April 1992. When I first arrived, I received help from a Vietnamese counselor for settlement needs. The services were very helpful. At that time, my dream was to have a job as an immigrant helper.



YAAK DUT

Settlement/Integration Counselor

From: Sudan. I came to Canada through Kenya about 5 years ago.

Why Canada: I never chose to come to Canada. The chance just came through World University Services of Canada (WUSC) and I chose to take it.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: Taking up membership in my ethnic community associations and participating in their activities.

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a great place to live. Things are not as easy as they may seem, however, with a little bit of effort, you can accomplish many things here.



On Canada...

Rate the weather: Not too bad but it gets annoying sometimes.

Favorite Things: Very peaceful country.

Describe Hockey in One Word: Watched it but never played it. I am actually a Flames fan. I think it is cool!

Pride: Yes. Canada is a second home for me. I am very proud of Canada's immigration policies.

The Future: Has never been easy but I am optimistic. I just completed one of my goals, a degree. I am hoping that the future will be friendly. Of course, I gotta work for it!

Barriers faced: 1. English.
2. Culture. I was able to overcome these barriers through interaction. I forced myself to talk with people, constantly practicing my English, and learning about their culture in the process. It was important that when I did this, I did not forget about the culture I brought with me.

Do you ever wear a "mask"?

At times. It is sometimes hard to interact with people with an accent.

ISC: ISC is a great service. I started as a summer student and eventually became a settlement counselor. I really like the program as it helps many people.



GRACE HAN

Office Support Volunteer

From: Korea. Came to Canada in 1986.

Why Canada: I got married to a Canadian who lived in Calgary.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I'm active in the Korean community and church. I'm married to a Canadian, and it is significant to me that we share both cultures. My children grew up in Canada, so I made sure to talk to them about Korea and the relations between the North and South whenever they ask. When they were growing up, I always cooked Korean food at home. Now that they are grown we always go to Korean restaurants when we go out to eat.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from

1-5: 5 I love to ski, and I love to watch hockey.

Favorite Things: Canada's Multiculturalism. Being outdoors, in fresh clean air.

Pride: Yes, I am proud to be Canadian.

The Future: The future in Canada will be great, because Canada is very accepting of the world's cultures.

WELCOME HOME!

I love living in Canada because of the kind and friendly people, the cleanliness, open spaces, and freedom. I live in the best country in the world.

Barriers faced: Learning English. Learning about the Multicultural society.

ISC: I am a volunteer interpreter for the Korean Language. When I came to Canada, there were only 1,000 Korean people in the area, now there are more than 10,000. I volunteer because it feels good to help out and give back to a community that helped me.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

The Operations and Resource Development department works diligently to increase Immigrant Services Calgary's role in creating welcoming communities and building strong neighborhoods. The Resource Development team focuses on the strategic priorities of the agency set out by the ISC Board of Directors, encouraging proactive planning and strategic growth in all areas of the agency. We are working together with newcomer individuals and families to provide support for successful settlement and integration through increasing access to information about the agency and resources, as well as increasing available funding to build capacity within the agency.

One of our major achievements included **the Immigrants of Distinction Awards** in March 2011. Coming at the end of our fiscal year, the awards were a major success, promoting the achievements of newcomers to Calgary and celebrating the diversity of our beautiful city.

Our community engagement efforts have included organizing community consultations on important issues effecting newcomer communities such as financial literacy and regulated professions, as well as responding to major events in Canada. We are dedicated to providing a platform for the important stories of our beneficiaries. In 2010, we launched a new website, www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca, with information available in over 11 languages. We have worked to partner with community organizations, businesses and all levels of government to continue to support and celebrate diversity in Canada. ♾

Community Consultations

September 2010: *Financial Literacy and Economic Outlooks for Newcomers* // June 2010: *Regulated Professions: Continuing To Build A Fair Alberta*

OUR VOLUNTEERS

“Calgary has once again lived up to its reputation as the Volunteer City of Canada.”

Much of what we do at Immigrant Services Calgary would not be possible without the numerous hours of service from our dedicated volunteers. Judging by the overwhelming response to our **Volunteer Program** in the last fiscal year, Calgary has once again lived up to its reputation as the Volunteer City of Canada.

At ISC, we continually recognize and reward our valuable volunteers. While our **Volunteer of the Month** award goes to a single, outstanding volunteer, the agency invests significant time and effort to ensure that all volunteers feel welcomed, appreciated and rewarded. We provide all volunteers with orientation, ongoing training, and we design specialized advanced training for dedicated, long-serving volunteers such as those serving in the interpretation and translation areas. Volunteer appreciation events are hosted on a regular basis to reward, showcase, and applaud our volunteers' outstanding dedication and achievements.

Our new **Youth Volunteer Program** targets immigrant and refugee youth to connect them to the broader community through civic participation. This program not only promotes community involvement through volunteer placements and explores Canadian culture through educational and recreational activities. The program aims to help immigrant and refugee youth integrate fully into their new home by cultivating an appreciation of Canadian heritage and empowering and motivating them to take part in and contribute to their community. In the past fiscal year, these future leaders have committed 1,830 volunteer hours to the program.

In our Language Bank department, a pool of volunteers offers interpretation and translation services in over 70 languages. While most of our services are prescheduled, there are occasions that call for on-demand services such as situations that involving domestic violence and other family crises. We are proud to say our volunteers have always stepped up to emergency needs at short notice. In the area of employment services, our volunteers are actively helping out with resume writing and mock interviews or assuming the role of a **Success Coach**. Many of our volunteers are employed full-time, yet they go the extra mile to find time and energy to lend their expertise and support to new immigrant job seekers. In the area of Success Coaching, our Volunteer Program has also tapped into the spirit of employee volunteerism in Calgary companies resulting in many valuable sessions of Success Coaching by corporations such as WorleyParsons, Deloitte, Accenture and Safeway Canada.

ISC volunteers play an important role at the agency helping with workshops, administrative and event support, or helping to teach and facilitate computer and literacy classes. They bring in the real world to ISC. 🧐

Our Volunteers

Number of Volunteers	647
Total Volunteer Hours	22,702
Workshops for Volunteers	72
Countries of Origin	89



“I like the freedom of being able to play outside. And you can go to school and learn. I didn’t have that opportunity in Sudan.”

PETER ALPHONSE

*MOSAIC Beneficiary – Mosaic
(Youth Inclusive Neighborhoods) Beneficiary*

From: Sudan.

Why Canada: Jobs for Parents. Freedom.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: Celebrating at home. Speaking the language. Flying and sometimes wearing the flag. It is important for me to never forget my heritage, because it reminds me of where I was born, and grew up. There are certain abilities I learned there, that not everyone can do. I am very good at making a spear and net, no one else in my class can do that. I miss my favorite food, Beans in a Bag. They are spicy beans in a bag that you drink with a straw. They are my favorite.

Barriers faced: 1. Five siblings. I find I have to spend a lot of time babysitting so that my parents can work late. If I didn’t have to babysit, I could spend more time with friends. 2. Getting a passport and becoming a Canadian citizen. 3. Learning English. It is hard to learn a new language, but I am better at it now.

ISC: Yes, It is fun, respectful and has changed me.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 5. Very different from home. I find it cold, but I love to play in the snow and build Snow-Forts.

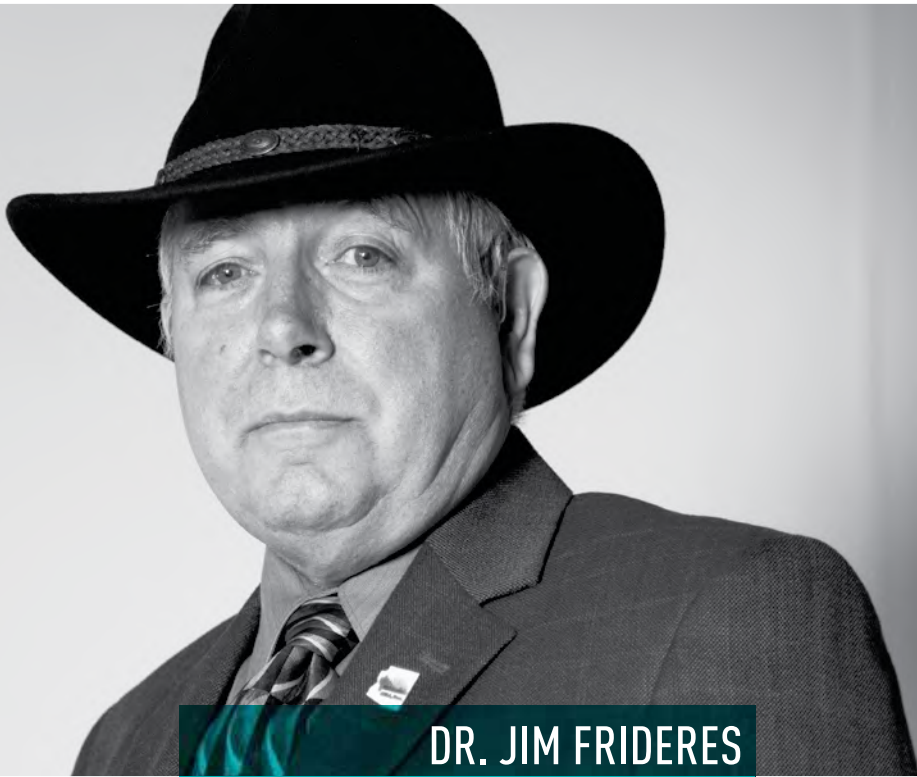
Favorite Things: Calgary Tower. I really like music, there are more types here. I think it is a good way to express yourself and singing builds pride in yourself.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I like to play and watch hockey, but I do not like playing goalie. I prefer to play forward so I get to score goals. One word to describe Hockey is “shooting.” My favorite team is the Montreal Canadians.

Is Canada “Home” yet?: Yes. I like the freedom of being able to play outside or join any sports team. I love that I can play basketball here. Also, you can go to school and learn. In Sudan, I didn’t have the opportunity to go to school.

WELCOME HOME!

Free and Awesome.



DR. JIM FRIDERES

*ISC Board Member –
Chair of the Board of Directors of ISC*



On Canada...

Rate the weather: Winter is always welcome as it covers the country in a blanket of white. However, this year’s winter has gone on much too long. Previous winters have been punctuated by Chinooks that take away the winter blues.

Favorite Things: Political Climate, Multiculturalism. A typical week at our house will include meals from a cookbook that represents Italian, Vietnamese, German, British, Chinese, Indian and Canadian food.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I played lots of hockey when I was younger and have the dental bills to prove it. My skating is not good. One word: Violent.

Pride: I came to Canada in 1971

The Future: With the election of the new mayor, his up-beat perspective and “lets do it” attitude, from a municipal perspective, very optimistic.

Is Canada “Home” yet?: Yes.

From: United States.

Why Canada: It held a better political climate that emphasized equality and justice. My first stop was in Manitoba where I taught at the U. of Manitoba. I then moved to Calgary to find a better job and prospects for the future.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: Being Luxemburgian is difficult (as there are so few in Calgary), but our family is the quintessential Canadian family: one status Indian, one Métis, one person of Aboriginal ancestry and one Luxemburgian. Art is the representative of culture in our home. We have works of art from all different nations/cultures.

Barriers faced: 1. The Political Structure. 2. Anti-Americanism in the 70’s. 3. Learning how to skate.

ISC: I have not used the services but was involved in the agency when it first was created. It was much different at that time – smaller board, smaller size, smaller budget.

WELCOME HOME!

I’ve had a “blast.” People have accepted me, supported me and have provided me with an excellent job. I’ve tried to provide some measure of “return to community” in that I do volunteer work for the community. I try to support the efforts of others as they try to integrate into Canadian society.



KRYSTYNA BIEL

*Executive Management Team –
Director of ILVARC*



On Canada...

Rate the weather: The

winter is much harsher here than it was in Poland, and much longer. In Poland we had 4 seasons, here we have two (if we are lucky). I still like winter here, but would like it more if it were a bit shorter. In the first year that we came to Canada on May 15th there was a severe snowstorm that paralyzed the city, whereas in Poland, everything was blooming at that time and the weather was summer like.

Favorite Things: Cross-Country Skiing

Describe Hockey in One Word:

How about two? Go Flames! The most famous hockey game that I have been to was the match between Poland and Canada at the 1988 Olympic Games in Calgary. It was hard to choose whom to cheer for, so we waved both flags!

Pride: I feel very proud to be Canadian, daily and especially when celebrating Canada Day and other national holidays.

The Future: Having lived in Canada for over 26 years, we consider Canada our home and we are very proud to call it that.

From: Poland. I have been in Canada since February 1985. (25 years)

Why Canada: To join my husband, who at the time was studying for his Ph.D. at the University of Calgary.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: We still speak the language at home, watch Polish news via TV Polonia, movies and cabarets, participate in Polish cultural events and socialize with our Polish friends from time to time. We also participate in cultural events with our children.

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a wonderful pluralistic country with amazing culture intertwined and unlimited opportunities for everyone.

Barriers faced: 1. Communicating and expressing your thoughts in English. 2. Trying to connect with people and developing social networks with Canadians. 3. Establish myself professionally. By volunteering and trying to immerse myself in the Canadian way of life and make as many contacts as possible.

Do you ever wear a “mask”? In life there is always a constant need to wear different masks to conform to the established norms and conventions, to adjust to the environment one is in, and behave in a socially acceptable and expected way. That is ok, as long as one does not compromise their dignity, ethical values and they stay true to themselves and what they represent.

ISC: ISC is my second home. Over the 21 years of dedicated service to ISC I have held the roles of an ESL/ Career Counsellor, Manager/Director of ILVARC, and intermittently acted as a CEO of ISC. I have successfully lead ILVARC through various stages of development as its role, sphere of influence and prominence have evolved and broadened. Being part of the ISC’s Executive Management Team, I have contributed to the overall development of ISC and advancing its strategic direction and mission. I find passion and inspiration in what we do and it is very gratifying to know that we do make a difference in the lives of our beneficiaries.

KUDOS TO ALL ISC VOLUNTEERS!

“Those who can do more, volunteer.”

IMMIGRANTS OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

THE 2011 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Arts and Culture

Ms. Shenaaz Nanji

Business

Ms. Fatima Dhanani

Community Service

Dr. Brijendra K. Sood

Distinguished Professional

Dr. Chirag Shah

Organizational Diversity

OMNI Television (Alberta)

Youth Scholarships

Mr. Koray Demirbag // Ms. Meng Zhao // Mr. Naanak Sodhi //
Ms. Patti Wang // Mr. Sergiu Lucut

Hadassah Ksienski Distinguished Service Award

Ms. Tina Merali

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For its 15th anniversary, the **2011 Immigrants of Distinction Awards** unmasked diversity in Calgary, showcasing the achievements of outstanding individuals and organizations in our city. This masquerade gala was a night of colourful fun, featuring delicious food and wonderful people from across Calgary's diverse communities.

At the gala, awards were presented to outstanding individuals and organizations who positively impacted the Calgary community in the areas of Arts and Culture, Business, Community Service, Organizational Diversity, and Distinguished Professional. The Youth Scholarship presentations highlight of 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.



The gala was attended by **The Honourable Diane Ablonczy**, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; **The Honourable Thomas Lukaszuk**, Minister of Alberta Employment and Immigration; **His Worship Naheed Nenshi**, the Mayor of the City of Calgary – and many other distinguished members of the community. Once again, talented TV personalities **Nirmala Naidoo** (CBC News Anchor) and **Erin Strate** (Anchor/Producer – Shaw TV Calgary) were the Masters of Ceremonies.

The contribution and support of volunteers is instrumental to the success of ISC's annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards. From outreach and publicity, to set-up, silent auction and ticket sales, our volunteers have returned year after year to lend a hand in this prestigious event. Our sponsors provided the support necessary to make the night a success, and our honoured guests made it a night to remember. 🎭



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MUNIR MAJID

Volunteer – Language Bank Volunteer

From: Came from Libya. I have been here since Feb. 17, 2009

Why Canada: Multicultural, and because I have many friends in Calgary.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: Practicing our customs, beliefs and traditions. Gather with friends at home. We make sure to cook traditional food when we eat together as a family. We also make sure to speak Arabic more often so that we do not lose the ability to use the language. Finally we make sure to honor the Canadian culture, but also teach our culture to our children so that they can pass it on to future generations.

Barriers faced: Weather, Canadian Experience

ISC: Great. They have helped me to improve my English language skills. In the beginning we had an English Assessment. Then my wife and I began classes. We attended many workshops, My wife completed LINC and I completed ESL courses and resume building. Alberta Employment Immigration and Industry helped in recognition of my credentials by IQAS. I now work at ILVARC as a volunteer to participate in helping others in need of the program which is established for immigrants.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 3

Favorite Things: Nature, Swimming

Describe Hockey in One Word: Overwhelming. It is very fast. It is not fair to call it just one thing, because there are different sides to the game. At times it flows and is quite beautiful, at other times it is violent and tough, but I guess that is the beauty of sport.

Pride: Yes, not to part it with any other country in the world.

The Future: Very Optimistic.

Is Canada “Home” yet?: Yes. You try to make roots and establish and develop a home so that future generations have an easier time living and growing in Canada.

WELCOME HOME!

It is a new intriguing, exhaustive and overwhelming experience with the prospect of accomplishments.


ALMAS MAWJI
Children's Program Volunteer

From: Raised in Tanzania, moved to Kenya, married and migrated from Kenya 29 years ago.

Why Canada: To join the rest of the family. My husband was offered a job here. The welcome by our ethnic group was very special. My parents moved from India to East Africa, but when we moved from Africa to Canada we really appreciated the multiculturalism and lack of discrimination.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: By being involved within our communities (the Ismailis) and practicing our faith and values. We meet at the Jamat Khana. We gather for prayer as well as social activity. When they were growing up, it was important to bring my children as we wanted them to learn about their culture.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: 3. When I first joined Girl Guides with a few other ladies from my community we went on a Leadership Training Camping trip. It was just our second year in Canada. We went camping in the spring and were totally unprepared: no tent, no gloves, mittens or boots. We had only been camping back home, and didn't realize winter in Calgary can come at any time. The Canadian Leaders were so kind. They showed us how to improvise for the weather. I stayed as a leader for 8 years. When I stopped, my daughter took over.

Favorite Things: Canada is a very peaceful country. The parks, and having the opportunity to volunteer for an organization like ISC. We do some travelling and we have some souvenirs from other countries. It reminds us that Canada accepts diversity.

Describe Hockey: I have watched it. Very 'Interesting' game.

The Future: Very optimistic because Canada is our home.

Is Canada "Home" yet?: O yes!

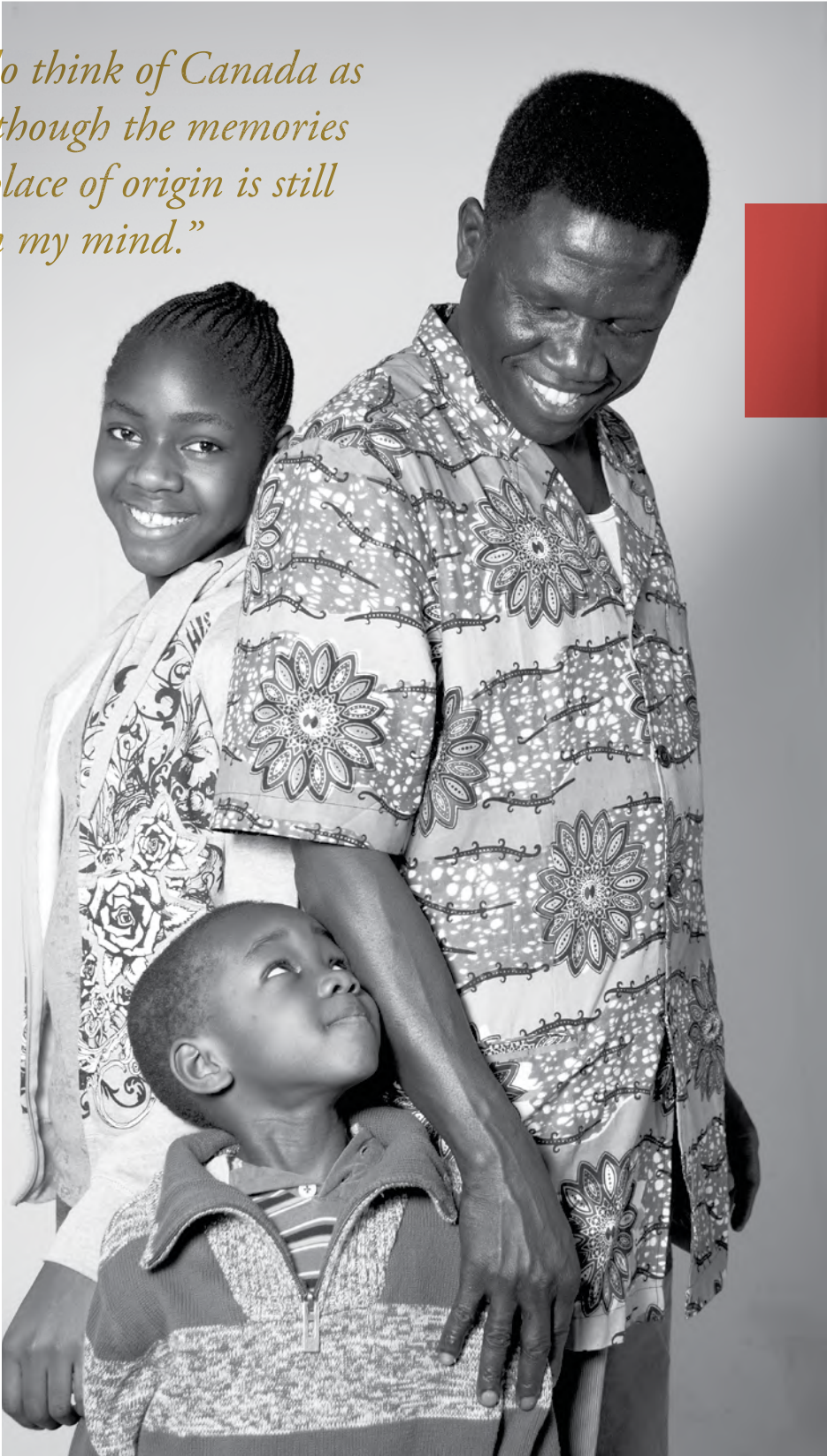
Barriers faced: Discrimination – overcame this by going to school and getting more education.

ISC: I am contributing at ISC by volunteering. I work with pre-school children and find it very fulfilling. I was a school teacher back home. When I came to Canada I worked in a daycare, then owned one. When I retired I came to volunteer at ISC to try and continue to make a difference.

WELCOME HOME!

Canada is a great country with lots of opportunities and it accepts the diversity and plurality of all peoples.

“Yes, I do think of Canada as home, though the memories of my place of origin is still fresh in my mind.”



ALFRED LOMORO EDWARD

*MOSAIC Beneficiary –
Mosaic (Pre-School) Beneficiary*

From: I came from Sudan, 6 years ago.

Why Canada: I came to Canada due to political upheaval in my country. I was living in Vancouver B.C., but I moved to Calgary in particular because there was a lot of opportunities and the cost of living was more reasonable.

Reflects Cultural Identity By: I maintain my cultural identity by speaking my native language at home, with my children and other relatives in Calgary and Canada. I practice my culture, by coming together and singing or dancing with friends. We usually come together whenever there is a wedding, or a funeral. We also come together for parties at least once or twice a year. My home reflects my family's diversity in a special way that is the combination of two different cultures altogether. For the most part, we speak English at home because the children are still learning the language. Watching and listening to media (TV, Radio) helps.

Barriers faced: The top three barriers were: the English language, the Canadian experience, and not having enough money to do everything I want. I was brought as a refugee under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Do you ever wear a “mask”? It seems to be difficult to take off masks and reveal our true selves.

ISC: I previously worked as a youth outreach volunteer for one year. Since then I have been involved by using the facilities and services.



On Canada...

Rate the weather from 1-5: At first I really didn't like the weather here in Calgary, especially during winter. I found that you really need a car, otherwise the cold weather can make you miserable. I would probably rate the weather a 3. I am now used to the cold weather, initially it was extremely difficult for me because I come from a warm weather climate.

Favorite Things: Calgary is a nice place to live, what I like most about Calgary is the design of the roads; traffic moves very smoothly. I also like the security of living in a city like Calgary. I love going to the zoo with my kids and I often try to go swimming. However, as one of my barriers is financial, it limits me from going to places I like, skiing in Banff.

Describe Hockey in One Word: I do watch hockey every time there is a game on TV. I don't play hockey, because the equipment is quite expensive. Yet I find myself loving hockey. The ONE word I use to describe hockey is 'YAAAAAAA!' when Flames win and 'BOOOOOOO!' when the Flames lose.

Pride: Oh yes, I am proud to be a Canadian, I can vote like any other Canadian without discrimination. I can travel from coast to coast without any limitation, and I can cross the border to the USA at any time and can return to Canada.

The Future: I am so optimistic about my future in Canada. Because there is still greater opportunity to achieve higher education in university.

Is Canada “Home” yet?: Yes, I do think of Canada as home, though the memories of my place of origin is still fresh in my mind.

WELCOME HOME!

I have learned more about the western style of life.

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