

# REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOGETHER



*Immigrant*

*Services Calgary*

**2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT**

# READ OUR STORIES



**PG. 22**  
NICOLE



**PG. 37**  
YOGI



**PG. 30**  
LOURDES



**PG. 4 – 7**  
REPORTS FROM THE  
CEO AND BOARD



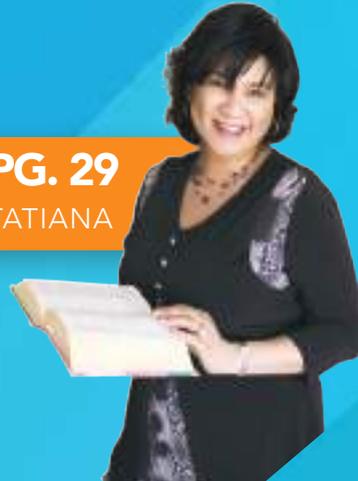
**PG. 21**  
WILSON



**PG. 36**  
FATIMA



**PG. 29**  
TATIANA



**PG. 23**  
CARGILL MEAT  
SOLUTIONS

**Cargill**<sup>TM</sup>

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# REPORT FROM THE BOARD

In our fast-paced, ever-changing world, moving is a common experience. It is not unusual for an individual to have many homes in a lifetime. Some will pack up one house and move to another across the city. Others will move across the world to seek a better life and new opportunities.

Moving to a new city or country is an incredible and exciting challenge. At Immigrant Services Calgary, our vision is to help newcomers and their families participate fully in an integrated and cohesive Canadian society and to help them feel at home while starting their dream of new life in Calgary and Canada. We aim to walk with them on their journeys of settlement and integration so they can meet that incredible challenge.

At the 18th annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards (IDA) on March 7, 2014, Calgary's Mayor Naheed Nenshi referred to newcomers' settlement and integration as shared priorities for all Calgarians. "We are all in it together," he said. "Our neighbour's strength is our strength. Our neighbour's pain is our pain and every single one of us has a stake in every other one's success and that is something that is tremendously powerful." Through community connections and partnerships and building on our collective strength and assets, ISC is able to create a greater impact for the individuals we serve and for the community.

The IDA gala – and this fiscal year – was about reaching new heights together because we understand that we are all part of the same success. Our settlement programs helped newcomers to ease their settlement process, find labour market and community connections that will help enrich their lives and contribute to society. Our family-based programs and resources ensured that immigrant and refugee parents, couples, and children are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in their journeys. In time, they'll be able to help each other and support other families. Furthermore, our language testing and counseling services helped newcomers establish strong language, educational and career foundations to build their prosperity in Calgary.

When we work with newcomers, we become invested in their success. Our dedicated staff leave the office at the end of the day wondering how their clients are doing – if their children are enrolled in school, if they've found a career in their field and if they have a social network and access to resources to gain support from when needed. Our management and Board take time to analyze and identify broader social, political, and economic trends to ensure we're offering the right programs and services relevant to ongoing and emerging needs and trends and changing times.

Our objective is to provide our assistance to newcomers to solve their issues in the new environment and also celebrate their success; we know that they enhance our city and make a great contribution together in our community we all live in.

Thank you to our many stakeholders – our funders, sponsors, donors, members, staff, volunteers, and partners – who have helped our many clients reach new heights this year. For Immigrant Services Calgary, reaching new heights in the coming months and beyond is about tuning into immigrants and refugees' evolving needs as Calgary grows and changes.

**“ WE ARE, MORE THAN EVER,  
ALL IN IT TOGETHER  
AND PROUD OF OUR  
STRONG PARTNERSHIPS  
AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
FOR OUR CITY AND FOR  
OUR NEWCOMERS. ”**

Sincerely,

**Josephine Pon**

Chair, Board of Directors

Immigrant Services Calgary



# REPORT FROM THE CEO

The theme for this year's annual report, "Reaching new heights together," couldn't be more relevant. Reflecting on my time with Immigrant Services Calgary and our work, I am reminded that reaching new heights isn't something that necessarily happens in a single fiscal year. Reaching new heights must be the theme of every day, every year, and every lifetime for it to add up to something remarkable. Reaching new heights, it seems, is a constant – a way of life for those seeking to make Calgary their new home and a better place for everyone.

This year marks my first anniversary as Chief Executive Officer, as well as my twenty-fifth year of service with Immigrant Services Calgary. Through the decades I have seen that change can be subtle yet far-reaching. When every day we strive to make Canada a welcoming home for newcomers, it is an amazing feeling to look back on a period of time to realize just how different the social, political, and economic landscapes look in part thanks to the efforts of the dedicated staff and volunteers I work with every day.

Margaret Mead, an American cultural anthropologist once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

There is so much truth in Mead's statement and no doubt that this small group of considerate and committed individuals – with the invaluable leadership of our Board

of Directors and thanks to the support of our funders, sponsors, donors, community and corporate partners and volunteers – is truly making a remarkable impact on our beneficiaries and our communities.

This is evident in the daily work of our Settlement and Language Bank Centre where participants of programs from youth to seniors feel more empowered, connected to community resources and equipped with skills to advance in the professional and social aspects of their new lives in Canada; where once-isolated newcomer women are making friends, discovering new recipes, and even growing their own produce; where volunteers are supported and immensely enrich our human resources so we are able to live our mission.

Through the Mosaic Family Resource Centre's programs and services, young people are developing the skills they need to foster healthy relationships and body image, children are supported in healthy social, emotional and cognitive development and are more prepared to enter kindergarten, students are engaged in positive social activities through our after-school programs, families gain positive parenting skills and access community resources independently when needed, and immigrant men develop coping strategies to overcome immigration stressors and expand their support networks.



“ **REACHING NEW HEIGHTS** MUST BE THE THEME OF EVERY DAY, EVERY YEAR, AND EVERY LIFETIME FOR IT TO ADD UP TO SOMETHING REMARKABLE.”



Through the Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment – Referral Centre every day new Calgarians are taking their first steps in securing sound linguistic, educational and professional futures. Our administration, IT support, finance and human resources’ dedicated staff provide the necessary infrastructure and support functions for our service delivery to thrive and ensure our fiscal and overall accountability.

On March 7, ISC hosted the 18th annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards (IDA) gala, where the ideals of reaching new heights and making a difference in the world were distilled into one glittering and inspiring evening. Honouring excellence in Arts and Culture, Business, Community Service, Youth Achievements and Organizational Diversity, to name a few, is not only a treat for the finalists, award recipients and guests: it is an extraordinary platform for us to reflect on why we do what we do. The answer, every time, is to see “reaching new heights” in action when our beneficiaries thrive and shape better lives and brighter futures for themselves and their families as well as contribute their skills and talents thus, build stronger communities.

Thank you for helping us make 2013-2014 fiscal year another successful and productive one. I hope you will join us in reaching new heights now and as we move forward. As we embark on the next leg of this journey, ISC will be seeking new ways to reach and impact the lives of our beneficiaries and we will continue engaging our valued funders and community and corporate stakeholders in sharing ideas, energy, and commitment to make it happen.

Sincerely,

**Krystyna Biel, M. Ed.**

Chief Executive Officer  
Immigrant Services Calgary

# THE HISTORY OF IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY AT A GLANCE

For over 35 years, we've been working with newcomers and their families to make Canada home. The agency has grown and evolved in many ways over the decades, but one thing is constant: We remain dedicated to providing comprehensive programs and services. Moving forward in 2014, we look back fondly on our history for inspiration.

- 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 members 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.
- 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 Vocational and Language Referral Centre (IVLRC), the forerunner of ILVARC, is established.
- 1986** Research into immigrant family resettlement leads the agency to begin providing family programming.
- 1993** The services of IVLRC are expanded to offer centralized eligibility assessment and referral for Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and its name is changed to the Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment - Referral Centre (ILVARC).
- 1994** The Mosaic Family Resource Centre is established to meet the individual and collective needs of the immigrant families 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 and to proudly mark ISC's 20th anniversary.
- 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 with overcoming challenges to participating in the workforce.
- 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 its new website.
- 2012** Immigrant Services Calgary celebrates 35 years of service to the community.
- 2013** Krystyna Biel becomes Immigrant Services Calgary's Chief Executive Officer. Her nearly 25 years of experience with Immigrant Services Calgary is helping the agency reach new heights.

# 2013-2014 HIGHLIGHTS

## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR VISION

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

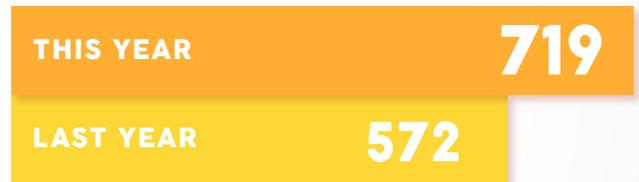
## OUR VALUES

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.

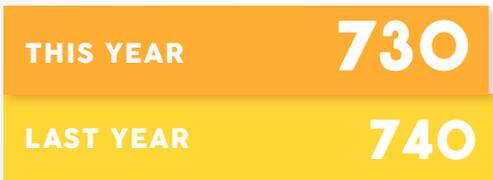
## VOLUNTEER HOURS



## WORKSHOPS



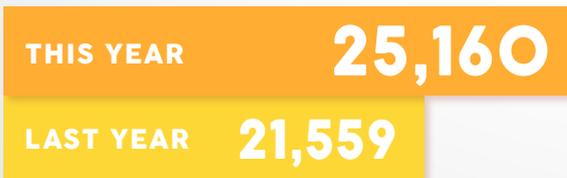
## VOLUNTEERS



## COUNTRIES



## BENEFICIARIES



## LANGUAGES SPOKEN



# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



**\$8,336,055**

CITIZENSHIP AND  
IMMIGRATION CANADA  
**48.83%**

UNITED WAY OF  
CALGARY AND AREA  
**8.45%**

CITY OF CALGARY - FCSS  
**5.50%**

IDA & CASINO  
**2.80%**

ALBERTA MINISTRY  
OF INNOVATION AND  
ADVANCED EDUCATION  
**0.49%**

SERVICE CANADA  
**0.20%**

ALBERTA MINISTRY OF  
JOBS, SKILLS, TRAINING  
AND LABOUR  
**16.27%**

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY  
OF CANADA  
**7.04**

CALGARY AND AREA CHILD  
AND FAMILY SERVICES  
**5.14%**

CALGARY FOUNDATION  
**0.57%**

CALGARY LEARNS  
**0.39%**

OTHERS  
**4.31%**

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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Andrew Syomin  
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Umashanie Reddy  
Yoelisi Delgado

## ORGANIZATIONAL DONORS

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Community Initiative Program  
Community Natural Foods  
Encana Cares Foundation  
The Excellence in Literacy Foundation  
Paragon Testing  
Shaikh Enterprises  
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## SPONSORS

Alberta Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour  
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Bell Canada  
Bow Valley College  
The Calgary Foundation  
The City of Calgary (FCSS)  
Dr. Chirag Shah/Chirag Shah Professional Corporation  
DIRTT  
Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation  
Human Resources Institute of Alberta  
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Pierson's Funeral Home  
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United Way of Calgary and Area  
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Cargill Meat Solutions High River  
Evolution Presentation Technologies Limited  
Twisted Basil  
The Westin Calgary

## MEDIA SPONSORS

The Calgary Herald  
CBC Radio  
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Global Calgary  
Shaw



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**SECRETARY**

# OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

ONE AGENCY. MANY SERVICES. MANY BENEFITS.

**IMMIGRANT SERVICES CALGARY** is one of Alberta's longest-serving and most comprehensive settlement agencies. The agency takes an integrated approach to helping immigrant and refugee individuals and families settle into life and work in Calgary and surrounding areas. Our programs and services include:

- Support for newcomers in adjusting to life in Canada
- Information about community services and referrals
- Interpretation and translation services
- Citizenship classes
- Assessment of English and literacy skills
- Eligibility determination for Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program
- Information on and referral to LINC and ESL programs
- Community-based programs
- Community development
- Career, educational, vocational, and employability counselling
- Employment workshops and information
- Pre- and post-natal programs
- Volunteer opportunities
- First-language support
- Mentorship opportunities
- Parent support groups
- Child and youth programs
- Family literacy programs
- Men's program
- Seniors' program
- Public education
- Labour market integration
- Pan-Canadian initiatives
- Community consultations
- Pre-arrival support
- In-home support program
- Supportive and Crisis counseling

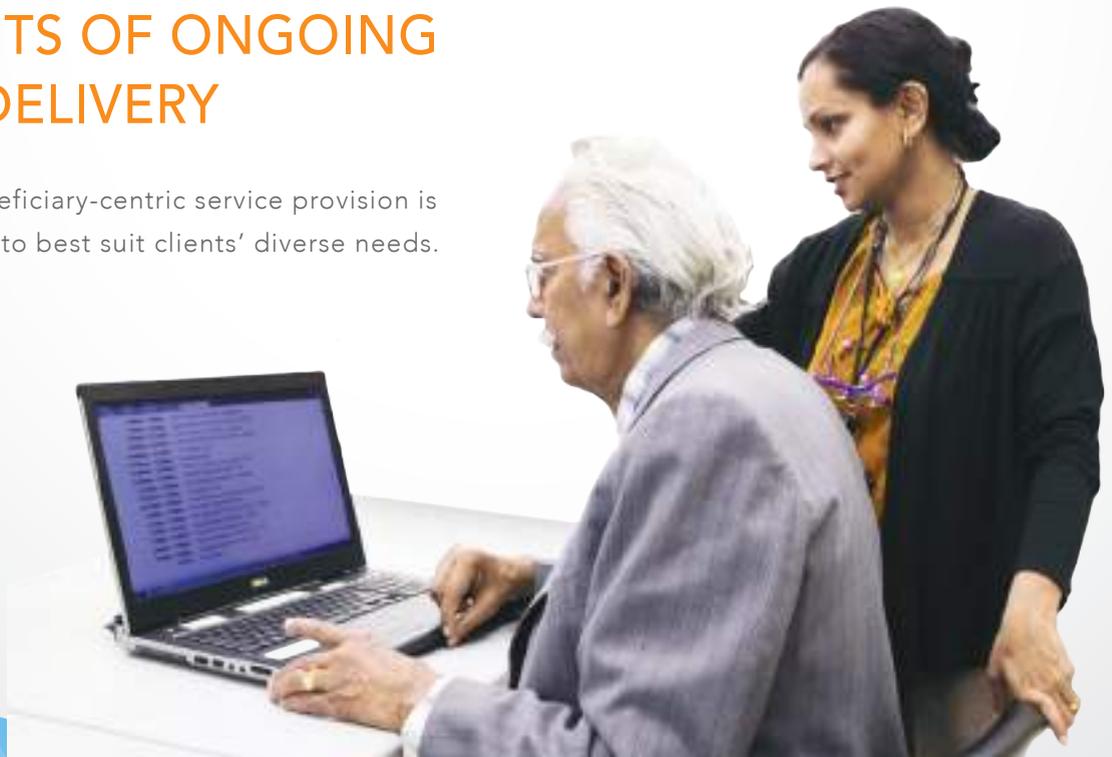
# SETTLEMENT AND LANGUAGE BANK CENTRE

## GUIDANCE THROUGH RESPONSIVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

ISC's Settlement and Language Bank Centre (SLBC) is a hub of activity committed to the values of equity, inclusion, diversity, and accountability. SLBC provides information, orientation and referral services, cultural interpretation, document translation services, supportive counseling, and employment-related services. These services empower immigrants and refugees to overcome language, cultural, social, and financial barriers, among others. Through first-language, one-on-one appointments and group sessions, immigrants gain access to the information and resources necessary to thrive in Canada.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ONGOING SERVICE DELIVERY

SLBC's holistic, beneficiary-centric service provision is constantly evolving to best suit clients' diverse needs.



Three highlights from this year are as following:

## 1. Decentralization

ISC aims to reach newcomers as soon as possible after their arrival in Calgary to ensure a smooth transition, proper settlement and successful integration. In addition to offering services from ISC's centrally located head office, we have established a number of satellite offices in multi-service facilities situated at strategic locations throughout the city. In 2013-2014, we started the position of our services in two new locations – at the Safe Communities Opportunity and Resource Centre (SORCe) in downtown and the Crowfoot branch of the Calgary Public Library in the northwest – bringing the total number of satellite offices to six.

Major benefits of decentralization include increased awareness, visibility and accessibility of services, enhanced service delivery, as well as an increased number of service contacts and newcomers served through attracting various beneficiary groups in the target neighborhoods.



**In 2013-2014, SLBC employment programs served over 1,074 clients, providing crucial counseling, mentoring, skill-building, and informational services as well as internships and corporate connection opportunities.**

**The number of clients served through SLBC programs has increased by more than 20% in this fiscal year.**



**ISC's annual volunteer satisfaction survey indicated that 98.5% of volunteers would recommend volunteering at ISC to a friend.**

**In 2013-2014 the Youth Volunteer Program recruited 50 mentees and 45 mentors making a total number of 95 youth volunteers that contributed 4,350 volunteer hours.**

## 2. Employment Readiness

To assist internationally educated professionals (IEPs) in overcoming barriers and securing meaningful employment in their field of expertise, SLBC provides a comprehensive array of employment/career services through three different programs: Employment Bridging, Mentorship in Action (MAPLE 2.0), and the Integrated Mentorship Program. Worthy of special mention is MAPLE 2.0, a nationwide project that brings together employers and IEPs to create employment opportunities for new immigrants while enhancing employers' cross-cultural competency. The project is managed by the Ottawa Chinese Community Services Centre, with Immigrant Services Calgary and Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia as its partners in Calgary and Vancouver respectively. In March 2014, MAPLE 2.0 won the top award for best workplace initiative in the category of Workplace Integration at Citizenship and Immigration Canada's prestigious International Qualifications Network (IQN) Awards.

## 3. Language Bank

Language and cultural barriers are among the greatest obstacles to newcomers' successful settlement and integration. Through the Language Bank's interpretation and translation services, immigrants are given a voice and an open door to needed services, relevant community resources, and valuable employment and education opportunities. In 2013-2014, the Language Bank successfully completed a wide range of translation requests including the translation of academic documents, employment records, passport stamps, birth certificates and driver's licenses. It also provided a large number of interpretation sessions pertaining to domestic violence, legal, and medical issues. The number of service requests was exceptionally high in the past year, reflecting the urgent demand for face-to-face interpretation at medical appointments and the translation of passport stamps. To accommodate the demand without compromising efficiency and service quality, the Language Bank identified emerging needs and adopted various strategies including prioritizing service requests, upgrading software, creating electronic document templates, and utilizing the language capacities of program staff to provide on-site translation services.



# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

## Volunteering builds strong communities

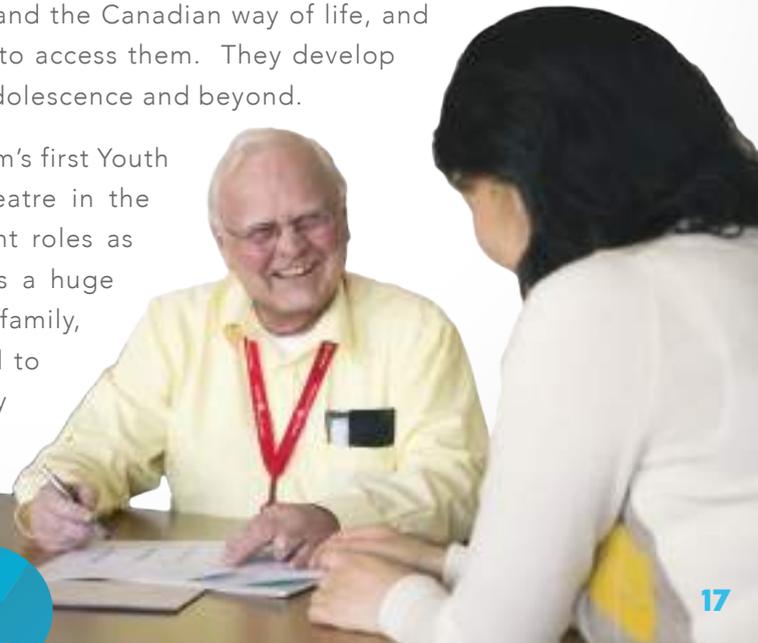
During Calgary's June 2013 state of emergency, Canadians discovered what those in the volunteer sector already knew: Calgarians are willing to step forward to provide a helping hand to those in need. ISC'S **730** volunteers exemplified this sentiment by contributing over **30,000** hours this year. With ISC's use of social media, participation in outreach activities and internal referrals, the Volunteer Department had 255 new volunteers join the team.

ISC provided 83 orientation/training sessions for volunteers in this fiscal year. Staff continues to create innovative training sessions that encourage volunteers to build their skill sets on an ongoing basis. Moreover, a large majority of opportunities are provided in a diverse setting to support and encourage volunteers to embrace Calgary's multicultural social fabric. Volunteer orientation sessions have also been reviewed and modified to include important topics such as "Key Considerations for Cultural Awareness."

## Youth learn through service

The Youth Volunteer Program (YVP) continues to support immigrant and refugee youth who are at risk of social isolation. Through volunteer opportunities, skill-building workshops and community events, youth participants are exposed to Canadian culture and the Canadian way of life, and learn about different community resources and how to access them. They develop social support networks that are invaluable in their adolescence and beyond.

In February 2014, 19 youth participated in the program's first Youth Talent Showcase hosted at the Engineered Air Theatre in the Epcor Centre. The youth had a number of different roles as volunteers, emcees, and performers. The event was a huge success, with over 100 guests present including family, friends, and YVP participants. The youth were proud to showcase their talents with the greater community and offer a show for youth, by youth in celebration of Calgary's multiculturalism.



# SLBC STATISTICS

## LEADING COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

China 17%	Vietnam 2%
India 8%	Somalia 2%
Colombia 6%	Sudan 2%
Ethiopia 6%	Russia 2%
Iran 6%	Nigeria 2%
Korea 6%	Mexico 2%
Pakistan 6%	Egypt 2%
Eritrea 4%	Afghanistan 2%
Iraq 3%	



**8,076**

**BENEFICIARIES SERVED**



**17,201**  
**SERVICES PROVIDED**



**33,618**  
**SERVICE CONTACTS**



**VOLUNTEERS**



**LANGUAGES**



**WORKSHOPS**



**3,123** **INTERPRETATIONS**

# COOKING WITH FRIENDS



SUCCESS  
STORY

SLBC is celebrating the success and expansion of the Cooking with Friends community kitchen program, which was first launched in 2012 in collaboration with the BowWest Community Resource Centre. The program aims to enhance the social and support networks of isolated immigrant women in the community of Ranchlands.

In 2014, Westview Baptist Church joined the partnership and provided the program with a larger facility. Since then, the program has expanded significantly, from five to more than 40 participants who come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and various communities in northwest Calgary. Most participants are immigrant women with young children. These women tend to be house-bound because of language and cultural barriers, child-minding responsibilities, and the lack of social and support networks.

The classes are conducted in simple English, with food being the common language that helps break down barriers and open doors to communication and friendship. Over time, bonding and supportive networks become evident among the women.

Cooking with Friends is a prime example of a successful neighborhood initiative using the asset-based community development model, which advocates mapping, mobilizing and leveraging a community's existing assets to implement collaborative initiatives that address identified needs and service gaps. The initiative is community-driven, outcome-based, and sustainable on the neighborhood level in terms of resources and social impact, helping to build more inclusive and supportive communities.

**ENHANCING THE  
SOCIAL AND  
SUPPORT  
NETWORKS  
OF ISOLATED  
IMMIGRANT  
WOMEN**



## **COOKING WITH FRIENDS PROVIDES A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN TO:**

- Make friends
- Learn about food and nutrition
- Share cultural dishes and life stories
- Gain information and knowledge on community resources and topics that promote self-sufficiency and well-being





**WILSON** moved to Winnipeg from China with his parents when he was 10 years old. Today he's an IT professional with strong business acumen and he volunteers on the ISC Board.

This spring Wilson's life changed dramatically when he and his wife welcomed twin babies – a boy and a girl – into their lives. Amid the hustle and bustle of being a new parent, Wilson can see that these births were a milestone in his immigration story.

"My mom just can't hide her happiness," he says. "Seeing the grandkids makes moving here all worth it."

Wilson can't help but think forward to the kind of life he wants for his children, and knows that his work at ISC is a big part of their shared future. He says he wants to set a good example for them by helping to create a welcoming city – one with programs and services that can help new Canadians. His family didn't have those kinds of supports in Winnipeg when they first arrived, but Wilson is optimistic that Canada will only continue to change for the better.

**“Calgary, specifically, is a young city with a tremendous amount of opportunity, it's heading somewhere that will benefit us all.”**



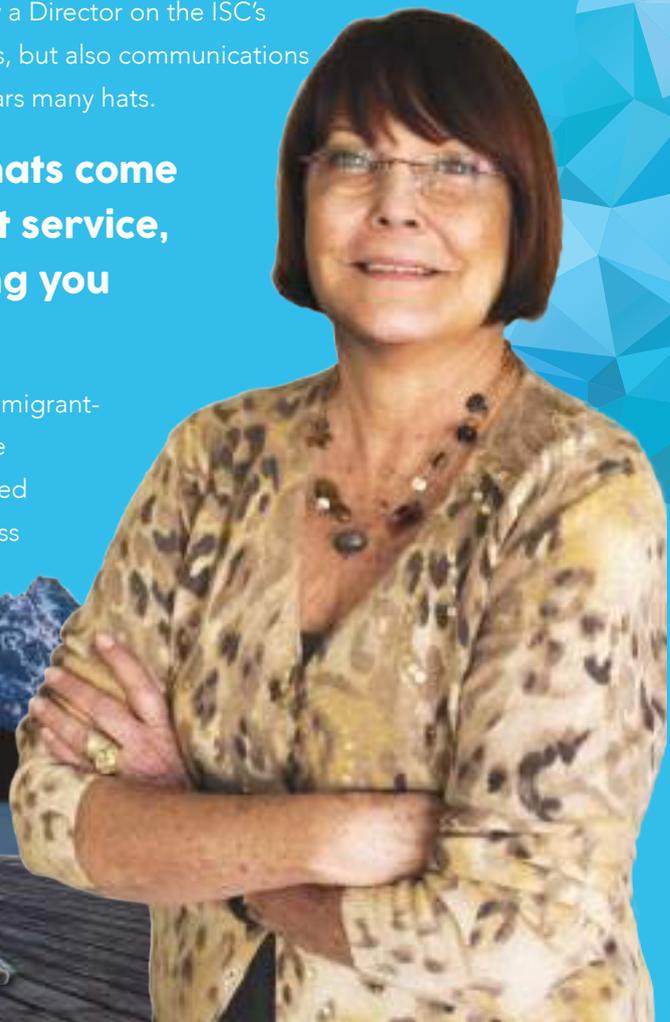


When **NICOLE** moved to Vancouver from Rio de Janeiro 33 years ago she quickly fell in love with the pink Western sunsets. With few social supports available, though, she needed more time to grow accustomed to Canadian life. "At that time, integration was something you did on your own. You figured it out," she says. "To get a job I had to reinvent my skills set, my knowledge base."

With grit and determination, the former civil lawyer found her comfort zone in the business world where she has earned a mile-long resume boasting her human resources and operations expertise. Besides her full-time job as the Executive Director of the Talent Pool, she is now a Director on the ISC's Board, offering her expertise in human resources and management, yes, but also communications and advocacy. In short, she is the classic definition of a woman who wears many hats.

**“ I have been fortunate that all the hats come together. One way or another, it's about service, and at the end of the day the best thing you can do is tell stories. ”**

Her stories bridge the communication gap between businesses and immigrant-serving agencies like ISC. Her main goal is to see an equalization of the workforce so newcomers can access the kinds of opportunities they need and deserve. The ability to understand both the immigrant and business perspective, she says, has helped immensely.





**CARGILL MEAT SOLUTIONS HIGH RIVER** is a leader in its efforts to hire and support newcomers. Its policies and practices earned Cargill the 2014 Immigrants of Distinction Award for Organizational Diversity.

“We are very honoured to accept this award on behalf of Cargill,” said Cargill representative Devin Tretiak in his acceptance speech at the gala. “For anyone who knows Cargill Meat Solutions you know that our organization reflects diversity throughout all levels of Cargill.”

**“ We are proud to be a part of helping new Canadians not only integrate into society but also to succeed. And in their success we enrich our lives, our businesses, and also our communities. ”**

Cargill offers consistent and ongoing support for newcomer employees on and off the job. It partners with organizations like ISC that assist in meeting individual settlement needs, organizes family and multicultural social functions, offers physical fitness programs onsite, and maintains a health office. Cargill also extends its care to the larger community of High River. It donated food to town residents during the June 2013 flood, raises money for charitable causes, and supports the schools where employees' children learn and play.

In placing its people and community first, Cargill is playing a crucial part in ensuring that the region's newcomers are warmly welcomed in Canada.



# IMMIGRANT LANGUAGE AND VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT - REFERRAL CENTRE

## LANGUAGE IS A KEY TO SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

As a core ISC service, the Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment – Referral Centre (ILVARC) helps newcomers to:

- Assess their English proficiency and first-language literacy;
- Access language training opportunities;
- Advance vocational/career/employability goals;
- Enhance educational opportunities; and
- Access support services.

ILVARC offers newcomers a warm welcome to the city. Indeed, the ILVARC office is one of the first places many immigrants and refugees visit upon arriving in Calgary.

Beneficiaries must have their language proficiency assessed so they can enroll in the training they need to further their language and careers goals. In this important transition period, services are provided in beneficiary's first language and enhanced by cultural understanding and sensitivity.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF ONGOING SERVICE DELIVERY

While ILVARC's continuing focus is on English assessment and referrals as well as education and career counseling, its services keep expanding to include workshops, information sessions and other opportunities to assist newcomers in reaching their goals. Beneficiaries' constantly changing and emerging needs require unique approaches in order to address their specific linguistic, education and employment goals. As Alberta and Calgary continue to be a popular choice for both newcomers in-land and abroad, the high demand for ILVARC's services continues.

Reflecting immigration trends across Canada, ILVARC serves newcomers from all backgrounds and immigration categories, with the most common being the Economic Class (Independent), followed by Family Class and Refugees (including Government Sponsored Refugees). ILVARC's first-language counselors work with all individuals, including highly skilled beneficiaries, who face challenges with language as well as employment barriers to develop individualized plans.



**THE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENT CLASS CONTINUES TO BE THE LARGEST BENEFICIARY CATEGORY SERVED AT ILVARC. HOWEVER, DESPITE THEIR HIGH LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND SIGNIFICANT WORK HISTORY, 64.8% WERE UNEMPLOYED AT THE TIME OF SERVICE PROVISION.**



Established almost 30 years ago in 1985 as a referral centre, ILVARC conducts a variety of activities, one of them being certified English language proficiency assessments, by offering beneficiaries the following to guide them in their education and career-related journeys:

## **ASSESSMENT TOOLS:**

The Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA);  
Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLBPT);  
Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy Assessment (CLBLA);  
Enhanced Language Training Placement Assessment (ELTPA 6-10); and  
Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN).



ILVARC is also seeing increased demand for services due to the various government policies, including Canadian citizenship requirements, resulting in more visits by beneficiaries to navigate the different options available to them. Committed to improving access, ILVARC also strives to meet the needs of those isolated beneficiaries by continuing to provide services in multiple geographic areas, including the Genesis Centre located in Northeast Calgary as well as the surrounding communities of Canmore, Strathmore, and High River.

As the central point of contact, ILVARC continues to play an active role providing information and collaborating with the various ethnic communities as well as LINC/ESL, education and employment training service providers in order to serve the beneficiaries better. ILVARC continued to produce the bi-annual "Directory of ESL Programs and Services for Immigrants and International Students in Calgary." Its recently developed LINC Directory is available on Immigrant Services Calgary's website and will be a great help to beneficiaries.

The **LINC Directory Booklet** is a promotional tool for newly arrived immigrants and refugees as well as anyone else that would benefit from the information to help them learn about the services ILVARC partners offer. As it has been a practice in the past, sharing and facilitating knowledge regarding needs, trends, and gaps in service delivery continued with ILVARC partners and funders to assist in planning for the ever-changing beneficiary requirements.





15,180

BENEFICIARIES SERVED

135



LANGUAGES

39



WORKSHOPS



24,447  
SESSIONS



8,848  
ASSESSMENTS  
COMPLETED

## TOP LANGUAGES



- #1 PUNJABI/URDU/ GUJARATI/HINDI
- #2 MANDARIN
- #3 SPANISH
- #4 ARABIC
- #5 PERSIAN (FARSI, DARI)
- #6 TAGALOG
- #7 AMHARIC
- #8 RUSSIAN/UKRAINIAN
- #9 TIGRINYA
- #10 FRENCH
- #11 KOREAN
- #12 VIETNAMESE
- #13 CANTONESE
- #14 SOMALI
- #15 OROMO

## REFERRALS



# YES, I MADE IT



A SUCCESS  
STORY

Munazza landed in Calgary from Pakistan in 2011 with her husband and four children. With her she brought a wealth of education and work experience. She learned about ILVARC services through friends. Upon visiting the agency she was assessed with an intermediate level of English language proficiency and began devising an action plan with a counselor.

Munazza was fully equipped with courage, determination, and commitment to accept the challenges of settling and integrating into Canadian society. Improving her language skills was identified as her highest priority in her journey to return to her original profession of teaching. As such, through ILVARC she enrolled in a LINC program close to her home while she juggled a job that could pay the bills.

With a positive attitude and healthy support system, Munazza broke through her language barrier and was offered work as an assistant teacher at the same school that offered her LINC program. Now she is a role model for the newcomers she meets there. Reflecting on her progress, she says, "Yes, I made it..."



“**THANK YOU,  
ILVARC, FOR  
FORWARDING ME  
IN THE RIGHT  
DIRECTION.**”



**TATIANA** originally from Brazil, has been in Canada for 20 years. Her knowledge of Canadian institutions and systems, it seems, is so extensive that over time she has become a go-to information source for newcomers wondering about things like taxes and benefits.

“Sometimes people had just arrived and they needed help. I'd say, okay, let's figure it out. I've been there.”

Knowing four languages – English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese – meant that she not only advised people, she often accompanied newcomers to their meetings and appointments to act as an interpreter.

After a while she realized she needed to put her skills to use in a more formalized way, so she came to ISC to volunteer as an interpreter, translator, income tax advisor, and job coach.

In sharing information with ISC clients she helps them reach new heights. It's evident that serving others is her true calling.

**“ I just give 100 percent to everything I do, ”**

Tatiana says. “It's so gratifying. I can't put it into words. As the kids would say: 'Cool!'”





When **LOURDES** left her home in the Philippines in 2005, she said a tearful goodbye to her three young children. Her goal was to find them a home in a country where she could help them reach their potential.

Her mission brought her to Calgary and eventually ISC, where she visited ILVARC to have her English proficiency tested. She brought her scores to a counselor who explained the many options Lourdes had for improving her language skills. The counselor referred Lourdes to a LINC program, where her abilities skyrocketed after a total of 62 hours in the classroom.

**“ My counselor was very nice to me, she accommodated me. ”**

The experience gave Lourdes the confidence boost she needed to envision a new future for herself. By the time her children had all arrived in Canada this spring, Lourdes was already busily planning how to advance her career in her original field of purchasing.

She's so happy to have a full house again. I missed my children and they missed me, but we're happy to be together now. We like the simple things. After work I want to see them right away. I just want to come home and cook for them.



# MOSAIC FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

## BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER

The Mosaic Family Resource Centre is committed to supporting healthy families and healthy communities through holistic and collaborative service delivery. The centre strives to reach out to underserved communities in all quadrants of the city. Currently, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre offers programs for families in eight different community locations.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ONGOING SERVICE DELIVERY

In this fiscal year, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre continued to enhance its wide range of programs and services in the areas of:

- Pre-and post-natal services
- Early childhood development
- Parenting support
- Family Literacy
- Programs for youth
- In-home support
- Programs for immigrant men
- Supportive counseling for individuals and families



# THREE **NEW** PROGRAMS BEGAN IN THIS FISCAL YEAR, OFFERING FAMILIES EVEN MORE OPTIONS FOR LEARNING AND GROWING IN CALGARY.

## 1. Mosaic Counseling Program for Immigrant Men

In April 2013, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre entered into a partnership with HomeFront to deliver the Mosaic Counselling Program for Immigrant Men. This program offers individual and group counselling services for beneficiaries referred through the Provincial Justice system. During the first year, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre and HomeFront have provided over 1,000 hours of counseling to these clients. Reflecting on his experience with the counseling services, one participant says, "Our counselor gave me lots of help when I felt helpless and upset, and provided access to a psychologist to help our child through this difficult time. Our community needs people like this who can help us in tough situations. The Mosaic Family Resource Centre is a great place. We feel safe when we work with them."

## 2. Healthy Together Program

As part of a national project dedicated to the promotion of healthy, active lifestyles, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre was invited to partner with The Bridge Youth & Family Services Society out of Kelowna, British Columbia, to deliver this program. For one year, Healthy Together brought families together to learn to make healthy choices and build healthy relationships through engaging in family meals, increasing physical activity, and decreasing sedentary activity. Mosaic provided three modules of the program: Happy Healthy Beginnings for children age 0 to 6 years and their families; Fun Healthy Habits for children age 7 to 12 years and their families; and My Life, My Choice, My World for youth age 13 to 18 years and their families. Over the three modules, this program reached 47 families from 19 different cultural backgrounds.



### 3. RESPECT

With the support of Canadian Women's Foundation, RESPECT, the newest Mosaic Family Resource Centre program, works in partnership with Antyx and two local community schools to promote gender equality, cross-cultural understanding, and a foundation for healthy relationships. Through this unique partnership, the RESPECT program aims to engage both boys and girls, aged 11 to 13, in developing awareness around how the media influences society's views of gender relations and self-image. Guided by the long-term vision of men and women standing together as advocates against gender-based violence, RESPECT has engaged youth from 14 different communities in this programming year.



**“THE ONLY LIMIT TO YOUR IMPACT IS YOUR IMAGINATION AND COMMITMENT.”**

**ANTHONY ROBBINS**



**DURING JULY AND AUGUST 2013, THE CLUB KISMET SUMMER PROGRAM WORKED WITH 44 CHILDREN/YOUTH AGE 6 TO 12 YEARS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN THE AREAS OF FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.**

# MOSAIC STATISTICS



## LEADING COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

1. China 31.5%
2. India 26.5%
3. Pakistan 16.3%
4. Colombia 14.5%
5. Iran 6.2%

## LEADING LANGUAGES

1. Mandarin
2. Punjabi/Telugu
3. Urdu
4. Spanish
5. Farsi

**602**  
CHILDREN

**159**  
YOUTH

**1,143**  
ADULTS

**1,904**  
BENEFICIARIES  
SERVED

**53**   
LANGUAGES

**452**   
WORKSHOPS

**59**   
COUNTRIES  
OF ORIGIN

 **54,338**  
HOURS OF  
SERVICE PROVIDED

# ASHA'S JOURNEY



SUCCESS  
STORY

Asha's story begins with a call from a school receptionist. She told Mosaic about a newcomer mother, Asha, who had asked about the Multicultural Literacy Program. Her family had come to Canada nine months earlier and now Asha was growing concerned about her children's literacy skills. She wondered how she could give them opportunities to learn English and be part of a group.

Through participation in the Multicultural Literacy Program, Asha laid a foundation for her family's learning. This program hosts songs, stories and games for families with children three to five years old. Children participate in activities designed to increase skill development and promote school readiness. Parent discussion groups and workshops are offered to increase conversational English, as well as build health and financial literacy.

During her time in the program, Asha networked with other parents, increased her basic English language skills, and participated in an employment workshop with her husband. She discovered additional opportunities to join other learning communities, and began participating in English conversation clubs through the Calgary Public Library. As she watched her children develop skills that would prepare them for school and make new friends, Asha felt that her family had a positive future in Canada. On the day Asha made a presentation for the parent group, she said:



“

**THIS IS THE  
BEST DAY  
OF MY LIFE  
IN CANADA.**

”



**FATIMA** originally from Tanzania, fondly remembers the 2011 Immigrants of Distinction Awards gala. She was in the audience with her family when she was announced the winner of the Business Award for her work with Bri-Mor Developments, a company she has led for over 20 years.

"I was very, very grateful for the acknowledged," she says. "It gave me the opportunity to speak about my journey, which was full of challenges, perseverance, and hard work, had great moments of fulfillment"

"Hard work," here, might be an understatement given the circumstances under which Fatima joined Bri-Mor in 1990: Her husband had just passed away at the age of 51, leaving her the small property management company. "I took over the business 10 days after he passed away. I had no knowledge, no experience. I didn't know what I was getting into," -Fatima says.

Under Fatima's guidance – fuelled by unwavering faith, dedication and a keen entrepreneurial spirit – the business acquired buildings and added land development and construction to her portfolio. As Bri-Mor continues to grow, Fatima says winning the Business Award in 2011 helped propel her in her mission.

**“ It was a milestone; to be acknowledged publicly as a successful business person was very encouraging. It told me that I didn't take all the risk in vain, and it made my children proud of my accomplishments as well. ”**





**“YOGI”** is the face behind Navagrah Landscape Architecture + Urban Design, the firm he launched in 2013 to provide a platform for his many creative talents. At the 2014 Immigrants of Distinction Awards gala, he received the Arts and Culture Award for his body of work.

“It’s all about art. I look at each project as an opportunity to engage the art of place-making to create quality outdoor spaces.” In the months since the gala, Yogi – who came to Calgary from India at age 23 – has had time to reflect on what the Immigrants of Distinction Awards experience means to him.

“The gala gave me a lot of opportunities to meet so many new people, including other finalists,” he says.

**“ The award is like a stepping stone, and it means a lot in the sense that it validates your credentials. It’s the world supporting you. ”**

Accepting his award, Yogi told the 600-person audience: “For the past 36 years, Immigrant Services Calgary has done remarkable and committed work [to help] immigrants like myself . . . It is a truly humbling experience to be recognized by such a distinguished organization.”

Yogi concluded his speech by saying he’ll continue contributing to society through his work and design, feeling fortunate to have been welcomed here “in this great city, our great province, and our great country.”



**NAVAGRAH LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN**  
is currently involved in landscape  
design of the following interesting projects:

**PALFREYVILLE CONDOMINIUMS, CALGARYLUFT  
RESIDENCE, EDMONTONSKYVIEW RANCH MIXED USE  
DEVELOPMENT, CALGARysteak-pit RESTAURANT & BRAGG CREEK**



# IMMIGRANTS OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

On March 7, 2014, ISC hosted the 18th annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards. This year's theme was "Reaching new heights together: Accomplished immigrants. Stronger communities. Brighter futures." The evening brought together 600 people from government, business, non-profit, and community circles to celebrate the accomplishments and talents of Calgary's immigrants and refugees.

This year's award recipients come from a variety of backgrounds. Among them are a landscape architect who has shaped Calgary's built environment with an astounding creative eye; a pioneering community builder who has contributed to the success of some of Calgary's most formidable non-profits; and a business leader who is building a legacy based on care and compassion. Certainly, their talent and contributions to our city's well being are both admirable and inspirational.

Conversations we've had since the gala have made it clear that in hosting the event we have been a part of something that's larger than a four-hour party on a Friday night. This award ceremony highlights our esteemed immigrants in a way that produces a shift in public focus, offering a message to newcomers that says: Calgary appreciates everything you do.

Accepting the Community Service Award at this year's gala, Dolores Dill told the crowd: "I will cherish this award forever." In sharing this sentiment, Dolores tapped into something that we're feeling here at ISC. We are so grateful that we have the opportunity, year after year, to honour Calgary's newcomers – and we will cherish our IDA memories forever. It is a privilege to meet accomplished newcomers, tell everyone we know about them, and then celebrate their achievements with hundreds of their biggest supporters. We hope we can do this forever.

We look forward to continuing this tradition and, in keeping with this year's gala theme, we know that as an organization committed to newcomers, we will thrive for years to come. Thank you for your support of IDA 2014.

# RECIPIENTS

## **Arts and Culture Award**

Yogeshwar Navagrah

## **Community Service Award**

Dolores Dill

## **Business Award**

Margaret Adu

## **Lifetime Achievement Award**

Om Malik

## **Achievement Under 40 Award**

Turin Tanvir Chowdhury

## **Organizational Diversity Award**

Cargill Meat Solutions High River

## **Youth Scholarship Awards**

Sarthak Sinha, Sujay Nagaraj, Simei (Amy) Li,  
Chuyang (Aaron) Lin, and Jiani Deng





**@askISC**



**ImmigrantServicesCalgary**



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