




Immigrant
Services Calgary
Over 40 Years of Community Impact

IMMIGRATION

Building Canada's Prosperity

Annual Report 2018-2019





Our Vision

Immigrants and refugees achieve successful economic, social and cultural integration and become valued contributors to Canadian society.

Our Mission

To facilitate the integration of immigrants and refugees into Canadian society.

Our Values

Accountability, collaboration, people, passion, innovation, professionalism, and a client and community focus.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Report from the Board..... 2
- Board of Directors..... 3
- Report from the CEO.....4
- Executive and Senior Management Team 5
- Top 10 Client Countries of Origin 6
- Highlights7
- Thank You to Our Funders..... 8
- Thank You to Our Immigrants of Distinction Awards Supporters 9
- Satellite Offices: Calgary and Area10
- Our Programs and Service Areas..... 11
- Mosaic Family Resource Centre12
- Settlement and Language Bank Centre16
- Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment – Referral Centre (ILVARC)..... 20
- Immigrants of Distinction Awards..... 24



Report from the Board



Shirley Philips
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC), we are honoured to play an important role assisting newcomers as they make Calgary their home. On numerous occasions in 2018, we witnessed Calgarians going above and beyond to help their neighbours, and at the same time, we saw newcomers making significant contributions in our community.

This past year, Canada welcomed the highest number of immigrants in recent history and this trend increased the need for our services. The Board of Directors is proud to see ISC meet this increasing demand.

At ISC, we know that newcomers and their families play a key role in Canada's future. We also recognize that their success is more than economics; it is about building healthy neighbourhoods and communities for all Calgarians. Through the delivery of our programs and services, our clients can confidently participate and contribute to Canadian society; this is made possible by engaging with government, business, and the community to develop inclusive processes that better support integration.

Some of our key achievements include:

- Supporting 24,942 newcomers to Calgary in 2018.
- Expanding our professional counselling services to include couples, families, children, and youth.
- Continuing to push the boundaries of settlement support services through innovative online platforms and resources.
- Enhancing language assessment services for newcomers with disabilities.
- Growing our remote language assessment services in rural and surrounding areas.

It is my pleasure to work with the ISC Board of Directors who are committed and knowledgeable volunteers. Together we successfully hired our new CEO, Hyder Hassan, and set the stage for the refresh of our strategic plan. I look forward to our continued success as a key contributor to the well-being of newcomers in Calgary.

Finally, ISC's success was made possible by funders, donors, staff, volunteers, and partners supporting our vision. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Shirley Philips
Chair, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

Shirley Philips
CHAIR OF THE BOARD



Raymond C.T. Cheung
TREASURER



Ada Adeleke-Kelani
DIRECTOR



Anita ReMartinez
1ST VICE-CHAIR



Nishi Thusoo
SECRETARY



Chandy Mung
DIRECTOR



Haritha Devulapally
DIRECTOR



Lisa Clarke
DIRECTOR



Claudia Wendrich
DIRECTOR



László Varsányi
DIRECTOR



Report from the CEO



Hyder Hassan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

Canada is rich in cultural diversity and Immigrant Services Calgary proudly recognizes the integral role that immigration plays in our collective future. We take great pride in the fact that the Canadian narrative includes vibrant communities from around the world, which truly makes Canada a strong and prosperous nation. Every newcomer that steps foot on Canadian soil joins this narrative — their pasts become forever intertwined with Canada's future.

Since 1977, Immigrant Services Calgary has been providing a wide range of settlement and language assessment services to immigrants and refugees looking to begin a new chapter of their lives in Canada. Being an immigrant myself, I am grateful for the legacy of millions of immigrants and refugees that came before me and the contributions they made to make Canada one of the greatest countries in the world.

As the newly appointed CEO of Immigrant Services Calgary, it is my great pleasure to present our 2018-2019 annual report. This year's theme, 'Immigration – Building Canada's Prosperity,' recognizes the inspirational immigrants and refugees in our nation's ever-expanding mosaic of ethnicities, languages, cultures, and talents that have come together to create a strong and prosperous Canada.

Who would have thought in 1999 that a fifteen-year-old Pakistani immigrant would be destined for leadership positions in the Canadian financial sector and later become the CEO of one of Alberta's longest-serving and most comprehensive settlement agencies? Immigrant Services Calgary knows that immigration matters to Canada's future. The newcomers of today are the professionals, community leaders, and entrepreneurs of Canada's tomorrow.

On that note, the four strategic priorities that will guide our efforts over the next year are:

1. Sharpening our program and service focus
2. Investing in innovation
3. Enhancing strategic collaboration
4. Optimizing human capacity and capability

I'd like to thank our generous funders, community, corporate stakeholders, the Board of Directors, and most importantly, our staff and volunteers for their unwavering dedication, resilience, and breakthrough work.

Thank you for working with us as we create an immediate and lasting impact for our clients, because immigration matters!

Respectfully,

Hyder Hassan

Chief Executive Officer

Executive and Senior Management Team

Hyder Hassan *Chief Executive Officer*

Homan Chan *Director of Settlement and Language Bank Centre*

Shiraz Amiry *Director of Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment – Referral Centre (ILVARC)*

Wendy Auger *Director of Mosaic Family Resource Centre*

Michelle Johnson *Chief Financial Officer*

Biljana Tratnik *Assessment Services Manager*

Danuta Krajewska *Operations Manager*

Mina Demian *Corporate and Community Engagement Manager*

Natalia Vizdoaga *Human Resources Manager*

Rana Hamodah *Business Development Manager, Language Bank Centre*

Vivien Lok *Settlement Manager*

Erika Tan *Executive Assistant*



Top 10 Client Countries of Origin



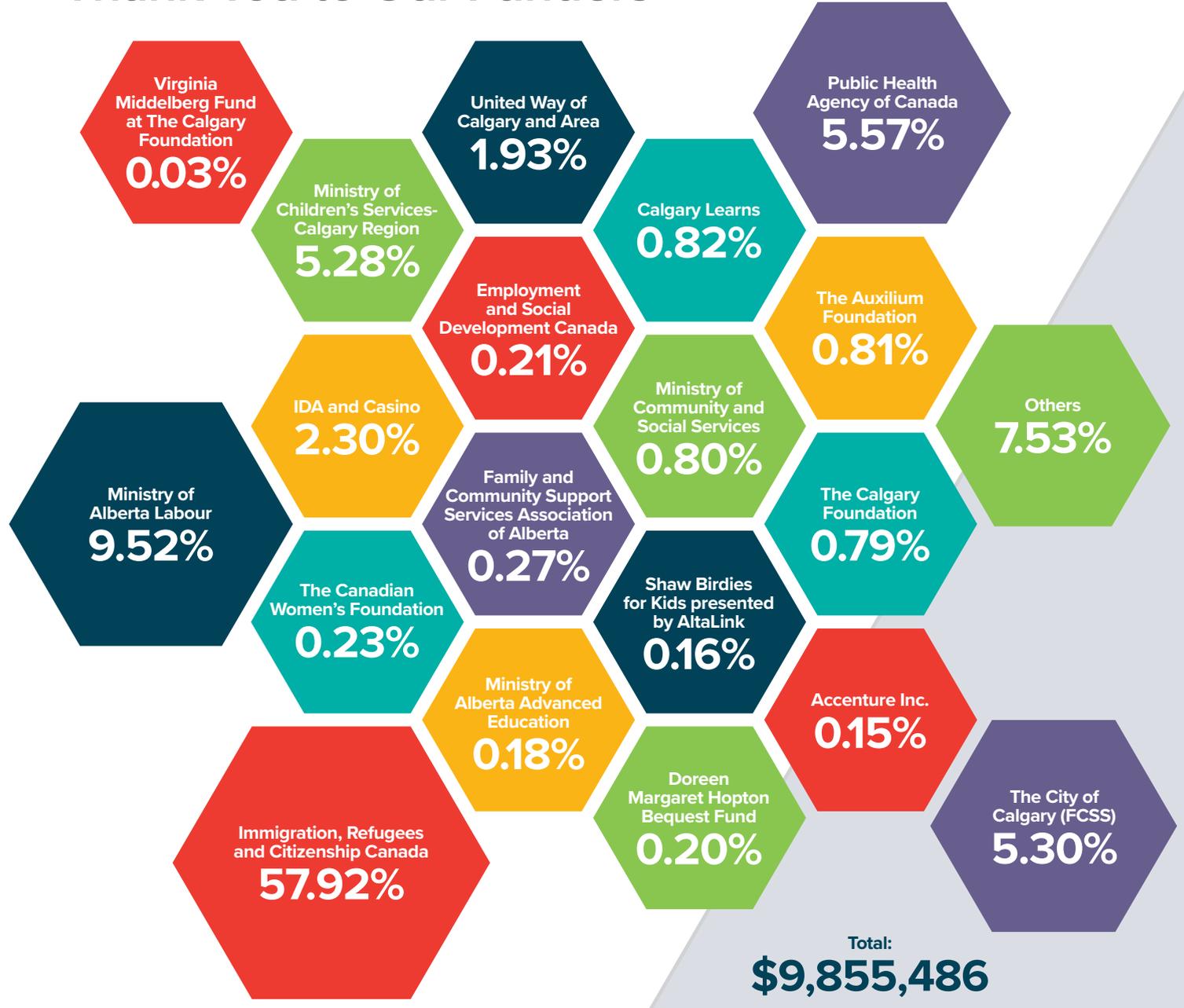
India	9.22%
China	6.65%
Philippines	4.64%
Pakistan	4.52%
Nigeria	3.90%
Ethiopia	3.80%
Syria	3.21%
Eritrea	2.99%
South Korea	2.49%
Iran	2.14%

Highlights

Immigrant Services Calgary proudly supported 24,942 newcomers in 2018 from 184 countries who spoke 172 languages. Newcomers benefited from 1,246 workshops. This important work was made possible by the generous support of 1,526 volunteers who donated 36,381 volunteer hours.



Thank You to Our Funders



Thank You to Our Immigrants of Distinction Awards Supporters

Silver Sponsors:

- Family & Community Support Services
- Bow Valley College
- Chartered Professional Accountants of Alberta (CPA)
- TD Canada Trust
- University of Calgary
- Trico Homes
- Royal Bank of Canada
- Dr. Chirag Shah

Bronze Sponsors:

- Imperial Oil
- Clarity Benefits Group Inc.
- Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA)
- Sodexo
- Shaw Communications Inc.
- Enbridge Inc.
- The Association of Science & Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET)

Event Partners:

- Harry & Martha Cohen Foundation
- Pierson's Funeral Service Ltd.
- United Way of Calgary and Area

In-Kind Sponsors:

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- Jeunesse Classique Ballet

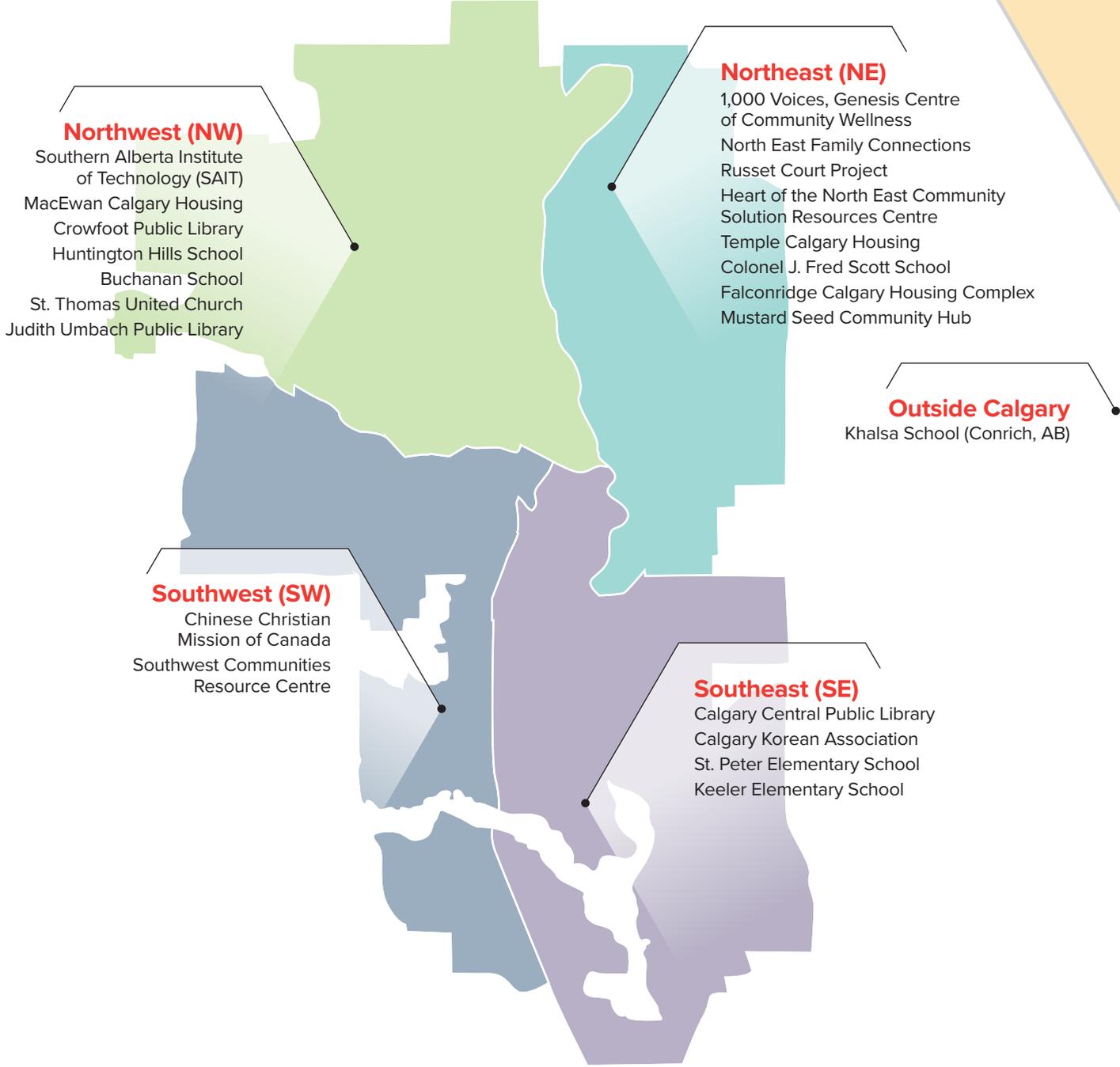
Media Sponsors:

- Global Calgary
- Postmedia
- CBC Calgary
- Calgary Arabia Radio
- New Canadians TV Show
- Sabrang Radio
- RED FM
- CVNTV
- Diversity Magazine
- Canada 88 News
- Hispanocity Calgary

Immigrant Services Calgary would like to thank our numerous individual and organisational donors and sponsors for their generous support.



Satellite Offices: Calgary and Area



Our Programs and Service Areas

Immigrant Services Calgary is one of Alberta's longest-serving and most comprehensive settlement agencies. Our aim is to reach newcomers in a timely and responsive manner to facilitate a smooth transition, proper settlement, and successful integration into the Calgary community. We work in collaboration with our partners to ensure newcomers have access to programs and services that help overcome the challenges associated with immigrating to a new country by offering:

- Pre-arrival support services
- Career guidance, employment workshops, mentorship, employment programs, and vocational counselling
- Assessment of English and literacy skills
- Information, guidance, and referrals to Language Instruction for Newcomers and English as a Second Language classes
- Interpretation and translation services
- Family, children, youth, and seniors' programs
- Counselling services for groups, families, couples, and individuals
- Volunteer opportunities
- Settlement and integration services





Mosaic Family Resource Centre



Wendy Auger
DIRECTOR

The Mosaic Family Resource Centre supports immigrant and refugee families in achieving individual and family success. The centre's holistic model addresses family isolation, nurtures parental skills, fosters the development of children through the promotion of play-based learning, and supports youth in the acquisition of life skills and the development of healthy relationships.

Prioritizing Mental Health for Newcomers and Their Families

Recognizing that mental health challenges affect all family members, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre has expanded professional counselling services to include couples, families, children, and youth. The Mosaic Family Resource Centre applies a holistic, culturally responsive approach to service provision that fosters newcomers' personal strengths while addressing underlying issues that impact successful integration.

Setting Newcomers up for Success

In 2018-2019, the Mosaic Family Resource Centre partnered with Alberta Workforce Essential Skills to pilot the Working Faster, Working Safer program. The program supports the development of targeted employment skills related to the hospitality industry while improving a newcomer's English language skills. Designed specifically for low level English language learners, this partnership was an excellent opportunity to expand existing literacy programming to better meet the needs of Calgary's adult learners.

Looking Forward

Family health is a cornerstone of the Mosaic Family Resource Centre and accessing resources online is becoming increasingly important. As accessibility to information and support is important to our clients, we plan to enhance technological and social media resources for our programs in the coming year. Providing families with increased access to technological resources will support the expansion of Mosaic programs and services in all areas of health including nutrition, recreational and physical activity, and promotion of mental health for all family members.



Mosaic Family Resource Centre Coordinators

Jen Thornhill, Senior Coordinator, Early Childhood and Parent Programs

Serenella Argueta, Youth and Family Programs Coordinator

Indira Caro, MC, Registered Psychologist, Family Support Programs Senior Coordinator

Healthy Start
Calgary Program



“I felt so lonely here in Canada and kept all the negative emotions inside. That is why sometimes I felt I could not breathe. Being here and talking with my counsellor helped me to face my emotions without being afraid of them. I felt supported by my counsellor and I started to care about myself again.”
– Mosaic Multicultural Counselling Program Client



Faraz Khan, Multicultural Counsellor for Men's Program

A.W.'s Story: Building Healthy Futures with the Multicultural Men's Program

A.W. was registered in the Multicultural Men's Program as a court mandated client. This twelve-week program encourages participants to reflect on their current situation and take responsibility for their actions. A.W. worked one-on-one with a counsellor and participated in group activities that ultimately helped him to interpret his past experiences differently. The culturally responsive services provided in the Men's Program validated A.W.'s strengths and encouraged him to develop effective communication skills and methods of coping with challenges. A.W. was an engaged participant and often acted as role model to other participants. Since the completion of the program, A.W. continues to visit as a volunteer, sharing his story and supporting new group members.



Alan, Mosaic Preschool Student

Alan's Story: Building a Strong Foundation

Alan came to the Mosaic Preschool Program in January 2018. Alan's family had recently immigrated to Canada from Nigeria and were looking for a program that would prepare him for kindergarten. Although he struggled to focus and participate in groups, Alan's parents and the Mosaic Preschool Early Childhood Team worked together to develop a plan that would support his needs. The Mosaic Preschool Program helped Alan to build trust and develop new relationships. With encouragement of positive behaviour, Alan was able to redirect his energy into constructive activities.

Today, Alan loves telling stories and singing songs with the other children. He is a wonderful teacher's assistant and is always excited to set up play areas for group activities. His mother is thrilled with the changes she has seen in Alan at home. She says, "I am so happy my son is in this program. Thank you!"

As Alan transitions into kindergarten in September 2019, the Mosaic Preschool Program wishes him great success on the next step in his journey.

Other parents say:

“I registered my daughter in the Mosaic Preschool in September 2018. I have seen many improvements in my daughter's skills. The staff are very cooperative and skilled in working with children and families.”

– Mosaic Preschool Program Parent





Homan Chan
DIRECTOR

Settlement and Language Bank Centre

At every step of a newcomer's journey, they encounter a myriad of challenges that can significantly impact their ability to succeed in their new Canadian life. The Settlement and Language Bank Centre (SLBC) helps immigrants and refugees overcome barriers to settlement and integration while maximizing their potential and enhancing their quality of life. Our comprehensive array of services includes newcomer orientation and referrals, supportive counselling, employment bridging, interpretation and translation, citizenship and civic education, youth and senior programs, volunteer programs, neighbourhood-based initiatives, and pre-arrival services.

SLBC's area of excellence is leveraging integrative technologies for innovative settlement service delivery. Thanks to the generous funding and support from three levels of government, we have attained significant milestones and established a widely applauded track record in this area over the past three years. Our most celebrated success is the creation of our one-of-a-kind interactive online settlement platform (www.settlementcalgary.com) which functions as a one-stop service portal. Besides offering 24/7 access to comprehensive, accurate settlement information, the platform hosts a plethora of online services: online appointment booking, settlement/career counselling, real-time interactive workshops, virtual career fairs, virtual job board, the Voices of Calgary Campaign, and more. Online service delivery has redefined connectivity and greatly enhanced the accessibility, scope, quality, outcomes, and impact of our services.

Muhammad and Sanaa,
ISC Volunteers



Settlement Team at the 2019
National Metropolis Conference (NMC)



Gezim Fetahu at ISC's
12th Floor Reception



Settlement Hub at the
Calgary Central Public Library

SLBC had the pleasure of sharing our experience and achievements in online service delivery at the 2018 and 2019 National Metropolis Conference (NMC). We were given opportunities to showcase the benefits and potential of leveraging integrative technologies in settlement service delivery and demonstrated how we have strategically utilized technology-generated analytics to identify user demographics, preferences, and trends to build effective online tools and service delivery models. We also facilitated discussions on the new opportunities technology integration has created for the settlement/social services sector and how non-profit organisations can overcome challenges and build capacity in this area. Both presentations were met with enthusiastic responses and earned accolades from large, cross-sectoral audiences.

Looking Forward

With support from the Alberta Government, SLBC will be piloting a trailblazing integrative online video project producing a series of multilingual, scenario-based settlement videos hosted on an interactive online platform. The project will also involve a social media campaign and province-wide cross-sectoral collaboration to maximize outcomes and impact. Stakeholder participatory research will be integral to gaining new knowledge regarding newcomer receptiveness to technology-based service delivery and informing the settlement sector on emerging needs and resource allocation priorities.

Settlement Platform



Language Bank
Centre Team



Pranali's Story

Becoming a successful businesswoman has always been Pranali Sharma's dream. To improve her employment prospects and further her career goals, Pranali courageously applied to move to Canada from her native India.

In August 2018, Pranali landed in Calgary and immediately dedicated herself to finding meaningful employment in the area of finance. Her search led Pranali to Immigrant Services Calgary's employment team where she received coaching to further develop skills in resume writing, networking and interviewing. At an ISC networking event in December 2018, Pranali connected with an employer and secured the job offer she needed to begin her career in Canada. Pranali is thankful for the support she received through Immigrant Services Calgary's employment team and is excited to take the first steps on the path to realising her dreams for a successful career.

Meenakshi Lamba, Settlement/
Employment Counsellor with
Pranali, ISC Client



Dienna's Story: Building a Successful Future

Dienna desired to re-establish her nursing career after immigrating to Canada from India with her family. However, she did not know where to start as the information she obtained from various sources about the licensing process was confusing and inaccurate. One day, through a casual conversation with a grocery store cashier who was a former client of Immigrant Services Calgary, Dienna learned about the agency's services and decided to go seek advice.

ISC's settlement counsellor conducted a comprehensive assessment to help identify Dienna and her family's immediate and longer-term needs. To alleviate the family's financial strain, the counsellor provided assistance with applications for government benefits as well as referrals to community resources. The counsellor also explained the licensing requirements for the Nursing profession in Canada, provided information on certification programs, and worked with Dienna to formulate an action plan to achieve her career goals.

Dienna enrolled in the basic-level certification program and was progressing well when tragedy struck—their family home and all possessions were destroyed by fire. The counsellor immediately went to the temporary shelter to provide supportive counselling to the distraught family and pulled together all possible resources to enable the family to get back on their feet, referring them to various community partners to obtain essential household items, furniture, and clothing donations. As well, the counsellor assisted with applications for replacement immigration documents and helped the family secure affordable accommodation. The tangible assistance and emotional support provided by the counsellor during this crisis significantly alleviated the family's stress and anxiety, and enabled Dienna to refocus on her studies.

A month later, Dienna received basic-level certification and landed a job at a reputable nursing home shortly after. Successfully getting her first professional job in Canada has filled Dienna with much joy and hope and motivated her to pursue higher level certification to maximize her potential. She feels empowered and is confident that she will be able to build a fulfilling career and a bright future for her family.



Shiraz Amiry
DIRECTOR

Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment – Referral Centre (ILVARC)

In addition to providing English language benchmark assessment and referral services to newcomers, ILVARC strives to address the barriers that clients may face while seeking these services. To ensure all newcomers can access the language services needed to succeed, ILVARC continues to offer its services at 1000 Voices of the Genesis Centre of Community Wellness in the north east quadrant of Calgary, an area with a high newcomer population density. Priority assessment of Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) at the Reception House continues to be yet another feature of ILVARC's services. Furthermore, ILVARC is proud to be at the forefront of numerous innovative services, including:

Remote Language Assessment

The need for ILVARC's remote language assessment for newcomers living in areas surrounding Calgary continues to grow. Newcomers who require language training or skill upgrading can now visit a designated proctor site close to their home and be assessed remotely by our assessors in Calgary. This innovative process eliminates costly and time-consuming travel for both assessors and newcomers. After the assessment, newcomers can access appropriate language training and other programs available in their local communities. With extensive experience and expertise in remote assessment, ILVARC has assisted the Centre for the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) in providing remote assessor training to assessment centres across Canada and served as a temporary remote assessment centre for newcomers in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.



Carmen Yu, ILVARC
Assessment Coordinator



Seemant Trehan, Outreach Officer/Counsellor
delivering ILVARC Information Workshop

Special Accommodation Assessment for Clients with Disabilities

To increase accessibility of assessment services for newcomers with hearing, physical, visual, intellectual, and learning disabilities, ILVARC developed a protocol to provide applicable language assessment accommodations. These accommodations help to alleviate a newcomer's anxiety and allows them to complete the test to the best of their ability. ILVARC then ensures newcomers with disabilities are referred to appropriate language training programs to meet their specific needs.

Effective Monitoring of Client Outcomes

With the support of Alberta Labour, ILVARC concluded the Outcome Measurement and Evaluation (OME) Project, through which we developed and implemented new data protocols to measure immediate and intermediate outcomes on the status of clients who had been referred to provincially funded programs. The knowledge gained through the OME Project will allow ILVARC to continue enhancing services and outcomes to meet newcomers' current and future language needs. With the enhancements in Learner Pathway Plans and through follow up with several cohorts of clients at different points in time, ILVARC can report more comprehensively on newcomer outcomes after the referral process.

Looking Forward

ILVARC looks forward to providing off site services in different quadrants of the city to increase service accessibility for newcomers living in all parts of Calgary. ILVARC also plans to implement a new computer-based English language placement assessment tool that will be used as the only core assessment tool by centres across Canada.



ILVARC Planning
Session



Rose, ISC Client



Community Initiatives for Immigrant Seniors Program (CISP)

Rose's Story: Building a Lasting Impact

Rose is an elderly widow who moved to Canada in April 2018 from Cameroon. Rose lives with her son who is currently pursuing both academic study and a career. Due to her age, Rose experiences difficulties with her hearing and vision, and thus struggled to learn English. Rose quickly began to feel socially isolated; however, she was determined to overcome the language barrier and participate in her new society. When Rose came to ILVARC for a language assessment in February 2019, she was given special accommodations for her hearing and vision impairments. Because these accommodations helped to put Rose at ease, she was able to concentrate on the test and she left feeling confident that she did her best. An ILVARC counsellor provided Rose with comprehensive information about language training options based on her needs and referred Rose to classes for newcomers with disabilities. The counsellor also referred Rose to Immigrant Services Calgary's Program for Seniors to meet other elderly newcomers. Rose looks forward to beginning her classes and is pleased with her experience at ILVARC.

"I am so happy that I came to ILVARC to have my English assessed. I am looking forward to beginning my English classes. As a senior who does not have anyone in Calgary except my son, I often feel lonely and depressed. Thank you also for referring me to ISC's Seniors Program. I love connecting with other people. I feel that ISC cares about people like me. God bless you."

[Translated from French]
- Rose, ISC Client



Immigrants of Distinction Awards

On March 15th, 2019, Immigrant Services Calgary proudly hosted the 23rd Annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards, *'Immigration – Building Canada's Prosperity'*, at Mount Royal University's prestigious Bella Concert Hall. The Awards recognized the inspirational immigrants and refugees in our nation's ever-expanding mosaic of ethnicities, languages, cultures, and talents that have come together to create a strong and prosperous Canada.

This special event was attended by more than 500 prominent business leaders, high-ranking officials from all three levels of Canadian government, international representatives of government, immigrant and refugee communities, and civic-minded Calgarians. ISC would like to thank Her Honour, the Honourable Lois E. Mitchell, CM, AOE, LLD, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, for once again joining us to celebrate the exceptional achievements and contributions of Calgary's immigrants and refugees.

Award Recipients

Achievement Under 35: Oluseyi Smith

Arts and Culture: Wilmer Aburto

Community Service: Dr. Victorino Lantion

Entrepreneurship and Innovation: Amy Giang

Lifetime Achievement: Dr. Adriana Fishta-Bejko

Organisational Diversity: Tower Cleaners

Youth Scholarships: Arijit Lodha, Claire Du, Nihal Potdar, Riri Jiang, Jadé Olayinka

Read more about our outstanding award recipients at:
<https://immigrantservicescalgary.ca/ida/award-recipients>



Oluseyi Smith



Riri Jiang



Amy Giang



Tower Cleaners



Nihal Potdar



Claire Du



Dr. Victorino Lantion



Wilmer Aburto



Dr. Adriana Fishta-Bejko



Arijit Lodha



Jadé Olayinka



Vindo Karna, Hyder Hassan, and Rajesh Angral



Youth Recipients of Immigrants of Distinction Awards



Organisational Diversity Award Recipients: Tower Cleaners



Kent Hehr, MP, Chad Moore, and Dr. Victorino Lantion



23rd Annual
IMMIGRANTS
OF DISTINCTION
AWARDS
2019
Immigration
Building Canada's Prosperity



*Immigrant
Services Calgary*
Over 40 Years of Community Impact

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