

Indo Canadian
Women's
Association

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INDO CANADIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Changing attitudes since 1984!

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INDO-CANADIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Established 33 years ago, ICWA is amongst the few organizations in Edmonton, Canada advocating for the protection of the rights of immigrant women, men and youth alike. Through settlement assistance, skill building community activities and adult education we try to ensure that immigrants are able to feel at home in Canada.

Our approach to preventing violence against women is by raising the status of women through dialogue and community mobilization. An attitude shift about the way women are portrayed and treated is essential and we believe small shifts in attitudes about women can create a large overall impact and raise the status of women in our communities. That is why we are proud to say, ICWA has been changing attitudes since 1984!

Our vision is that all new Canadians will achieve a sense of fulfillment and integration into the Canadian culture and society. Everyone will have an equal opportunity to fully participate in Canadian society.

Our mission is to encourage and promote participation by new Canadians in social, economic, and political life in Canada. We are dedicated to promoting equality, opportunity, and protection of rights for everyone.

Our values are equality, opportunity and protection of rights for everyone.

The Impact of the ICWA

The ICWA has served over 45,000 clients since its inception in 1984, and is one of the very few immigrant serving and social services organizations serving the Millwoods area. It has doubled its annual intake of clients and currently serves 85% more clients than expected as per contracts with the core funding agencies. It now employs 12 full/part-time staff speaking 9 languages, as well as 15 full-time and over 50 part-time volunteers.

The impact ICWA has had on Edmonton, Alberta and Canada is well respected locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. ICWA's work as a change agent has reached diverse communities not only in Canada but also abroad.

Most importantly the association has had significant impact on mainstream institutions and government agencies. ICWA has influenced change by impacting the delivery of services amongst front line workers, practitioners and professionals in immigration/settlement, health care, social work, enforcement, law, medicine, education, to name but a few areas.

Programs

The ICWA provides the following programs.

Integration & Settlement

- Needs Assessment & Referrals
- Information and Orientation
- Support Services - Translation

Education Program

- Computer Literacy
- ESL functional literacy
- Senior conversational English
- Citizenship exam preparation

Community Activities

- Youth program
- Women's Program
- Senior's Program

Project Directory

“Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls”

Outreach

- Organizing conferences and workshops to engage and change attitudes among mainstream service providers, practitioners and professionals
- Collaborating and engaging with mainstream agencies

Celebrations and Special Events



A) Volunteer Conference

The service of volunteers forms a considerable part of the resource base of the Indo-Canadian Women's Association (ICWA). Since 1984, we have engaged numerous volunteers who help ICWA deliver on its mission to serve immigrants in Edmonton. In that context, the ICWA hosted a 'Volunteer Conference' on the afternoon of April 30, 2016.



The gathering included the ICWA Board as well as diverse community volunteers for ICWA service programs. The speaker for the occasion was Mr Harchand Grewal, a teacher and dedicated community volunteer. Mr. Grewal described the numerous benefits of simple kindness done without expectation of personal gain - whether this be handling the grill at a community barbecue, or shovelling snow for a neighbour in need. He also shared an inspiring personal account of volunteering to take a large group of students from Saskatchewan to British Columbia.

B) Symposium: "Building Empathy and Conquering Apathy" "BECA"



On May 13th and 14th, 2016, Canadians for a

Civil Society in partnership with the IndoCanadian Women's Association, MacEwan University and NAIT held a symposium "Building Empathy and Conquering Apathy" (BECA). BECA was the first milestone in a three-year plan to raise awareness of connections amongst humanrights violations, gender-based violence, race, and poverty. The symposium offered a collaborative platform for educators, policy makers, human rights advocates, academics,

non-profit and front-line service workers.

The guest of honour was acclaimed human rights activist Leslee Udwin, the director of "India's Daughter," which was screened as part of the symposium. Over two days of consultation at MacEwan University and NAIT, the participants intensively examined humanrights violations and relevant solutions through approaches such as empathy-based education. Around 30 speakers and six panel discussions discussed measures to ensure gender equity, address the enduring trauma of residential schools, prevent and intervene in sexual assault, and strengthen current capacity to prevent complex forms of violence amongst immigrant communities. Indo-Canadian Women's Association, represented by Dr Amrita Mishra, participate in a panel discussion on gender violence in Canada. In another

presentation, Amrita provided highlights from ICWA's ongoing multi-partner project against so-called 'honour'-based violence.

The Honourable Stephanie McLean, Minister of Services Alberta Status of Women, The Honourable Richard John Feehan, Minister of Indigenous Relations, and the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, expressed their appreciation and support of the event was when survivors of violence described how they rebuilt their lives and remained resilient in the face of complex intersecting challenges such as sexual assault, substance abuse, racism, and poverty. Another significant feature of the symposium was the resource fair. Several non-profit organizations including the ICWA across Edmonton engaged with participants, distributed information about their services, and networked with each other.

Almost 200 people attended BECA. At the close of the two days, there was an overwhelming consensus that the symposium was an impressive effort, highly successful in creating a space for dialogue, collaboration, and community engagement.

C) Annual General Meeting:

The ICWA's 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the 28th of May, 2016. Around 35 members, supporters and special guests attended the event. Board President Mrs. Ratna Basappa welcomed the guests with her cordial opening speech. Our guest speaker was Dr. Gita Das, member of the ICWA Advisory Board, a psychologist by training and an ardent community volunteer. Her talk was entitled " Women's life in the context of work life balance". She began by confirming women's life has been improved and how



women have empowered themselves through education and employment. However, their heavy workload tends to upset their family life. Women in Canada are working approximately for 3 hours/week doing unpaid home work. Dr. Das's call for measures to ensure greater work life balance led to a vibrant discussion on potential solutions.

Special guest MLA Rod Loyola expressed his great pleasure in continuing to work with the ICWA. He confirmed the importance of expansion of ICWA services. He stated that he looks forward to working with the ICWA to end domestic violence in our community, by raising awareness amongst school-goers and by giving them career-building and community leadership skills.

In a great conclusion to the meeting, Minister Christina Gray congratulated the ICWA for electing the new board. She commended the ICWA for its great work in assisting newcomers with their integration into Canadian society and in enabling them to overcome diverse barriers in that process.

Daughter's Day Celebration

On August 27th, 2016, Canadians for a Civil Society in partnership with the Indo-Canadian Women's Association celebrated the Daughter's Day. The purpose of this event is to recognize women who have been doing outstanding work by contributing to the community by focusing to end all discrimination and fighting against human rights abuse against women.



Our Keynote speaker was Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish. He is a Palestinian Canadian, the author of the book called "I Shall Not Hate". He is known as the Martin Luther King of the Middle East. In



order to obtain peace he dedicated his life to health. He is internationally recognized human rights and peace activist. He said "...medical and health are the human equalizer and the stabilizer in this world and we must not underestimate it." Dr. Abuelaish gave a remarkable speech about human rights, peace, forgiveness and reconciliation. He said, "Women are the reason the world has made it this far and women are the only hope is world has to rise up and reach its greatness."

This year six honourable women were chosen for the Daughter's Day award for their exceptional work. Daughter's Day 2016 was attended by more than 200 people and it also filled with great entertainment.

D) Peace Fest

The Indo Canadian Women's Association's participation in the Peace Festival of Edmonton was a forum celebrating Women's Contribution to World Peace. The ICWA hosted its Peace Fest on September 28, 2016. The event organized at the Millwood's Seniors Association was very well attended. MLA Rod Loyola brought greetings from the Premier and announced that ICWA have got the approval to run the pilot project on gender equality in Ekota Edmonton Public school. The two key note speakers were Colleen Ring, Board Member, Mahatma Gandhi Foundation for World Peace and Nina Delling, President, The United Nations Association, Edmonton branch. The speakers emphasized the importance of acts of kindness and described how local initiatives



can become global. A highlight of the evening was the skit presented by Youth Group of the ICWA. They emphasized that peace comes in many forms. Their role play highlighted the biographies and achievements of women leaders including Anne Frank, Marie Curie, Rosa Parks, Indira Gandhi, and Mother Teresa.

E) International Day of the Girl Child

On October 19, 2016, Indo-Canadian Women's Association, in partnership with Canadians for a Civil Society (CCS) and SAHAARA (South Asian Humanitarian Aid & Resettlement Association), organized a celebration of International Day of the Girl Child at CN Theater of MacEwan University. Councillor Mohinder Banga brought greetings from the City of Edmonton. The event drew a huge audience that filled the Theater to view the ground-breaking documentary 'Petals in the Dust' made by Ms Nyna Pais Caputi.



Petals in the Dust is an examination of son preference and daughter devaluation in India, the world's second most-populous country. The screening was followed by a lively discussion of the themes of the film.

Ms Caputi joined the conversation (from California, via Skype) with three noted Edmontonbased experts on gender violence and women's empowerment. The experts from Edmonton were Dr Asma Sayed of MacEwan University, Ms Elauna Boutwell of Edmonton Mennonite Center for Newcomers, and Prof. Philomina Okeke-Ihejirika of the University of Alberta. Mr Satya Brata Das, journalist and expert on strategic policy, was the Master of Ceremonies and moderator of the panel discussion. MLA Rod Loyola (Edmonton-Ellerslie) elaborated on the importance of unceasing engagement against gender violence. He also expressed his deep appreciation of the work of grassroots organizations against patriarchy in the guise of tradition.

After the opening remarks, the audience watched Petals in the Dust in mesmerized silence. The film laid bare the reality of gender violence in India and worldwide. It illustrated how violence against women and girls covers the life span, starting at the prenatal stage with female feticide and continuing into old age. The subsequent discussion and panel-audience interaction raised profound questions. Key themes were the legal, policy and dialogic measures needed to halt a genocide of women and girls in India and in diasporic Indian communities in the US and Canada.

F) Family Violence Prevention Month

On November 26, 2016, to mark the Family Violence Prevention month, the Indo Canadian Women's Association organized a screening of 'A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness', a 2015 documentary directed by Sharmeen Obaid- Chinnoy. A Girl in the River depicts the story of a woman in Pakistan sentenced to death for falling in love and becomes a rare survivor of the country's harsh judicial system. It was followed up by an angry and passionate discussion by audience.



The screening, organized at the Welcome Center for Immigrants, was preceded by a commentary by the Indo Canadian Women's Association's board about the prevalence of family violence in Alberta. After the screening, attendees participated in an open discussion about the film's themes. Manal Alnajjar, Executive Director of the ICWA, moderated the discussion. The film screening was ICWA's effort to promote awareness of the complex dynamics of family violence and engagement of the audience was a mark of success.

G) Seniors Seminar



ICWA in partnership with Mill woods Seniors Association, SAHAARA and Hameed Law conducted Seniors Seminar on November 16, 2016. Councillor Mohinder Banga brought greetings from the City of Edmonton. The two keynote speakers were Ruth Adrea, Founder, Elder Advocates of Alberta Society and Rosalie Gelderman, Social Worker, Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council. The seminar involved a morning question and answer forum. The discussion was opened by Yavar Hameed who pointed out that elders become invisible in

society. Such invisibility is a systemic outcome of negative social attitudes that foster abuse of and discrimination against seniors, even in the sphere of law. It was pointed out that in cases of spousal violence, victims cannot withdraw charges. In cases of elder abuse, however, there is the scope to withdraw charges, as a result of which elder victims may withdraw charges because of shame, fear and pressure. Charges need to be laid when there is elder abuse, as much as in cases of spousal violence. The two plenary discussants were Ruth Adria of the Elder Advocates of Alberta Society and Rosalie

The event included a "working lunch" with small-group discussions in which attendees conversed about challenges that affect their well-being along with strategies to improve their

situation, e.g. by building connections to other seniors', service providers, professionals and the broader Edmonton community.

The main recommendations that came out from the group discussions are:

- There needs to be more information on senior rights available for senior's in different languages.
- Immigrant seniors need to be encouraged to learn English and English classes should be made accessible to them.
- Seniors need to be prepared for retirement at the right age. Also, retirement is not a onestep event.
- Lawyers need to be better informed about the specific concerns, obstacles, and legal rights of seniors.
- There needs to be less red tape, which limits or makes it very difficult for seniors to access the healthcare they need.
- Seniors need more information on home care and how it works.
- Seniors should have access to medical education sessions so that they can have a better understanding of the healthcare system and how to use it.
- The centralized healthcare system needs to be improved. For example, "net care" should be used so that physicians can have access to all the medical information they need about their patients.
- Isolation was identified as the biggest danger in retirement. Seniors in retirement must learn to fight against isolation and remind themselves that they are strong. They need to be made aware that they need and must seek social networks and senior's centers.
- The ability to communicate and receive proper information is essential for seniors to plan their finances.

Dr. Sheree Kwong See, Seniors Advocate, in her concluding remarks, emphasized that there is a need for seniors' advocate offices in all Canadian provinces. The advocate centre office is trying to help seniors through referring them to the right places and with follow up. Also, the center tries to provide advice to the government about gaps in the system and about what works well. The seminar was a call to action for seniors to connect and share their experiences so that they can develop strategies for their better living now and in the future.

H) Grand Multicultural Celebration



The Indo Canadian Women's Association held its Annual Grand Multicultural Celebration on the evening of December 16, 2017. The event, organized at the ICWA Office was a big success with its more than 30 guests, including members of Legislative Assembly, donors, Local Organizations, ICWA board, staff and members.

The evening was full of group songs, conversations and activities that highlighted the immense value of inter - cultural understanding and community diversity in an inclusive and respectful society.

I) International Women's Day



On March 24th, 2017, the Indo Canadian Women's Association held their 33rd annual International

Women's Day celebration at Woodvale Golf Club in Edmonton. The ICWA renewed its call for gender equality for social justice in an inclusive society.

The Master of Ceremony was Ritu Khullar who was appointed as Justice of Queen's Bench of Alberta on the same day as our IWD celebration. Ritu was the first Indo Canadian woman to be appointed to that position. ICWA congratulated her for this honor. More than 300 people attended the event. Attendees included community members, advocates, activists, MLAs, community leaders, professionals and academics that support the work of the ICWA to

promote gender justice and end violence against women. Mrs. Ratna Basappa, President of the Board of Directors of the ICWA welcomed the participants and thanked them for their continuous support for ICWA's programs to encourage and promote participation by the new Canadians in social, economic and political life in Canada. Councillor Mike Nickel brought greetings from the City of Edmonton.

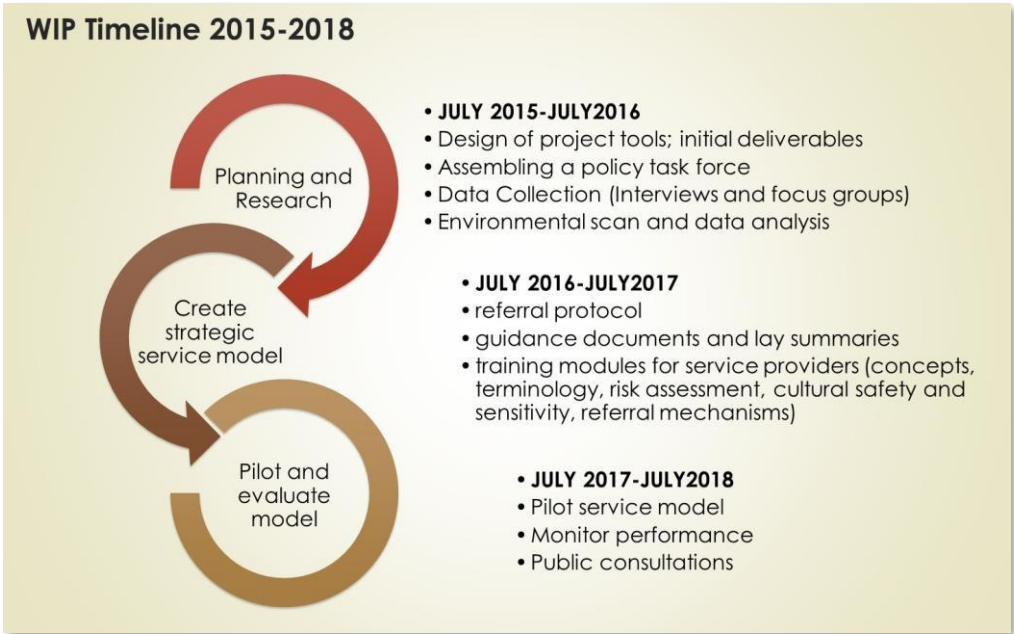
Our Keynote speaker for the evening was Sally Armstrong, Human Rights Activist, journalist, author of *Ascent of Women*, and recipient of the Order of Canada. In her keynote talk, Sally Armstrong highlighted the importance of individual will and acts of resistance to oppression and violence. The centerpiece of her talk was her observations of grassroots activism in Kenya. She described how 160 child rape victims sued the Kenyan government for not protecting them and for failing to uphold the 2010 Kenyan constitution's promise of greater

equality for women and girls. The audience then enjoyed the multicultural buffet dinner as well as some traditional Indian performances.

Projects

1) Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Girls and Women

Currently, ICWA is helming a 2015-2018 project to devise cohesive strategies to prevent and intervene in cases of honour-based violence (HBV hereafter). The project “Working in Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls” (WIP hereafter) is funded by Status of Women Canada.



To implement the project aims, the ICWA is partnered with YWCA Edmonton, Today Family Violence Help Centre and the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights. The

“Working in Partnership To end Violence Against Women and Girls (WIP)” needs assessment was conducted between January 2016 through May 2016. Prior to the needs assessment, July through December 2016 were used for planning, staff recruitment and extensive networking with service agencies. These steps were preparatory to the needs assessment and development of a formal support network of agencies with relevant mandates.

A task force to create an integrated service plan was established in March 2017 with the inclusion of Today Center (represented by Leigh Rosales, Program Lead), Pride Center of Edmonton (represented by Kristy Harcourt Education Coordinator and Program Manager), Candora Society (represented by Valerie Cudmore, Executive Director; also Chair of the Ethnocultural Family Violence Committee), Liz John-West (an individual task force advisor; trainer on family violence support at ICWA; program lead in a second stage shelter La Salle of Catholic Social Services) have signed on to the task force. The MoUs were discussed and finalized in March 2017. Three one-on-one meetings were held with each of the members. The first group meeting has been held in April 2017. Meetings will continue through to September 2017.

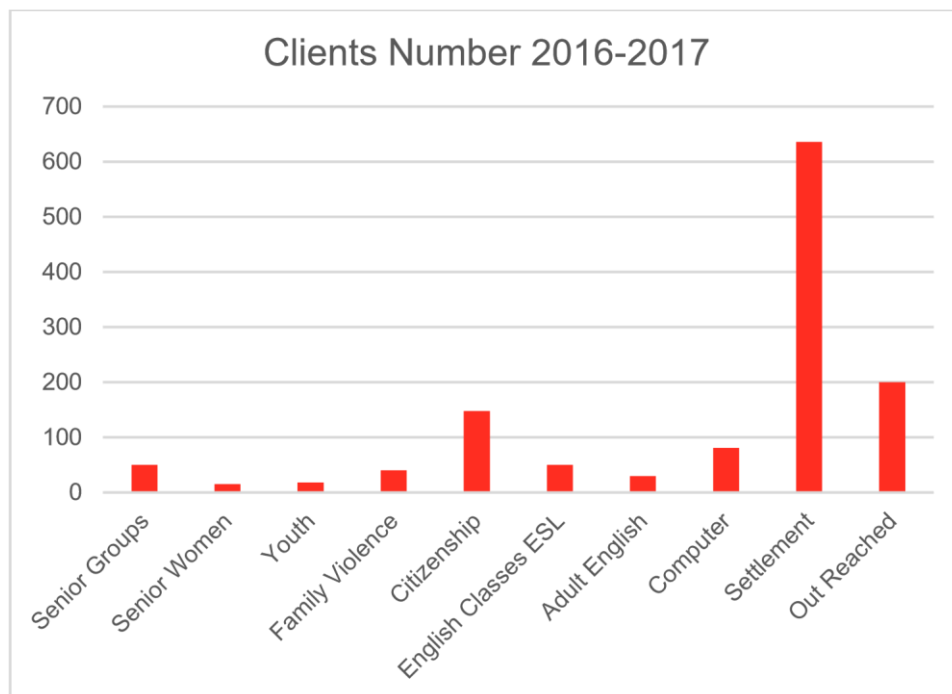
A model for a pilot service (Bridge to Safety B2S) has been prepared and will be implemented through 2017-July 2018.

The project website (blog site) <https://workinginpartnership.wordpress.com> now has 30 posts, to which number there will be additions over 2017-2018. The website has been shared with all agencies who participated in the needs assessment and provided signed agreement to be part of the knowledge sharing and formal support network. The site has had 980 hits so far.

Amrita Mishra also participates in case consultations at the Today Centre. These consultations bring multiple agencies to one forum to discuss actual cases in anonymized format, generate solutions, and also to celebrate success stories. The aggregated and anonymized insights from these consultations are also incorporated into posts on the website.

ICWA team have also assembled the literature on honour based violence (HBV) for a database. 100% of the 2004 items (comprising articles, news items, theses, government and non-profit reports, and webpages) have been indexed on Mendeley.org. The database will be updated as the project continues. The articles on the database are shared with agency partners (as references and synthesized into guidance notes). The database material is also used to access references for the project website.

Programs



Clients Number	
Senior Groups	50
Senior Women	15
Youth	18
Family Violence	40
Citizenship	148

English Classes ESL	50
Adult English	30
Computer	81
Settlement	636
Out Reached	200
Total	1268

ECALA Program:

A) English as a Second Language (ESL)

Objective: Help students to develop the ability to use oral and written English for daily needs, acquire basic conversation skills and vocabulary, and use simple sentence patterns. Help students adjust to their new cultural setting and utilize their skills to function in the new environment.



The ESL classes create opportunities for the students to interact and express their views about various topics in English. They also get connected and share knowledge which help students to boost their confidence and their social networking. Through these learning opportunities, students are able to make plans for their studies, careers and other future goals. The instructor with the support of the ICWA management are able to create the positive learning environment where students feel at home and relaxed for more successful

achievements. Our class is in high demand due to our teaching methods based on active learning as well as our accessible location at the Welcome Center for Immigrants. We elicit the feedback of our students in order to choose the times and content that work best for them.

This year, about 50 students have attended our ESL classes (about 80 classes). The members of the highly diverse student body hail from Chile, India, Pakistan, Colombia, Somalia, Korea, China, Poland, Haiti, Burundi and Nepal.

Success Story



Munimah Ali Mishu is originally from Bangladesh. She came to Canada as a permanent resident on 22nd January 2017, after one year of her marriage. “Life did not seem easy since I came to Canada. I faced some problems to communicate with local people as my English was not so good,” Munimah said. Besides this, she felt uncomfortable to meet people from different countries as well as adjust with new culture. Everything was new to her. She did not know what she should do to enter into

Canadian workforce.

One day she came to know about “an organization named Welcome Centre for Immigrants” through the internet. She joined the WCI’s English language classes from February 2017. After that, she started to meet and talk to people from different countries, different cultural backgrounds. These English language classes not only helped Munimah to improve her language skill but also helped her to mix with and share her views with different kinds of people. “Our instructor was so much cordial. He provided us so many information about skill development, career development. He also talked about Canadian culture and norms. I think, these classes acted as a guideline to prepare myself to do something better” Munimah said.

At present, Munimah is working at SEARS as a sales associate. She is grateful to ICWA because the Association not only helped her to improve her language level but also enabled her to make many new friends. Now Munimah is more confident and more optimistic about her new life in Canada.

B) English Conversational Classes

Objective: Provide students with English language skills to ensure smooth transition and settlement for newcomers and allow them to seek employment, remain social and become active members in their communities.

Our Adult Literacy class language Learners are funded by ECALA. Conversational skills are enhanced in these courses with an emphasis on speaking, grammar and comprehension. The friendly, supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere of these courses allows students to strengthen their reading and writing skills. Class enrolment was 30 students, with 20 women and 10 men.

C) Citizenship Preparation Class

Objective: to aid immigrants to complete their Citizenship Exams. We teach the voting process, Canadian history, symbols and basic government processes and geography. We educate students on duties of citizens and on constitutional rights and guarantees in the Charter of rights and freedoms.

Our Citizenship preparation Class is instructed by Paul Kalsi, who provides students with essential information to fully understand their rights, responsibilities and values as Canadian citizens. The Class caters to people from multiple walks of life. The instructor spends considerable time ensuring that his students get the best possible experience with unique study material and efficient instruction. In total, this class served 148 students, 57% were women. This class had a 93% success rate. The students were of diverse backgrounds - Argentinian, Portuguese, Indonesian, Cuban, Fijian, Moroccan, Sudanese, Egyptian, Finnish, Tanzanian, Chinese, Russian, Australian, Bolivian, Pakistani and Indian.



Success Story

Annatolia is originally from Zimbabwe and recently applied for citizenship with the help of Indo Canadian Women's Association (ICWA) at Welcome Centre for immigrants (WCI). She attended four citizenship classes before going to her citizenship test.

Through the citizenship classes, Annatolia have been able to learn about Canada. She learnt about Canada geography, history and the Canadian Economic and civil system. . She passed her test with a 90% distinction. "It easier with the enthusiasm of the instructor who gave me great insight and confidence in myself to seat for the test once and for all, the lessons I attended made possible for me. I would want to express my appreciation to this organization for this kind of assistance that I would wish for others to access the help of the awesome people at this center." Annatolia said.

D) Computer Class

Objective: to aid students to advance their careers. Typing and basic computer skills help to ensure immigrants will receive higher positions and therefore achiever greater economic status. They also aid seniors to access information on their own and communicate via email.

Our Computer Literacy classes, instructed by Jaya Saxena, are offered at two levels: basic and intermediate. These classes are attractive to the adult population because they enhance employability. The classes equip our students with the confidence to apply to higher positions and advance in their careers. With the skills acquired from our classes, students are better able to integrate into the Canadian work environment. An improved socio-economic status gives our students independence. The ICWA gratefully acknowledges the funding of the 'Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association' for successfully running these classes.



There were 12 sessions in total of which 7 were for Basic and 3 for Intermediate computer classes. The sessions included 49 adults who gained basic knowledge and 32 who opted for intermediate level. Many basic students wanted to go further to the Intermediate level but either undertook higher studies or got good jobs and did not continue. Eight of those who completed the Intermediate course undertook higher studies and three who were already working got promotions. Women numbered 90% of the students. Most students hailed from India. Others were from Burundi, Nigeria, Philippines, Puerto Rico, China and Pakistan.

Success Story:

Kausar Masood is a 55 years old that came to Canada 3 years ago. Kausar had joined NorQuest college for Linc classes for the purpose of improving her English. She was having a difficult time doing her course as she has to use her computer a lot for the classes and had no knowledge of computers. Kausar decided to join our computer class to learn how to use computer and improve her English.

After completing the Basic computer course at ICWA, Kausar enrolled for the intermediate classes and completed them both successfully and to her complete satisfaction.

Kausar was able to complete her level 6 in English successfully for the Linc and is enrolling in level 7 in the near future where the computer knowledge will come in very handy.

She said "I am very grateful to ECALA and ICWA for giving me the opportunity to learn computer as in this country without computer knowledge a person cannot get ahead in life".

Settlement Services Program

A) Settlement Counselling

Objective: to meet the diverse settlement needs of newcomers in Edmonton by offering a wide spectrum of accessible and appropriate settlement services.

The settlement and counselling services are designed to welcome newcomers to the community and provide them with the necessary resources to integrate into Canadian society.

The consultations not only convey valuable information to newcomers at a single forum, but also offer them with an opportunity to mingle and network with other immigrants from different parts of the world. All in all, these programs offered by the ICWA provide participants with valuable exposure and experience with the diversity that marks Canadian society.

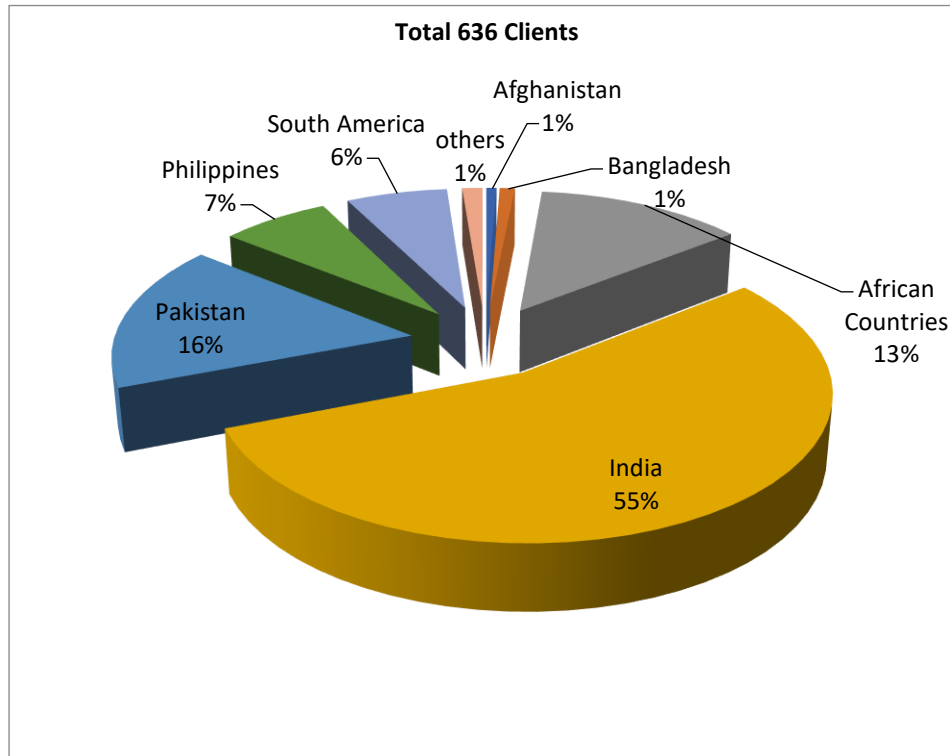
The Newcomer Settlement Orientation program lays a strong foundation for a settlement plan for newcomers built upon one-on-one sessions or family sessions. Clients are asked to think about and discuss their reasons for choosing Canada as their new home. This is followed by a discussion of their expectations of life in Canada. Finally, they are asked to keep both these elements in mind while charting out their goals to keep a clear focus and eliminate undue stress. This program is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). ICWA provides the Settlement Programs and Services from the Welcome Centre for Immigrants located in the Millbourne Mall of Millwood neighborhood. There are two Full Time Settlement Counsellors hired by ICWA to provide settlement and integration services to new immigrants. 24 settlement work Shops were conducted for 222 Newcomers. One-on- One Sessions were provided for 487 Newcomers. There were 90 returning clients and 59 clients received other services. A total of 636 clients received services through ICWA’s Settlement Program.

Settlement & Outreach Activities and Results:

Activity	Outputs for Year to Date	Annual Target	% Of Annual Targets Met	Comments on variance (if any) between achieved versus contracted outputs
<u>Newcomer Outreach</u>	300	300	100%	<i>Targets successfully met.</i>
<u>Needs Assessment Information & Orientation</u>				
Orientation workshops	24	24	100%	Targets successfully met.
Total Newcomer Participation	636	660	96%	

<u>Interpretation</u>				
<u>Translation</u>	600	500	100%+	<i>Targets successfully met.</i>
<u>Supportive Counselling</u>	636	660	96%	<i>Targets met.</i>
<u>Enhancing Supportive Communities</u>				
Volunteers trained				
Volunteer hours	5	2	100%+	<i>Targets successfully met.</i>
Hrs. training volunteers/ practicum students	100	100	100%	
	40	10	100%+	

Demographic Distribution	Number
Afghanistan	4
Bangladesh	6
African Countries	82
India	348
Pakistan	105
Philippines	43
South America	40
others	8
TOTAL	636



Success Story

Journey of a highly skilled Immigrant within first few weeks in Canada.

Umair Sartaj and his wife Mehwish Umair are highly skilled professionals from Pakistan and have worked in the Middle East. Umair has a degree in Engineering and Mehwish is a medical professional. They arrived in Canada on March 4th, 2107 with 3 minor children. On arrival the family was provided temporary accommodation by a relative.

They were referred to the Welcome Center for Immigrants by their relatives; the settlement counselors did 'Needs Assessment' with the couple, and were included in the 'Newcomer Information Orientation'.

The clients were provided with a great deal of information during their appointments with the settlement counselor. For a newcomer, some of the information is complex, for example, on 'Rights and Responsibilities' of newcomers, understanding the Tax System/CRA, Canada Child Tax Benefit, Provincial (Alberta) Benefits for Newcomers, Education in Alberta/designated schools for children, Housing, Medical provisions in Alberta and an overview of Canada.

Solution based counselling:

Based on the Needs Assessment the Settlement Counselor assessed 'housing' as the immediate need of the family and second, finding a designated school for the kids. The settlement counselor had provided contact information for housing based on the client's preferred area for accommodation. The client contacted the property manager over the phone. Unfortunately,

when the client and his wife went to meet the property manager and to view the apartment, the manager promptly announced that the apartment was no longer available to rent, though the clients had phone conversation with the property manager on their way to the appointment. The clients indicated that the property manager profiled and excluded them based on their visible markers of religious identity. The clients were badly demoralized by the behavior and contacted the settlement counselor at the Welcome Center for Immigrants. The SC worked with them to find housing for the family and found them accommodation on that very day. The second step was to file a complaint with Service Alberta - Consumer Protection to get an apology for the discriminatory behavior of the property manager. Service Alberta is working on the complaint.

B) Outreach

Objective: to provide support to new hard to reach immigrants and provide them information/orientation and refer them to appropriate services.

There are two Outreach staff working for the ICWA under the Immigration and Settlement Program to support newcomers living in hard to reach communities and have multiple barriers such as Language, Socio-economic, and mobility. The ICWA Outreach team regularly visits designated areas for Outreach presentations and meetings and also coordinates events to spread awareness among newcomers, as well as for the publicity of ICWA Settlement Services. 200 clients were outreached by the two outreach staff.



Community Programs

A) Youth Development Program

Objective: provide young immigrants a platform where they can discuss their problems, look for solutions and engage in various activities.

The Indo Canadian Women's Association (ICWA) has been running its Youth Development Program for the past decade. This program was developed to integrate young people into the Multicultural communities of Canada. It assists young people by providing them with a platform to discuss their issues and concerns in regards to dislocation from their home country into Canadian society. We aim at helping these youth function as productive citizens of Canada. Most of our activities emphasize the roles of youth in civic, education, global citizenship and leadership.



In June 2016, ICWA restarted the youth program titled “The Indo-Canadian Youth Discussion Panel”. The group is about starting important conversations, and encouraging advocacy. 15 youth was recruited for the panel. The format of these sessions has usually been a round table discussion on a variety of topics that range from sexism and misogyny, to intersectional feminism and privilege. We’ve also screened some wonderful short documentary films which include Café Sheroes, a piece on life after an acid attack, and The Boxing Girls of Kabul, a piece outlining the efforts of girls in Afghanistan to learn professional boxing under the threat of the Taliban regime.

The youth of our group have also started a number of initiatives. They have created a collage, which is based on the ideals of femininity and masculinity, they have participated in a photo campaign, which involves each

member recognizing a privilege they have and privilege they do not have. The campaign has been titled “I Checked Myself Before I Wreaked Myself.” A number of youth group members have also started initiatives that involve them pursuing research based on socio cultural issues, hosting workshops aiming to educate target groups on these issues, and volunteering at the Welcome Centre for New Immigrants, through a devised mentorship program. **B)**

Seniors Program

Objective: to make seniors self-reliant, healthy and secure.



Seniors are often house bound due to language and mobility challenges. They find it hard to learn winter sports and have little desire to go for a walk or any exercise. Consequently, most remain isolated, especially in the long winter months, and feel bored, sad and depressed. Community based supportive counselling helps to alleviate these problems. Each meeting is attended by 25-30 men who discuss various issues. During the sessions, attendees are informed about recreational activities available to them in the city, and to

supports such as Alberta Seniors Benefit. The total number of seniors attended our seniors sessions is 50. The topics discussed in seniors group sessions have included:

- Income tax returns filling for seniors. Free filling
- Senior's benefit from Alberta government
- Canada pension plan. (CPP)
- Old age security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement
- Affordable housing for low income person

- General sale tax refund .(GST)
- Special need assistance programme for seniors
- Leisure access program pass
- Long term care for seniors
- Stress management for seniors
- Survival benefits for seniors
- Banking special benefit for seniors
- Property management for senior in Canada
- Elder abuse in Canada
- Entertainment for seniors
- Volunteer work for seniors

Success Story

Paramjeet Singh Matharu is one of seniors participants who has attended seniors group program of ICWA at Welcome Center for immigrants (WCI) for the last three years. Paramjeet attended our weekly seniors sessions with other 25 seniors from different cultures. The group sessions were successful in the sense that participants spoke freely about their own interests and experiences and raised questions. “It gave me good knowledge regarding various benefits and information about various activities like how to live in Canada. I also be able to find friends and enjoy their accompany.” Paramajeet said.

The seniors program helps seniors to have company of various people from different cutlers and not feel isolated. During the sessions, seniors share various information, discuss their problems and support each other. “The program helps us getting out of depression. I got some benefits after I attended this programme. This programme is very beneficial for newcomers in Canada. Staff members of this centre is very supportive” Paramjeet said.

Other activities

Domestic Violence

ICWA has handled 40 cases of women facing domestic violence. Our team provided critical, informational, confidential and emotional support to women fleeing violence. These referral services help women to rebuild their lives after escaping violence. ICWA provides resources for women seeking safety from violence in the following ways:

- Conducts needs assessment / intake of the women fleeing domestic violence and perform ongoing periodic evaluation.
- Provides emotional support to women who are fleeing violence through active listening and respecting the women’s choices and decisions.
- Refer them to Emergency Women shelters and other specialized agencies
- Housing support services
- Assist women in getting Alberta Works financial benefits
- Provides help in accessing additional support such as legal advice and counselling.

- Help them to improve their safety and build their confidence
- Provides help in translation in Punjabi, Hindi and Arabic languages
- Provides them up to date information of relevant community resources

Partnerships, Trainings, conferences and presentations

A) Diverse Voices for Change Initiative

ICWA had a partnership with the City of Edmonton in the national Diverse Voices for Change Initiative. Besides Edmonton, participating municipalities include Halifax, London, Sioux Lookout and Montreal. For Edmonton, this initiative is championed by Councilor Esslinger with staff support from Multicultural Relations, Indigenous Relations, the Women's Initiative as well as members from the Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton. The purpose is to establish stronger partnerships between municipalities and community organizations to build larger networks of women who can be enlisted to support municipal governments and shared goals or projects. Another objective is to provide municipalities with expertise and tools in areas of inclusive consultation, participatory processes, policy development, gender and anti-racism training, and leadership development and research.

- On October 26, 2016, ICWA board and staff participated in a focus group discussion organized by the City of Edmonton. The focus group aimed to gather information to guide future activities. The initiative strives to increase the diversity of women in leadership roles at the municipal level and has a specific focus on women who identify as being aboriginal, from a visible minority, and/or a recent immigrant (within the last 10 years).
- On December 7, 2016, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar, Project Director Amrita Mishra and Settlement counsellor Saima Tanwir attended a focus group discussion organized by the City of Edmonton to report back & Funding discussion with community partners IAAW, ICWA, WAVE

B) Resource Fair



- On March 11th, 2017, ICWA participated in the Resource Fair hosted by Minister Christina Gray at Mill Woods Seniors and Multicultural Centre.
- On September 21, 2016 ICWA participated in Edmonton Peace Festival hosted by Mahatma Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace at City Hall.
- On September 8, 2016 ICWA participated in the Open House at Millwood’s Seniors Centre.
- On August 27th 2016, ICWA in partnership with Canadians for a Civil Society celebrated “Daughter’s Day” at City Hall and also participated in the Resource Fair.
- On January 21st, 2016, ICWA participated in the Resource Fair organized by Minister Christina Gray at Mill Woods Seniors and Multicultural Centre.

C) Community Events and Workshops

- On March 11, 2017, Board member, Jagjeet Bhardwaj and our staff members Amrita Mishra and Shazia Ambreen attended Stakeholder Forum at Mill Woods Seniors and Multicultural Centre. The forum aimed to share the information gathered by Immigrant Seniors Project in their Environmental Scan and to seek input from participants.



- On March 4, 2017, workshop on immigrant family violence delivered by Project Director Amrita Mishra to 27 Master of Social Work students at the University of Calgary (slide-deck and notes, with the “excellent” feedback appended to the notes) (Filenames: OUTPUT Mishra 4-3-2017 UCALGARY Workshop.pdf; OUTPUT Mishra 2017 UCalgary FSW Workshop notes.pdf)
- On November 26, 2016, Project Director Amrita Mishra presented on “Violence Against Immigrant Women: The (missing) numbers and links” at the Better Halves, Better Lives Symposium organized by the Immigrant Women’s Integration Network (I-WIN) of the Edmonton Mennonite Center for Newcomers (EMCN). The event was covered by CBC. Click: <http://bit.ly/2gPQ1wV> (English, text) and <http://bit.ly/2hBGMMyQ> (French, video). More photos: https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipPldX364My1FCnz_oYLSY8E12zOpK7C_9SevaeHRjTuquak6RKxG_GpD500tzHZoq?key=YjZfWdUxQTR5S2RFNDhQRzVKeXYzLVJtOWQ2SDd3
- On October 24, 2016, Project Director Amrita Mishra spoke on “Working in Partnership

Against Patriarchal Reputation-oriented Violence (PROV)" for a "Lunch and Learn" session. It was organized by the Ethnocultural Family Violence Committee.

- On November 16, 2016, Project Director Amrita Mishra participated in focus groups for the Provincial Consultation "Safety from Domestic Violence: Using Evidence Based Practices to Keep Women Safe" organized by the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters.
- On November 16, 17 & 18, 2016, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar and Project Director Amrita Mishra attended Diverse Voices Family Violence Conference organized by Today Center for Family Violence.
- On June 1 and 2, 2016, Dr. Amrita Mishra attended the 12-hour training workshop "Family violence across the lifespan" at the Today Family Violence Help Centre.
- On May 10, 2016, the Executive Director Manal Alnajjar attended a reception and luncheon for his Excellency Tariq Azim Khan, High Commissioner for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at Edmonton Federal Building.

D) Settlement Training Courses

- On March 30 and 31, 2017, Outreach Worker Shazia Ambreen attended training course on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder conducted by McGill University.
- On March 1st, 2017, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar and Settlement counselor Farah Fatima attended Syrian Refugee Stakeholder Forum. This meeting organized by Catholic Social Services and reviewed the past year with the refugee response and heard from different sectors involved in the effort.
- December 22nd , 2016, Settlement Counselors Farah Fatima, Saima Tanwir and Outreach Worker Shazia Ambreen completed an online course on Focus on Privacy "FOIP" with the Government of Alberta. The training was provided by Government of Alberta on handling private information of clients and staff in offices and variety of workplaces.
- On December 5, 2016, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar and Settlement counsellor Saima Tanwir attended Syrian Refugee Stakeholder Forum. This meeting called by Catholic Social Services and discussed action items from throughout the year and next steps as we move into Month 13 for the first group of refugee families.
- November 24, ICWA frontline staff participated in a focus group about Immigrants and mental health issues. The focus group was organized by UVA.
- On November 2, 2016, Outreach Workers Shazia Ambreen and Rajbir Kharod completed a training course on Clear and Concise Writing Applications conducted by NAIT.
- On October 20 & 21, 2016, Settlement counsellor Saima Tanwir completed Needs Assessment & Action Plan conducted by AAISA.

- On September 12, 2016, Settlement Counselors Farah Fatima & Saima Tanwir have commenced an online training organized by Grant McEwan and delivered by Mount Royal University. The module “Core Concepts of Adult Learning” is a part of the Adult Educator Seminar Series and will end on Oct 09, 2016. In their role as Settlement Counselors, this course will enhance their skills in assessing the needs of and providing information & orientation to adult learners.
- On Aug 05, 2016, Settlement Counselors Farah Fatima and Saima Tanwir completed an online training “Introduction to Post –Traumatic Stress Disorder” conducted by McGill University School of Continuing Studies and Douglas Mental Health University Institute delivered between. This course is highly beneficial in supporting immigrants and refugees arriving in Canada from distressed locations.
- On July 11 & 12 2016, Settlement Counselor Farah Fatima participated in a training session – 2A Professional Role & Ethics, organized by Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.
- On June 28, 2016, Settlement Counselor Farah Fatima represented ICWA at the Alberta Settlement and Integration Consultation 2016 - AAISA Conference. This conference discussed challenges, recognized achievements and shared perspectives about the refugee resettlement experience, assess the immigration system overall and consider what it means for the future work in the settlement sector in Alberta.
- On June 22, 2016, Executive Director Manal Alnajjar and Settlement Counselor Farah Fatima attended Syrian Refugee Stakeholder Meeting. This meeting called by Catholic Social Services and discussed the ongoing settlement needs and challenges of the refugees who have arrived, and plan for the additional refugees.
- On April 28-29, 2016, Outreach Worker Shazia Ambreen completed an AAISA training of Module 2L (Adapted) Working with Refugees with Complex Needs, at the University of Alberta.
- On March 14 and March 21, 2016, Settlement Counselors Farah Fatima and Sudha Nayak attended a 14 hour AAISA training. The training was on Managing Practitioner Stress and Burnout.
- On March 31, 2016, Settlement Counselors Farah Fatima and Sudha Nayak and the Outreach Worker Shazia Ambreen attended a 1-day training on Clear and Concise Writing at NAIT.

Publicity, Promotion, and Networking

- Our quarterly newsletter has been a successful means to reach our community. We have used it to announce our programs, services and events. We send the newsletters out to our members, the women's groups, and other ethnic, mainstream, government and nongovernment organizations to promote awareness of our initiatives and activities. The newsletter is also our potential tool to discuss issues related to women and immigrants, integration and multiculturalism.
- Project director Dr. Amrita Mishra and project coordinator Tripat Kaur gave camera interview to CTV on the topic of sex-selective abortions amongst South Asians in Canada. Dr. Mishra emphasized that loopholes in health technology regulation enables sex selection - owing to the absence of any reasonable conditions on the time of appropriate disclosure of fetal sex. Sex selective abortion amongst any Canadian community - Indian or not – must be examined in its Canadian context. Tripat described the pressures on young mothers to bear boys and to seek medical terminations of pregnancy when the fetus is female. Tripat also described social practices that celebrate the birth of boys and devalue the birth of girls. Below you can see the links.

VIDEO 1 <http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/more-male-babies-born-to-indian-immigrants-in-canada-study-1.2854015>

VIDEO 2 <http://www.ctvnews.ca/video?playlistId=1.2854668>

VIDEO 3 <http://www.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=847450&playlistId=1.2854668&binId=1.810401&playlistPageNum=1&binPageNum=1>

- Amrita also wrote an article “Skewed male-female ratios amongst immigrants in Canada” for Millwoods Mosaic (May 15, 2016). The article reviewed “social, technical and policy factors underlying sex-selective abortion in Canada” and concluded that “a cultural shift is necessary along with the placing of regulatory controls on the dispensation of fetal sex information nonmedical purposes. Responsibility for change rests with policy makers, healthcare providers, and those who want to play out their social biases in current landscape of technology sans controls.”

Administration and Governance

The Board of Directors

The Indo-Canadian Women's Association is managed by a volunteer board that looks after its finance, governance, policy-making, project-supervision and day-to-day administration. All members of the Board and the invited members-at-large are dedicated women with expertise

and distinction in various walks of life. They dedicate their valuable time and services in many different ways. They also help with writing funding proposals.

ICWA BOARD MEMBERS	
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Dr. Rashmi Jyoti	Director

Mita Das

Director

Board committees volunteering hours

Board Meetings	30 hours
Executive committee	500 hours
Standing committee work	800 hours
Program & project work	1800 hours
Total hours volunteered by Board	3130 hours

ICWA STAFF

Manal Alnajjar Executive Director

Dr. Amrita Mishra Project Director

Tripat Kaur Office & Project Coordinator

Farah Fatima Team Leader/Settlement Counsellor

Saima Tanwir Settlement Counselor

Shazia Ambreen Outreach Worker

Rajbir Kharod Outreach Worker

Paul Kalsi Outreach Worker—Citizenship Instructor

Jaya Saxena Computer Instructor

Chouaib El Bouhali English as a Second Language (ESL) Instructor

Cheryl Demcoe Seniors English Conversational Instructor

Acknowledgements

Partners:

- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN)

- Catholic Social Services (CSS)
- John Humphrey Centre For Peace & Human Rights Rotary Club of Edmonton South
- Today Family Violence Help Centre
- YWCA Edmonton
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW; Edmonton Chapter)
- Mill Woods Seniors Activity Center (MWSAC)
- SAHAARA
- Hameed law

Sponsors

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ICWA Funders

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- Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Status of Women Canada
- AGLC Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
- Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association

- Stollery Charitable Foundation
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Alberta Cultural and Tourism
- City of Edmonton
- New Horizons for Seniors Program- Service Canada

