### ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019



### **CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

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### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dr. Graham Pike, Board President

Dean, International Education, Vancouver Island University

Paul Winn, Board Vice-president

Lawyer - retired

Mindy Kailly, Board Treasurer

VP, Finance & Treasury, Coastal Community Credit Union

Maureen Shakespeare, Board Secretary

Department of Citizenship and Immigration - retired

**Peter Sikora** 

Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) - retired

**Wendy Young** 

Director of Finance, Vancouver Island University

Gerald (Gerry) M. Laporte, MEng, PEng, cfc

Canadian Naval Officer - retired

**Anthony (Tony) Ogbechie** 

Mutual Fund Advisor, HSBC INVESTMENT FUNDS (CANADA) INC

The all-volunteer Board of Directors is the governing body of CVIMS. It provides strategic direction, sets policy and provides governance oversight for the Society.





t has been an exciting and productive year for CVIMS! As we begin to think about how to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we commemorate the vision and courage of the Society's founders who, in 1979, recognized the urgent need to provide supports for new immigrants to our community. Forty years on, CVIMS continues to play a leading role in helping newcomers from around the world become established in their new homes and in creating a vibrant and welcoming community. As we plan for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala, awards that will be presented to newcomers in various categories, will illustrate some of the outstanding contributions that many newcomers have made to the wellbeing and prosperity of central Vancouver Island.

The work of CVIMS, in the past year as in all previous years, could not happen without the skills and dedication of the staff and volunteers. Under the leadership of Executive Director Jennifer Fowler, much progress has been made in establishing a firm foundation for the future, built around the key goals and innovations outlined in the new Strategic Plan. New collaborative partnerships have been forged with allied organizations, many of which have joined with CVIMS in the development of a Local Immigration Partnership that will further enhance the provision of services for newcomers in our region. The Board wishes to thank and congratulate the staff on their achievements and on the high level of service provided throughout the year.

At the end of this year three Board members, including myself, come to the end of their six-year terms as Directors. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as President of CVIMS for the past three years and I am pleased to leave the Board at a time when the future of the organization, and the community it serves, looks so bright. I would like to extend sincere thanks to Mindy Kailly and Maureen Shakespeare for their exemplary contributions to the work of the Board and to wish new and returning Board members every success in helping to guide the Society in the coming year.

he year 2018/19 was my first full year in the role of Executive Director.

The one thing that remained consistent was much conversation on how to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. Given, next year, my report will look back on how we celebrated this milestone, this report will reflect on how we got here.

Our journey started in 1979, a Task Force was set up to explore setting up a society. In September the society was formed, a board elected, bylaws and constitution were set. In 1980 the Society received its incorporation and an office was opened on Victoria Road. The society held monthly meetings for the public which included evenings of cultural exchange and community sharing. In 1981 the first child care worker and first teacher for the Mom's and Tots program were hired in response to the influx of refugees and in 1982 our first ESL program was started. Our work in the community has always been key to our success. In 1983 we worked on (and won) the first human rights case for college students. In 1987 we expanded our programming further with two 10-week Employment Programs (Provincial).

A major milestone, our 10th Anniversary, was commemorated with a celebration held at Bowen Park, showcasing the impact the society was having in the community. The 20th Anniversary Celebrations (1999) at Bowen Park included entertainment, displays, and the dedication of a plaque to Emily Stark, the 1st female black teacher on Vancouver Island, (1874), on Wesley Street. To commemorate 30th Anniversary, CVIMS was the Recipient of two awards - City of Nanaimo's "Excellence in Social Development" for dedication to community needs.

This is but a mere snapshot of all that has occurred over the past 40 years. As we look back, our success would not have happened without the commitment from the community, the spirit and resilience of our clients, trust from our funders, support from our hundreds of volunteers, guidance from past and present Board members, and, of course, the passion of past and present staff. For this we are truly grateful.

Stay tuned for more next year's report on how we celebrated 40 years, with the intention of 40 more to come!

Jennifer Fowler, Executive Director





### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

The partnerships that we build within our community are very important to us. The following is just a sample of our representation on community committees ...

- Nanaimo Economic Development Committee
- BCSIS Advisory
- Pathways to Prosperity Advisory
- The Immigrant Integration Coordinating Committee (IICC), AMSSA of BC
- Nanaimo Youth Advocates Meeting
- Community Coordination for Domestic Safety Committee
- Seniors Connect
- WORK BC Case Management Meetings / GT Hiring Solutions
- Nanaimo Job Developers Group / GT Hiring Solutions
- WorkSafe BC
- Career Paths Advisory Committee
- VIU ECEC Community Advisory Committee
- VIU WUSC Local Committee
- Healthy Start Fairs
- Nanaimo Filipino Canadian Association
- Vancouver Island Visayan Association
- BC TEAL Board
- VIU conference committee representing BC TEAL and EAL providers on Vancouver Island
- PacificCARE Child Care Resource and Referral
- Literacy Central Nanaimo

### LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

The term 'welcoming communities' has been defined in a number of ways but each definition goes to the role communities can play in aiding newcomer integration and shares "...a common understanding...that a welcoming community is a healthy community" (Esses et al. 2010, 9) In the 'two way street' model of integration, both newcomers themselves and the established community must take steps to accommodate one another and help all residents to feel valued and included.

Although welcoming attitudes are important, it is not enough for a place to be free of discrimination and inviting of newcomers if policies, programs, and processes are not in place to help new residents become active members of the community.

This was an exciting time for Nanaimo as we embarked on the creation of a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP). LIPs bring the community together to develop local coalitions and community based planning around the needs of newcomers (a person that has been in Canada for 5 years or less). Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) support LIPs, as they recognize the importance of engagement at the local level.

### Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are community-based partnerships that:

- ◆ Foster a systematic approach to engage service providers and other institutions to integrate newcomers;
- ◆Support community-based knowledge-sharing and local strategic planning; and,
- ♦Improve coordination of effective services that facilitate immigrant attraction, settlement and integration.

Nanaimo is at the starting stages of its LIP. Working groups have been identified with keys research priorities. As we engage further with community a strategic plan will be created to focus on how we can create a more welcoming community for newcomers.

### IN THE COMMUNITY



### Newcomer Youth Forum Theatre Project

For immigrant youth in Canada, concerns around stereotypes, discrimination, racism, and marginalization are realities. And as such, The Youth Forum Theatre Project worked with youth participants, to design and present a public performance on the topic of belonging.



Through the use of forum theatre techniques this youth led interactive theatre production was produced. The project provided youth participants with an introduction to the power of acting, stage performance and storytelling as a mean to engage in

community dialogue, and personal transformation. It also informed audience members of the realities immigrant youth face, and assisted in forming a more welcoming city.

### Intercultural Mental Well-being Equity Project (IMWEP)

Funded by the City of Nanaimo, the *CVIMS Inter-cultural Mental Well-being Equity Project* (IMWEP) was an innovative one-year, two-phase project aimed at beginning to bridge Nanaimo's research gap in the area of newcomer's mental health and well-being while making the case for strengthened interagency responses that improve equity.

Phase One was research-based and intended to increase awareness of the strengths and needs of diverse newcomer communities, specifically in the area of mental health and wellbeing. Phase Two is largely informed by phase one and will see initial steps towards improving mental well-being equity in Nanaimo put into action.

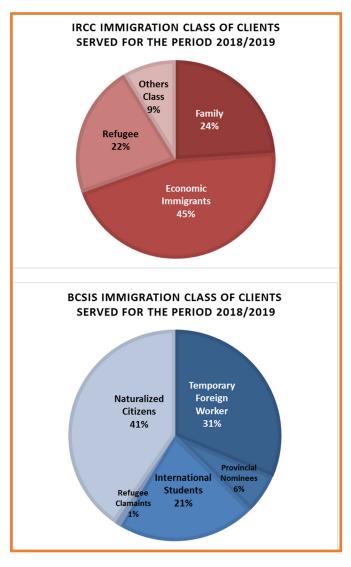


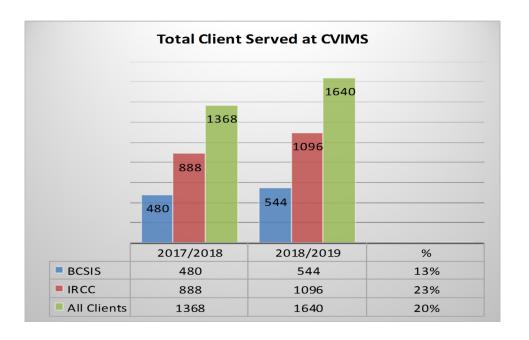
The Sounds of Summer in the OCQ was held throughout the 2018 summer months celebrated many different musical groups are a part of this free 14 concert series in the OCQ - Old City Quarter of Nanaimo. Hundreds of people came out and enjoyed it all every Friday from 12-1pm The events celebrated the many different cultural and ethnic music groups and sought to inform community members of the numerous musical traditions and cultures that live and thrive in Nanaimo. The festival showcased the vibrancy of Nanaimo's multiculturalism through music that encourage participation of the whole community; fostered cross cultural awareness, understanding, community unity and intercultural relationships through the sharing of music; built the capacity and experience of smaller or newer community groups to deliver events through the development of genuine partnerships between community organizations.

### **STATISTICS**

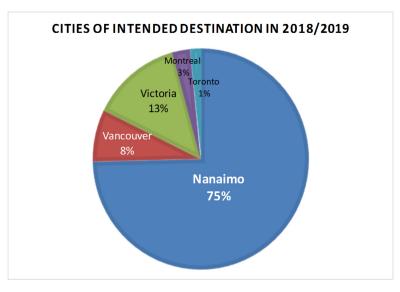
### Total Clients served in the period by funder:

- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
- British Columbia Settlement and Integration Services (BCSIS), Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology





Those clients funded by IRCC who stated that Nanaimo was their intended destination accounted for only half of total clients; therefore 50% of clients are secondary migration meaning they intended or lived in another part of Canada before moving to Nanaimo.





Services were delivered through drop-in ments by the Settlement team to 544 new and returning clients. varied; ranging from simple oneproviding extensive individually tailored one-on-one support to isolated and vulnerable clients. In January 2019, we introduced a "Settlement Worker of the Day". Clients are encouraged to make drop into the centre without an was generally available within a few minutes to conduct a brief introductory meeting and welprograms, and schedule the first appointment. The response to the change was very positive and new arrivals expressed appreciation for the immediate attention.

Settlement supports included information sessions for new immigrants on a wide range of valuable topics including law, education, health, housing, private sponsorship information, taxation systems in Canada and other sessions tailored to address current topics of interest to newcomers

Throughout the year staff conducted a number of activities designed to build community connections between immigrants and other community service providers such as the City of the Nanaimo, Parks, Recreation and Culture; Haven Society; Service Canada and Service BC. Staff also represented CVIMS at committee meetings with Youth Advocates and the Community Coordination for Domestic Safety Committee to increase awareness of immigrant needs.

Ming Frederick, Settlement Team Lead







### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

VIMS Youth Program provided opportunities for immigrant youth to engage in recreational activities that promote language learning combined with life skills development. Along with a variety of summer activities, the youth organized a fundraising "Bottle Drive and

Hotdog Sale". It was a great success! 16 Youth participated on a very hot day in August and their hard work paid off.

They raised \$391.80 in hot dog sales and \$320.60 from the bottle drive for the Youth Program.

We received great feedback from the youth and parents. The program served to connect immigrant youth with the broader community, while increasing language and cultural confidence.



### **SNAPSHOT OF OUR CLIENT BASE**

GENDER	
Male	36%
Female	64%

THE TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF BIRTH		
Syria	33%	
China	24%	
South Korea	6%	

IMMIGRATION CLASS	
Refugees	36%
Family Class	34%
Economic Immigrants	22%

MAIN PURPOSE FOR ATTENDING		
Participate in Canadian Society	61%	
Find Employment	22%	
Get an Education	10%	
Acquire Citizenship	7%	

MOTHER TONGUE/		
Arabic	35%	
Chinese	24%	
Korean	6%	

VIMS Language Department helps newcomers gain the English language skills needed for successful integration and to develop the confidence and independence needed to fully engage in the community.

The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program offers PRs, TFWs, and refugees English classes at a range of ability levels. Classes offer a thematic curriculum based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) exploring topics like housing, employment search, obtaining medical services, Canadian citizenship, community, and shopping

along with vocabulary and grammar study, in all four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Upon completion of a LINC course, students receive a LINC certificate that can be used to demonstrate language proficiency. In addition to LINC training, a specialized Literacy Stream is available for students requiring specialised support in developing the literacy skills needed to be successful. The Department also administers the CLBPT language assessment, useful for both placement in the correct English language program and recognized by some educational and professional programs as a sign of language

skill. In 2018 – 2019 152 clients were served in LINC classes and 200 assessments were conducted by our certified assessors. The department responded to client demand for additional language service by providing spring break and summer LINC classes, along with Conversation, Listening and Speaking classes, and tutoring open to students who required additional support. Additionally, a fee for service IELTS preparation course was offered to students preparing for the IELTS test. This expansion of programing has been well received.

Gerald Halabura Head Language Instructor

# DAYCARE



### "Oh the places you'll go...." Dr Seuss

Indeed the places these littles ones will go!

It was a rewarding year in the Childminding program supporting children in Early Years development. Using the BC Early Learning Framework in our observations of children's development, staff engaged parents through one on one meetings using photos, pictures and documentation to share the children's successes. Parents left with a better of understanding and appreciation of the philosophy that children learn and develop through play experiences in their early years.

Sue Luoma represented CVIMS at several Strong

Start programs from Ladysmith to Lantzville and connected with newcomer families unfamiliar with our society and services. We provided practicum and observation placements for students in the ECE programs at Sprott Shaw and VIU, bringing new learning to both the students and staff.

We foster relationships with community partners, such as participation on VIU ECE Advisory panel to advise the program on current trends and needs in the community, and membership with the PacificCare Society collaborating in workshops and webinar presentations for early year educators and parents.

Camps were held in the spring for youth ages 7-12,

resulting in new peer relationships and connection to the activities available to the youth in the community. Off-site care was offered to parents in the HIPPY program, giving parents an uninterrupted space to learn and seek help with their parental challenges.

What a gift it is to be able to support these children in their own unique settlement process and to know that that these children and families have the strongest scaffolding in place to take them to great places as citizens of Nanaimo.

Vania Zanetti, Childrens' Program Coordinator

## EMPLOYMENT



mployment Services provide support not only to newcomers and immigrant job seekers but also to local employers as they try to fill their labour shortages.

The delivery of a variety of employment programs allows us to support clients through all aspects of a

place culture, workplace safety, career planning, the credentialing process, labour market, resume writing and many other critical aspects of finding that first job in Canada.

The dedication and passion of a devoted staff is what makes the services meaningful and successful.

Assisted Employment Clients: 341 Clients Attended Workshops: 260

Clients Received Financial Support: \$94,217.17

Job Placements for clients: 15



### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC) / WORK BC for specialized population. We entered and completed the last year of the 7-year contract with GT Hiring Solutions to deliver specialized services to immigrants in Nanaimo community.

Job Ready. The program fulfilled the original 3 year contract; however, in October 2018 we received a 10 month extension while a new RFP rounds were awarded to various services providers across BC. We delivered 5 sessions in the community to a total of 40 participants of various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. We said Good-bye to Darcie Gabruck and wished her the best.

**Employment Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants Program** received expansion in Aug. 2018 to provide a more intense case management support and

increased funding for professional immigrants to return to their original fields. We were able to extend the delivery of services to the North Island community. A total 25 participants received funding in the amount of \$19,975.30.

Employment WorkSafeBC - Immigrant and Refugee Worker Program. 93 participants attended Orientation Sessions on General Occupational Health & Safety and Small Business Primer. Program received an expansion to include the communities of Parksville and Port Alberni. We delivered 8 sessions in the communities of Nanaimo, Duncan, Campbell River and Parksville.

Angelika Valchar, Employment Manager

CVIMS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	# CLIENTS
EPBC / Work BC	183
Job Ready!	40
Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants	25
WorkSafe BC / Thorne Consulting	93

PLUS Services for Employers including Job Boards, Employer Panels, Assistance with Recruitment, Diversity Training

### **EMPLOYER PARTNERS**

Pacific Care, Medicine Shop, MSE Precast, United Ramp, Hub City, St. Jean's, Compass Group, DOMCOR, Pharmasave, K2Stone, Island Health, Tim Hortons, A&W, Berwick on the Lake, VMAC, Kia Harris, Carbon Safety Solutions and many more



### CAREER PATHS FOR SKILLED IMMIGRANT SUCCESS STORY

oncaros is a Health and Safety professional with almost 20 years of diverse experience from several different countries, most recently 7 years in Singapore. He came to Canada to join his family who had already immigrated here. Despite his credentials, he experienced many challenges trying to secure employment in a new country. In 2018, after visiting the CVIMS office, he says "my life started to change".

"When I went to CVIMS office, I signed up for the Career Paths Program, it totally changed my jobhunting process. When I started, I was clueless, I do not even know where to start and if I'm doing it right. Then I underwent a 1-week intensive training in all relevant aspects in job hunting. I found the training-workshop extremely effective, from CV development to submission of application and how to conduct myself in an interview. I was helped in goal setting, improve my interviewing and negotiation skills. And I realized that I have the capacity and ability to improve my skills and get the Safety Professional job here in Canada."

The Career Path for Skilled Immigrants program also supported Boncaros' access to credential evaluation, required for BCSRP Safety Certification, and the examination fee. Moreover, CVIMS sponsored First Aid Level 2 training as well as a 1-year membership fee for CSSE.

"CVIMS helped me to draft, perfect my goals and accomplish the things that I wanted and that I was praying for with my family which is to get a better job and be able to provide well for them. After the thorough preparation, I luckily landed on a much wanted job. I was interviewed and hired as Safety Consultant with EnviroSafety, one of the leading Safety Consultancy providers in British Columbia.

All that I have now is thanks to the mentorship and assistance of CVIMS. I will be forever grateful for all your efforts and help extended."

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters





ome Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters" (HIPPY) is a school readiness program that is offered to low income, isolated families. HIPPY recognizes the parent, primarily the mother, as the child's first and most important teacher. The 30 week curriculum is delivered to the mother by a Home Visitor. The mother uses the activities and practical information, provided in the lessons, to develop the cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills of the child.

This year the program served 39 families who emigrated from seven countries, supported by Four Home Visitors from four countries (China, Bosnia, Philippines, and Indonesia).

Monthly meetings support the participants to connect to other parents and access community resources. Several community partners presented on topics such as Positive Parenting, Fraud and Theft, Early Childhood Development, and Domestic Violence.

CVIMS was presented with a unique opportunity when one of its participants, a mother from China,

expressed her desire to introduce the HIPPY program to China. With the help of the International Executive Director of HIPPY (Miriam Westheimer), CVIMS played a leading role as the HIPPY manager and a Home Visitor (Amy Xing) trained the Chinese HIPPY staff and guided and supported them to establish the first Chinese HIPPY site.

HIPPY parents continue to express their gratitude and share feedback of the program.

"The HIPPY program covers a wide range of content which makes my son's study easier at school" (A.G.), "HIPPY program gives me more strength and self-esteem, makes me feel connected. I like coming to Group Meetings because I talk to other mothers who have different experiences and ideas and I lean about my community" (M.B.)

The Nanaimo HIPPY staff look forward to another exciting upcoming year.

Swedini Halliday, HIPPY Manager

### **TESTIMONIALS**

"HIPPY was a fun and exciting experience for my daughter and me. Nurturing and inspiring her to learn was a great achievement for me as a mother, especially seeing her learning progress." (I.B)

"I was searching for a program where I could do from home but didn't want it to be costly or require any extra supplies. HIPPY was the perfect fit. The home visits were also great to further explore the lessons and answer any questions." (F.R)

"HIPPY is more than just a curriculum, it is also a bond between our family as well as fun and love. All the Hippy books are interesting and educational. He learned quite a lot of new words from the books, but science is his favorite." (H.T)

### FUNDERS



### **OUR PRIMARY PROGRAM CONTRACTS**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture

Ministry of Social Services and Poverty Reduction

City of Nanaimo

Nanaimo Community Foundation

United Way

### A VERY SPECIAL THANKS **TO OUR DONORS**

April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019

Canadian Tire

Home Depot

**Board Games House** 

**Kool and Child** 

Michaels

**Country Grocer** 

**BC Transit** 

**Eagle Quest Soccer Golf** 

St. Pauls Anglican Church

Nanaimo United Soccer Club

Lawn Bowling

Skillz Nanaimo

Nanaimo Museum

...and our many, very generous, private donors!

Our sincere apologies if we missed anyone.

Funded by / Financé par:





Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada



### **STAFF**

Executive Director: Jennifer Fowler Assistant Director: Nanette Leather Program Director: Robert Dawkes

Reception and Client Services: Dawn Marusin, Carole Pedler

Accountant: Pat Denham

### **LINC Program**

LINC Coordinator: Jillian Yun Head Instructor: Gerald Halabura

LINC Instructors: Emika Asani, Corinne Hamel-Taylor, Nancy Hayne, Marian Remenda, Barbara Stasiuk, Nancy Cameron

### **Employment Program**

Employment Manager: Angelika Valchar

Employment Consultant EPBC: Charlee Touchette, Carey Karlsson

Employment Admin Support: Manoela Curado

Immigrant Employment Specialist: Daisy Baluran Bereska

Employment Consultant Job Ready: Darcie Gabruck

Facilitator: Wendy Phillips

### **Settlement Program**

Settlement Team Leader: Ming Frederick

Settlement Workers: Rim Shin, Jennifer Bricker, Ahmad Briz,

Daisy Bereska, Larissa Coser, Walid Talhouk

Settlement Admin: Noor Al Shoykh Youth Activity Worker: Sara Kishawi

### **HIPPY Program**

HIPPY Manager: Swedini Halliday

Home Visitors: Maja Djilas, Enna Kurina, Amy Xing,

### **Children's Program**

Children's Program Manager: Sue Luoma Children's Program Coordinator: Vania Zanetti

Children's Program Worker: Olena Nagorna-Kryvonos, Pasco Hamburg

On Call: Djalila Hasni, Eman Al Zouabi

### **Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)**

LIP Coordinator: Sean White

Contract LINC Assessor: Mary Peters, Edith Ives

Contract Counsellor: Dr. Martine Charles

Contract Janitorial: Regency Commercial Cleaning