

ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020



Central Vancouver Island
Multicultural Society

CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

101 – 319 Selby Street, Nanaimo BC V9R 2R4

T: 250.753.6911 F: 250.753.4250 E: admin@cvims.org

www.cvims.org



In Memory of

Dr. Joseph Makhan (Mac) Dube

July 30, 2020 marked the passing of Dr. Joseph Makhan (Mac) Dube. An immigrant from Trinidad & Tobago, Dr. Dube was one of the founding members of the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society and the first Chairperson of the Board of Directors. In 2019, he was awarded the first Nanaimo Newcomer Awards “Lifetime Achievement Award” in recognition of his exceptional commitment to the goal of creating a more welcoming and inclusive community for all. The Staff and Board of Directors at CVIMS are grateful for his contributions over the years. He will be missed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CVIMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS	4
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT	6
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT	7
COMMUNITY	8
SETTLEMENT SERVICES	14
LANGUAGE PROGRAM – LINC	16
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM	18
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	20
HIPPY PROGRAM	22
FUNDERS & DONORS	24
STAFF LIST	27

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gerald (Gerry) M. Laporte, MEng, PEng, cfc , Board President
Canadian Naval Officer - retired

Peter Sikora, Board Vice-president
Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) - retired

Wendy Young, Board Treasurer
Director of Finance, Vancouver Island University

Shauna DeBodt, Board Secretary
Executive Assistant - Communications, School District 68

Paul Winn
Lawyer - retired

Anthony (Tony) Ogbechiem MBA, MSc
Mutual Fund Advisor, HSBC INVESTMENT FUNDS (CANADA) INC

Aamera Jiwaji, MBA
Vancouver Island University Faculty of International Education

Yifo Shi, M.Ed, CCC, RCC
Clinical Counsellor, Vancouver Island University

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.





This past year has been noteworthy for many accomplishments of which reaching our 40th anniversary of service is particularly significant. We can all be very proud that over these years, CVIMS has helped over forty thousand newcomers to become members of our Canadian family. The impact of this cannot be over stated. On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to thank our Executive Director Jennifer Fowler, the staff and all our volunteers for their contribution to this great accomplishment.

Under Jennifer's leadership CVIMS continues to have a broad impact, particularly through our Community Partnerships which serves to enhance our reputation. Employers have come to recognize that newcomers whom received training from CVIMS have the potential to be highly valued members of the work force. Also as part of our 40th anniversary celebration we recognized through our Nanaimo Newcomer Awards the contribution in support of newcomers made by members of our community. By doing this we give recognition to those whom set an excellent example of civic responsibility. More on this later.

This year also saw the departure from the Board of Directors of Mindy Kailly,

Maureen Shakespeare and our previous president Graham Pike after completing their six year term of service. We were very fortunate to have had such a talented group working with us. On behalf of all of the folks at CVIMS I would like to thank them for their commitment and leadership. I would also like to welcome our new members of the board. These include Shauna DeBodt, Aamera Jiwaji and Yifo Shi.

Needless to say, the impact of the Corona Virus has been a challenge on how we serve our clients. Fortunately with good cooperation and very good management by our leadership team, we developed the means to keep our services available. This year we also witnessed tragic events which set off a massive outcry and brought greater attention, engagement and hopefully sustained action to the Black Lives Matter movement around the world. Let us remember that a core value we have at CVIMS is the recognition that all people have the right to be treated equally and that diversity is a source of strength. To this end I think that all of us can be proud of the fact that we are an organization that is part of the solution to racial discrimination.

**Gerald (Gerry) M. Laporte, MEng, PEng, cfc,
Board President**

The year 2019 marks the 40th Anniversary of the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (CVIMS). As we look back on the past 40 years, our success would not have happened without the commitment from the community, the spirit 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.

There is no better way to celebrate a milestone than with a proper party! The Nanaimo Newcomer Awards Gala was certainly one to remember. We packed the room at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre and spent the evening recognizing the amazing contributions of the Nanaimo Newcomer community. Special congratulations to all of the winners and a sincere thank you to sponsors and community for all the support.

The Society continued its growth with new programming such as the Settlement Worker in Schools Program, supporting the province with its new WorkBC program, and forging an important alliance (Nanaimo Community Impact Alliance). An alliance that looks to enhance the capacity of its members to speak to issues that impact community-based organizations. It recognizes that there is a whole spectrum of ways for two or more organizations to work together.

The Society also dealt with great change in Board Leadership. I would like to take time to recognize the contributions of our former Chair, Dr. Graham

Pike, former treasurer, Mindy Kailly and former secretary, Maureen Shakespeare, all of whom share great commitment, and appreciation for the mission of CVIMS and will be greatly missed. I am confident that our new executive team will offer great support and guidance as we embark on a new 5-year contract with our key funder, Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada.

We also had a significant shift in management this year as Robert Dawkes, our Program Director, sailed off into retirement. Angelika Valchar, who has been our employment manager for several years, is now Director of Client Services, taking over much of Robert's portfolio. Robert's sense of humour, rapport with staff, and strategic guidance will be greatly missed, but we are definitely in good hands with Angelika at the helm.

This report cannot be completed without recognizing that near the end of March 2020, the world was struck with the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in an abrupt shift in service delivery and the postponement of the Nanaimo Anti-Racism Arts Festival. The festival is rescheduled for the spring of 2021, and CVIMS will continue its work to ensure that racism has no place in our community.

There are too many unknowns to understand what impact COVID will have to CVIMS, but one thing will not change - CVIMS will continue to work closely with funders and community to ensure that immigrants and diverse people flourish in the community.

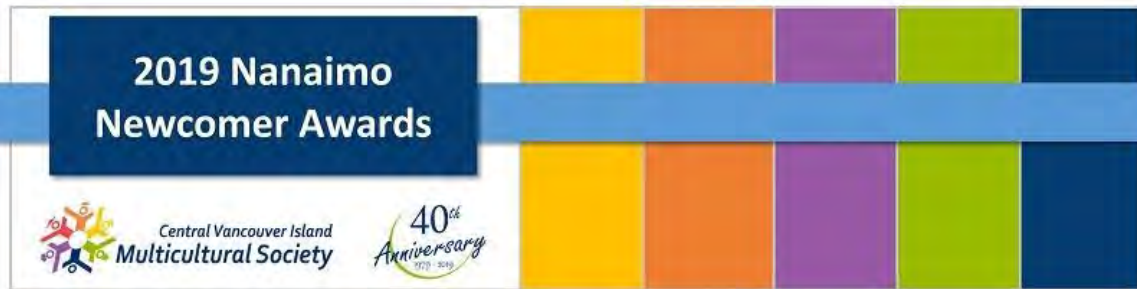
Jennifer Fowler,
Executive Director



COMMUNITY



40TH ANNIVERSARY 1979 - 2019



One way in which we celebrated the Society's 40th Anniversary was to host the Nanaimo Newcomer Awards on September 19, 2019. The awards were a means to celebrate the stories and successes of newcomers in Nanaimo, and the community that has welcomed them. It was an evening of celebration where newcomers, local residents, leaders, community partners and businesses came together to recognize individuals, groups and employers who have made a difference toward creating a more welcoming and inclusive community for all.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Joseph Makhan Dube was a founding member of CVIMS. He was the first Chairman of the Board of Directors of CVIMS. He was also a founding member of Global Village Nanaimo. He has helped to sponsor refugee families since 1979 and has been a tireless advocate for the needs of newcomers and supported many families in the settlement process. As result of Dr. Dube's efforts, CVIMS has become a vibrant and important organization serving and meeting the needs of over 1500 newcomers annually, for 40 years. He is a kind, generous, dedicated, compassionate visionary. It is without a doubt that Dr. Dube has dedicated his lifetime to supporting newcomers and it my honour to present him with this lifetime achievement award.

Employer Excellence Award

NOMINEES - Bees Knees Café, Eden Gardens, AlSCO Linen & Textile Services, PacificCARE, MSC Precast
MSC Precast - WINNER

MCS Precast has been a primary employer for newcomers over the past few years. Bernie is always thinking outside of the box when looking for employees. He has employed many of CVIMS' newcomer clients over the past couple of years, continues to keep them gainfully employed and intends to continue providing employment.

Rising Youth Award

NOMINEES - Johann Suarez, Angelo Suarez
Angelo Suarez - WINNER

When Angelo arrived in Canada, from the Philippines, he applied for and was accepted in to the "Employment KEEP IT!" program at Nanaimo Youth Services Association. What changed as a result of his participation is the program is he created a sense of appreciation among his Canadian-born colleagues for the free benefits they as youth were receiving from the government through the program, benefits that many seemed to be taking for granted and ones that Angelo explained were not available in his home country.

Entrepreneur Award

NOMINEES - Shazi Ansari, Green Trails Montessori Daycare, Shirin Younessian, Bees Knees Café
Shirin Younessian, Bees Knees Café - WINNER

Shirin arrived in Canada, from Iran, in January 2015 and took over the Bees Knees Café a year later. Over the last three and a half years, she has transformed the cafe into a cozy and relaxing community hub for people of all ages. Through introducing Persian cuisine and culture, Shirin is also attracting residents who have Persian family ties or who are interested in finding out about this part of the world. In addition, Shirin acts as a mentor and exemplary role model to other newcomers who are trying to integrate into the community.

Community Leadership Award

NOMINEES - Shirin Younessian, Bees Knees Café Malquides/Kristen Azcarrage: The Medicine Shoppe, Judy Stephan: Nanaimo Magazine

Judy Stephan: Nanaimo Magazine - WINNER

Judith, originally from South Africa, has participated in a wide variety of organizations in Nanaimo and is greatly respected throughout the community. Her interests are varied and she is always an individual willing to help whatever the cause. She is supportive of other newcomers and does whatever she can to offer assistance.

Arts and Culture Award

Dema Maksod - WINNER

Dema is a well-known painter from Syria, who has settled here in Nanaimo. Her paintings speak to her lived experiences as a woman, an artist, a Syrian emerging from war, and a newcomer to Canada. The Vancouver Island University (VIU) Art and Design Department provided her with studio space on campus where she exhibited a number of her paintings throughout the summer. During her short time in Canada she has contributed significantly to the ARTS AND CULTURE of Nanaimo and the Mid-Island, and to cross-cultural understanding and relationships!

IN THE COMMUNITY

Citizenship Classes



"Good morning, this is Hanh Vu. I got Citizenship yesterday (Fri. Feb 21). I would like to share my happy to you. Thank you for helped to organize the Citizenship class at Multicultural before, from there I learned about history of Canada country now Canada is new my home. Thank you again and Have a nice day to you."

We offer our congratulations to Hanh Vu and all the others who received Canadian Citizenship last week! And MANY thanks to Judge Carol-Ann Hart, Citizenship Judge for the BC/Yukon Region, for taking the time out of her busy schedule to be our guest speaker last Thursday. We hope you will visit us again soon!

Feb 2020

Spelling Bee



CVIMS entered a sponsored team in the Literacy Central's Spelling Bee Fundraiser on March 2, 2020. Teams picked silly/unusual names and dress in costumes to make the event fun.

Our team was "The Interstellar Super Spellers". We may not have won but a spirited time was had by all!



The Resilience Program

This year we also received funding from the Nanaimo Community Foundation (sponsored by RBC) to support the Resilience Program—a program dedicated to fostering the success and integration of refugees and newcomers in Canada through empowerment, intercultural skills-building and language improvement. The focus of the program is to run weekly activities involving visual arts, music, and computer literacy alongside regular English language sessions. By combining varied activities, the program seeks to enhance language abilities and skills-building through more innovative ways of teaching and learning. By establishing a connection between newcomer youth, service providers and community organizations, the program aims to build a lasting network of support for the benefit of these youth and community resilience within Nanaimo.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Fringe Festival



CVIMS was approached to partner and agreed to offer up to FIVE sponsorships by lottery for newcomer/cultural artists (based on need) to cover the cost of Nanaimo Fringe Festival participation fees! Fringe Festivals encourage artists' exposure, provide a space for local artists to develop their talents and offer the opportunity to build bridges with international performers.

Anti-Racism Arts Festival

The poster for the 2020 Vancouver Island Anti-Racism Arts Festival features a dark blue background with white and yellow text. At the top, it says "2020 VANCOUVER ISLAND ANTI-RACISM ARTS FESTIVAL". Below this, a tagline reads "Free festival that inspires, teaches and features local artists to use creativity as a catalyst for change." The poster lists several events:

- 48-HOUR FILM CHALLENGE**: MARCH 13 - 15, 4:30 P.M. Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, 101 - 319 Selby Street, Nanaimo.
- FOOD AND LEARN WORKSHOPS**: SATURDAY, MARCH 14. FoodShare Community Kitchen, 271 Pine Street Nanaimo.
- EXPERIENCE THE PHILIPPINES**: COOK FILIPINO CUISINE AND LEARN TAGALOG. NOON - 2 P.M.
- EXPERIENCE CHINA**: COOK CHINESE CUISINE AND LEARN MANDARIN. 3 - 5 P.M.
- SPOKEN WORD OPEN MIC NIGHT**: ANTI-OPPRESSION AND ANTI-RACISM IN SPOKEN WORD. SATURDAY, MARCH 14. 6 - 9 P.M. Bees Knees Cafe, 208 Wallace Street, Nanaimo.
- BLANKET EXERCISE**: LEAD BY ELDER GARY MANSON. SUNDAY, MARCH 15. 1 - 4 P.M. Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, 101 - 319 Selby Street, Nanaimo.
- SATURDAY, MARCH 21 RED CARPET GATHERING**: 5 - 6:30 P.M. Nanaimo Museum, 100 Museum Way.
- FILM CHALLENGE SCREENING**: 7 - 9 P.M. Shaw Auditorium: Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 101 Gordon Street, Nanaimo.

At the bottom, it says "REGISTER FOR FREE AT CANADIANCMF.COM".

PARTNERS



CVIMS and several community partners worked together to present the 2020 Vancouver Island Anti-Racism Arts Festival. The festival planning included cooking & learning workshops, a spoken word open mic night, and blanket exercise. The center piece of the festival was a 48 Hour Film Challenge. Teams were invited to produce, within a 48 hour time frame, a short film on the topic of Anti-racism. The top three films would then be presented at a Film Screening at the VI Conference Centre with a Red Carpet event at the Museum prior to the screening.

The festival is part of a national set of events coordinated to promote information sharing and Anti-racism with support of the Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation.

It was with tremendous disappointment that, in light of the concerns relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19), we made the difficult decision to put our festival on hold. Stay tuned ...

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The partnerships that we build within our community are very important to us as well as the time we spend bringing the newcomer perspective and issues to the several different community tables. The following is just a sample of our partnerships and representation on community committees ...

- AMSSA
- ASPECT
- OCASI
- Centre for Education & Training (TCET)
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks
- Nanaimo Economic Development Committee
- BCSIS Advisory Group
- Pathways to Prosperity Advisory
- Immigrant Integration Coordinating Committee (IICC), AMSSA of BC
- Nanaimo Youth Advocates Meeting
- Community Coordination for Domestic Safety Committee
- WorkBC Case Management Meetings
- Nanaimo Job Developers Group/GT Hiring Solutions/Maximus Employment Services
- Career Paths Advisory Committee
- Vancouver Island University
- Healthy Start Fairs
- Nanaimo Filipino Canadian Association
- Vancouver Island Visayan Association
- PacificCARE
- Nanaimo Community Impact Alliance -
(Literacy Central Vancouver Island; Society for Equity, Inclusion, and Advocacy (Nanaimo Citizen Advocacy); Food Share; Nanaimo Youth Services Association; Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre; Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island; Mid Island Métis Nation)
- Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society
- Nanaimo Child Development Centre
- St Vincent de Paul Society – St Peter’s Conference
- NUKO - Nanaimo Unique Kids Organization
- The Career Centre - Parksville
- Immigrant Welcome Centre - Comox Valley
- Literacy Alberni Society
- The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy - Departure Bay
- School District 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)
- Safe Schools Advisory Committee
- Mosaic
- Island Health
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Nanaimo Museum
- Nanaimo Fringe Festival
- Crimson Coast Dance Society
- Haven Society
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
- Parksville and District Chamber of Commerce
- Coastal Community Credit Union
- Mothers Matter Centre
- Forefront Training Services
- **as of the date of publication, our local MLAs (Sheila Malcolmson and Doug Routley) and MP (Paul Manly)
- All of the many employers in our community who work with us to put international experience to work!

STATISTICS

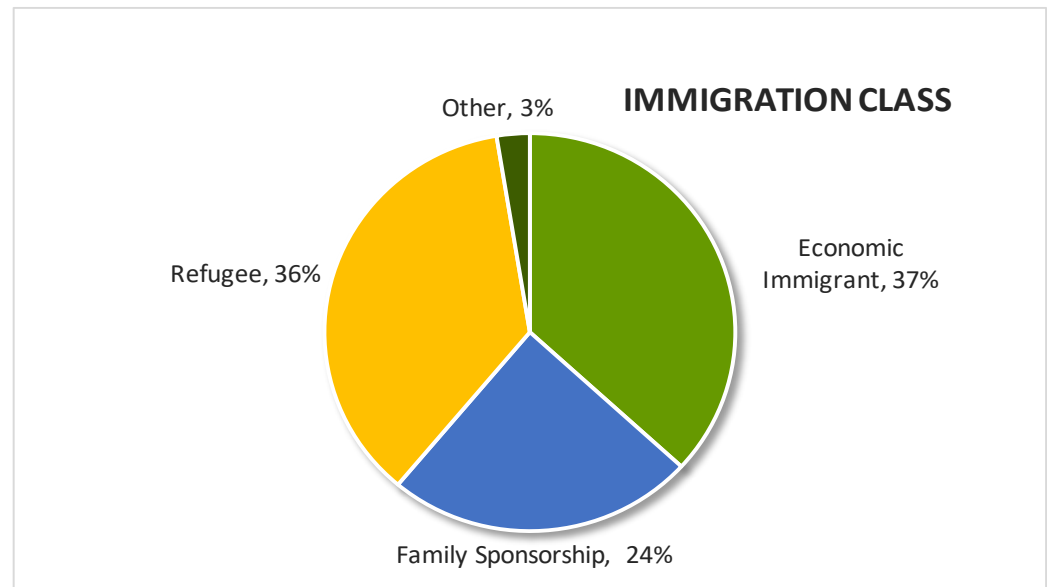
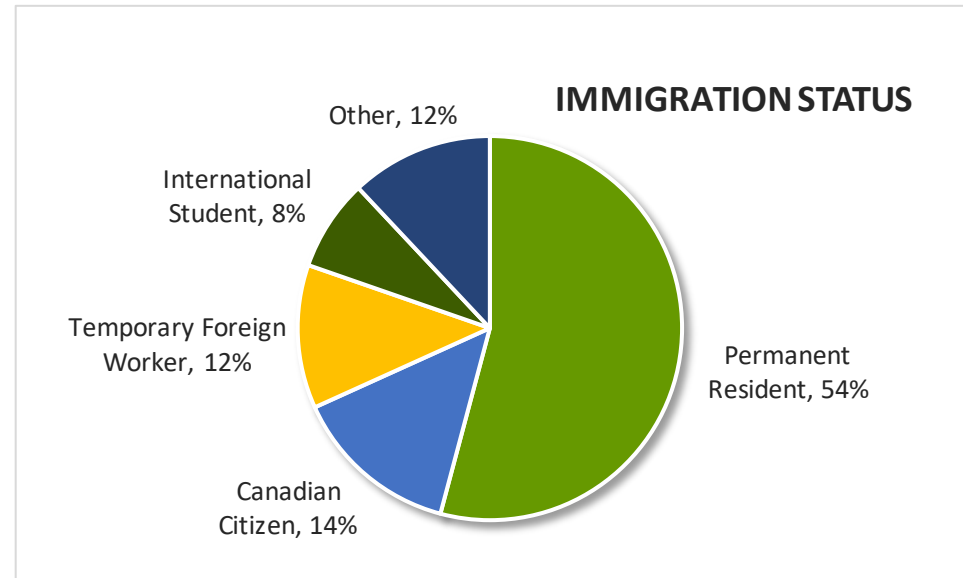
Total Clients served in the period by funders:

- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
- British Columbia Settlement and Integration Services (BCSIS), Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness

TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED		
2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
1368	1640	1449

TOP TEN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN	
Syria	16.2%
China	14.6%
Korea	13.7%
India	7.3%
Philippines	7.2%
Vietnam	3.8%
Iran	2.6%
Great Britain	2.6%
Eritrea	2.1%
USA	1.9%

TOP FIVE MOTHER TONGUES
Arabic
Korean
Mandarin
Tagalog
Vietnamese



SETTLEMENT

*“The orientation is beyond my expectation. I was expecting some information relevant to employment. It turned out I got more than I expected. Awesome! I'd like to make one-on-one appointment to get assistance of employment & volunteering. Thanks for the welcome and friendly environment which was provided ... I'm happy and excited to see my people here. Really grateful!
Thank you all!”*

“I received many things from Immigrant Welcome Center by settlement worker. These were learning English, finding a job, volunteer, health care system and supporting my children education. Also the settlement worker helped many documents like PR card renewal, change name, income tax and applying for citizenship.”

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Program highlights for this year include the introduction of a Youth Program in partnership with SD68, streamlining settlement services, increased staff training and utilization of technology for data and statistics, increased focus on outcome-based results that tie directly to government funding, and continued service delivery improvements and modifications in all aspects of our work.

- Introduced Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) in partnership with SD68. This is an asset for all parties involved but most importantly for the children/youth and their parents when registering for school. Parents meet with the worker who answers all their questions and later meets the family at the school on the first day of attendance. From Sept. 2019 to March 31, 2020 we delivered Friendship Club group activities at two different elementary schools selected by SD68. The goal was to increase the settlement supports for newcomer children; engage kids in fun activities to promote school integration and create relationships that foster a sense of belonging, build self-confidence and learn new skills through fun activities. We also had the opportunity to run a “Just Us Girls” winter camp for Syrian girls 13 to 18 over the winter break including 20 participants in total.
- In partnership with City of Nanaimo we were able to privately rent the Beban Park swimming pool to facilitate access for girls from Arabic speaking countries.

- In partnership with a local psychologist, we prepared 8 sessions on “Adapting to a New Life in Canada through Art and Play”. Families took part in the group sessions where the focus was to provide newcomer families with extra support to ease the challenges they face when adapting to a new life in Canada.
- Introduced CVIMS Group Orientation Sessions designed to help clients better understand the various services offered at CVIMS
- Professional development for staff included Mental Health First Aid, Client Management System (OCMS), numerous AMSSA and BCCDA (provincial regulatory bodies) webinars.

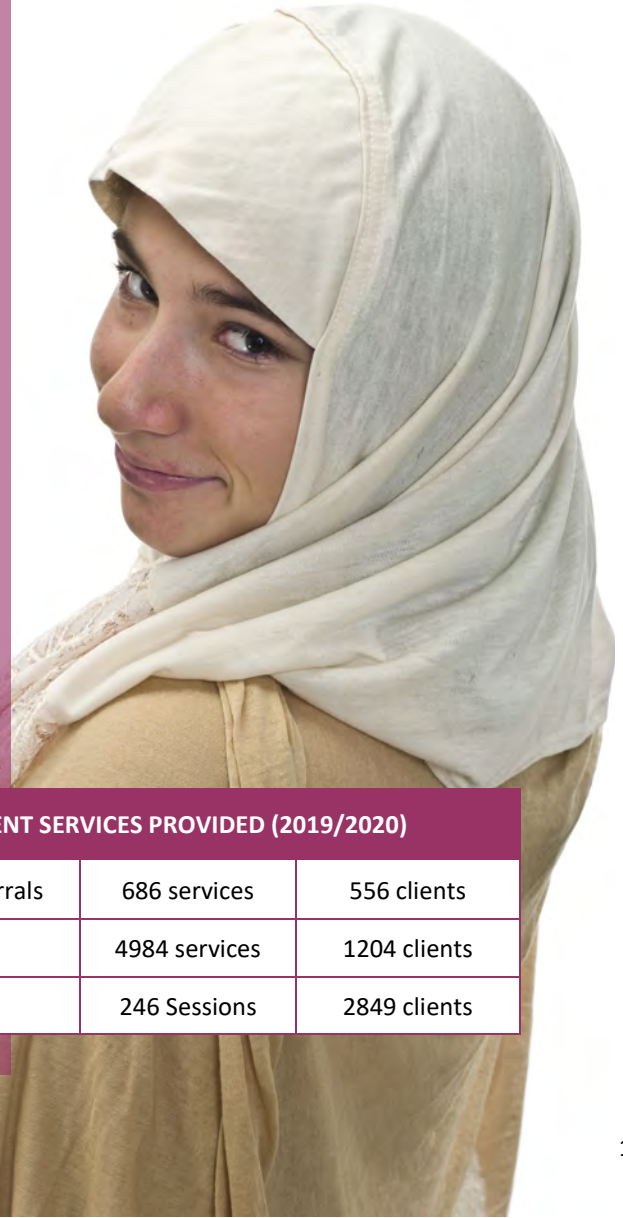
The settlement team said goodbye to long-time Program Director, Robert Dawkes and to Jennifer Bricker, Settlement Worker. We miss them greatly and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

We are grateful to our funders that make it possible for us to help newcomers and refugees with their integration into Canadian society.

Angelika Valchar
Director of Client Services

CVIMS SETTLEMENT SERVICES PROVIDED (2019/2020)

Needs Assessment & Referrals	686 services	556 clients
Information & Orientation	4984 services	1204 clients
Group Activities	246 Sessions	2849 clients



LANGUAGE

*Language Instruction for
Newcomers to Canada - LINC*

"My family recommended that I seek advice from CVIMS and I am very grateful to have found the best and most professional staff there."

"Learning another language for me has never been easy. Sometimes I faint and sometimes I am very excited but I know I must continue to do so."

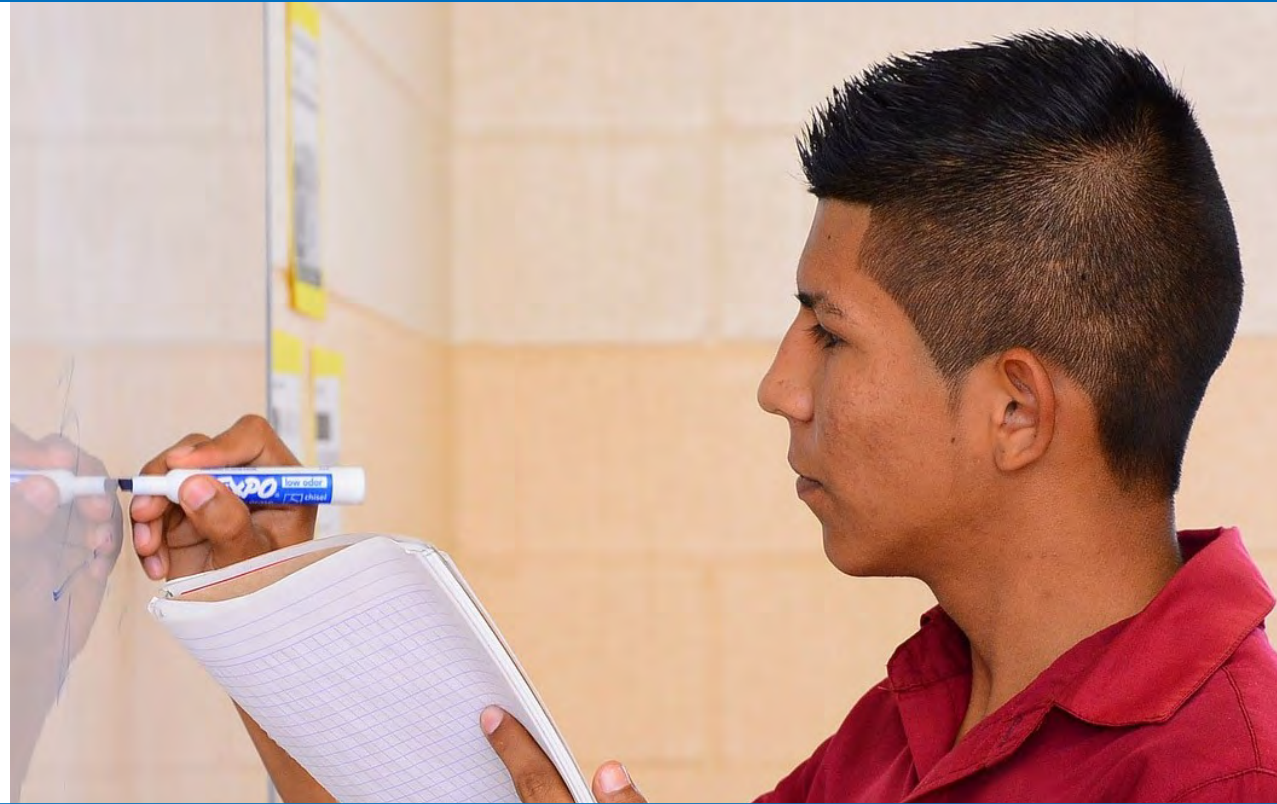
"I would like to let you know how grateful I enrolled in LINC classes which also gave me an opportunity to access some of the programs offered in CVIMS."

SNAPSHOT OF OUR CLIENT BASE

GENDER	
Male	36%
Female	64%

THE TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN (LINC)	
Syria	31%
China	27%
Vietnam	5%

IMMIGRATION CLASS (LINC)	
Refugees	44%
Family Class	36%
Economic Immigrants	20%



CVIMS Language Department assists newcomers in acquiring the English Language skills needed to develop the confidence and independence to meet the challenges associated with successful integration.

The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program offers language classes at a range of abilities to PRs, TFWs, and refugees. Our curriculum is thematic in nature, and based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs). The curriculum explores the language needed to successfully meet settlement challenges in areas such as securing

housing, searching for employment, visiting the doctor, Canadian culture and citizenship preparation, recreation and the education system, along with vocabulary and grammar study. Upon completion of a CLB level, students receive a LINC certificate demonstrating their level of language proficiency. In addition, CVIMS offers a specialized Literacy stream for students requiring support in developing their reading and writing skills. We also administer the CLBPT language assessment, useful for both placement in the correct English language program and recognized by many educational programs and professional associations as a sign of

language skill. In 2019 – 2020, 233 clients were served in LINC and 132 assessments were conducted. The department responded to client demand for additional language services by providing spring break and summer language classes, tutoring, conversation practice and digital literacy support. Additionally, a fee for service IELTS stream was offered to students who may require help preparing for this test.

Gerald Halabura,
Head Language Instructor

DAYCARE

“The big results for me is my daughter, my daughter she very happy at daycare she learn English, activities, regulation and she make lots of friend. She would like to come to school every day.”

“My children have a kindergarten with good caregiver. My daughter did not speak at 3.5 years old (English and my language). CVIMS offered me help. They made my daughter an appointment with the speech doctors ... My daughter was taken to a speech therapist.”

“The daycare support and help my children know how to connect with another children.”

“Our daughter gets ready for school every morning in a good mood. She doesn't cry when she breaks up with her parents. ... The CVIMS (daycare) has helped adapt the Canadian education system. Your concern has influenced our daughter's development.”



It has been a rewarding and busy year supporting newcomer families with their settlement goals and nurturing their children's emotional and social development as they navigate their new environment. There have also been many exciting opportunities to strengthen our local community partnerships, which has helped provide further scaffolding that enhances our endeavors supporting families.

Camps for children kept us busy and engaged with families during the Nanaimo School District summer break. A special highlight was a partnership with Nanaimo's Unique Kids Organization (NUKO), which enabled us to hold camp at the NUKO location. Camp at the NUKO site allowed opportunities for children aged 6-10 to build self-efficacy in an environment conducive to their developmental stage. The children participated in activities at local parks, the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre and cooking activities over a six-week period.

In January and February we collaborated with Literacy Central Vancouver Island. We supported nine newcomer families with care for their children while they participated in the Immigrant Parent as Literacy Support (IPALS) program funded by DECODA Literacy.

Access to our learning spaces and connecting educators with DECODA, parents were able to learn strategies to encourage their young children to develop language and literacy skills to help them adapt to their community and prepare them for school.

This year we said good bye to Sue Luoma. Sue worked at our organization for over 20 years. Much of the childminding program's successes over the years can be attributed to Sue's commitment to the children and outreach in the community. We wish her all the best in whatever her next adventure brings her.

The amazing team of educators and volunteers I have been able to work with this year fills me with gratitude. Their expertise and daily commitment to the team, children and families is inspiring and makes it a pleasure to work with them. The Children's Program report would not be a success story without them.

Vania Zanetti,
Children's Program Coordinator

EMPLOYMENT

“It was a helpful and effective presentation for me. I am so grateful for this program. I want to give thanks to Wendy and Walid for their great job!”

“The instructors were very helpful & answered questions which are needed to know. Very informative and helps a lot.”

“I had questions about employer rights etc. and it was answered. Great opportunity for newcomers to learn, helped lots. Thank you so much!”

“I very grateful and thank you for this meeting. I have got many very important information and help me to know more. Thank you so much.”

“Thank you for telling us about Employee work, job. I learned a lot today. I feel comfortable about working in B.C. now. We have safety at work and we have right to complain.”

“I liked how the presenter presented specific scenarios and explained how one should deal with them. He answered specific questions very well and gave recent examples from the community. I liked how the presentation covered different industries.”



Clients Employment Team Assisted: 352 (3.2% increase)
Workshops Delivered: 52
Clients Attended Workshops: 230
Clients Received Financial Support: \$51,934.57
Job Placements for clients: 58

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Helping Newcomers find work is the main focus of the Employment Department. Through two distinctive employment programs, **WORK BC & Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants**, we provide the necessary support to clients in all aspects of the job searching process. This may include: understanding Canadian workplace culture, the local labour market and employer expectations, career planning, the credentialing process, workplace safety, resume writing and many other critical aspects of finding that first job in Canada. Clients work closely with Immigrant Employment Specialists (IES), identify their strengths, their challenges and develop an action plan to help overcome employment barriers. IES also assist clients to develop important community and employer connections and job leads that are often lacking for newcomers. These connections and local references are critical to securing first employment. We would like to recognize the many local employers who support the CVIMS vision and mission and join us in providing support to many newcomers. Just to name a

few: K2 Stone, MSE Precast, Pacific Care, Hub City, Tim Hortons, SD68, Berwick on the Lake, VMAC, Carbon Safety Solutions, COMPASS Group, Medicine Shop, A&W and many more.

Under contract with WorkSafeBC, we delivered orientation sessions on General Occupational Health & Safety and Small Business Primer in the North Island region for the Immigrant and Refugee Worker Program. In total we delivered 8 sessions with 77 participants attending.

We also embarked on a new journey in partnership with Nanaimo Youth Services Association (NYSYA) to deliver a “pilot project” for immigrant youth. **CareerStart** youth skills training and work experience placement is associated with the “Employment KEEP IT!” (EKI) program at NYSYA and funded in part by the Government of Canada – Skills Link Program. In CareerStart, seven CVIMS youth clients, aged 19-30 years, participated in the program. The countries of origin included China, Eritrea, Syria, and the Philippines. All participants successfully graduated

from the in-class skills training component which included a diversity of soft skill training and eight industry-affiliated certificates: Barista Level 1; First Aid - Naloxone, OFA1, Red Cross Emergency First Aid with CPRC, and Transportation endorsement; FoodSafe Level 1; SuperHost - Foundations of Service Quality; and WHMIS. Six of the youth secured work experience placements after the skills training through NYSYA’s one-month, 100% wage subsidy for the employers. COVID-19’s arrival in BC coincided with the CareerStart work experience placements. In response, NYSYA was able to offer the youths’ employers a \$7/hour wage subsidy during the lockdown which resulted in four of the youth retaining their employment throughout the lockdown. CVIMS and NYSYA expressed mutual satisfaction with the partnership and have agreed to renew it for a three-year period.

*Angelika Valchar,
Director of Client Services*

HIPPY

*Home Instruction for
Parents of Preschool Youngsters*

“HIPPY program is really appreciated and beneficial to our family. How time flies? I have been in this program for 5 years with my two boys. I felt that it is such an amazing program for new immigrants’ children to adjust well, enhancing confidence at school in the early years and build great bonding for parents and children during fun learning together”.

“HIPPY plays a very important role in my life as well my kid’s life too because when I’m learning new techniques of study from home visitor....that is very helpful for kindergarten preparation specially new experiments, new ideas of teaching, and socialization”.

“HIPPY group meetings are also very important & beneficial for us too, because by attending these meetings we came to know so many things about different cultures and also a ways of interacting with new people, the way of socialization for those who don't know any one in community, new to Canada.”

“My Home Visitor been such a good listener and always been very supportive”.

“I also need to show my great appreciation to the Nanaimo HIPPY team. During these 3 years, I cannot count how much works they did for our HIPPY families. These lovely people are my best honor people and friends in Nanaimo. They represent the spirit of Nanaimo, the Spirit of Canada. They are the angels that God send to us to warm the new people’s heart”.

SAY SLIME!!

A woman with long dark hair is holding up a large, stretchy piece of light green slime. She is wearing a dark blue sweater. The background shows a window with white blinds and a door.

In May 2014, CVIMS launched the “Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters” (HIPPY). From the onset, HIPPY has been a successful program with an annual participation rate of thirty to forty families.

In September 2019, thirty-six families enrolled in HIPPY. Countries of origin included China, India, Philippines, South Korea, Syria and Thailand. The parents remained dedicated and committed to teaching their children despite their personal struggles, settlement issues, time constraints due to employment or enrollment in school, job demands and caring for newborn children. Parents share that the skills and abilities their children acquired and the progress of their children inspires and motivates them to persevere with the program. They were pleased with their children’s performance in Kindergarten and they believed their children had acquired the necessary skills from HIPPY.

The parents had the opportunity to connect with other parents, share personal experiences and

access community resources through monthly Group Meetings. Several community partners presented sessions on topics such as Positive Parenting, Emergency Preparedness, First Aid Treatment and Domestic Violence. The childminding provided allowed the parents to participate without distractions. The parents claimed they learned new skills and gained knowledge of Canadian culture and traditions.

The Nanaimo HIPPY Home Visitors are highly skilled in their positions and recognized by HIPPY Canada for offering best practices and parents praised their patience, understanding and dedication. Three Home Visitors, originally from Bosnia and Hercegovina, China and Kazakhstan, delivered the program to the parents in their homes, for thirty weeks, and supported the families in the settlement process when required. Two of these Home Visitors were former participants in the program.

*Swedini Halliday,
HIPPY Manager*

FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
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Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness
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Our many, very generous, private donors! With special mention to Janet Farooq for her continued contributions to the Ghazi Farooq Newcomer Fund.

...and

Our sincere apologies if we missed anyone.

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Executive Director: Jennifer Fowler

Director of Administration & HR: Nanette Leather

Program Director: Robert Dawkes (*retired in Oct*)

Director of Client Services: Angelika Valchar

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, Nancy Hayne, Marian Remenda,

Nancy Cameron, Koli Agbing, Barbara Stasiuk

Employment Program

Employment Manager: Angelika Valchar (*until Oct 2019*)

Employment Consultant WorkBC: Carey Karlsson, Manoela

Curado, Charlee Touchette (*maternity leave*)

Employment Admin Support: Manoela Curado

Immigrant Employment Specialist: Daisy Baluran Bereska

Facilitator: Wendy Phillips (*until Aug 2019*)

Settlement Program

Settlement Workers: Ming Yue, Rim Shin, Jennifer Bricker,

Ahmad Briz, Daisy Bereska, Walid Talhouk

Settlement Worker in Schools: Iryna Lacroix

Training/Facilitation Coordinator: Wendy Phillips (*Sep 2019*)

Summer Youth Activity Worker: Sara Kishawi



HIPPY Program

HIPPY Manager: Swedini Halliday

Home Visitors: Maja Djilas, Marina Filatova, Liping Kang, Enna Kurnia

Children's Program

Children's Program Manager: Sue Luoma (*until Jun 2019*)

Children's Program Coordinator: Vania Zanetti

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

On Call: Djalila Hasni, Eman Al Zouabi, Daito Lan, Kim Lang ,

Tatianna Gonzalez, Jamie Lee Miller

Local Immigration Partnership

Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator: Sean White

VIU Intern: Teti Filantri Siregar (Lala)

Contract LINC Assessors/Instructors: Mary Peters, Edith Ives/
Megan Arundel

Contract Counsellor: Integral Counselling

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