

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



*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**



**@CVIMSnanaimo**

During the period of this report we needed to develop new methods for service delivery. In a remarkably short amount of time we were able to transition all staff to working remotely and to support clients and students with adapting to new technologies, tools and methods that would allow for a continuation of services. What we discovered was that many of these adaptations were well received by those we serve, and in several cases had resulted in greater access to service.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CVIMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS	4
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT	6
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT	7
COMMUNITY	8
SETTLEMENT SERVICES	12
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*

**Anthony (Tony) Ogbechie MBA, MSc**  
*Premier Manager, 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*

**Alan Cavin**  
*Permanent Deacon, Archdiocese of Vancouver*

**Cheryl Yan, PhD**  
*Pharmacist*

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.





**N**eedless to say, in a time of pandemic disease and a depressed economy this past year has been a challenge. However, I can also say that we have a lot to be proud of. CVIMS actually saw an increase in clients. That is we provided critical services to over 1,600 persons, representing an increase of 14% from the year before. This influx of newcomers mostly came from China, Syria, the Philippines, South Korea and India. Achieving this level of service couldn't have been possible if it were not for the strong leadership by Jennifer and her management teams as well as and the dedication and talents of all our staff that makes up the character of our organization. Clearly this is something we can all be proud of.

The Board of Directors saw a change of personnel as we welcomed Alan Cavin and Cheryl Yan to the team. Unfortunately, Cheryl's service was short lived as she moved from the island not long in her tenure. Cheryl's link to the Chinese community was valued as she introduced us to their culture when we co-sponsored the Chinese new-year festival. We wish her great success in her new endeavours.

Jennifer's enthusiasm for community involvement was particularly noteworthy. Through her initiative CVIMS participated in many activities from golf tournaments to anti-racism workshops. Such events served to heightened our local profile and give recognition to the leadership we provide to the newcomer community and how they make Nanaimo a better place for all.

As we look to a future that may see Afghanistan become the greatest refugee crisis since the Syrian civil war, we can't help but feel that our expertise and services are only going to be of greater value to our community. We may also be compelled to explore new approaches to providing the support newcomers need. I can assure you that the Board of Directors have a great deal of confidence in the talents and energy of our leadership and the CVIMS team to be able to address new challenge that may come our way.

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

This year will be recorded in world history as a pandemic year. This will not be a typical “Year in Reflection” ED report. There are many highlights in this Annual Report that will give you this information, so I would like to focus on that if the pandemic has taught us nothing, it taught us that #ImmigrationMatters.

Canada is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Between 2000-2015, an annual average of 250,000 Permanent Residents were welcomed into Canada. This number increased to 300,000 in 2017, and a set target of 340,000 for 2020. Of course, COVID has significantly impacted these numbers; however, many who arrived before COVID, and the few that are coming now, require support from many community members and organizations, with CVIMS often being their first stop.

To frame it locally, within Nanaimo, there is an immigrant population of approximately 13,120 (approximately 14.5% of the total population) of whom 3% are recently arrived immigrants (in Canada for five years or less) (Statistics Canada, 2016). The 2016 Statistics Canada Census reported that immigrants and refugees in Nanaimo are from more than 50 countries of birth, with over 91 languages spoken within the city.

Immigrants in Nanaimo are of diverse educational backgrounds and settlement categories. These skills are important in our knowledge economy. Important for Nanaimo to compete with other similar cities in attracting a future workforce; however, for newcomers (of various genders, countries of origin, or settlement categories) who

hold advanced degrees or specialized professional qualifications, several express an inability to find similar work in Canada.

For immigrants to find work here, it is important to make sure their education, training and experience meet Canadian job standards. CVIMS works with employers, accreditation institutions and government bodies to make this happen as quickly as possible. Canadians are living longer and having fewer children. More of us are retiring, and there are fewer students in our schools. As a result, the pool of Canadian-born existing and potential workers is limited.

Yes, even with the impacts COVID has had on the labour market, if it were not for immigrants, employers would have trouble finding enough qualified workers to fill available jobs. As the world struggles to find its way through this pandemic it is important to remember that the economic and social benefits of immigration do not work in isolation—they reinforce one another.

As I write this report, I am transitioning out of the ED position at CVIMS. It is time to begin another journey. But I leave knowing that the work of CVIMS has never been more important.

Like many businesses we had to significantly adjust how we delivered our services. Combine this with provincial government restrictions, border closures, service delivery, safety protocols and many other challenges that were beyond our control. Despite all these challenges overall statistics for the CVIMS clients surpassed the one from the previous year.

We can attribute this to few reasons: improvement in data recording, follow up with past clients that have not been in contact over the period of 24 months, and increased collaboration with School District 68 and therefore increase in SWIS clients. But the greatest reason was the dedication and perseverance of the staff. There are no words to describe how grateful I am to the staff for their commitment and resilience throughout this past year.

**Jennifer Fowler,**  
**Executive Director**



# COMMUNITY





# 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 ...

- Achēv
- AMSSA
- ASPECT
- BCSIS Advisory Group
- Career Paths Advisory Committee
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks
- Coastal Community Credit Union
- Community Coordination for Domestic Safety Committee
- Cowichan Intercultural Society
- Crimson Coast Dance Society
- Discovery College
- Forefront Training Services
- Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
- Haven Society
- Healthy Start Fairs
- Immigrant Integration Coordinating Committee (IICC), AMSSA of BC
- Immigrant Welcome Centre - Comox Valley
- Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA)
- Integral Counselling BC
- Island Health
- Kamloops Immigrant Services
- Literacy Alberni Society
- Mosaic
- Mothers Matter Centre
- Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society
- Nanaimo Child Development Centre
- Nanaimo Community Impact Alliance
- *(Literacy Central Vancouver Island; Society for Equity, Inclusion, and Advocacy (Nanaimo Citizen Advocacy); Nanaimo Food Share; Nanaimo Youth Services Association; Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre; Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island; Mid Island Métis Nation)*
- Nanaimo Early Years
- Nanaimo Economic Development Committee
- Nanaimo Filipino Canadian Association
- Nanaimo Fringe Festival
- Nanaimo Job Developers Group/Maximus Employment Services
- Nanaimo Museum
- Nanaimo Youth Advocates Meeting
- OCASI
- Parent Support Services of BC
- Parksville and District Chamber of Commerce
- Pathways to Prosperity Advisory
- PacificCARE
- Safe Schools Advisory Committee
- School District 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Society for Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy (SEIA)
- St Vincent de Paul Society – St Peter’s Conference
- The Career Centre - Parksville
- The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy - Departure Bay
- Vancouver Island Region LINC Providers Committee
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Vancouver Island University
- Vancouver Island Visayan Association
- Volunteer Nanaimo
- WorkBC Case Management Meetings
- 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!

## IN THE COMMUNITY

While our community experienced a level of uncertainty and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic, we also came together to innovate and find ways to support one another. The reliance on digital means of communication has also increased.

CVIMS has noticed many of our clients of younger generations and various backgrounds spend more time on Instagram, and therefore, we launched our presence on the social network. Moreover, we have unified our social media accounts to become @CVIMSnanaimo, making it easier for our clients and community members to find and communicate with us online. Furthermore, we shared many inspiring stories and celebrated our clients, volunteers, and various events on our blog at [cvims.org/blog](https://cvims.org/blog).

Despite the pandemic's challenges, we continued our commitment to building bridges with various community partners. For example, unwilling to forgo what has become an annual activity, we invited Vancouver Island University 3rd year nursing students to a combined virtual tour and video meeting with our team to introduce them to our services and various programs. They also had the chance to ask questions and expand their knowledge about newcomers and immigrants. Through such an opportunity for both parties, we acknowledge the potential of these students to become great ambassadors for the newcomers in our community.

These innovations and recognizing the importance of digital communications during and post-covid, we overcame many challenges during the COVID-19 lockdown.

*Jansait Qughondouqa, Community Connections Advisor*



## IN THE COMMUNITY



2021 VANCOUVER ISLAND  
**ANTI-RACISM ARTS FESTIVAL**  
 ONLINE EDITION

National travelling festival that inspires, teaches and features local artists and educators to use creativity as a catalyst for change.

**48-HOUR FILM CHALLENGE**  
 MARCH 12 - 14, 4:30 P.M.

**LEARN ALL ABOUT THE SIKH TURBAN**  
 MARCH 14, 2 P.M.

**HISTORY OF HIP HOP WITH A.J. "MEGAMAN"**  
 MARCH 15, 3 P.M.

**EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION OF AFRICAN BRAIDS**  
 MARCH 20, 2 P.M.

**FOOD AND LEARN SERIES**

**COOK FILIPINO CUISINE AND LEARN TAGALOG**  
 MARCH 13, 5 P.M.

**COOK PERSIAN CUISINE AND DANCING TOO**  
 MARCH 15, 4:30 P.M.

**THE ART OF CHINESE DUMPLINGS**  
 MARCH 16, 6 P.M.

**SACRED HAND DRUM MAKING**  
 MARCH 16, 4 P.M.  
 Free online and paid in-person options available.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE SNUNEYMUXW: HUL'Q'UMIN'UM'AN**  
 LED BY ELDER GARY MANSON  
 MARCH 17, 4 P.M.

**RED CARPET SHORT FILM SCREENINGS**  
 MARCH 20, 5:30 P.M.  
 Screening of films made during 48-hour challenge

More information about each workshop on our website. All events available online, for free and times listed are in pacific standard times.

**REGISTER AT CANADIANCMF.COM**

The Anti-Racism Arts Festival (ARAF) is a national event that takes place in March of each year hosted by different cities, and in 2021 it took place in Nanaimo!

The festival brought together hundreds of people from Nanaimo and all over Canada who attended the week-long festival, which features various art and educational activities free of charge. The original event of the first festival, which has continued through the years, is the 48-hour film challenge. This event brought together teams of local amateur and professional filmmakers. These teams were given 48 hours to write, shoot, and edit short films with the themes of anti-racism.

Organized by the Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation and Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, the festival could not have achieved this success without the funders; the Government of British Columbia and the City of Nanaimo, and our partners in Nanaimo; Nanaimo News Bulletin, Nanaimo Foodshare, Mid Island Metis Nation, Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre, Nanaimo Youth Services Association, Society for Equity and Inclusion, Literacy Nanaimo, Boys and girls club of Central Vancouver Island and Crimson Coast Dance Society.



# SETTLEMENT

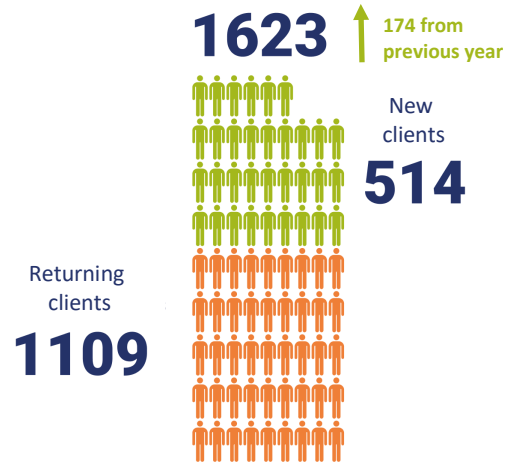


# STATISTICS

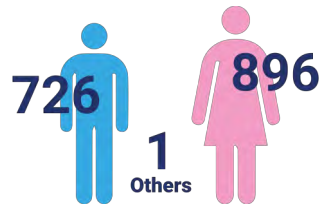
Funding for clients served for the period of this report made possible by:

- ◆ Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
- ◆ British Columbia Settlement and Integration Services (BCSIS)

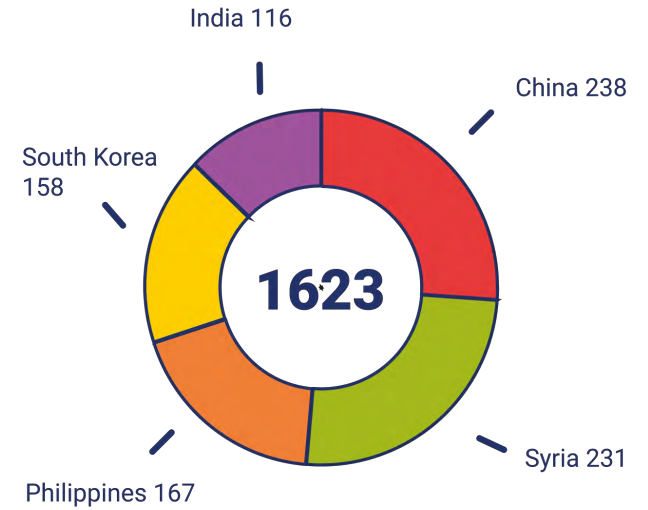
## TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED



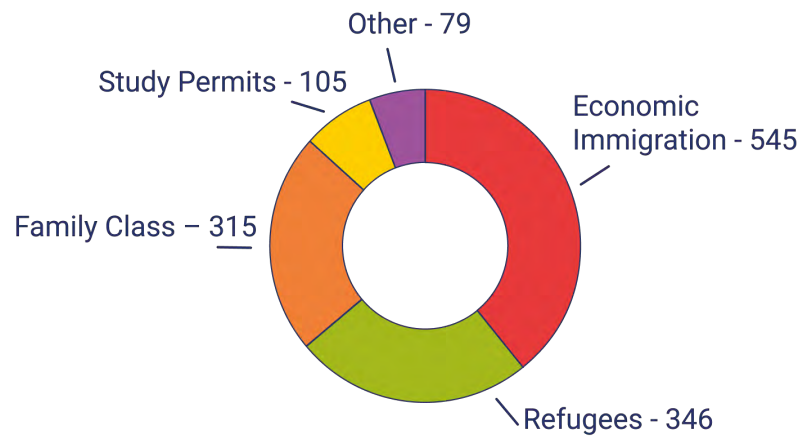
## GENDER



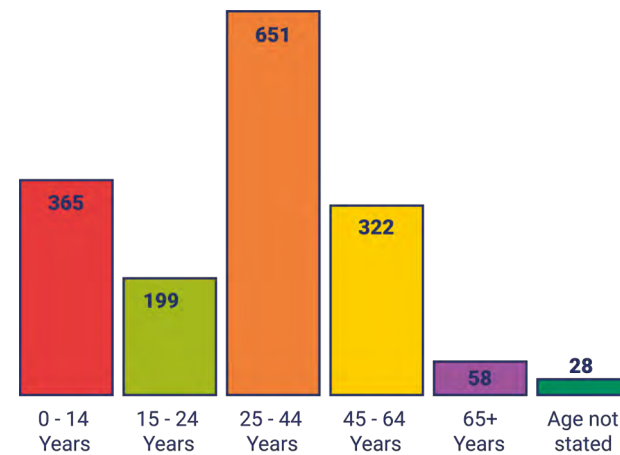
## COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



## IMMIGRATION CLASS



## AGE GROUP



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

In response to the global pandemic and to protect our community's health, all services moved from traditional in-person service delivery methods to virtual. In partnership with Literacy Central Vancouver Island, we helped our clients facing financial setbacks obtain donated computers to connect with our services.

When the BC's Health Authority permitted small group gatherings, we provided computer literacy classes to our senior clients who expressed their need for this knowledge. Moreover, as a result of partnerships with AMSSA, the Government of BC and CRA, our team remained up to date on all governmental supports and was able to deliver relevant information sessions on these topics to our clients.

Our team provided virtual information sessions in Mandarin, Korean, Arabic, and English with local Pharmacists to keep our clients updated and informed of the vaccines. We continue to provide virtual sessions to Newcomers on healthcare, employment & income, law and justice, Healthy family living, and finance.

Despite long processing times, our clients remained enthusiastic about becoming Canadian citizens. We provided the support needed to complete applications to become Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or renewals and learned new immigrant pathways.

We also welcomed Beme Lei to our team. Beme is an intake worker and the first point of contact for clients needing settlement support. New Client Services Director, Angelika Valchar, combined the settlement, employment, language, and the children's program teams into a Client Services team for better collaboration amongst team members. Teams meet virtually every day, which has provided a cohesive and collaborative way to share best practices, support each other and, most importantly, to provide the highest level of service to our clients and community.

**Ahmad Briz**  
*Settlement Worker*





## ONLINE FRIENDSHIP CLUB FOR STUDENTS OF GEORGIA AVENUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

**Puppets are a wonderful toy to fuel  
imaginative playtime!**

## SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS (SWIS)

**S**ettlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) work to create healthy environments and positive experiences for families, children and youth. This past year brought new challenges that turned into successes.

The SWIS program developed new partnerships with WorkBC and Nanaimo Youth Services Association to deliver employment information workshops and activities to enhance newcomer youth employability through volunteering, First Aid training, and Food Safe training.

The team also developed a Pen Pal program for newcomer students in Nanaimo with their peers at Kamloops Immigrant Centre, which helped them connect with new friends during the pandemic.

Moreover, due to the increase in digital services during the lockdown, White Hatter and SWIS conducted Internet Safety workshops in English and Arabic for families.

In the summer, the team initiated an online support group for newcomer female youth - hikes at Westwood Lake, an ice cream party, and participation in the 48-hour film challenge as part of the Anti-Racism Arts Festival, where they won third place! SWIS also provided fun and interactive activities for youth and children - hikes, games, and Escape Rooms - all while following the BC Health Guidelines.

With School District 68 Safety Advisory Committee, SWIS worked on "Procedure 350" – an Anti-racism and Cultural Safety document to ensure inclusion for

newcomer students. Moreover, during COVID-19 lockdown, the Friendship Club moved online; reading and education boxes were delivered to the students to virtually explore it together.

SWIS continued to support families with the school registration process, school and distance learning transfer requests, and online or homeschooling education programs.

Similarly, it was essential to provide children, youth and their families with mental health support during the pandemic by offering resources and referrals to help those affected by last year's challenges.

*Iryna Lacroix*  
*Settlement Worker in Schools*

# LANGUAGE

*Language Instruction for  
Newcomers to Canada - LINC*





## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The past year was a challenging one for the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, as our team strove to offer language classes at a range of abilities to Permanent Residents (PRs), Refugees, Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) and Naturalized Canadian Citizens (NCCs). Our curriculum is thematic in nature, and based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs). The curriculum explores the language needed to 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. When the province announced a shutdown, we continued to provide clients with learning opportunities by moving online, utilizing Zoom and the learner management system Edmodo. In addition, CVIMS offers a Literacy stream for students requiring support in developing their reading and writing skills.

We administer the CLBPT language assessment, completed both in person and, when required, online. This assessment test places clients in the correct class level and is recognized by certain

professional associations such as the BC Care Aide & Community Health Registry. Replacing the CLBPT, new CLBA training will be scheduled in the next fiscal year.

We are looking forward to 2021, building on our learnings from 2020 as we pivot back to face-to-face delivery.

**Gerald Halabura,**  
**Head Language Instructor**

**Jillian Yun**  
**LINC Coordinator**



# DAYCARE





## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**W**hat a Year! What a Learning Curve! Do we want to do it again? Not really. Yet, I can honestly say many positives and joys resulted from running an early years program during a pandemic.

In April, we began in earnest to maintain the connection for children and families with a virtual Zoom Room. Once a day, we met with parents and their children aged 0-6 years to sing, share stories and connect. Initially, the challenge was to bring fun and consistency to the 'littles' who were missing their daycare program, teachers and friends. After the first few sessions, children began to engage productively in the activities. Games like "I Spy With My Little Eye" allowed children to connect with others socially and make a connection with exciting objects in their homes.

To say we started in September with some apprehension is probably an understatement. We opened our doors to provide care for a small group of children throughout the day while navigating all of the safety "bubbles" we were creating. We feared for our health and that of the families. Highlighted was that everyday events that bring children security, a sense of belonging and support healthy development were disappearing. However, our fantastic team rose to the challenge! Weekly, Pasco and Olena adjusted to the newest health recommendations put forward by the health

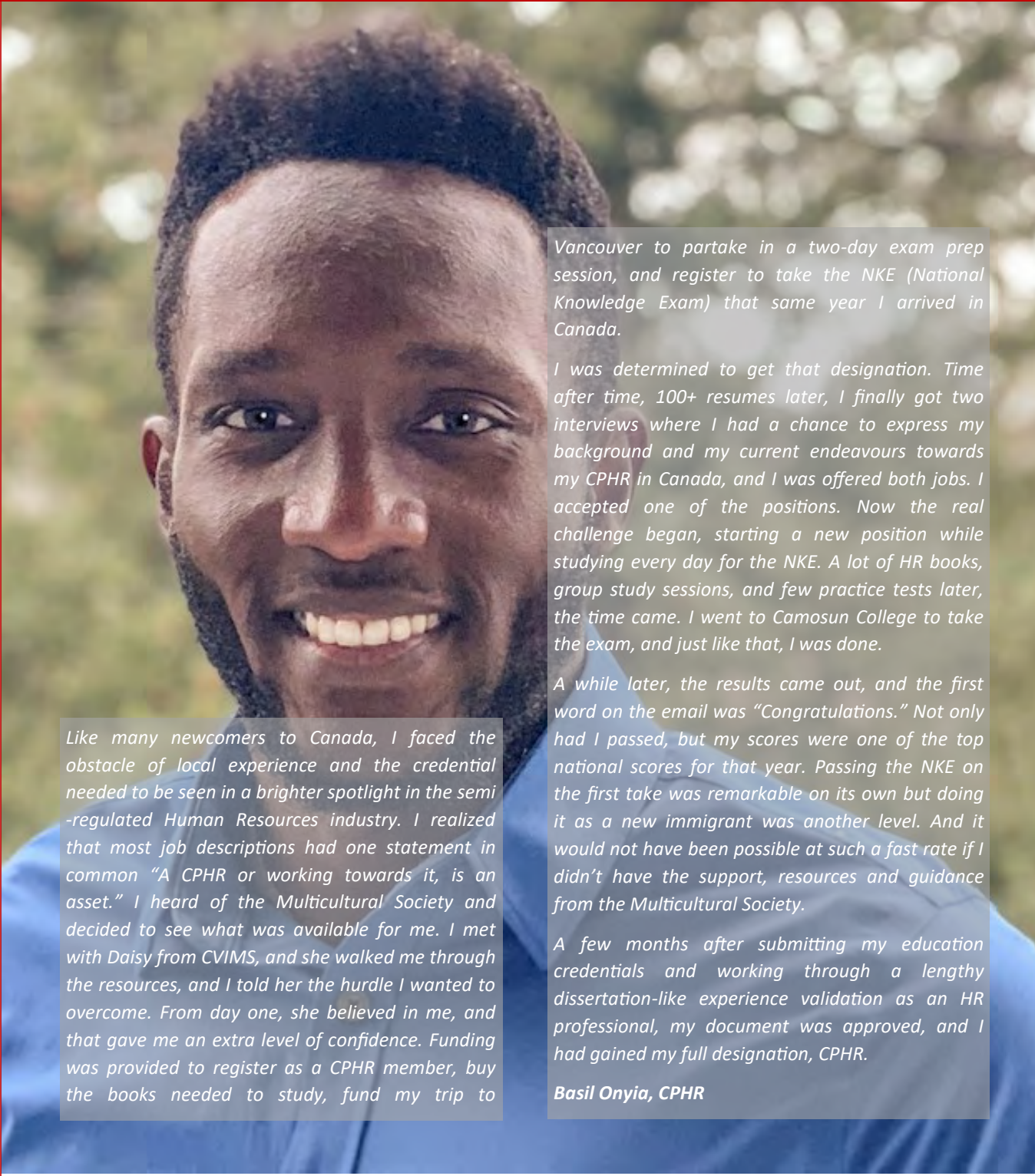
authorities with kindness and compassion, which lent a sense of security for these families. The team created engaging activities supporting the children's development with a safe, reliable space to grow and learn.

Then came the November closure. Overwhelmed, we had questions like, "How could we continue to serve our families? In what ways could we continue to create a sense of normalcy for children and support their development?" Again, the team rose to the challenge! With little computer knowledge, lots of tears and laughter, we converted over 100 traditional songs into presentations to build robust, more engaging, and interactive sessions held twice a day. Since April 2020, we have supported and connected with over 60 different parents and children! Some families even joined us for both sessions daily!

January did bring Olena and Pasco back onsite. Children won't remember the team's dedication to their security, safety and support. Still, their future will be more outstanding for the care and compassion of Pasco and Olena during these seven months. I am also a better person to have had had the privilege of working with these extraordinary women.

*Vania Zanetti,  
Children's Program Coordinator*

# EMPLOYMENT



*Like many newcomers to Canada, I faced the obstacle of local experience and the credential needed to be seen in a brighter spotlight in the semi-regulated Human Resources industry. I realized that most job descriptions had one statement in common "A CPHR or working towards it, is an asset." I heard of the Multicultural Society and decided to see what was available for me. I met with Daisy from CVIMS, and she walked me through the resources, and I told her the hurdle I wanted to overcome. From day one, she believed in me, and that gave me an extra level of confidence. Funding was provided to register as a CPHR member, buy the books needed to study, fund my trip to*

*Vancouver to partake in a two-day exam prep session, and register to take the NKE (National Knowledge Exam) that same year I arrived in Canada.*

*I was determined to get that designation. Time after time, 100+ resumes later, I finally got two interviews where I had a chance to express my background and my current endeavours towards my CPHR in Canada, and I was offered both jobs. I accepted one of the positions. Now the real challenge began, starting a new position while studying every day for the NKE. A lot of HR books, group study sessions, and few practice tests later, the time came. I went to Camosun College to take the exam, and just like that, I was done.*

*A while later, the results came out, and the first word on the email was "Congratulations." Not only had I passed, but my scores were one of the top national scores for that year. Passing the NKE on the first take was remarkable on its own but doing it as a new immigrant was another level. And it would not have been possible at such a fast rate if I didn't have the support, resources and guidance from the Multicultural Society.*

*A few months after submitting my education credentials and working through a lengthy dissertation-like experience validation as an HR professional, my document was approved, and I had gained my full designation, CPHR.*

**Basil Onyia, CPHR**



**Clients Employment Team Assisted: 286**  
**Workshops Delivered: 95**  
**Clients Attended Workshops: 364**  
**Clients Received Financial Support: \$62122.82**  
**Job Placements for clients: 38**

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Helping newcomers succeed with finding and keeping work is the main focus of the Employment Program. This year was vastly different from previous years as the world faced a pandemic that affected employment opportunities, the labour market, and mental wellness among our clients and the community. In a remarkably short amount of time, we transitioned all staff to working remotely and supporting clients with adapting to new technologies, tools, and methods that would allow continued services.

Through two distinctive employment programs, WorkBC & Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants, we delivered the necessary support to clients in all aspects of their job search process. Clients work closely

with Immigrant Employment Specialists to identify their strengths and challenges and develop action plans to help them achieve their employment goals.

The connections and relationships we build with local employers that support newcomers with employment opportunities help bridge the way to labour market attachment for our clients. Also essential are the partnerships and collaborations with other organizations. These included Nanaimo Youth Services Association to deliver CareerStart - a program for immigrant youth, and a new partnership with the Immigrant Employment Council of BC to deliver ASCEND (Applied Skills Curriculum to Empower Newcomer Development). ASCEND was a 7-week program offered via Zoom.

Two cohorts completed online modules and participated in weekly workshops learning soft skills, workplace culture, leadership and networking.

We successfully introduced several virtual workshops: Arabic Men Job Club, Job Club for Childcare Providers, Multicultural Café, Working in Canada, Job Club for Newcomers, Resumes & Cover Letters, and a monthly information session for Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants. We also developed training sessions for Arabic-speaking clients with low-level English to obtain Food Safe and First Aid certificates and increase employability.

***Carey Karlsson,***  
***Immigrant Employment Specialist***

# HIPPY

## Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters

*HIPPY is an awesome program! I am a new immigrant originally from China. We have had the fortune to work with HIPPY for both of my son Lucas and daughter Chloe. Our 7-year-old son Lucas have completed HIPPY program two years ago. I sincerely believe that he gains so much confidence after he goes to the school and he could understand English better after he completed HIPPY program. As a mom, I get to know the Canadian curriculum very well and what to expect from their school. Even now, he still likes to play hippy activity with us.*

*Our 4 year old daughter Chloe are now involved in the second year of HIPPY program. Our mom-daughter relationship has deepened substantially with HIPPY, she really likes science and math part of HIPPY activity. She looks forward to our time together and feels proud of herself each time she completes an activity. I see her confidence building*

*and her knowledge of many things growing. I sincerely believe that the HIPPY program has helped give my daughter a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning.*

*HIPPY provides support from the beginning to the end of the program with amazing home visitors that come and teach parents how to help teach their children, especially during the COVID-19 period. HIPPY program become one of few connections with community activities. My home visitor Marina has been very patient with me and give me so many good suggestions about teaching. She kindly reminds me everything about HIPPY events and tried her best to help as much as possible in every way she could. I feel very fortunate to have joined in this program years ago. Thanks HIPPY teams.*

**Cindy Chen**



Hippy Activity  
 Year 1 Weeks  
 Create Your Own Book

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**H**ome Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) provides low-income or isolated parents an opportunity to prepare their children to enter kindergarten.

HIPPY is delivered in two components - Home Visits and Group Meetings. Home Visitors deliver the curriculum to the parent in their home once per week for thirty weeks. The parent then spends 15-20 minutes per day teaching their child by following the same methods. Home Visits enable the Home Visitors to build trusting relationships with each family, and help to create an educational environment in the home. Monthly Group Meetings allow parents to socialize and participate in activities together, and become familiar with community resources and events. Combined, this approach supports newcomer families by reducing isolation and barriers, increasing confidence, and building stronger social and community networks.

Despite the fear, anxiety, and uncertainty experienced by the families due to COVID-19, the team continued delivery of the program with minimal disruptions. Beginning in April 2020, all Home Visits and Group Meetings moved to online delivery using new, creative ideas designed by the Home Visitors. They developed videos and implemented a variety of techniques to compensate for their physical absence. Drawing on their abilities, skills and experience they continued to offer the program without compromising content. This year when the program ended in June, the Group Meetings continued throughout the summer. The Home Visitors volunteered their time recognizing the value of staying connected with the families during this challenging time.

Thirty-six parents participated in the 2020-2021 HIPPY program. All were grateful they could continue to receive support and encouragement even during the pandemic.

**Swedini Halliday,**  
 HIPPY Manager

# FUNDERS & DONORS





## FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)  
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)  
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training  
Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness  
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture  
Ministry of Social Services and Poverty Reduction  
Ministry of Children and Family Development  
City of Nanaimo  
WorkBC: Maximus Employment Services  
Social Research and Demonstration Corporation  
United Way Central & North Vancouver Island  
WorkSafe BC  
Nanaimo Community Foundation  
Drake Medox College

## A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS

***April 1, 2020– March 31, 2021***

MosaicIT  
Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
Harbour City Plumbing & Gas Ltd.  
First West Credit Union

Our many, very generous, private donors! With special mention to Janet Farooq for her continued contributions to the Ghazi Farooq Newcomer Fund.

... our sincere apologies if we missed anyone.

Funded by / Financé par:



WelcomeBC



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



## STAFF

Executive Director: Jennifer Fowler  
Director of Administration & HR: Nanette Leather  
Director of Client Services: Angelika Valchar  
Finance Manager: Pat Denham  
Community Connections: Jansait Qughondouqa  
Reception and Client Services: Dawn Marusin, Carole Pedler

### LINC Program

LINC Coordinator: Jillian Yun  
Head Instructor: Gerald Halabura  
LINC Instructors: Nancy Cameron, Magdalena Holub, Nancy Hayne, Dale Jenkins, Alex Kapana

### Employment Program

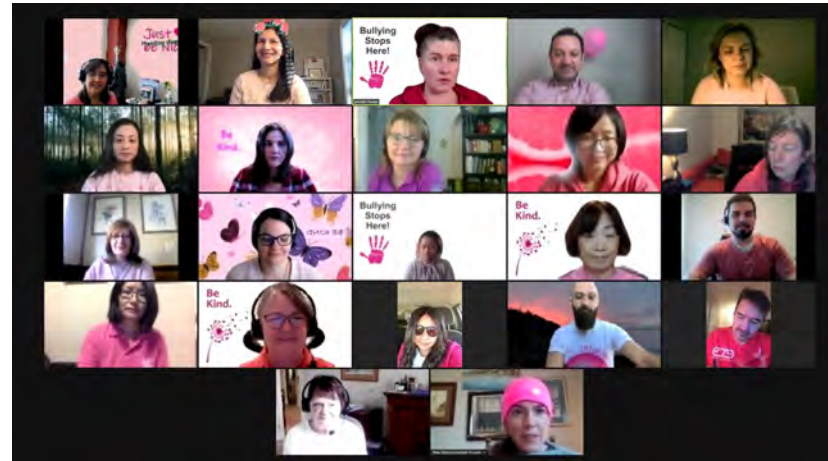
Immigrant Employment Specialists WorkBC:  
Carey Karlsson, Manoela Curado,  
Admin Support: Charlee Touchette  
Immigrant Employment Specialist: Daisy Baluran Bereska

### Settlement Program

Settlement Workers: Ming Yue, Rim Shin, Ahmad Briz,  
Walid Talhouk  
Settlement Worker in Schools: Iryna Lacroix, Hosam Abou Ali  
Intake Worker: Beme Lei

### HIPPY Program

HIPPY Manager: Swedini Halliday



Home Visitors: Maja Djilas, Marina Filatova, Amy Xing

### Children's Program

Children's Program Coordinator: Vania Zanetti  
Children's Program Worker: Olena Nagorna-Kryvonos, Pasco Hamburg  
On Call: Eman Al Zouabi, Djalila Hasni

### Volunteer Program

Volunteer Coordination: Dawn Marusin

Contract LINC Assessors/Instructors: Mary Peters, Edith Ives  
Contract Counsellor: Integral Counselling  
Contract Janitorial: Regency Commercial Cleaning