Calgary Immigrant Women's Association Annual Report 2007-2008



Vision

Women from diverse backgrounds are empowered to reach their goals and dreams as equal and contributing members of Canadian society

Mission

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association delivers

professional services that facilitate the

integration and full participation of

women and their families in the community

Values

Equality

Empathy

Integrity

Inclusiveness

Contents

2	Message from the President and Board Chair
3	Message from the Executive Director
4	Settlement and Integration Services
6	Language Training and Employment Services
8	Family Services
10	Celebrating 25 Years of Service
12	Childcare Services
14	Our Clients
15	Our Volunteers
16	Organizational Chart
17	Our Funders
18	Our Partners

Message from the President and Board Chair



President & Board Chair Jolanta Warpechowska-Gruca

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Communications Chair Gerda R. Bloemraad

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Director
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Reserve Director
Tracy Diehl

Last year marked the 25th anniversary of CIWA; it has been a year of unprecedented growth. The revised Strategic Plan and Business Plan are in place. CIWA increased its global budget by more than 33%, expanding existing programs and starting new ones. This happened because of the strong leadership of the Executive Director and the Management Team and the hard, dedicated work of CIWA Staff. The Board congratulates the organization on all of this year's achievements.

The Board itself concentrated this year on the business of a policygovernance board. The Self-Governance committee finalized the Strategic Plan, reviewed CIWA Bylaws, and improved the process of record keeping and documentation. The Recruitment committee created a Board recruitment policy and established and documented the interview and orientation process for new Board members. The Finance committee reviewed and augmented financial management policies. The Fund Development committee ensured participation of all Board members in fund development, and assisted in preparation of the 25th anniversary gala. The Communications committee kept the Board informed of current issues related to immigrant women. The Human Resources committee, in conjunction with the Executive Director, established a process for the development of a salary grid that will ensure that CIWA is competitively positioned in the market. The Program committee created a comprehensive summary of CIWA programs and services to guide the Board in the program oversight function.

We would like to extend our appreciation to all stakeholders, in particular funders and partners, for their continuous support of CIWA's business. We would also like to thank CIWA volunteers who donated countless hours serving CIWA's clients in multiple ways. And finally, I would like to express gratitude to all Board members for their diligence and dedication, especially those who completed their term on the CIWA Board and are stepping down.

Jolanta Warpechowska-Gruca President and Chair of the Board

Message from the Executive Director

Over the years, Calgary has seen an increasing number of immigrants coming to our city with hopes and dreams for a better life and promising future for their children. CIWA's specialized, women-focused services provide a healthy and supportive environment for our clients and their children and ensure their successful integration in our community.

This past year was extremely successful for CIWA. We saw huge growth and expansion of programs in the areas of enhanced language training, health, human rights, employment skills, housing support, and specialized programs for senior immigrant women. We served 11,377 clients through individual counselling sessions, workshops and group presentations. The success we have achieved stems from our dedication, responsiveness and ability to continuously adapt to the changing needs of our clients.

In collaboration with other immigrant serving agencies and our funders we embarked on a plan to address staff compensation and retention issues for the sector. We have already seen positive results that enhanced our staff retention rate and secured stability in clients' services.

CIWA is extremely proud to have been recently recognized with a Quantum Leap Award for exemplary leadership and commitment to the United Way of Calgary and Area.

When I look back at the clients we served last year, and what they were able to achieve, I stand amazed at the level of skill and expertise they bring to Canada. I hope that by reading this report, you'll catch a glimpse of the diverse strengths and talents of immigrant women in Calgary and feel proud of their accomplishments just as we all at CIWA are.



rigin
.18%
.10%
7%
6%
5%

Top 5 Client Languages Spanish25% Mandarin19%		
Spanish25%	0	
Mandarin19%	0	
Arabic9%	0	
Urdu8%	0	
Hindi6%	ó	
	J	

Clients come to us from 130 different countries

Clients speak
118 different languages

Solog Gorpez

Beba Svigir Executive Director

Settlement and Integration Services

"She (the Counsellor) helped us through a hard time and helped us move into our current home. We would like to thank all the people that helped us find a permanent home."

- Find Me a Home client

Settlement and Integration Services continue to support new immigrant and refugee clients by facilitating their integration and access to community support. Clients are provided assistance securing food, clothing, social and legal services. Many women accessing the Integration Program are multi-barriered and/or have been the victims of domestic violence.

Our longest running program, New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups, continues to provide immigrant women from diverse backgrounds with the opportunity to meet new people, make friends, and practice conversational English. In these groups, women share experiences, knowledge and information about community resources.

CIWA's Volunteer Program supports all aspects of the agency and contributes to the integration of immigrant women into Canadian society. Many of the immigrant women volunteering for CIWA are able to make connections in the community, create a support network and gain valuable Canadian work experience. To support immigrant women fleeing domestic violence, the Find Me a Home project began in July 2007. This project helps immigrant and refugee women facing multiple barriers secure affordable housing. CIWA assists immigrant women in their housing search and advocates on their behalf.

In August 2007, CIWA initiated the Human Rights Education project. Based on a "train-the-trainer" model, women from various ethnic communities are trained and provided with the tools to educate members of their respective communities about human rights laws. We generated a comprehensive resource manual that supports trainers in their presentations. The trainers speak Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, Dari and Farsi, and have delivered numerous workshops in their respective ethnic communities.

"CIWA is a big family for all women from every country."

- Settlement client











3,423Settlement and Integration clients

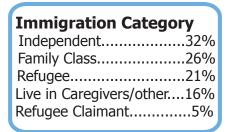
631 groups and workshops

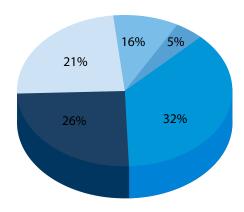
7,697 contacts with clients

In the last year CIWA promoted healthy living among immigrant women and their families. Living Healthy: Education and Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes Among Immigrant Families provides education about the prevention of type 2 diabetes, a disease increasingly affecting immigrant populations. This disease is preventable through proper eating and exercise and our project incorporates education sessions, healthy cooking classes, healthy grocery shopping, family exercise, and information about health resources.

Further supporting the health needs of immigrant women, the Cervical Cancer Screening Project provided under-served immigrant women the opportunity to learn about cervical cancer and get screened for the disease. Understanding the importance of preventative measures, like screening, will contribute to the overall health and well-being of Calgary's immigrant women.

Last year, CIWA implemented an innovative project targeting senior immigrant women. Senior Immigrant Women Take Arts and Crafts on the Road engages isolated senior immigrant women and involves them in the community. Participants share and learn craft skills as well as enhance their language skills in a group setting. They facilitate craft activities and share the skills they have learned with other groups in the community.





Language Training and Employment Services

"I started learning English at CIWA. I feel more confident than before. Now, I can say that I am more independent. As an immigrant I am grateful to CIWA, it helped me a lot."

- LINC student

Language Training and Employment Services offers essential services to newcomers in their effort to integrate into Canadian society. Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) has expanded to offer 15 classes at CIWA and in the community.

The LINC program also added a pronunciation class for students in LINC levels 3 and up. The classes equip students with tools, strategies and techniques to help with accent reduction.

Pebbles in the Sand, a literacy program for immigrant and refugee women with less than six years of education in their native country, now serves nearly 150 women annually. A crucial component of this program is the promotion of family literacy. This program uses a holistic approach to language acquisition and has been extremely successful over the years.

In the spring of 2007, Language Training Services embarked on a research project called Knowing Your Literacy Students. The objective of this project was to create a culturally sensitive curriculum to help low literacy immigrant and refugee women transition into LINC or ESL programs. This project produced and published the "Knowing Your Literacy Students: Curriculum Guidelines and Cultural Manual" which was shared with other service providers. The manual can be downloaded from CIWA's website.

An exciting new enhanced language training project began in September 2007. Advanced Training for Immigrant Women Seeking Employment as ESL Assistants trains immigrant women with teaching and/or human services backgrounds to become ESL assistants in Calgary. In collaboration with the Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District, participants gain valuable Canadian classroom experience.











2,673Language Training and Employment clients

1,048 individual and group employment sessions

8,202 hours of language training

To prepare immigrant women for the Canadian labour market, we offer a number of employment services and workshops that help our clients find meaningful employment in Calgary. The Receptionist Training Program provides language and skills enhancement training to immigrant women seeking employment in the administration field.

The Accounting Training Project, generously funded by ConocoPhillips, has helped immigrant women learn basic accounting principles through six-week sessions. Women are introduced to accounting in Canada as well as how to use Quick Books software.

Making Changes Program is a twelve-week preemployment program that equips participants with the tools and knowledge to help them find meaningful employment. All clients seeking employment services have the opportunity to receive individual job search support and participate in group workshops. CIWA staff offer support with resumes, interviews, and career planning. Group workshops support clients by providing information about interview skills, communicating with confidence, labour standards, networking skills, International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) assessments and APEGGA (Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, and Geophysicists of Alberta) qualifications.

"I am more comfortable and confident than before because I improved my pronunciation. I was afraid to talk to Canadians but now have the confidence to express myself."

- Enhanced Business English participant

Family Services

"The Youth Program has helped me become confident, make new friends and learn about diversity."

- Youth Program participant

CIWA's holistic approach to supporting immigrants has resulted in a number of family oriented programs. One of CIWA's longest running programs, the Cross-Cultural Parenting Program has been bringing awareness of parenting issues, Canadian laws, community resources and positive parenting skills to immigrant families for 22 years.

Working with the Calgary Health Region, CIWA offers prenatal support for immigrant women through the Best Beginning Program.

Parents are also provided post-natal services for their children through the Healthy Families Program. This program assists parents with newborns by ensuring children receive the appropriate care. Parents receive information about community resources and services to meet the needs of their family.

In partnership with six other agencies, CIWA connects parents to community resources through the Hand-in-Hand Parent Link Centre at the Village Square Leisure Centre. The centre serves families in the Heart of the Northeast and aims at setting immigrant families up for success.

Family Conflict Program continues to work at increasing accessibility and decreasing barriers for immigrant women and their families, living in family conflict/violence situations. This work is done through support groups, crisis and short-term counsel000ling, advocacy, referrals, and follow-ups.

Crossing-the-Bridge project targets specific East Asian and African communities to address family violence and bullying through cross-cultural counselling, advocacy and referral services. Extensive work is done with community and religious leaders to inform and educate communities about domestic violence.











5,865Family Services clients

42 off-site locations

529 presentations and workshops delivered

CIWA's Youth Program supports young immigrant, refugee and visible minority women to become active in their schools and communities through volunteering. This contributes to young immigrant women becoming confident, educated and informed, enabling them to make successful lifelong decisions, and be role models to future generations.

In-Home Support Program serves families and children of diverse backgrounds facing multiple barriers and requiring early intervention from Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority. Twelve staff speaking a total of 21 languages offer first language support to clients. Last year, a total of 38 families with 100 children received support from CIWA's In-Home Support workers.

To meet the changing needs of our clients, CIWA initiated a pilot project offering one-on-one counselling to senior immigrant women. This project has seen many successes since it began in November 2007. More than 250 participants have received information through community presentations and customized, culturally sensitive, in-home counselling services with first language support. One-on-one counselling has helped break the cycle of isolation many senior immigrant women deal with. Many of the clients involved in this program have gone on to participate in other CIWA programs and services such as Pebbles in the Sand, Senior Immigrant Women Take Arts & Crafts on the Road, and Employment Skills.

"This course was excellent for me. I liked learning about children and the process of adaptation in a new culture."

- Cross-Cultural Parenting participant

Celebrating 25 Years of Service





In 1982, a handful of visionary women created an organization to support the needs of immigrant women in Calgary. From humble beginnings, CIWA has grown to be one of the premiere immigrant serving agencies in the city. To celebrate CIWA's 25 years of service, a gala event was held at the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

The event brought together a diverse group of people representing our funders, corporate sponsors, community partners, CIWA clients, members, volunteers, Board members, and staff. For one evening we gathered together to celebrate and acknowledge the important contributions of immigrant women in the community.

This event successfully raised funds for our *Pebbles in the Sand* Program. The Pebbles Program offers a holistic approach of enhancing family literacy among non-literate immigrant women and their children.

We thank all of the people that made this event possible. With your continued support we will be able to serve immigrant women in Calgary for another 25 years!

The Gala was made possible through the generous support of:

ConocoPhillips Nexen

Global Calgary
RBC Foundation
Macleod Dixon LLP
TransCanada Pipelines
Southland Transportation

Gibson Energy Ltd.

Ruellen Forsyth-Nicholson Canadian Pacific Railways Haworth Change by Design

Talisman Energy

PrimeQuest Resources Inc.

EnCana

Concise Design

Centre for Newcomers

Lisa Higham Laricina Energy

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Fairmont Banff Springs Toole Peet Insurance

Maria Neuwirth Mary Sheridan First Energy Capital Nigerian-Canadian Association

Q V Investors

First Energy Capital

Dolce & Gabbana Cathy Strand

Glenda Landsiedel

YMCA

Adrielle Soriano Gulnar Hemani Peruvian Rhythms

Mijail Pardo Cherie Beninger

Shokoufeh Rahmani



Childcare Services

"We can do the alphabet and count with our children. We can talk about some of the things we learn in school. We sing and play games together."

- Client with children in SMILES

Providing childcare services for our clients is essential for their successful integration. CIWA's programs and services are supported by SMILES (Small Multicultural Immigrants Learning Early Strategies).

SMILES began in 1999 to provide free, quality child minding services to children ages six months to six years while their mothers attend CIWA programs. In the past year SMILES cared for 385 children.

The SMILES team customizes childcare services to accommodate on-site and off-site programs including: LINC, Pebbles in the Sand, New Friends and Neighbourhood Groups, Cross-Cultural Parenting, Canadian Pronunciation, Making Changes and educational workshops. SMILES benefits mothers by allowing them to attend programs and services, as well as the children by providing culturally sensitive, age-appropriate developmental activities to increase their school readiness. Children enhance their language development, social, cognitive, emotional, gross motor and fine motor skills.

In addition to daily learning activities such as crafts, singing, story time, and various play-based learning activities, the children in SMILES enjoy a variety of activities and special events to celebrate the changing of the seasons, holidays, birthdays and other celebrations. Children have the opportunity to go on field trips with their parents to the Calgary Zoo, Calgary Children's Festival, Telus World of Science, Fort Calgary and Calgary Public Library.

CIWA recently acquired additional space for childcare services on the main floor at our main office location. Preparation of the space is currently underway and once it has been properly equipped, we will significantly increase our child minding capacity. This will reduce the waiting list for clients accessing LINC classes.

"I can learn English and I can help my child learn English."

- Client with a child in SMILES











Children came from **36** countries

385 children enrolled in SMILES Children served:
Infants......22%
Toddlers.....27%
Pre-Schoolers....51%

When Anna* first joined the childcare centre she was extremely challenging to deal with. She did not listen to the childcare staff, cried often, fought with other children and would do her own thing because she was not used to the classroom setting. She was not fond of sharing toys and doing activities with other children.

The childcare staff observed that Anna had many talents they could work with and try to develop. In time, she started responding well to their attention and affection. She began to adjust to the classroom setting, began listening to her teachers and interacting appropriately with the other children.

Now, Anna is a very happy child. She comes to CIWA with a smile on her face and expresses affection for her teachers and classmates. Anna is eager to join the class and play with her friends.



She is a born leader and helps her teachers and fellow classmates. She helps put the toys away at the end of playtime and ensures her classmates do the same. Anna especially enjoys craft activities and manipulative toys. She is getting the feel of painting and drawing and proudly presents her work to her mother.

Since joining the SMILES program, Anna has become a wonderful role model to her fellow students. She gets along with everyone and her English language abilities have improved significantly. She expresses her thoughts in grammatically correct sentences, listens to requests made by the teachers, uses "please and thank you" and is able to recite the alphabet and repeat numbers in sequence.

Our Clients

Tina is a passionate and gifted teacher. For her, teaching is the most rewarding and engaging work she has ever done. After immigrating to Canada, it seemed almost impossible to Tina that she might ever return to teaching. She felt overwhelmed by the barriers she faced as a new immigrant including adjusting to new customs and a new culture, as well as an immense language barrier.

After researching the "Advanced Training for Immigrant Women Seeking Employment as ESL Assistants" project at CIWA, Tina's passion for teaching was reignited and her dreams of re-entering her profession were renewed.



When she joined the project, Tina was impressed with the enthusiasm and professionalism of the project staff, "They taught us to believe in ourselves and others, to love learning, to work hard, to manage stress and have strong values." Furthermore, Tina relished the opportunity to learn from her classmates and work as a team. By the end of the project Tina felt fully prepared to work as an ESL assistant and help ESL students overcome similar barriers she herself had faced.



Farzana, an MBA graduate, immigrated to Canada from Pakistan a year and a half ago. With seven years of teaching experience in her home country, Farzana hoped to be able to re-enter the teaching profession in Canada. Unfortunately, the process to attain certification as a teacher with the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) is a lengthy process, and job prospects without certification are very limited.

When Farzana heard about CIWA's new enhanced language training project "Advanced Training for Immigrant Women Seeking Employment as ESL Assistants" she quickly applied. The project allowed her to gain valuable work experience in a Canadian classroom while using her teaching experience to work one-on-one with children. Farzana

was accepted into the project and had the pleasure to learn alongside other immigrant women who were experienced educators from diverse backgrounds.

Through the project Farzana increased her understanding of the Canadian educational system, enhanced her knowledge of teaching strategies, heightened her cultural awareness and sensitivity, and improved her presentation and communication skills. The most significant benefit Farzana experienced was her increased self confidence and the sense of community developed through her friendships with fellow classmates and project staff.

Our Volunteers

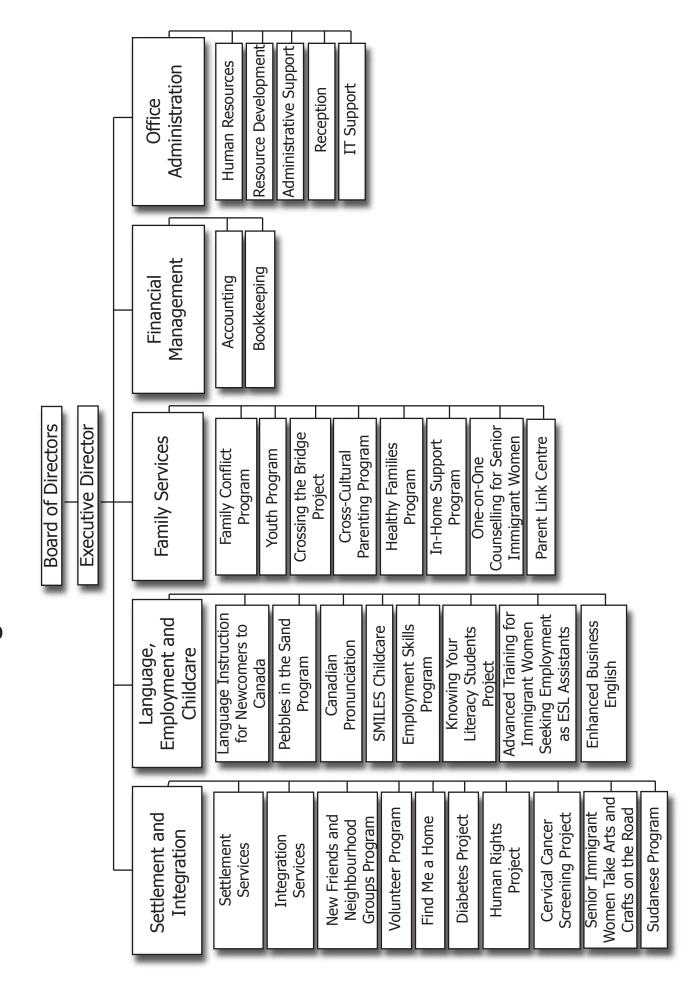
Without the tireless effort of our volunteers, CIWA would simply be unable to provide the range and quality of services we currently offer. We strive to continuously recognize the important work of these valuable members of the CIWA team by holding volunteer recognition events throughout the year. We sincerely appreciate each and every one of our dedicated volunteers.

365CIWA volunteers

21,563 volunteer hours



SIWA's Organizational Chart 2007-2008



Our Funders



Alberta Advanced Education and Technology Alberta Children's Services Alberta Employment and Immigration Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture

Alberta Lottery Board
Community Initiatives Program
Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund
Wild Rose Foundation



Community Donor

United Way of Calgary and Area



Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program



Calgary Regional Home Visitation Collaborative



RBC Foundation

Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada New Horizons for Seniors Program Public Health Agency of Canada Status of Women Canada



City of Calgary
Family & Community Support Services



Calgary Learns



ConocoPhillips



Region 3 - Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority

Our Donors and Supporters

Burns Memorial Fund
Catholic Charities
Hand-in-Hand Parent Link Centre
Canadian Pacific Railway
CIBC World Markets Children's Foundation
EnCana Cares Foundation
Imperial Oil Foundation
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Knox United Church
Martha G. Billes Family Foundation
Morland Resources Ltd.
RBC Royal Bank
Salopek Business Management Consulting Ltd.
Soroptimist International of Calgary Society
The Co-operators
Charles Guest
Anonymous Donors

Our Partners

Ability Society Early Birds

About Staffing Accountemps

Action Committee Against Bullying & Harassment

African Sudanese Association Agape Language Centre

AIDS Calgary

Alberta Children's Hospital Alberta Teacher's Association

Alberta Works

Alliance to End Violence

Almadina School

AltaGas APEGGA Aspen Astro Oil ATB Financial ATCO Structures Inc.

Awo Taan Parent Link

Bangladesh Canada Association of Calgary

Bantrel Inc.

Beddington Church
Best Beginning Program

Bethel Church
Bow Valley College
Boys and Girls Club
Calgary Board of Education

Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth Calgary Catholic Immigration Society Calgary Chamber of Commerce Calgary Children's Initiative

Calgary Chinese Community Services Association

Calgary Church of Christ

Calgary Coalition on Family Violence Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse

Calgary Co-op

Calgary Family Services Society

Calgary Health Region Calgary Housing Company

Calgary Immigrant Educational Society

Calgary Interfaith Food Bank Calgary Interfaith Furniture

Calgary Jiang Zhe Shanghai Association

Calgary Learning Centre

Calgary Learning Village Collaborative

Calgary Legal Guidance

Canadian Mental Health Association

Calgary Multicultural Centre Calgary Police Services Calgary Public Library

Calgary Regional Home Visitation Collaborative Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District

Calgary Seniors' Resource Society
Calgary Sexual Health Centre

Calgary Women's Centre

Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

CBC Radio

Canadian Diabetes Association

Canadian Forces

Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd.

Canadian Red Cross

CareConnect

Catholic Family Services

Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association

Red Deer Centre for Newcomers

Child Welfare Diversity Working Group

City of Calgary

City of Calgary Transport Assistance Program

Columbia College

Community and Neighborhood Services Coalition for Equal Access to Education

Connaught Community School

ConocoPhillips

Co-op Midtown Market

Credit Counselling Services of Alberta

Discovery House Duke Energy

Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary Faith Link Steering Committee

Families Matter
Family Place
First Baptist Church
Foothills Alliance Church

Fort Calgary

Francophone Newcomers Centre

Glenbow Museum Grace Baptist Church Health Canada Healthy U

Heart of the Northeast Community Resource Centre

HomeFront Husky Energy

Immigrant Services Calgary

Indian Ex-Servicemen Immigrant Association

Inner City Resource Network

Interfaith Youth Group Ismaili Muslim Community Jewish Family Services Kids Up Front Foundation Knox United Church Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Literacy Alberta

Making Changes Employment Association of Alberta

Manpower International McDougall United Church

McMan Youth, Family and Community Services

Momentum

Mount Royal College

Muslim Association of Calgary

Nazarene University College

Neighbour Link

New Life Evangelical Free Church

Nexen

New Sudanese Community Association

North of McKnight Community Resource Centre

Northeast Calgary Women's Clinic

Nova Chemicals

Office Team

Parent Link Centre

Petro-Canada Oil and Gas

RBC Royal Bank

RESOLVE Alberta

Robert McClure United Church

SAIT

Samaritan Club of Calgary

Shell Canada

Shepell-fgi

Sheriff King Home

Sleep Country Canada

Southeast Rockyview Community Anti-Bullying Project

Southland Transportation Ltd.

Southwest Community Resource Centre

St. Andrews United Church

St. Michael's Church

Suncor

Superstore

Talisman Energy

TeenZone

Telus World of Science

The Brenda Strafford Centre

The Community Adolescent Needs Network

The Dunvegan Group

The Salvation Army

Toastmasters of Alberta and Saskatchewan

University of Calgary

University of Calgary Women's Resource Centre

Varsity Acres Presbyterian Church

Village Square Leisure Centre

Volunteer Calgary

Walk-In Closet

Wellness Centre at Ernest Manning

Wellness Centre at Forest Lawn High School

West Area Youth Sub-Committee

West Central Community Resource Centre

Women in Need Society

Women's Health Resource Centre

YMAP

YMCA Calgary

Youth HIV/AIDS Working Group

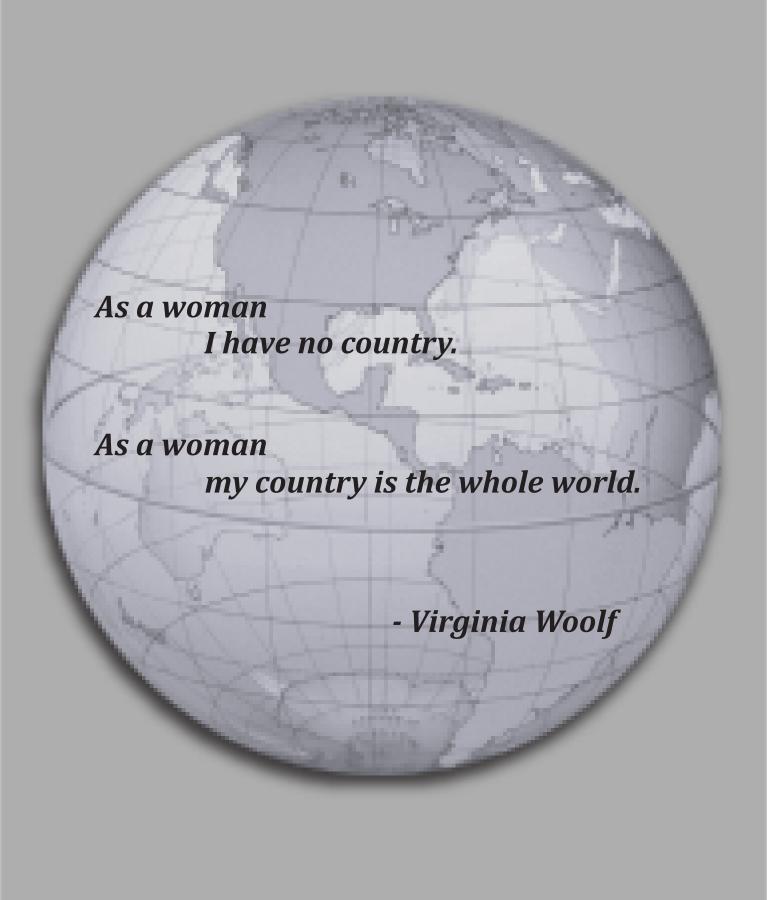
YWCA Mary Dover House for Women

YWCA Family Violence Prevention Centre

YWCA Parent Corridor

It is with the help of our partners that CIWA is able to deliver services to immigrant women throughout Calgary. They provide venues, services and referrals that enable us to continue the work that we do. We would like to acknowledge the support and commitment of each and every one of our partners.

THANK YOU!



CIWA Annual Report Team

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