

Vibrant City Vibrant CIWA

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Annual Report 2013-2014



"A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform."

Diane Mariechild



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Message from the Board of Directors



Amal Umar
Board Chair



Sarah J. King-D'Souza Q.C.
Vice Chair
Governance Chair



Fernando Cala II
Treasurer



Kiran Birdi
Secretary



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Director



Praneeta Kumar
Director
Finance Chair



Dr. Aradhana Parmar
Director



Jose Ramirez
Director



June Read
Director
HR Chair



Mark St. Pierre
Director



Bin Wu
Director

It has been a privilege and honour to work with the Board of Directors at CIWA this past year. Our collective board and governance experience spans several decades, and brings proven, innovative and policy-focused leadership to the organization. In the past year, we were able to finalize new agency by-laws that instill sound and transparent governance and an effective leadership structure. Our Governance, Finance and Human Resources committees have met on a monthly basis, bringing policy recommendations to the rest of the Board for consideration to ensure informed decisions are made. Our decision-making lens focuses on three questions: what is in the best interests of immigrant women and their families, what is in the best interests of CIWA and what is in the best interests of the community.

We have been committed to adding meaningful value to the agency and exercising due diligence in financial and governance stewardship. This led to the creation of a comprehensive fund development policy to guide the process of acquiring additional funds for the agency. This will enable us to better serve the many immigrant women in our community who are not eligible for public sector funded programs and services.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Board members, CIWA staff and volunteers, our community partners and funding partners who have worked very hard to ensure our collective efforts support equitable integration for immigrant women and their families. We look forward to our continued collaboration as a vibrant organization within a vibrant community.

Amal Umar
Board Chair

Message from Senior Management



Beba Svigir
CEO



Joanne Pawelek
Director of
Programs



Jennifer McColl
HR & Administration
Manager



Michael Wyman
Financial Manager



Joan Chernoff
Employment Services
Manager



Rekha Gadhia
Family Services Manager



Shokoofeh Moussavi
Settlement & Integration
Manager



Eva Szasz-Redmond
Language Training &
Childcare Manager

We are pleased to report that in the past year, CIWA reached new heights in the area of client service, diversification of programs as well as agency capacity to support strategic priorities and outcome measurement.

Our client numbers are constantly increasing, challenging us to remain innovative in our service delivery while maintaining best practices. We added a learner centered approach to serving low literacy clients experiencing challenges, which appreciates the need for a customised service delivery. Our efforts were rewarded nationally, through The Great-West Life, London Life, and Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award for this initiative.

Partnerships continue to define our service delivery approach and add value to every initiative at CIWA. We offer programs in over 120 community locations in Calgary, that all provide access to free childcare services for clients.

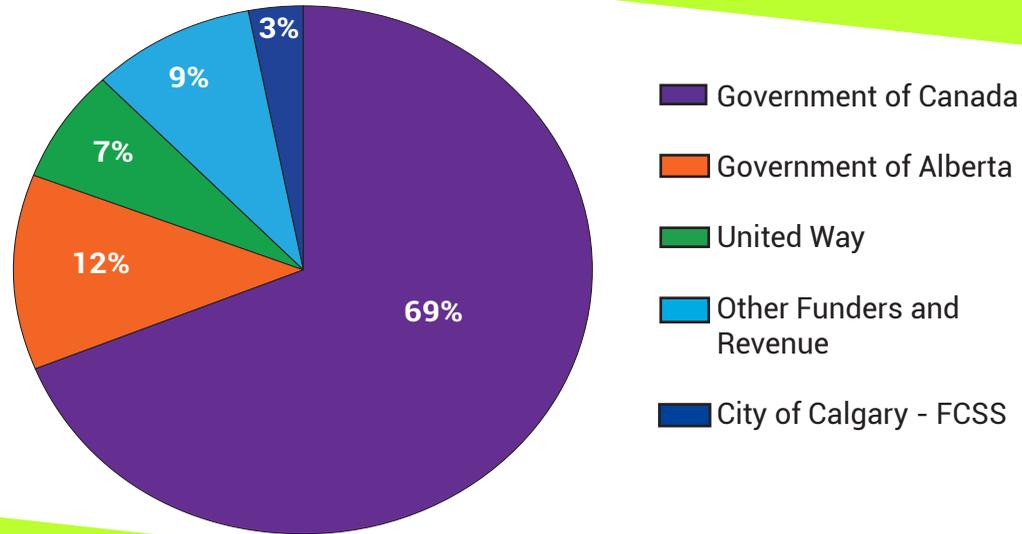
We were able to secure a new ten year lease agreement, adding an extra floor to our space, as well as keep staff retention at the highest level. This ensures a sustainable space option for future and allows us to continue delivering high quality programs and services. Everything we do is supported by an impressive volunteer corps of over 1000 committed women and men from the community.

In line with our holistic and effective settlement and integration support, we secured substantial funding for the prevention of homelessness initiative, through the generosity of the Calgary Herald's Christmas Fund. We also hit a new funding milestone this past year, finishing with a budget of over nine million dollars and further diversifying our funding sources. As such, funding partners remain committed to CIWA and our unique gender focused approach that strengthens the immigrant family as a whole and benefits the community we live in. To all of you who supported our clients to achieve their goals - from language acquisition to employment equity- we say a huge thank you.

Statistical Overview

18,219 clients served (individual and group services)

Operating Revenue Sources



Immigration categories:

- Independent (27.31%)
- Family class (19.42%)
- Citizen (20.87%)
- Refugee (12.68%)
- Live-in caregiver, investor and others (13.56%)
- Temporary foreign worker (4.42%)
- Refugee claimant (1.74%)

146 countries

Top six countries:

- Philippines
- Pakistan
- China
- Ethiopia
- India
- Colombia

134 languages

Top six languages:

- Filipino (Cebuano, Tagalog, Ilokano)
- Mandarin / Cantonese
- Spanish
- Arabic
- Hindi / Punjabi
- Amharic / Tigrinia / Oromo

Vibrant City Vibrant CIWA



- Vision :** Empower Immigrant Women. Enrich Canadian Society.
- Mission:** To engage and integrate immigrant women and their families in the community.
- Values :** Equality. Innovation. Empathy. Collaboration.

CIWA Programs

Employment Services

- Bridging the Gap for Foreign Trained Accountants
- Links to Success: Skills Enhancement & Internships for Young Immigrant Mothers
- Office Administration Program for Immigrant Women
- Labour Market Bridging for Volunteers: Interpretation and Translation Clinic
- Employment Skills Preparation for the Retail Industry
- Employment Skills Program
- Low Literacy Modular Employment
- Childcare Training for Low Literacy Immigrant Women
- From Margins to Engagement
- Building Futures for Low Literacy Immigrant Women in Calgary

Settlement & Integration

- Intake, Settlement and Referral Services
- New Friends and Neighborhood Groups Program
- Integration Program
- Filipino Community Development Program
- Volunteer Program
- Assisting Immigrant Mothers (AIM) Project
- Breast Health Initiative for Newcomers
- Find Me a Home Project
- Legal Clinic

Family Services

- Cross Cultural Parenting Program
- Family Conflict Program
- One-on-One Counselling for Immigrant Women
- Civic Engagement for Immigrant Women
- Healthy Families Program
- Youth Program
- In-Home Support Program
- Hand in Hand Parent Link Centre
- Victim Supports Outreach Program
- Grandma's Kitchen Project
- Empowered to Achieve: Culture. Confidence. Connection.
- Immigrant Girls Against Gender Violence
- Youth Mentorship Program

Language Training & Childcare

- Language Training (formerly LINC)
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program
- Pebbles in the Sand Program
- SMILES Childcare
- Canadian Pronunciation Course
- Technological Literacy Curriculum
- Learning Support Services
- Building Skills and Expertise for Working with Struggling Adult ESL Learners

Vibrant Programs

Labour Market Bridging for Volunteers (LMB): Interpretation and Translation Clinic

In how many languages can you say "interpretation?" LMB can say it in 22. This certified training program provides immigrant women with the opportunity to traverse between languages with competence.

Did you know?

- The program has a 100% pass rate in Community Interpreter examination (CISOC)
- The program has a social enterprise component

Learning Support Services

Imagine not being able to keep up with the learning expectations. Sixty students this past fiscal year have benefited from a positive experience due to an individualized approach provided by CIWA's learning support specialist.

Did you know?

- Male and female students can access this service
- This service is available for internal and external referrals

Youth Collaborative

Ever hear a teen saying "that's awesome"? They're most likely referring to CIWA's Youth Collaborative.

Comprised of five programs with a focus on youth, the initiative motivates and supports both immigrant and mainstream teens throughout the city.

Did you know?

- You can Bellyfit, Yoga and Zumba your way to health
- Expressive arts is an important component of the collaborative

Find Me A Home Program

Everyone deserves a safe home. CIWA's Find Me a Home Program, the recipient of the 2013 Calgary Herald Christmas Fund, ensures immigrant and refugee women receive housing support when in crisis. This initiative provides assistance in situations such as fleeing abuse, experiencing eviction or inability to pay damage deposit.

Did you know?

- The 2013 Calgary Herald Christmas Fund raised \$95,150 for the program
- This program has seven years of history at CIWA

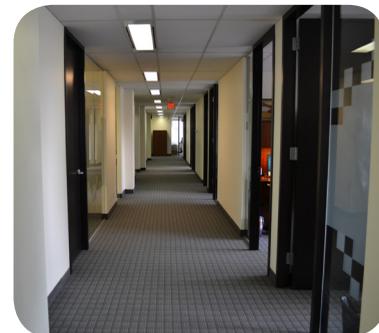
Vibrant Space



Vibrant services require vibrant space! CIWA now occupies 30,000 square feet within First Street Plaza. The fifth floor of the building is now home to administration and finance staff, as well as all professional bridging programs. Renovations included creating four new large classrooms, meeting rooms, as well as upgrades to all CIWA premises in the building.

CIWA now occupies four floors in the building, allowing clients better access to our services. The childcare remains on the main floor, while the second and third floor respectively house family services, language training, settlement & integration and low literacy employment services.

The new 10 year lease accomodates the agency's recent growth and it secures long-term space sustainability for CIWA and its clients for years to come.



Vibrant Clients

Mithlesh Kanwar came to Canada with her family in September 2012. Prior to her arrival, she lived in the USA for a while. Although she had extended family there, she was feeling isolated, spending time at home with little interactions around the community. In pursuit of better opportunities, Mithlesh and her family decided to immigrate to Canada.



Once she settled in Calgary, Mithlesh began to look for a job. However, she felt very discouraged in her job search due to a lack of work experience and irrelevant education from India.

Mithlesh was then recommended to join CIWA's Retail Program. After three months of full-time training, she graduated and immediately became an employee at Walmart. Six months later, she advanced to the position of Department Manager of Jewelry.

"Attending CIWA's course really helped me build my confidence. Although I was familiar with many of the concepts, I did not have the soft skills and experience needed to get a job. Before I was scared of working in Canada, but now I am very comfortable." - Mithlesh Kanwar



Originally from Myanmar, **Htoo Lay** arrived in Canada in March 2010 with her three children who were born in a refugee camp in Thailand. Htoo had no opportunities to pursue a formal education and so she didn't have a chance to learn to read and write in her native Karen language.

She started literacy classes in the Language Training Program in August 2012 and a year later, joined the HIPPY program with her preschooler. Because they spoke Karen at home and the entire family was struggling with English, Htoo thought it would be impossible for her to teach her children anything of value.

Htoo is now in our CLB 5 class and demonstrates every day that sometimes all you need is the desire to learn. In the classroom, Htoo is a role model for other students; at home she is a proud mother of a bright preschooler who is able to demonstrate literacy skills he has learned from his mother. Htoo feels confident as a learner, as a parent and as a citizen as she embarks on another year of discovery and learning at CIWA.

"In the beginning I didn't understand anything. I just smile and nod my head. But with the help of Hippy and LINC I learned more English." - Htoo Lay

Vibrant Volunteers

Volunteers of the Year!



Did you know?

- During the past fiscal year, over 1000 volunteers contributed 25,652 hours to CIWA
- Volunteers provided support in 42 different areas, including administrative support, facilitation, interpretation & translation, job search, legal support, childcare, arts & crafts, special events and as Board members
- Volunteers helped raise \$5,527.50 through arts & crafts sales

Cindy Yu came to Canada with her family as a skilled worker from Mainland China in 2010. Despite her Master's degree in English Literature, doors remained closed for Cindy as her job search did not yield results. She also felt very vulnerable and unaware of her surroundings living in a different country.

Through her optimism and go-getter attitude, Cindy came to CIWA where she and her family received settlement services and family support. Soon after, Cindy started actively volunteering with CIWA.

Cindy now has three part-time jobs working as a teacher, security guard and support worker. She was also one of the program assistants for CIWA's International Women's Day 2014 event. Cindy is very happy to be living in Canada and remains an active volunteer with CIWA.



"Knowledge is power: not just through books, but through support and guidance. I have collected a lot of knowledge through CIWA and now I want to share it." - Cindy Yu

Vibrant Team



Each year, CIWA staff support and encourage women and their families who are new to the community through a variety of programs and services. The CIWA team is made up of dedicated staff members who appreciate their diverse work environment. They are committed to doing their best, and bringing their experience, expertise, passion and focus to their roles each day.

They are also keen to have fun and work together in building an even stronger team. This year, that was evident by several activities they took part in, including CIWA's annual staff appreciation day at Heritage Park, monthly super person and birthday celebrations and the annual staff holiday talent show.

In addition to the CIWA team coming together for fun and team building, they also come together for a cause. Every year staff contribute time, money and talent to the annual United Way Campaign and the Cure Foundation for Breast Cancer's National Denim Day. This year we also added a Flood Food Drive to collect money and food for the Calgary Food Bank to support those who lost so much in the June floods, as well as a money and clothing drive to support the Philippine Typhoon effort.

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much" – Helen Keller

Vibrant Awards



Community Partner of the Year Award
Goodwill Greatness Awards 2013



Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award
Low Literacy Modular Employment Program 2013

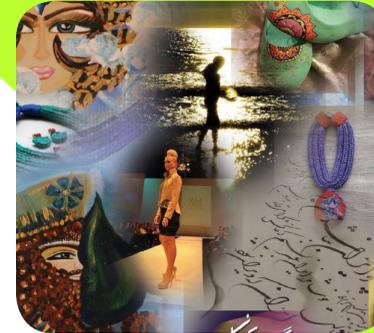


Calgary Herald Christmas Fund 2013
Find Me a Home Program



This year's prestigious Heart of Calgary Award was presented to CIWA's Board Chair, Amal Umar. This award is presented by Propellus (formerly Volunteer Calgary) to recognize an individual who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution of 25 years of service through their efforts as a volunteer.

Vibrant Events



Art Show
March, 2014



Youth Forum
February, 2014



International Women's Day
March, 2014

This past year was filled with much excitement and energy as CIWA continued to inspire the community.

CIWA hosted the 2014 International Women's Day Community Fair in partnership with Awo Taan Healing Lodge, Calgary Public Library, Discovery House, The Women's Centre, Women's Resource Centre at the University of Calgary, YMCA Calgary and YWCA Calgary. The 1,100 people who attended the fair had the opportunity to interact and network with over 40 community agencies. The theme of the event - Learn, Share, Act - provided interactive opportunities to enable change and make a difference in the areas of poverty, violence and leadership.

Yara Institute of Art and Culture partnered with CIWA to organize the first ever Iranian art exhibit in Calgary. The event, held at CIWA, featured 17 female artists who showcased their talent through painting, sculpture, calligraphy, silk painting and fashion design. The event was enjoyed by over 400 people.

The second annual Youth Forum, - CultureFest - attracted 300 guests to promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding between immigrant and mainstream youth. Throughout the day, youth had the opportunity to take in main stage acts and participate in inspirational booths that promoted self-esteem and information on rights and freedoms around the world.

Vibrant Milestones

25 Years at CIWA!

Vibrant Staff Member

Janeth Alonso, originally from Guatemala, came to Calgary in 1989. The same year, she began her career at CIWA as a Volunteer Program Coordinator.



Her passion for helping immigrant women has been evident throughout her 25 years tenure at CIWA. Janeth's commitment has allowed the Volunteer Program to grow from a mere 49 volunteers to well over 1,000. She also founded the volunteer cooperative at Connaught Community School, which has morphed into a successful Arts and Crafts social enterprise at CIWA.

In 2002, Janeth received the prestigious Queen's Jubilee Medal for her service to the community. In addition to managing volunteers, Janeth contributes countless hours of volunteer service as a member of the Speaker Bureau for Passages to Canada and host for a Spanish Radio program. Janeth is also a board member for The Women's Centre, the Canadian Guatemalan Association and the church she attends.

Janeth is currently the Manager of the Volunteer Program at CIWA, a title she has held since 2006.

25 Years at CIWA!

Vibrant Volunteer Program

Volunteers are a vital part of day-to-day business at CIWA. For the past 25 years they've helped run the agency and serve clients in all capacities.



Volunteer Program provides an opportunity for women to engage in the community and build social support networks. Through their work, volunteers are able to connect with clients, staff and each other sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences. In addition to gaining work experience, volunteers also receive training that enhances their skills.

Vibrant Funders

Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Employment & Social Development - Service Canada
Status of Women Canada

Alberta

Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour
Human Services
Innovation & Advanced Education
Culture
Calgary and Area Child & Family Services
Justice & Solicitor General
Gaming & Liquor Commission



Along with:
The Moffat Family Fund
Proud Family Fund
Turner Family Fund



Along with:
The Sam & Betty
Switzer Foundation



Vibrant Donors and Supporters



- Alberta Beverage Container Recycling Corporation
- Alberta Federation of Labour
- Alberta Theatre Projects
- Anonymous Donors
- Avison Young
- Burns Memorial Fund
- Calgary Herald Christmas Fund
- Calgary Learns
- Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra Heart Strings Program
- Callow & Associates Management Consultants Inc.
- CAN Telematics
- Captain Nicholas Goddard School
- Cedar Grove Baptist Church
- Cenovous Employee Foundation
- ConocoPhillips
- CUPS
- Dentons Canada LLP
- Edgemont Community Association
- Encana Cares Foundation
- Erin Wallace Photography
- First Book Canada
- Frank and Lindy Kennedy
- Frame Media
- Glenbow Museum
- Hair City Salon Spa
- ICE (Institute for Cross-Cultural Exchange)
- Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire
- Kernels
- Kids Up Front Foundation
- Know United Church
- Laricina Energy Ltd
- Legacy One
- London Drugs
- NEXEN
- RnR Wellness
- Safeway
- Shoppers Drug Mart
- Soul Feet Dance Production
- St Pauls Anglican Church
- Strategic Group
- Telus Cares
- Theatre Junction Grand
- TransAlta
- United Way Donor Choice Program
- Westside Rec Center

And numerous individual donors...

Vibrant Annual Report Team

CIWA takes pride in the innovative and creative skills of our staff to produce this report in house.

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