



1723 40<sup>th</sup> Street SE.T2A 7Y3.403-235-3666  
3820 32<sup>nd</sup> Street NE.T1Y 7L9.403-291-0002  
[www.immigrant-education.ca](http://www.immigrant-education.ca)



Report from Board of Director's President .....	3
Report from CEO .....	4
CIES Vision and Mission.....	5

## LANGUAGE

LINC Program & Care for Newcomer Children .....	6
LINC Home Study Program .....	8
Drop-in ESL Program .....	9
Literacy and Basic English Program .....	10
Refugee Express Drop-in ESL & Integration Program .....	11

## TRAINING

Employment Skills Training Program .....	12
Computer Skills Training Programs .....	13
Clerical Skills Training Program .....	14
Accounting Skills Training Programs .....	15

## SETTLEMENT

Welcome Resources Information Program .....	16
Financial Literacy Program (Money Smart) .....	17
Human Rights Workshops .....	18
Volunteer Program .....	19
Communications Department .....	20
2015-2016 Highlights .....	21
Recognition of Board of Directors .....	26
Recognition of Funders & Donors.....	26

## Report from Board of Director's President



On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Calgary Immigrant Educational Society, I welcome you to our 28th Annual General Meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to the volunteers and Board members who dedicated over 6000 hours to CIES this past year. I would also like to give my sincere thanks to the staff who have generously given their time and efforts to the successful administration and implementation of our programs and services. In addition, I thank all our partners and stakeholders who have supported CIES throughout the 28 years since our inception in 1988. CIES was established by the late Salim Sindhu, serving the first 26 years of our Society's existence as Executive Director. With the assistance from a few volunteers, we worked together to serve our community. The vision that came

from this small group of volunteers of which I was a part from the onset is now a reality. Salim would be so astonished and I am so proud of all the things that we have accomplished together.

Last year we welcomed Dr. Sally Zhao as our CEO. Sally has been with CIES for over 10 years. Starting with us as a volunteer ESL tutor in our Drop-In ESL Program, she quickly moved her way up within the organization. Sally has proven to be dedicated and committed to the Society.

In the past year CIES has proven to be a strong and resilient organization with great leadership and teamwork skills, adapting to major changes quickly and successfully. To mention a few; we opened 21 additional *LINC* classes, making it 56 *LINC* classes in total and 135 childcare seats, established a cutting edge Communications Department, and introduced The Refugee Express Drop-In ESL & Integration (REDI) Program. 2015-2016 is a year that brought CIES a steady growth of programs and with it a large increase in the number of staff. At present, CIES employs more than 120 staff and over 100 volunteers, all of whom work in our wide variety of programs offered in both NE and SE Locations, seven days a week. Great job, everyone!

On behalf of CIES, I express my heartfelt thanks to our funders and donors for their continuous generous support and understanding. Lastly, on behalf of all the Board members, I thank all of you for attending our 28th annual general meeting. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*M'Liss Edwards*

M'Liss Edwards  
President, Board of Directors, C.I.E.S.

June 23, 2016

## Report from Chief Executive Officer

The hard work and earnest contributions of countless individuals and community organizations made 2015-2016 a historic year of activity and impact for the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society. I am proud to present to you this annual report; a report that summarizes the highlights from Fiscal Year 2015-2016, a pivotal year and a time of tremendous growth for CIES, and a year in which all our efforts continued to serve our core mission – to provide immigrants and economically challenged individuals the tools to be successful and active participants in the community.



I would like to start with my heartfelt thanks to our valued funders, community and corporate partners, Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, the community of Calgary and our clients for helping the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society reach new heights and to celebrate yet another productive and fruitful year. CIES also worked conscientiously with our fellow sector agencies to develop consensus around themes of mutual importance and further still, our staff has worked tirelessly to raise the voice and profile of other non-profit agencies in the community. Besides the growth of the programs, CIES took the initiative this past year, developing and utilizing our strong in-house technology expertise and experience in communications, including a vast social media platform and original video production to not only advocate our programs and services but also the aforementioned services provided by other non-profit organizations in Calgary, helping those in need navigate and find suitable services.

Open 7 days a week, we serve more than 1200 adult clients and 135 children a day at two locations and simply could not be more pleased to serve each and every person who comes through our doors. As we move forward in 2016 and beyond, I am proud of what CIES accomplished this past year and excited about the future. Calgary is both vibrant and strong, and together we will continue our efforts to offer a foothold of strength to newcomers and disadvantaged Canadians, uphold human rights, and safeguard an inclusive, open and sustainable community, while ensuring human dignity for the most vulnerable populations of our great city.

Once again thank you to all who contributed to our mission throughout 2015-2016, as without your great support, none of this would have been possible. I look forward to working together with you all for another rewarding year.

Sally Zhao, PhD

*Sally Zhao*

Chief Executive Officer

**Vision:** Advancing the future success of newcomers and economically challenged individuals

**Mission:** Provide immigrants and economically challenged individuals the tools to be successful and active participants in the community



## LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

### LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)

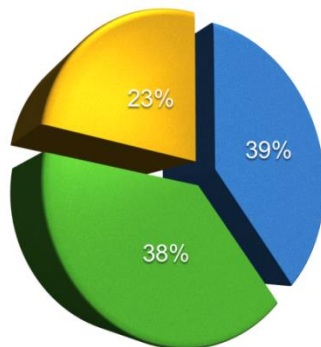
*Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*

LINC has been an integral program at CIES since 1992, providing free English language training for immigrants and refugees for nearly 25 years. Qualified instructors provide practical training to improve skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as well as improving essential skills, life skills, and cultural awareness about Canada.



CIES offers LINC classes from Literacy and CLB 1 up to CLB 7, full time and part-time in the morning, afternoon, and evenings during weekdays and part-time on weekends. The 2015-2016 fiscal year witnessed a sizable expansion of the LINC program at CIES. Thanks to the generous support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, in February and March of 2016, 21 additional LINC classes, from Literacy to CLB4, were opened to newcomers on the CIES LINC wait lists. **CIES is now proudly delivering 56 LINC classes, 7 days a week, morning afternoon and evening**, at its SE and NE locations.

- Refugees (both Government & Private Sponsored)
- Family Sponsored Immigrants
- Other (several dozen categories)



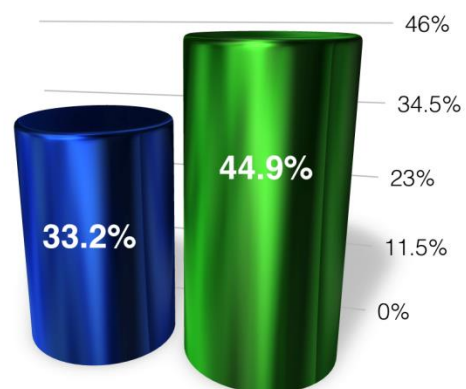
1349 LINC CLIENTS

1349 clients received service in the CIES LINC program, with the number of refugees who received service increasing by nearly 17% over the previous fiscal year. Our classes are composed of newcomers from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, totaling 80 different countries and origins with 48 different languages spoken. The top three languages were Arabic (17.98%), Spanish (10.7%), and Vietnamese (9%).

Presenters from **26 community partners gave 68 presentations** to our clients on various community engagement purposes. **23 community organization representatives** provided face-to-face consulting service to clients about matters of clients' concern in the CIES Community Resource Fairs. Guest speakers from different fields talked about community resources, Canadian culture, Canadian law, life skills, essential skills and others.

**195 field trips to 58 different sites** have been organized for clients. Field trips take learning out of the classroom and allow students to learn and interact in a real-life environment, obtaining some hands-on experience of Canadian community life.

- final quarter 2015
- first quarter 2016



% of refugees served from last quarter of 2015 to first quarter of 2016

## CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN

*Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*



Since 2003, CIES has offered its Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) program, also known as Childminding. The service is free of charge for CIES LINC (and Employment Skills Training) students with children between 19 months and 6 years of age.

Our CNC staff plan regular activities that are age-appropriate and sensitive to children's past experiences while introducing them to Canadian culture. To foster respect and understanding within a multicultural context, we encourage children's creativity while taking into account their variations in physical, mental, and emotional development.

Childminding service was provided to support the LINC students. The service allows students who are parents of young children to attend the LINC or EST programs without any extra cost.

In order to meet with the high demand for childminding, CIES CNC programs were expanding to provide more childminding seats. CIES was running the two licensed CNC programs at full capacity. The evening children's group at the CIES NE location was **expanded from 10 to 40 children**. The NE full time children's group was expanded from 30 to 35 children. Additionally, childminding service was opened up on weekends at both the SE and NE locations. The number of children served per quarter **increased from 105 to 157**. With the ratio of 1 to 5 for toddlers and 1 to 6 for preschoolers (1 CNC educator to 5 or 6 children), we have assisted **183 children** from April 1 2015 to March 31, 2016. On average, 16.8% of LINC students used the service of the CNC programs. Alberta Human Services have approved our application to increase the maximum seats available in the CNC program at the NE location to **50 children per group**. CIES is looking at serving more children in our CNC program this year.





## LINC HOME STUDY

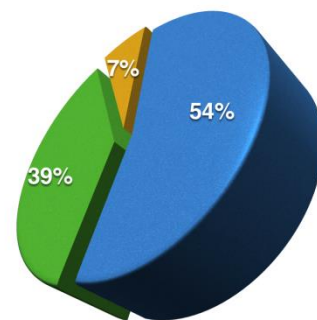
Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada



Not every student can attend LINC classes. Some are prevented from attending due to illness, disability, conflicting work schedules, their role as family caregiver, or distance. For these students we offer the e-learning alternative, LINC Home Study (LHS). Eligible clients must have benchmarks between 3-3-2-2 and 8-8-8-8. Classes are conducted each week through a combination of phone/Skype-guided lessons and a robust Learning Management System (LMS)

During the 2015-2016 fiscal year LINC Home Study provided language instruction for 147 clients, down from 2014-2015's intake of 164, but greater than 2013-2014's enrolment of 116. One of the reasons for this dip has been the increased retention of LINC Home Study students. Many have chosen to stay in class longer to maximize the benefits of the program and regularly scheduled student satisfaction surveys have been overwhelmingly positive with **100% of students agreeing that the class has helped them**, that they are happy with the instruction, and that they would recommend LINC Home Study to a friend.

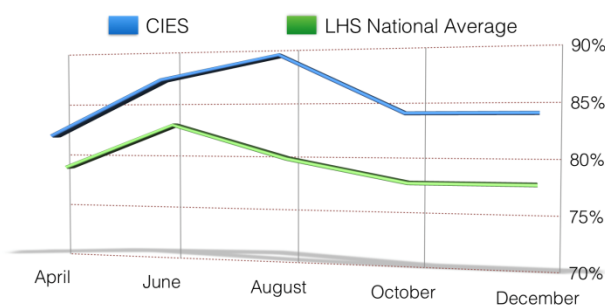
Reason Clients Take LINC HOME STUDY



- Family Caregiver
- Conflicting Work Schedule
- Illness/Disability/Personal

Because of the overwhelming interest in LINC Home Study, wait-times have remained consistently high since the program's launch in 2012. As such, clients can expect a 12 month wait for class, based on availability. CIES added online registration for all of its programs in 2015, providing clients with an easier way to access and register for LINC Home Study (especially important for the program's isolated demographic). To address the lengthy entry process and accelerate engagement upon entry, LINC Home Study has continued to offer a resource package to eligible clients, giving them access to self-directed materials while they wait for their place in class with a LINC Home Study instructor.

Percentage of Students Progressing Each Quarter



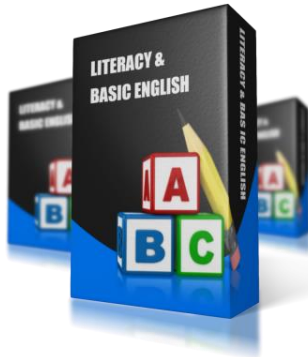
### 2015-2016 also marked the beginning of LINC Home Study's video tutorials.

Originally intended to simplify student orientation procedures and reduce the time spent by administrators and instructors guiding first-time online learners, these video tutorials have provided added benefits to the program. Improving client engagement and structure, LINC Home Study's video tutorials have

become a best practice and we look forward to creating new materials that will address the digital literacy gap, therefore removing barriers to entry and promote client's English language instruction without the invisible hand of technology getting in the way.

## LITERACY & BASIC ENGLISH

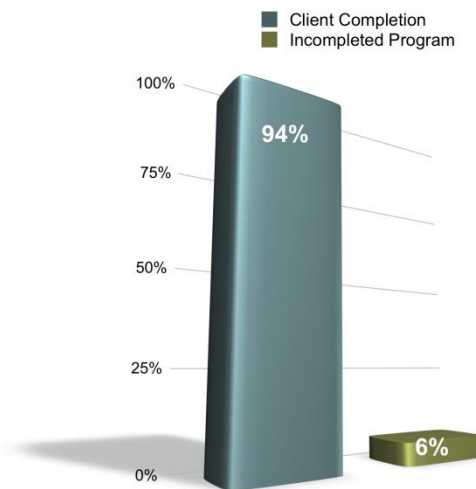
Funded by Alberta Labour



Specifically designed to help adult immigrants who have extremely low to non-literate language skills acquire the basic essentials required for learning English, this program works to minimize the language-learning obstacles experienced by some individuals and prepare them for basic conversation of the English alphabet and words.

This program focuses on improving participants' self-esteem and confidence when using the English language. CIES currently offers morning and afternoon Literacy and Basic English classes. The goal of this program is to introduce the basics of the English language to low-literacy participants and minimize language-learning obstacles.

The program helps adult learners develop basic literacy skills and learning strategies which prepare them for future ESL study, such as our *LINC* and *Drop-In ESL* programs. The classes are taught by encouraging and positive instructors who create a hands-on learning environment for all students. The classes extend over a course of 10 weeks with over 100 hours of classroom instructional time. This fiscal year **100 clients were served** and volunteers donated over 50 hours of their time to help assist in the classroom.

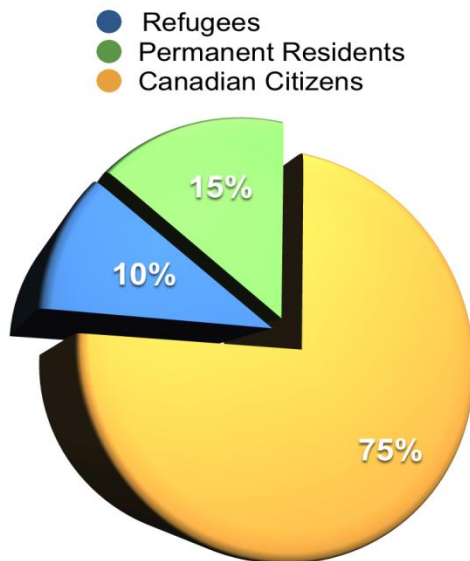


## DROP-IN ESL

*Funded by Alberta Labour*

The Drop-In ESL program is taught by volunteers and helps adult immigrants improve their English skills by exploring weekly themes and practical subjects which are directly related to daily living and employability skills. Aimed at helping Drop-in ESL participants adapt and integrate smoothly into Canadian society, three different levels of classes are offered: pre-basic, basic, and intermediate / advanced. This program is ideal for those who have to fit classes around family needs or work schedules or those who are not eligible for LINC (such as Canadian citizens).

The Calgary Immigrant Educational Society has been delivering the Drop-In ESL Program since 1988. The program aims at helping immigrants to Canada acquire language skills and knowledge that helps them integrate into Canadian society. It is aimed at, but not limited to, adult learners who cannot attend ESL programs provided by other institutions or organizations with fixed schedules or strict attendance policies. They also may not be able to attend because of their immigration status and/or their length of residency in Canada. Overall, this program provides a valuable service to a significant population that is unable to access other ESL programs in the city.



Volunteer tutors are central to this program. During the 2015 to 2016 funding period, 92 volunteers spent over 4500 hours both in and out of the traditional classroom setting teaching the **423 clients** that were served during the 2015-2016 funding period.

Four afternoon and three evening classes were offered, Monday through Thursday, for a total of twenty-eight classes each week. There are three different levels of classes offered both in the afternoon and evening: pre-basic (CLB level 1), basic (CLB levels 2 & 3) and intermediate (CLB levels 4 & 5). The top three countries represented by the clients in the program were Vietnam, Colombia, and Sudan.



## REFUGEE EXPRESS DROP-IN ESL & INTEGRATION (REDI)

*Funded by Alberta Labour*

The Refugee Express Drop-In ESL & Integration (REDI) project is a fast-track language training and social integration project designed for refugees to learn essential vocabulary and basic language skills, incorporating basic real life tasks in order to function in Calgary communities. This three-day a week project, targeting Syrian refugees and other Arabic-speaking refugees displaced by circumstances in the Middle East, offers in-class instruction, hands-on workshops, and field trips to help build life skills.



The REDI project officially opened its doors at CIES on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, and **in 3 short months has registered 82 clients, provided in-class service to 44, and assisted 26 in their transition to LINC-programming** (either at CIES or one of our partner organizations) as of June 2016. Classes with REDI are conducted by two bilingual instructor (English/Arabic) and are offered in two levels: CLBLA (Literacy)/Pre-Basic and Pre-Basic/CLB1. Intake and daily operations are supported by a part-time bilingual coordinator, and one project manager.

As part of its mandate to not only provide quality English instruction, REDI has also conducted field trips to help newcomers explore and engage in the community. With a focus on essential skills knowledge, destinations have included Calgary Public Transit, Safeway, TD Canada Trust Superstore, and the Calgary Public Library – Central. Destinations in the coming months include the Peter Lougheed Centre, and guest speakers from the Royal Bank of Canada and Calgary Police Service (among others).



Public support for REDI has been outstanding. In May, Soup Sisters (a community non-profit) donated 20 litres of halal soup to REDI's students. Other calls of support and donation pledges have been coming in since the project started and we look forward to announcing some very exciting partnerships in the next month.

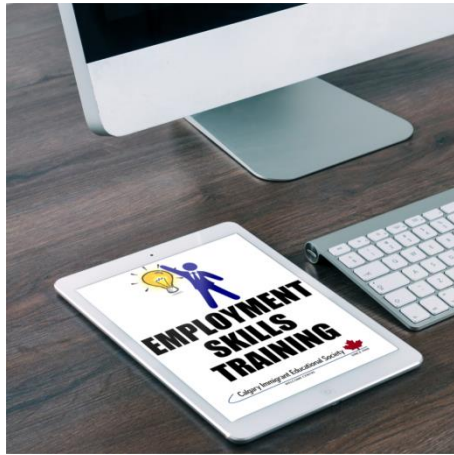
Childminding spots were allocated to the project in May. Class capacities are currently 16 students (CLBLA/Pre-Basic) and 14 students (Pre-Basic/CLB1), but are subject to change based on intake levels.

Sessions are ongoing, meaning that students can register anytime. Spots are filled on a first-come, first-served basis and each session is made up of six 2-week modules, including: Public Transit & Driving in Calgary, Medical Services, Housing / Childcare & Education, Money & Banking, Grocery Shopping, and Employment.

## TRAINING PROGRAMS

## EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING (EST)

*Funded by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada*



This Employment Skills Training (EST) Program assists unemployed newcomers in gaining the skills needed to secure employment in Canada. Classes are free of charge and run Monday to Friday, providing training in computer skills, business communication, job search skills, resume writing and interview techniques. EST also offers an optional one month job practicum at the conclusion of the program.

This past year **86 students** enrolled in EST and **72% of our clients gained employment on or before completion of the program**. Other clients chose to go back to school to further improve their skills. EST assisted in building student confidence, allowing our clients to

attend career fairs, training events and workshops, all of which are aimed at helping them integrate successfully into the Canadian workplace. Apart from regular classroom activities, students were trained in First Aid / CPR and the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). Clients expressed that the program provided them with the opportunity to assess their strengths and weaknesses, while helping them better understand Canadian workplace culture and assisting them in preparing their career plans with timelines beyond classroom learning.

Guest speakers from a wide variety of sources such as Tervita, SAIT, Calgary Workers Resource Centre (CWRC), and Alberta Treasury Branch (ATB), just to name a few, provided presentations to EST students with first-hand knowledge about career planning, networking skills as well as their hiring procedures. ATB has in fact hired several EST students who have proven very successful in the workplace. Altogether, there were **34 presentations in the last fiscal year**.



CIES would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the program this past year. We would not have been able to offer our EST program without the generous support of IRCC. We all recognize and thank them for their continued support.



## CLERICAL SKILLS TRAINING

Funded by United Way of Calgary and Area

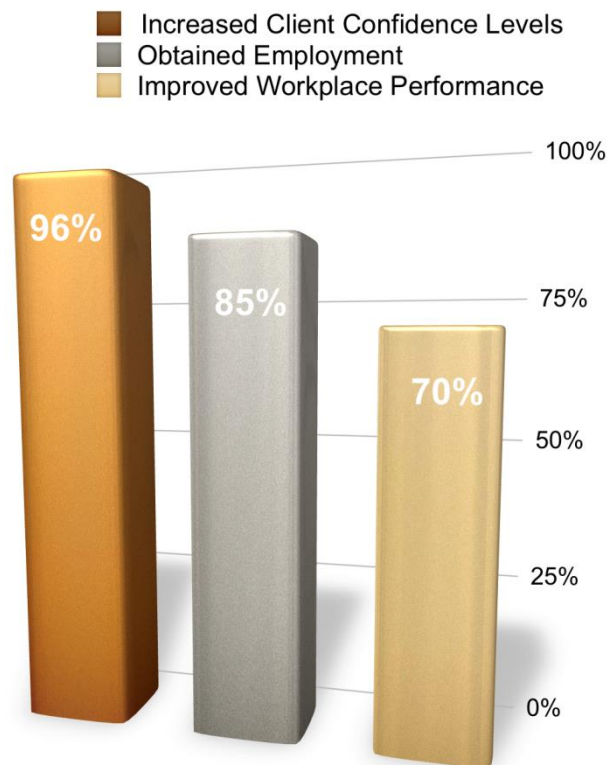


Designed to improve business skills for administrative support in the modern office, the Clerical Training program is for individuals who wish to pursue a career as an administrator in an office environment. This course covers computer terminology, keyboarding, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, career search techniques, resume writing, office procedures, and business communications.

This program runs 17 weeks for a total of 51 hours, including an optional 80-hour volunteer job placement program in which students can gain valuable Canadian work experience. The top 5 countries of origin for our clients were Philippines, India, Colombia, Nigeria and Russia.

We proudly served a total of 135 Clerical Training Program students in 2015. Among these students, **over 90% were immigrants who held clerical positions in their home countries.** However, due to lack of Canadian office work experience, **they could not find employment in an office setting** here in Calgary. With the generous financial assistance from United Way of Calgary and Area, our clients received training in clerical and computer skills and **85% obtained employment** in their field upon completion.

The Clerical Training Program falls within United Way's "From Poverty to Possibility" priority focus area as the Program engages in public education and advocacy concerning poverty and its impacts and causes. **73% of students** live in the economically depressed south east and north east quadrants of Calgary. By empowering this economically disadvantaged category we helped reduce poverty and positively impact the community as a whole.



## COMPUTER SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

*Funded by Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission*

Suitable for those who want to enhance their Microsoft Office knowledge, our Computer Skills Training Programs train clients in the use of the Office suite. Students who wish to further advance their computer skills have a program for them as well, helping them adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> century Canadian job market.



**ESSENTIAL COMPUTER SKILLS:** This 30 hour course is the first step for those unfamiliar with using a computer. The course covers basic functionality of hardware and software such as computer components, troubleshooting, Windows Operating System, Keyboarding, Basic Microsoft Word, Email and basic Internet.

**COMPUTER SKILLS FOR EMPLOYMENT:** This 42 hour course is for those who want to enhance their Microsoft Office knowledge and consists of more advanced functions of these applications, allowing participants to further improve their computer skills. The course covers Enhanced Keyboarding, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook Emails, Job Search and Canadian Workplace Culture.

**ADVANCED COMPUTER:** This 20 hour course will allow students to improve their computer skills in advanced and in-depth Microsoft functions in Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Students will develop advanced computing skills with features not commonly known in order to increase their productivity.



## ACCOUNTING SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

Funded by Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission



Our Accounting Training Programs introduce students to the basics of manual accounting, journalizing, posting to ledgers, completing trial balances and how to prepare financial statements. Further education introduces software such as QuickBooks and Sage 50, and students at the highest level can expect to master complex payroll systems, taxation principles, personal income taxes, pensions, and more.

Upon successful completion of this program, students will obtain a certificate of achievement.

**BASIC ACCOUNTING:** This program is designed for those with no accounting background or as a pre-cursor to taking more advanced accounting programs. This 24-hour Accounting program trains students in manual accounting to better prepare them to pursue and reach their goals.

**ADVANCED ACCOUNTING:** This 24 hour program further refines students' accounting skills through advanced features and functions such as Payroll, Personal Taxes, Business/Corporate Taxes, Pension and Other employee benefits.

**QUICKBOOKS AND SAGE 50:** These two software programs are the most commonly used accounting applications for small businesses in Canada. Here students are trained within the accounting industry standard in terms of computer use with the most up to date version of software.

Over this past fiscal year, these accounting programs helped 200 students equip themselves with necessary computer and accounting knowledge. Many students take the classes in sequence from basic through QuickBooks/Sage 50, learning progressively and structurally throughout. We enrolled a total of **193 students in our Basic Accounting program, 108 students in Sage 50 (former Simply Accounting) and 144 in our QuickBooks programs.**

Our accounting programs are very popular and in high demand throughout the year.





## SETTLEMENT PROGRAMS

### WELCOME RESOURCES INFORMATION PRORGAM (WRIP)



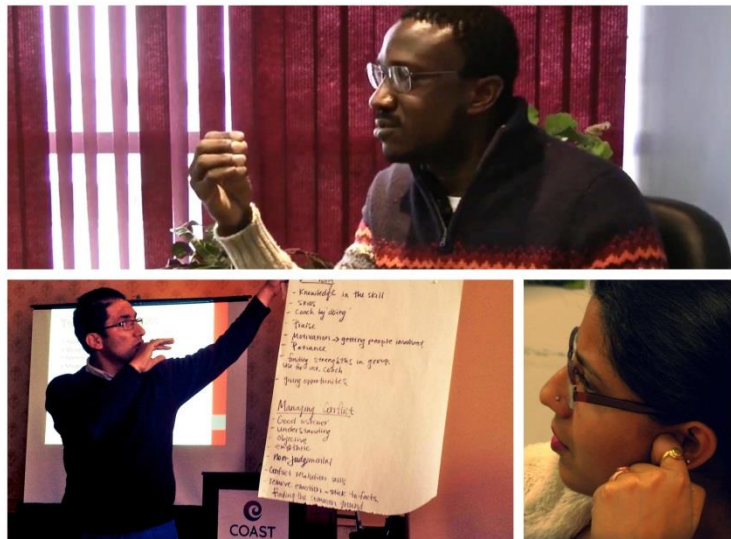
Offered as an information service for helping newcomers navigate the services they need, the Welcome Resources Information Program (WRIP) provides guidance to services around the city, places of worship, health and housing organizations, while also providing clear directions to other immigrant service providers to help bring our community together and make sure individuals are getting the right program for them.

The program has three major components - **information and orientation, needs assessment and referral, along with community connection**. Additionally, CIES has developed a website ([calgaryconnect.ca](http://calgaryconnect.ca)) designed to provide information in areas such as housing, education legal support, employment, community and daily life.

Approximately **350 people per month** visited the website in fiscal year 2015-2016. Overseas connections were made with a number of non-profit organizations, academic institutions and consulting firms. Places such as the Canadian English Centre in Brazil, the Multicultural Helping House Society in Philippines, and the Development Promotion Group in India assisted CIES in providing program information to clients planning to come to Calgary. In the year 2015-2016, **261 new clients**, their family members and **118 returning** were provided information about resources available in the city, assisted in preparing their settlement and career plans, supported in obtaining benefits and social assistance, helped to identify and prioritize their needs, referred to service providers for their unique needs and connected with their community organizations.

**261 clients were from more than 50 countries.** 82 % of the clients were permanent residents, 7% were citizens, and 4% were refugees, with the last 7% coming from other categories.

All the stakeholders, including clients, partner organizations, service providers, community leaders and interpreters deserve special thanks and appreciation in making this program a success.



## MONEY SMART FINANCIAL LITERACY

Funded by Prosper Canada and Federated Co-operatives Limited



The Money Smart Financial Literacy Program aims to inform low income newcomers and financially challenged individuals about the financial services in Canada, the banking system, credit services, and how to handle financial issues such as budgeting or debt.

Activities include workshops, meeting with professionals from the financial and banking industries, face to face meetings with financial counsellors, arranged field trips to different financial

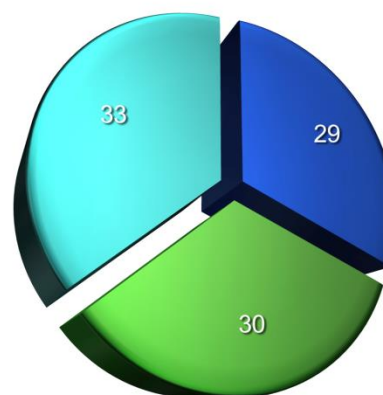
institutions, and hosting special financial literacy events.

## FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

Technical assistance was provided by **Service Canada, ATB, RBC and TD Canada Trust** and the experts were made available to provide personal guidance to interested clients after each presentation. In 2015-2016 fiscal year, **92 participants** benefitted from 3 financial literacy presentations as seen in the chart.

Financial Literacy Workshop Attendees

- Building & Managing Credit / Employment Insurance
- Different Types of Savings Products
- Banking System in Canada



## PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

Personal financial counseling was one of the major components of the program. **261 clients were provided personal financial counseling** and assisted in getting services in areas such as social assistance, child tax benefits, Alberta Health Services, senior's benefits, income support, learners' support, income tax preparation, and opening registered education saving plans in 2015-2016.

Altogether, **353 clients** were served by the program in fiscal year 2015-2016. In addition to education and increased confidence, clients were able to get assistance from government, financial institutions and non-government organizations for their specific needs and developed a better understanding of the value of money and saving. CIES is committed in providing financial literacy education as part of its regular services.

CIES expresses our sincere thanks and appreciation to all partner organizations and individuals who contributed to make the program a success. Special thanks go out to Federated Co-operatives for proving financial assistance to this valuable program.



## HUMAN RIGHTS WORKSHOPS

*Funded by Alberta Human Rights Commission*



Designed to help at-risk newcomers, this program provides a series of workshops intended to raise awareness of human rights and ethics and how they relate to Canadian society. Speakers explore topics of equal opportunity, discrimination, family status, and sexual orientation. Additionally, the topics of Human Resources legislation, domestic

violence, the internet and harassment and human rights in the workplace were also addressed (among others) in an attempt to reduce the vulnerability of newcomers and raise awareness of both their rights and responsibilities that come with living in Canada.

Launched in February 2016, 142 immigrants received workshops on family violence and the Human Rights Charter of Canada. Participants were extremely positive about how the program increased their understanding of complex social-cultural issues and how they were made aware of the services available to them. They requested the integration of human rights topics into English classes, so as to better relate it to socio-cultural contexts that newcomers face on a regular basis.

CIES would like to acknowledge and appreciate the technical assistance provided by University of Calgary, Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre and Calgary Legal Guidance Society. And a special thanks to Alberta Human Rights Commission for providing financial assistance to this initiative.



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



Volunteers are the backbone of the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society. Their commitment and contribution allow us to provide more comprehensive services to our clients. Their generosity and commitment help adult immigrants acquire and polish their English language skills, familiarize with Canadian culture, and integrate into Canadian society smoothly.

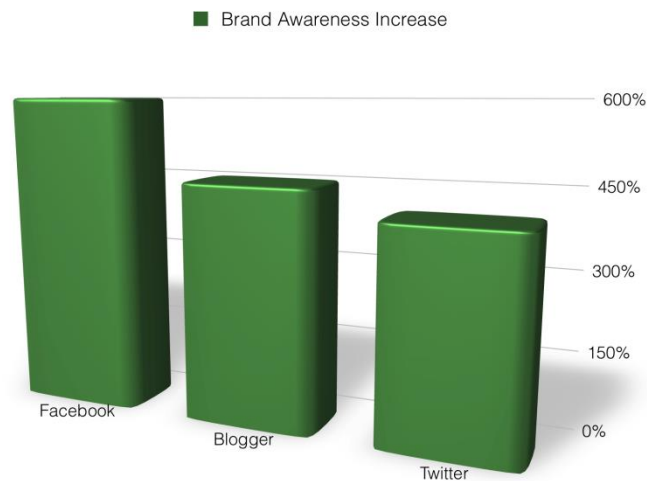
Our volunteers contribute in many areas. Besides helping in ESL programs such as *Drop-In ESL*, *Literacy and Basic English* and *LINC* as volunteer tutors or instructor's assistants, there are individuals who assisted in areas such as maintaining computers, helping in computer classes, providing administrative assistance, helping in fund raising events, and preparing tax returns for economically challenged members and seniors in our communities in March and April every year.

From April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 the Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors, staff at CIES and **128 volunteers contributed a total of 6,212 hours to our Society**. We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated volunteers for all of our programs, especially our ESL volunteer tutors who play an important role in the success of Drop-In ESL program. Without their commitment, we would not be able to offer the program at all. Their dedication and commitment have a tremendous impact on immigrants who come to our Society, not only in terms of learning the English language, but also understanding Canadian culture. The more positive interactions new Canadians have with other Calgarians, the easier it is for them to find a sense of belonging in Canada. Therefore, each of our volunteers' support is significant and this serves as the most valuable asset of CIES. We would also like to express special thanks to our volunteer Board of Directors for their continuous support, guidance, and direction.

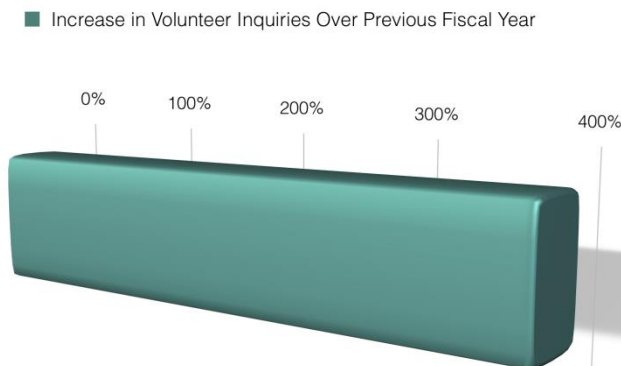


## COMMUNICATIONS

At the onset of the 2015-2016 fiscal year CIES established a Communications Department charged with increasing brand awareness. Throughout the course of the year, channels for **near daily correspondence with clients, employees and external stakeholders** were established to keep people informed of society events, initiatives, and developments. Further still, strategies were created to increase employee awareness and promote productivity in a way that maintains a positive image of the company.



After a soft launch late in the previous fiscal year, Blogger, Facebook and Twitter were established as social media platforms. Recognition within the community has been readily apparent and continues to grow by the day. The CIES blog is fast approaching 50,000 visits, our Facebook page has seen a 600% increase in followers, with Twitter not far behind at 400%. The dramatic rise in the number of volunteer inquiries, along with their knowledge of CIES before their arrival can also be directly contributed to this initiative.



CIES Productions was also established this year to fuel communication platforms with content. **More than 40 original productions highlighting the mission and vision of CIES were filmed** and released to the public at large, including **a screening at this year's Anti-Racism Film Festival of the CIES original documentary short *Broken Heart of the West***. CIES Productions has also done work for, or is in the planning stages

of shooting, with organizations such as Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Centre for Newcomers, Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies, International Avenue's Business Revitalization Zone, the ArtBOX, the Distress Centre and the Major Minor Music Project, amongst others. Further still, a proposed initiative to revamp our overall brand resulted in an updated logo that captures both our NE and SE locations and a single in-house designed top-of-the-line website. With several projects currently in place and research into additional platforms continuing, 2016-2017 should bring more of the same.

## 2015-16 HIGHLIGHTS

### CIES EXPANSION



This past year CIES added 21 additional Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes. This was followed by our new Refugee Express Drop-In ESL & Integration project, a fast track language training and social integration initiative. Moreover, our Employment Skills Training (EST), formerly offered at only our SE location in Forest Lawn, is also now being offered in our NE Location in Whitehorn as well. On top of this, a University of Calgary Student's Union grant has allowed us to launch our Reading Room Program, a pre-literacy, one-on-one program for those below level one literacy levels.

CIES now offers a combination of 56 different LINC classes in two locations across the city, with scheduling running 7 days week, morning, afternoon and evening. Further still, with expansion and growth comes renovations, Our 22,000 square foot facility in the NE is less than four years old, so it was time to turn our attention to our 15,000 square foot SE Location, the CIES Head Office since 2003. Our Drop-in and ESL programs have had classrooms refurbished with everything from new tables and chairs, additional tablets and additional resources, including a re-designed and updated curriculum and a volunteer training package. The entire building's plumbing was replaced and even our admin floor was furnished with new flooring, along with all rooms being given as a fresh coat of paint.

We have been proud to serve the community of Calgary for nearly three decades and with two bustling and up to date centers on both sides of the city open 7 days a week, we look forward to three decades more. We thank those who have and continue to support our mission, a mission that has remained the same since first opening our doors all the way back in 1988 - to provide immigrants and economically challenged individuals the tools to be successful and active participants in the community.





## SUMMER FESTIVAL

Funded by International Avenue Business Revitalization Zone and Government of Canada



In August of 2015 CIES held its 5th annual Summer Festival and by all accounts it was an unparalleled success. Hundreds of attendees came by throughout the day in the form of local residents, clients, sponsors, partners, and both members of the municipal and provincial governments, including recently elected MLA Robyn Luff and the City of Calgary's Jason Luan. Food, dance and music from all over the world were on display, as well games, contests and activities. More than 30 countries from

around the globe were represented on what was a remarkable day.

The theme for this past year's festival was *Celebrating Diversity* and seeing so many customs and traditions, so much culture and so much diversity all in one place was truly special. CIES would like to thank all those who attended, the artBOX for graciously providing us with an absolutely great venue, the International Avenue Business Revitalization Zone's support, and most especially a heartfelt thanks to all those who participated in the day's events. Without your input, without your pride in sharing your culture and donating your time, we could not have put on such a truly amazing day.



What was without a doubt a day of fun also had a very important subtext and in the end, very much stands for what the Calgary Immigrant Educational Society strives for each and every day. CIES seeks to promote global citizenry and what it means to be Canadian through the respect, awareness, and recognition of individual perspective. Specificity over stereotypes, tolerance over dogmatism, and justice over bigotry - CIES is about the deconstruction of ethnocentrism and the undeniable truth that in our diverse and global community that is the

great city of Calgary, life has many paths upon which to unfold and not only one. Above all else, although the values and beliefs of any single culture will never be universal, it is in celebrating this undeniable truth that our sense of community, our sense of family, our sense of being Calgarian is born. Thank you for sharing and celebrating with us and making Calgary the remarkable city it is.



## NEWCOMER RESOURCE FAIR

Here at CIES we strongly believe that ethno-cultural community organizations play an important role in settlement and integration sector and as a result we are always searching ways to better serve the immigrant community. With this in mind we held our first annual Newcomer Resource Fair.



The heart of this event is our belief that the non-profit sector is an important contributor to the economic health and vitality of Calgary. All of us here at CIES strive towards collaboration with our non-profit family, as in the end we are all here to help those who need it most, and by extension, help in making Calgary the best city it can possibly be for all who live here. Just some of the service providers in attendance included Calgary Police Service, Immigrant Access Fund, Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Calgary Public Library, Making Changes/Walk in Closet, Inform 211 (Services for newcomers), YWCA Shelter for women, The Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary, 311 City of Calgary – Fee Assistance Fair Entry Program, Calgary Workers Resource Centre CWRC, Alberta Health Services, Calgary Housing, RBC, ATB, University of Lethbridge – Calgary Campus

After two days of information, sharing and networking our first annual Newcomers Resource Fair was no less than a great success. We would like to send a special thank you to all partner organizations from across the city for helping us promote the many services and opportunities available to new immigrants living in Calgary. All those who attended benefited greatly from the collaborative effort of all involved, pointing those who need assistance, advice and information in the best possible directions. CIES would like to send out a very special thank you to Jovita Dias, Immigrant Legal Education Specialist for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary, whose contributions to the event made it the great success that it was.

## THE READING ROOM

*Funded by 10,000 Grant, Students' Union, University of Calgary*

The Reading Room Initiative's primary intention is to provide a quality, comprehensive reading instructional program to promote literacy through providing one-on-one or small group instruction to students who require extra help with reading.

Many of the students recommended to the Reading Room are literacy students who are not only learning English as a Second Language, but may not be functionally literate in their own language for a variety of reasons. This program is run entirely by volunteers. We currently have a number of tutors volunteering their time in the Reading Room, and based on the high demand for this program, we hope to recruit more motivated and eager volunteers from the University of Calgary to join us in further developing and implementing this innovative program.

Our goal is to run the Reading Room on a daily basis, estimating to serve 120 literacy students per year. After a soft launch, CIES received a U of C's Committee of 10,000 grant from the University of Calgary's Student's Union to further establish the Reading Room. The money was used to purchase resources, including adult literacy reading intervention software, and also to contribute to developing a curriculum and teaching manual for the program.



## COMMUNITY INVESTORS SERIES



A new weekly series, Community Investors, was launched this past year as CIES social media platforms began regularly featuring Calgary non-profit organizations. The non-profit sector is an important contributor to the economic health and vitality of Calgary. Charities and non-profits throughout the city support the quality of life enjoyed in Calgary, addressing social needs, providing recreational and leisure opportunities, delivering arts and cultural

programs, helping those in need, and stewarding our natural environment. Many organizations also provide services essential to support the labour force, from settlement services and ESL programs for new immigrants like us here at CIES, to skills upgrading and both childcare and elder care programs that enable individuals to participate in the workforce.

In the end, CIES very much believes the non-profit sector of Calgary is a family of caregivers, helping those who need it most, however and wherever we can. Each has its own story, its own passion and CIES has and will continue to bring them to you over the course of this series. All of us here at CIES strive towards collaboration with our non-profit family, as in the end we are all here to help those who need it most, and by extension, we are all here to help make Calgary the best city it can be for all who live here.

## FIELD TRIPS



The Calgary Immigrant Education Society wants all learners who pass through our doors to have an educational experience that is as well-rounded as possible. That is why field trips are an important dimension to the Society's learning process. Our field trips expose newcomers from everything to Canadian history to practical shopping habits to simply great places to spend time in both our city and province and are a regular part of the CIES experience.

To supply our learners with a working knowledge of their new home, greatly assists in their understanding of Canada's cultural mindset and our place within the global community. Enriching field trips contribute to the development of clients in their integration process, becoming men and women who possess more knowledge about art, have stronger critical-thinking skills, exhibit increased historical empathy, display higher levels of tolerance, and have a greater taste for consuming art and culture. We don't just want our clients to acquire work skills from their education; we also want them to develop into well-rounded Canadians who appreciate the breadth of human accomplishments.

Additionally, field trips give diverse and financially-in-need clients equal opportunity to experience things outside the classroom that they may not be able to afford. For low-income clients new to Canada, educational trips that take advantage of local resources promote community connectivity. A client may not ever have the opportunity to visit a Drumheller, Banff or even the Glenbow Museum or the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame, which are all important parts of our society and culture. Clients from non-English-speaking families or who have recently moved to the community get the chance to learn about the local area and then share the information with their family when they return home. It is a win for all involved; most especially the city of Calgary and Canada as a whole - a nation built on the very concept of immigration.



## A Thank You to Our Board Members for Their Service

First our Board Executive – President M'Liss Edwards, our Vice President John Li and our Treasurer / Secretary Phillip Baker – thank you for your leadership over the course of an exciting year. Next, we would also like to thank our Board Directors - A. Ray Kristinson, Peter Plesche, Wilson Howe, Nalini Plesche, Jay Sandhu, and Dr. Shahid Mohammed – your dedication and service throughout the year is wholeheartedly appreciated. Lastly, a special thanks to Elizabeth Bertram, who started off the year as our Vice President, and former Board Director Danny Rehbein who recently moved to the U.S.A. We thank them for their direction and great contributions to the development of the Society.

## Recognition of Donors

The Calgary Immigrant Educational Society is very grateful for the generous donations made by organizations and individuals. We appreciate their support, donation in cash, in kind, or in service to our Society.

International Ave BRZ  
 Shell Canada Limited  
 United Way Donor Choice  
 Masone & Company  
 The Benevity Community  
 Encana Care Foundation  
 Logos Training Center Inc.  
 Canada Help.org

Dr. Sally Shifeng Zhao  
 Wei Dang  
 Yi Jin  
 Mubenga Abraham  
 Peter Plesche

## Recognition of Funders

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
 Employment and Social Development Canada  
 Alberta Government / Alberta Labour  
 Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission  
 Alberta Human Rights Commission  
 United Way of Calgary and Area  
 The Students' Union, University of Calgary  
 Federated Co-operatives Ltd.  
 Prosper Canada  
 Momentum Community Economic Development Society





