



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

# **BUILDING CONNECTIONS**

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# A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CEO

2018-19 HAS BEEN AN INCREDIBLE YEAR OF GROWTH FOR THE CALGARY IMMIGRANT EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY (CIES).

The cornerstone of our growth is **leadership with vision**. At CIES, we lead by example. Through our internal Leadership Development program and external Professional Development (PD) opportunities, we encourage leaders in our midst to grow and learn alongside our clients.

With the guidance of our Board of Directors and funding support from funders and donors, our Staff and Volunteer Team delivers 30+ programs under four streams: Language, Employment, Settlement, and Research. Outcome-based, client-centered services are offered at three CIES locations (a combined space of 40,000+ sq. ft), and online through our e-Learning portal. At CIES, “no” is never the answer. Every single client who comes through our door will receive professional assistance in a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment, either service on-site with CIES or through referral to our partner service providers.

Over the past 31 years, clients have benefitted from our collaborative approach to service delivery. In 2018-19, an even greater effort was made to expand and enhance our **partnership** with community organizations, businesses, and post-secondary institutions. By implementing effective methods of communication and outreach, our profile in the community has grown. This has resulted in strong partnerships and diversified funding sources, which in turn enabled us to make our services more accessible to a greater population of clients.

In 2018, we celebrated 30 years of service, which was a special opportunity to demonstrate CIES’ capacity to **serve and build our community**. Thanks to all who attended or supported our 30th Anniversary Gala on October 30, 2018.

Through the services offered at CIES, we build connections, which creates **TIES** between clients, staff, volunteers, community partners, employers, funders and donors. Going forward, we look forward to working together with all stakeholders for an inclusive and pluralistic society.

*Sally Zhao*

Dr. Sally Zhao  
Chief Executive Officer





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Kuldip Thind  
John Li, **Vice President**  
M'Liss Edwards, **President**  
Gita Boyd

Nalini Plesche  
Marilynne Smith  
Dr. Sally Zhao, **Chief Executive Officer**  
Peter Plesche

Ray Kristinson  
Philip Baker, **Treasurer + Secretary**  
*Not Pictured:* Gerry Robitaille,  
Rabail Qasir, Wilson Howe

# ADMIN TEAM LEADS

Eva Su  
Manager, HR  
+ Office Operations



Wei Dang  
Chief Financial Officer



Cliff McGuire  
Manager, Facility  
Operations



## OUR MISSION

An inclusive and pluralistic society

## OUR VISION

To provide innovative language education, customized employment training and placement, and integration services to newcomers and Canadians based on best practices

## OUR VALUES

- Caring** • We support others through compassion, understanding, and empathy
- Inclusion** • We welcome and embrace pluralism
- Empowerment** • We instill confidence and strength in ourselves and others
- Service** • We serve and build our community

*“As always, I thank all of our volunteers and staff for their dedication and commitment to the mission that the founders envisioned in 1988.*

*The years have shown that the ideals upon which this Society was founded have stood the test of time and helped many, many new Canadians. As one of the founders along Salim Sindhu and others, I am so happy and proud of this accomplishment.*

**-President M'Liss Edwards**

# OUR IMPACT

Our Society helps newcomers and Canadians by providing simplified solutions to complex life problems.

 **3**  
LOCATIONS  
(+ ONLINE LEARNING)

11 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS  
13 EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS  
4 SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS  
3 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**30+**  
PROGRAMS

 **195**  
STAFF

321 VOLUNTEERS  
**10,984**  
VOLUNTEER HRS

 CLIENTS SERVED THIS YEAR:  
**5,600+**



# LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Whether it's learning English in-class or online, we provide accessible options for all learners.



## LINC & LINC LITERACY

CIES offers free English classes under the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) banner, which includes traditional and literacy levels of instruction. In these classes, clients learn the basics of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills and gain the skills that are needed for healthy everyday communications.

576

new clients entered programming over the course of the year

63.5%

clients progressed by at least one benchmark

92

staff supported the learning and empowerment of newcomers (+8 volunteers who donated 386 hours of their time)

134

trips into the community for education and integration

72

clients accessed LINC Quality of Life counselling/intervention sessions

**Top countries attending class:**  
Syria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, India, Vietnam



Client Gender:

61%  
FEMALE

39%  
MALE

1,142

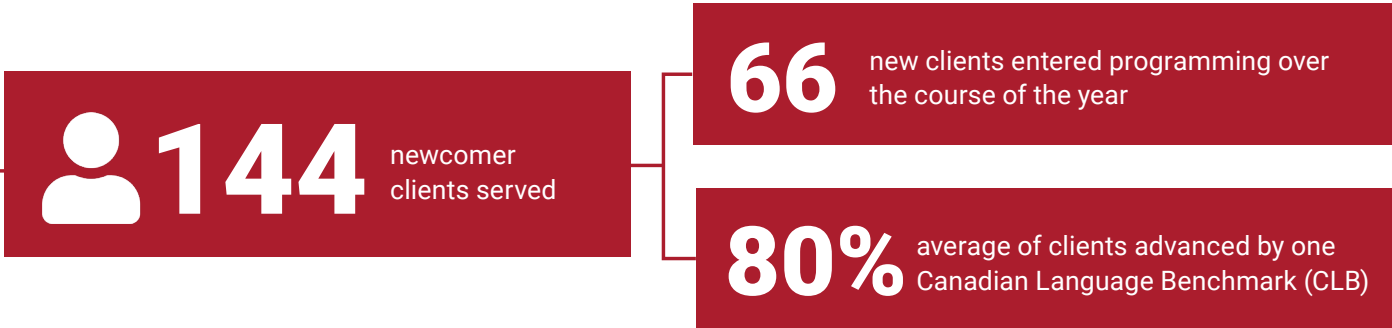
unique newcomer individuals accessed services in LINC & LINC Literacy classes (812 LINC, 330 LINC Literacy)



**Richard LeBlanc**  
Director, Language and Childcare

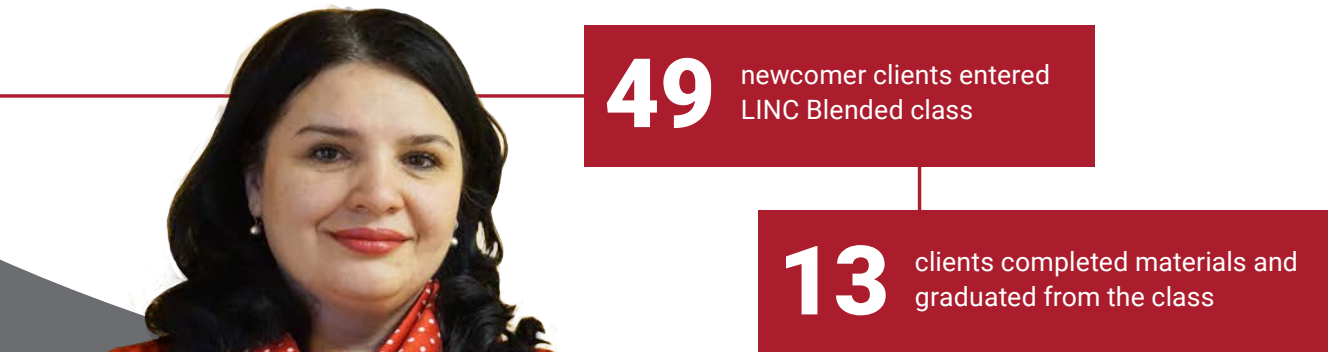
# LINC HOME STUDY

LINC Home Study is an English online program for learners who are unable to attend in-class instruction due to illness, disability, conflicting work schedules, lack of childcare, or distance. Clients receive weekly instruction from a teacher online and work through web-based activities. This program has been one of the top-performing LINC programs in Canada for the past 7 years.



# LINC BLENDED

LINC Blended is an online English program intended for learners who have barriers similar to those in LINC Home Study, but are still able to attend in-class instruction part-time. Each week, clients complete activities online before coming into the classroom one day per week to receive face-to-face instruction and talk with their peers.



Jana Ciobanu  
Manager, LINC Program

# ENGLISH FOR EMPLOYMENT: JOB SEARCH

English for Employment: Job Search (EEJS) is an English online program run entirely by volunteers. This self-directed course helps newcomers and pre-arrival candidates improve their English and job search skills to find work in Canada.



Top regions attending class: Alberta, Quebec, Ontario, India, Algeria



# WORKPLACE ONLINE RETENTION CLASS

Workplace Online Retention Class (WORC) offers English language learners an opportunity to improve their workplace communications skills and advance in their career. Weekly online guidance teaches workplace conversations, conflict management, etiquette, and more.

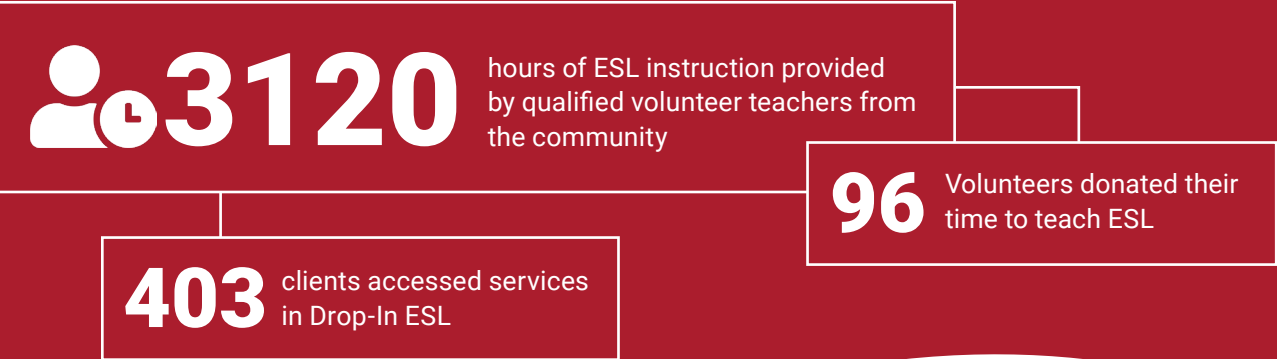


Colyn deGraaff  
Manager, e-Learning and Communications



# DROP-IN ESL

For 30 years, CIES has been offering flexible Drop-In ESL classes for landed immigrants, refugees, and Canadian citizens. With a series of available class-times, newcomers can choose what time best meets their busy schedule.



# LITERACY & BASIC ENGLISH

CIES provides this program to teach basic literacy skills to adult newcomers with low language competency and prepare them for life in Canada. Unlike LINC Literacy, this program is available to Canadian Citizens.



# READING ROOM

The Reading Room provides one-on-one tutoring for LINC clients struggling with reading and writing in English. This support is perfect for clients with learning disabilities or little education in their home countries.

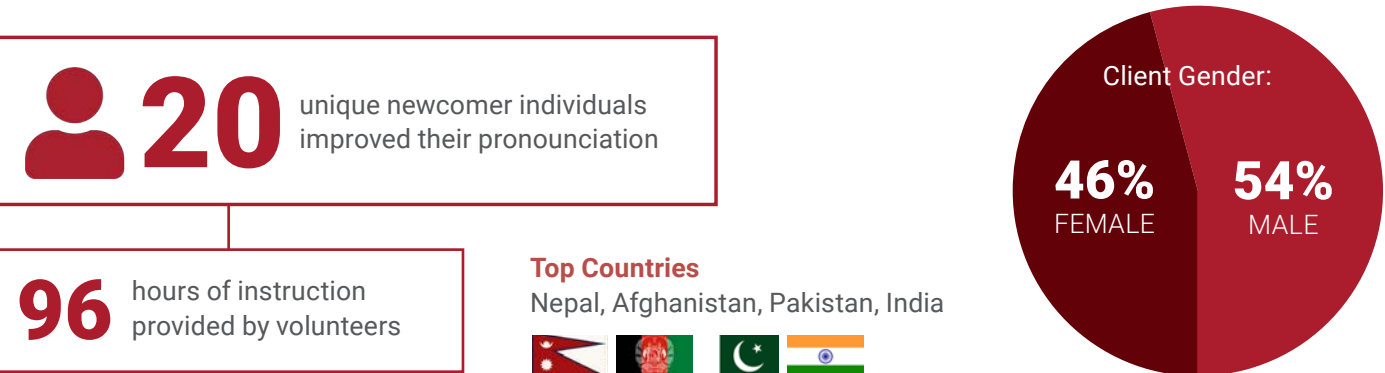


Priscilla Lee  
Manager, Drop-In ESL, Literacy, + e-Learning



# SAY WHAT? PRONOUNCIATION CLASS

CIES offers pronunciation classes to help newcomers improve their spoken English skills and build confidence in their daily communication with others. This program is offered to 3 different groups with each connected by the same language background (South Asian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern).





# COMPUTER ACCESS FOR LITERACY LEARNERS

Learning how to use a computer can be a challenge if you struggle with reading or writing in English.

The Computer Access for Literacy Learners (CALL) program equips literacy-level clients with the basics of using a computer. Classes are beginner-friendly, hands-on, and easy to follow.

**86%** of clients reported having more confidence using technology

**100%** of clients indicated the CALL classroom was a safe and welcoming environment

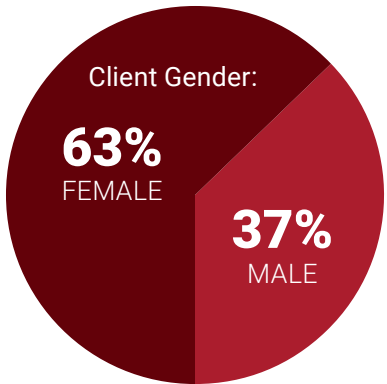
 **660+** volunteer hours contributed

**Top Countries**

Ethiopia, Eritrea, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Syria



 **102** newcomer clients served



# TESTIMONIALS

We asked our clients about how language programs at CIES have made a difference in their lives. Here's what they had to say.

## MARIA

After only one and a half months in the program, I gained enough confidence to learn to speak in another language! I am also improving skills like reading, writing, and listening in English. At the beginning I was a bit shy, but now I'm confident and hoping for the best.

## YING

It is a program very well structured, with excellent teachers, a great platform on the Internet, and has amazing direction and focus. For me, I have seen myself improve and teachers have helped me improve.

## HASSAN

Going to school for the very first time has not been an easy journey for Hassan, who lived through the Darfur genocide. He knew his alphabet but was unable to read or understand that the letters of the alphabet that he learned himself in Africa had sounds. After a year in class, Hassan ran into the classroom after a doctor's appointment. With excitement in his voice, he said because of class he was able to read, understand and fill out a medical form! He had never been so excited.



# EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

We help newcomers develop the fundamental skills needed to navigate the Canadian job market.



## EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING

CIES has been offering Employment Skills Training (EST) to newcomers and refugees for almost 20 years. In EST, clients receive training in four different categories (up to 80 hours in each) to help them secure work in Canada. These categories include job search skills, Canadian business communication, computer skills for job readiness, and seminars/networking opportunities.

 **74%** of EST clients found employment

 **26%** of clients went on to take further courses

**\$18,263** value of transit passes distributed to clients

**\$8,928** value of childcare for clients reimbursed

**Progression Rate**  
(Clients graduating per intake)  
Full-Time EST: 75%  
Part-Time EST: 73%

### EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

62+ EST events held throughout the year include:

- Presentations + Workshops
- First Aid + CPR
- Project Management Seminars
- Networking events
- Employer Appreciation Brunch
- RESP Event

**124** clients registered in EST  
(111 clients graduated from the program)




**Suman Khanal**  
Director, Employment, Settlement + Training



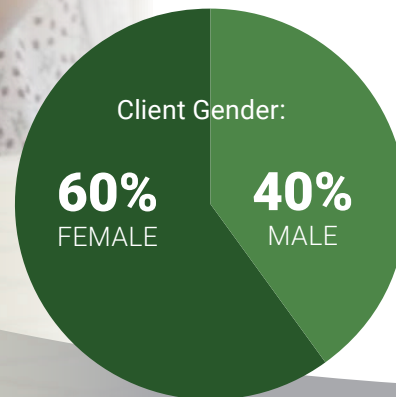
## EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH EMPLOYMENT

Empowering Youth through Employment (EYE) is available to newcomer youth and low-income Canadian Citizens between 15-30 years of age. Clients gain valuable experience through employability skills training, career counselling, and 12 weeks of practicum placement.

Minimum wage benefit support is provided for clients seeking employment through this program.

 **5** field trips per intake (approx.) | Includes career fairs, networking events, employment-related workshops

 **18-30** age range of clients



 **77%** of clients found employment

 **56** newcomer clients served

**Progression Rate**  
(Clients graduating per intake)  
84%

**Top countries attending class:**  
India, Syria, Philippines, Colombia



## CANADIAN WORKPLACE TRAINING

The Canadian Workplace Training (CWT) program is designed to help newcomers find entry-level jobs in one of three streams: **Childcare**, **Hotel Housekeeping**, and **Warehouse/Logistics training**. After choosing their area of focus, clients receive job-specific language instruction combined with skills training.

 **65%** of CWT clients found employment

 **35%** of clients went on to take further courses

**Progression Rate**  
(Clients graduating per intake)  
83%

**90** clients registered in CWT  
(49 clients graduated from the program)

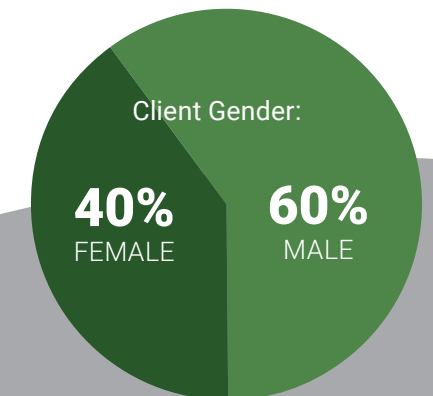
## ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Many newcomers arrive in Canada with a dream to start their own business. We can help make this dream a reality through our Entrepreneurship Development Training (EDT).

Through this program, clients learn about business management, registration, customer service, and hiring to increase their chances of entrepreneurial success.

 **25-55** average age range of clients

**Top countries attending class:**  
China, South Africa, Albania, Mexico

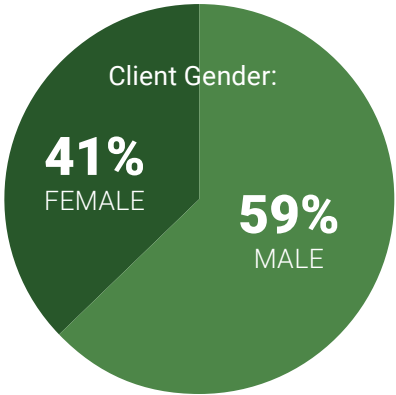
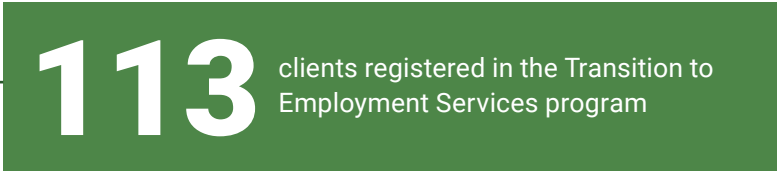


 **23** newcomer clients served

# TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Transition to Employment Services program offers personalized support for recipients of Employment Insurance (EI) within the past 5 years.

An individualized service plan is developed for each client. Financial help is provided accordingly to help purchase job equipment, daycare, and educational courses to improve their chances of finding a job.

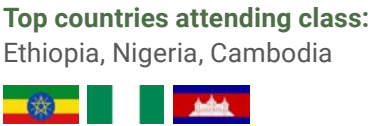
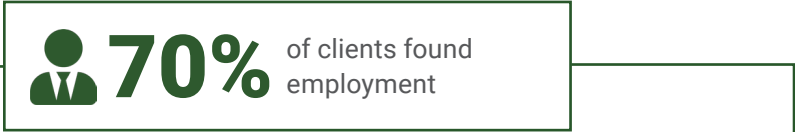


## HIGHLIGHTS

- Highlights of Transition to Employment Services from 2018-19 include:
- Partnership with Centre for Newcomers
  - 3 Career/Job Fairs

# FARM PROGRAM

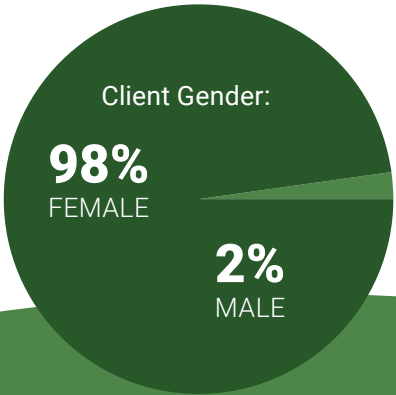
Foundations in Agricultural-based industries for Refugees and Migrants (FARM) builds upon a common area of newcomer interest and experience: gardening and agriculture. Through this program, clients are equipped to work in Canadian agricultural industries through in-class English language training, practical hands-on lessons, field trips, guest speakers and a 45 hour paid practicum.





# CLERICAL TRAINING

This program is designed to prepare newcomers for a clerical position in a modern Canadian office environment. Training is provided in-class and includes an optional 80-hour volunteer job placement where clients are able to gain valuable “hands-on” Canadian work experience.



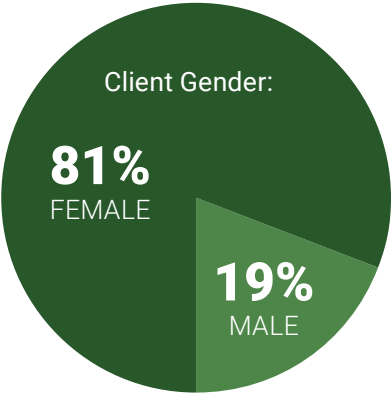
Top countries attending class:  
India, Philippines, Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan



Racine Diallo  
Manager, LINC Database + Training Programs

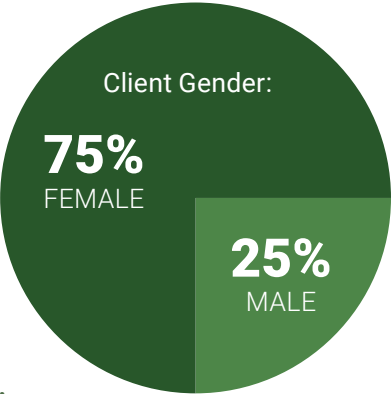
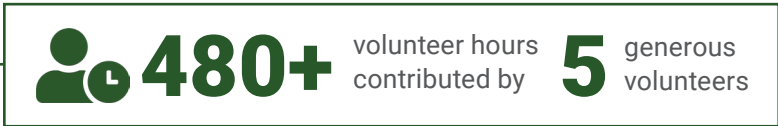
# ADVANCED COMPUTER TRAINING

This program helps clients learn the intermediate and advanced functions of Microsoft Office programs, including Word, Excel, and Powerpoint.





# ACCOUNTING TRAINING PROGRAMS

Accounting training available at CIES includes: **Basic Accounting**, **Advanced Accounting**, and courses to learn software including **Quickbooks** and **Sage 50**. These programs prepare clients for a career in the accounting field.



Top countries attending class:  
India, Philippines, China, Mexico, Pakistan



## BY PROGRAM:

- Basic Accounting: 113 Clients
- Advanced Accounting: 59 Clients
- Quickbooks: 80 Clients
- Sage 50: 34 Clients



# TESTIMONIALS

We followed up with some of our former clients to hear how our employment programs have helped them now that they're working in the community. Here's what they had to say.

## NASMA

I was struggling to find the right way to start my career here in Canada with no Canadian experience, not a very good English or even good interview skills and almost 30 years old and on top of that I am a single mother. This program was the saver for me when I had no hope. It helped me to build my confidence, improve my English conversation skills, build a very strong network, give the financial support to afford living and a daycare for my son! Thank you for changing our path!

## SARUNAS

I am very thankful for the opportunity to participate in CIES EYE program. Competent program instructors prepared me for a job market in Canada and helped me to gain more confidence in professional work environment. Without this program, I believe, it would be hard for young immigrants to be competitive through job search process and stand out from others. Proposed work placement became not only my permanent job, but also helped me to find my new career path. Thank you CIES team for making my dream come true.

# SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE


Integrating into Canadian society comes with many challenges. We provide solutions to overcome them.





# CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN

The Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) program provides age-appropriate activities every day which are designed to help them understand life in Canada. All activities are sensitive to each child’s past experiences and differences in development.

 **227** newcomer children served

**20** CNC sessions offered to children of our clients


**1:4** ratio of childminders to toddlers


**1:5** ratio of childminders to preschoolers

 **171** parents supports through CNC

# GARDENS BY REFUGEES AND OTHER NEWCOMERS WELCOMED

During the summer months, our clients come together to become caretakers of a community garden through the Gardens by Refugees and Other newcomers Welcomed (GROW) program. By sharing their gardening experience with others, clients are able to meet new people, build connections, and share in the experience of the annual Harvest Festival and building a community Cookbook that combines the garden’s ingredients and recipes from clients’ home countries.

 **37** garden beds seeded by newcomer clients

 **5** cooking videos showing traditional recipes



**Dr. Cesar Suva**  
Director, Research & Program Development



# REFUGEE & NEWCOMER EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Moving to another country can be a difficult and stressful experience. Newcomers often struggle with issues like culture shock, isolation, and anxiety. Refugee & Newcomer Emotional Wellness (ReNEW) provides one-on-one counselling for these challenges, as well as more serious issues like domestic abuse, alcoholism, and trauma.

**3000** volunteer hours contributed by 7 generous volunteers

**131** unique newcomer clients served

**90%** of clients who had multiple meetings had their needs met

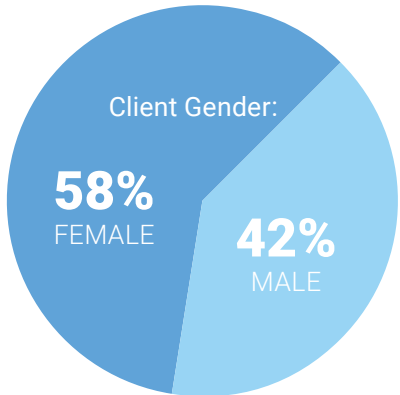


# WELCOME RESOURCES INFORMATION PROGRAM

The Welcome Resources Information Program (WRIP) is an information service that helps guide newcomers through the different programs and services available in Calgary.

**163** unique newcomer clients served

**Top countries attending class:**  
China, India, Pakistan, Syria, Nigeria







# RESEARCH & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing research allows us to identify and address arising needs in the community, and share best practices.



## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

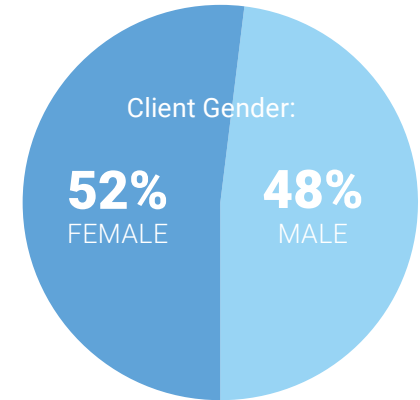
This program is designed to break down financial barriers faced by newcomers and economically challenged individuals through programming, workshops, and seminars. Programming available at CIES includes **MoneySmart Financial Literacy**, the **RESP Program**, and the **Tax Clinic Program**.

**708** clients served through MoneySmart Financial Literacy

**215** clients served through the Tax Clinic Program

**103** clients served through the RESP Program

Top countries attending class:  
China, Albania, Mexico, Iraq, Peru



## FARM IMPACT STUDY

Foundations in Agricultural-based industries for Refugees and Migrants (FARM) has a program delivery component, which prepares newcomers for work in the agricultural field, and a research component, which seeks to measure impact, improve accessibility, and identify trends.

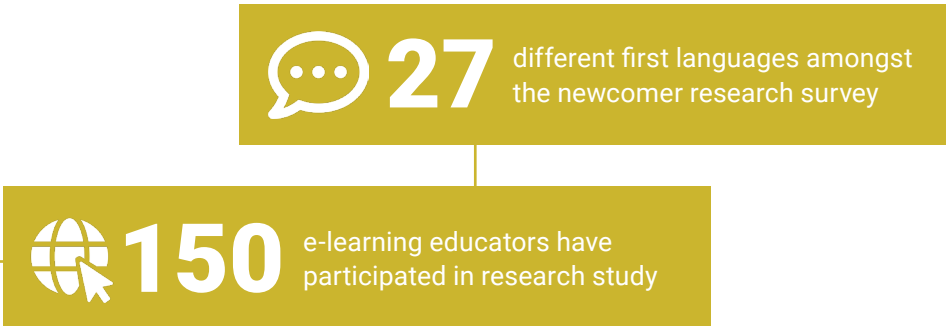
Because of high demand for workers in the agricultural sector, newcomers may experience hastened economic integration by working in this industry. In addition, many newcomers have previous experience or interest in gardening and agriculture. Engaging with this field in Canada can impact newcomers' successful integration.

Research will be conducted by CIES in partnership with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) to identify the impact of FARM from two different perspectives: newcomers, and industry partners/employers.



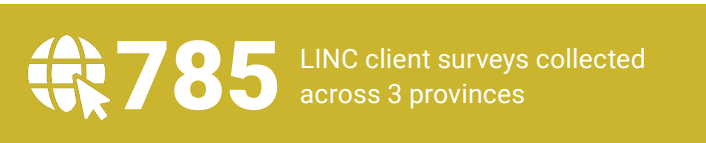
## NEWCOMER INTRODUCTION TO CLASSES ONLINE

Newcomer Introduction to Classes Online (NICO) is a research and service delivery project designed to accomodate the needs of online education. Through mixed media research, it is studying the barriers for newcomer education online and is developing an orientation course to improve digital literacy for online classes.



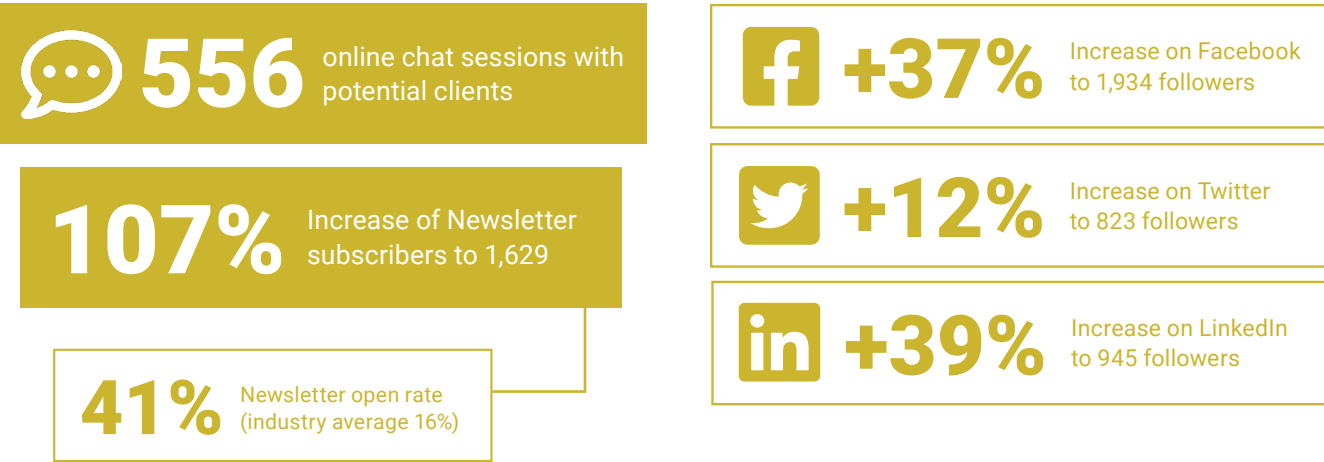
## RENEW PARTNERSHIP FOR BEST PRACTICES

The ReNEW Partnership for Best Practices is a research project which addresses the emotional wellness of newcomers across Canada's prairie provinces. With partnerships in Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg, its activities include the examination of emotional wellness issues, development of best practices gathered from literature and research, and the pilot of a new model of service.



## COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Communications Department at CIES supports the outreach and public relations activities of the Society and its programs. Throughout the year it provides internal and external communication support, social media posts, marketing and design, and oversees the organization's web assets.





# MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Colyn deGraff**, Manager, e-Learning + Communications  
**Priscilla Lee**, Manager, Drop-In ESL, Literacy + e-Learning  
**Racine Diallo**, Manager, LINC Database + Training  
**Sally Zhao**, Chief Executive Officer  
**Richard LeBlanc**, Director, Language + Childcare  
**Cesar Suva**, Director, Research + Program Development

**Wei Dang**, Chief Financial Officer  
**Eva Su**, Manager, HR + Office Operations  
**Clifford McGuire**, Manager, Facility Operations  
**Suman Khanal**, Director, Employment, Settlement + Training  
*Not Pictured: Jana Ciobanu*, Manager, LINC Program  
*Not Pictured: Olivia Chen*, Manager, NICO Program

# THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND DONORS:



Individual donors: Agnes Wong, Alison Edwards, Angela Kokott & Grant Pollock, Anne Spring, Barry Moore, Blair Kraus, Carol Neumann, Charan Lekhram, Chetan Sainath & Smitha Anand, Clifford McGuire, Colyn deGraaff, Daniel Ling, Din Ladak, Fiona Macelli, Frances Ugbaja, Irina Copil, Jana Ciobanu, Jeff Edwards, Joanne Hingley, Kassandra Wenaas, Katerina Palova, Kerry Howard, Lynne deGraaff, Maria MacMinn Varvos, Mervin Graham, Minaki Palat, Munazza Saeed, Nataliya Lyksherstova, Olivia Chen, Osa Eto, Oxana Cherednik, Patrick Grant Sheldrake, Peter Jarmics, Philip Baker, Rob MacInnis, Sandy & Mayssoun Hniedi, Suman Khanal, Suzanne Clavelle, Wei Dang, Whitney Loewen & Jason Kang, Yu Hai Zhang & Lin Na Li, Zack Fu & Sally Zhao





Visit us online at  
[immigrant-education.ca](http://immigrant-education.ca)

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