





2023/2024

Impact Report

 101 - 319 Selby Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 2R4

 T. (250) 753-6911

 info@cvims.org
www.cvims.org



@CVIMSnanaimo

Vision

We ensure that immigrants and diverse peoples flourish in this community.

Mision

We are leaders in providing services to our community, with a focus on newcomers. We are committed to promoting the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and respect for all peoples.

With the respectful acknowledgement that the CVIMS community is located on the Traditional Territories of Snuneymuxw and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations.

Table of Content

- 03** Board of Directors
- 04** Message from the President
- 05** Message from the Executive Director
- 06** 2023 - 2024 Overview
- 07** Financials
- 9** Settlement
- 14** Language
- 17** Family Programs
- 21** Employment
- 24** Community

Board of Directors



President
Mark Seneviratne



Interim Vice President
Eun Jung (EJ) Jang



Treasurer
Gavin Lin



Interim Secretary
Arooj Shah

Message from the President

A Transformative Year for CVIMS

This year has been a landmark for CVIMS, marked by significant growth and expanded services for the Central Vancouver Island community. Our diverse offerings - from youth workshops and resume writing sessions to women's resilience groups and job fairs - continue to empower newcomers, helping them achieve success and integration.

This year's standout event was the Newcomer Wellness Fair, a celebration of health and wellness. Featuring a range of local vendors, this event was a testament to our dedication to fostering a vibrant, supportive community.

On February 24th, our Board and Management team convened to chart a strategic direction for CVIMS. It was the first strategic planning session since 2018 when our organization faced different dynamics and challenges. Through a comprehensive review of our current and future landscape, we established four key pillars that will guide our priorities for the next two years.

We also bid a heartfelt farewell to two of our dedicated board members, Shauna Debodt and Yee Shi. Our diligent secretary for six years, Shauna, played a crucial role in maintaining our board's efficiency with her meticulous minute-taking and organizational skills.

Our Executive Director, Mikaela Torres, deserves special recognition for skillfully navigating our unique challenges, securing additional funding, and expanding our workspace. Her leadership has been pivotal to our continued success.

Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to every staff member and volunteer for your unwavering dedication to CVIMS and its mission. Your hard work and commitment are the backbone of our organization.



Message from the Executive Director

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for our collective achievements at CVIMS. This year has truly been transformative, with our unified efforts propelling us to new heights in supporting newcomers.

Key highlights include:

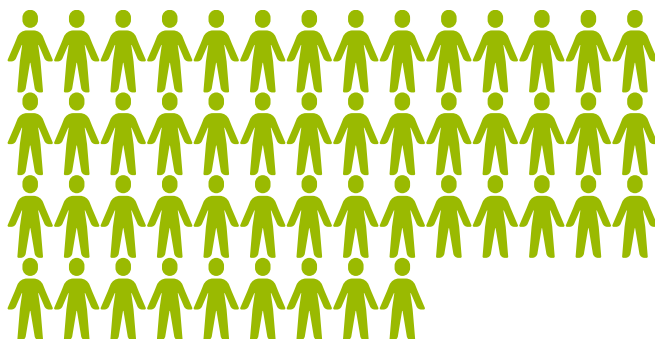
- **Settlement:** We assisted over 2,700 clients from more than 100 countries. Our dedicated Settlement Team developed personalized plans and maintained vital partnerships, emphasizing our commitment to facilitating smooth transitions and successful integration into our communities.
- **Resettlement:** Our Resettlement program excelled, resettling over 175 Government-Assisted Refugees. The expansion of our team and the strengthening of community partnerships were crucial in providing secure housing and employment opportunities, demonstrating the power of collaborative support.
- **HIPPY:** Despite the challenges, the transition to virtual delivery allowed us to continue empowering 33 families and celebrating their achievements, including a notable success story shared on a national platform.
- **Settlement Workers in Schools:** Significant strides were made in assisting 292 families with navigating the educational system.
- **Childminding:** Our program supported 56 children, enabling their parents to focus on learning English.
- **Language Team:** We welcomed over 300 students, enhanced year-round support, and integrated innovative assessment tools.
- **Employment:** Our program evolved to better meet the needs of newcomers and engaged the community through initiatives like the Newcomer Wellness Fair and Indigenous training.

These successes are a testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners. As we look ahead, let us build on this momentum with renewed enthusiasm and a shared vision for continued success.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and outstanding work.



2023 - 2024 Overview



Total clients: 2776

Immigration class



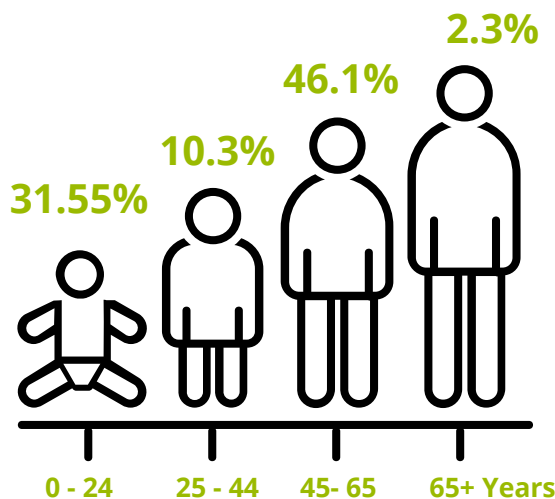
Temporary Foreign Worker: 17.5%



CUAET: 14.9%



International Students: 11.1%



100+ Countries of origin

- #1: Ukraine
- #2: India
- #3: China
- #4: Philippines
- #5: Syria



Total families: 1103

CVIMS Financials

2023 - 2024 CVIMS Financials

Revenue	2022-2023	2023-2024
Federal Funding	\$2,355,780	\$4,125,676
Provincial Funding	\$308,821	\$426,532
Other Funding	\$183,462	\$35,722
Grants and Special Projects	\$35,902	\$80,383
Fees for Service, Donations, Memberships	\$65,081	\$42,101
Total Revenue	\$2,949,046	\$4,710,413

Expenses	2022-2023	2023-2024
Wages and Benefits	\$1,891,250	\$2,573,868
Direct Program Expenses	\$470,456	\$1,327,942
Capital Purchases		\$260,135
Office and General Expenses	\$414,354	\$485,526
Total Expenses	\$2,776,060	\$4,647,472

Settlement

Settlement Overview

Supporting newcomers settling into the Nanaimo, Ladysmith, and Parksville area remains the primary focus of our Settlement Team. Our services play a crucial role in assisting newcomers to adapt to their new community, addressing immediate needs upon arrival and fostering long-term integration. This contributes significantly to the overall well-being and success of their settlement journey. Some key achievements this year include:

- Assisting over 2700 clients with settling in the Nanaimo area
- Working closely with families originating from over a 100 countries
- Developing personalized plans to navigate BC’s healthcare, education, legal system, and government services
- Sustaining partnerships with organizations such as Bikes for Kids, Brain Injury Society, Volunteer Nanaimo, Nanaimo Museum, Nanaimo Art Gallery, Nanaimo Foodshare, BC Hydro, Vancouver Island Library, Eco Wildwood Forest, Telus, and Vancouver Island University, to name a few.
- Establishing new collaborations with Island Health Community Dental Program, Crystal Lee of Relocal, and MKS Immigration Lawyers.
- Collaborating to deliver specialized groups including a Women’s Art Therapy Group and a Men’s Groups with clinical counsellors from VICCIRS, No Fear Counselling, Integral Counselling and other private providers.



Total clients: 2776



Total families: 1103



Permanent Residents: 39.6 %



Work Permits: 24.2%



International Students: 12.0%

Activities



Resettlement Program

The CVIMS RAP program exceeded expectations by successfully resettling over 175 Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs), far surpassing our initial target of 50 clients annually. These GARs arrived in Nanaimo from diverse countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, Eritrea, Ghana, Congo, Syria, Venezuela, and Honduras. More than 50% of our RAP clients secured part-time or full-time employment during this period.



Government Assisted
Refugees: 175



52 Housing Units

Throughout the reporting year, the RAP team secured housing for 52 units, accommodating both families and individuals. Our program has strengthened its partnerships within the community, establishing positive relationships with property management groups and private landlords who generously accommodate our clients. We are deeply thankful for the invaluable support of our community partners, whose collaboration has been essential in our efforts.

Community support remained pivotal, with volunteers furnishing homes for over 50 households with donated furniture. The RAP team expanded to include 3 RAP Workers and 1 Housing Worker, collectively fluent in over 10 languages besides English. Their dedicated support has been instrumental in assisting GARs integrate into the Nanaimo community. RAP's advocacy efforts are evident through transparent processes, streamlined operations, and effective communication practices, enhancing support for GARs in Nanaimo.



Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)



This past year has highlighted the challenges faced by newcomer families as they navigate educational systems and strive to secure enrollment within catchment areas. Complex bureaucratic processes and limited availability of spaces often lead to anxiety and uncertainty among parents seeking the best educational opportunities for their children.



clients



school registrations

Our Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) team has been pivotal in addressing these challenges. They have provided crucial support to 292 newcomer families, guiding them through enrollment criteria, deadlines, and documentation requirements. Thanks to their dedicated efforts, these families now have equitable access to educational resources and opportunities within our catchment areas.



Beyond enrollment assistance, SWIS creates opportunities for newcomers to build friendships and feel at home both inside and outside of the school. Together with our community partners, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring every child receives the support they need to thrive.

Language

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) celebrated another successful year, welcoming over 300 students from diverse backgrounds around the world.

Throughout this fiscal year, our program conducted a total of 391 assessments with three certified Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) assessors. These assessments included 255 IRCC-funded, 93 BC-funded, 40 for clients’ personal purposes, and three for employment programs. The majority utilized the Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLBPT), with plans to integrate the new Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Assessment (CLBPA) more extensively in the future.

With IRCC approval, our LINC classes transitioned to year-round sessions, ensuring uninterrupted learning opportunities for our students. Responding to increased demand, we introduced additional Literacy and LINC Level 1 classes alongside our existing offerings. All LINC instructors completed training on Avenue, our online learning management system up to Stage 2, enabling students to conveniently study from home.



Total assessments: 391



Total students:



Mother tongue



Ukrainian: 23%

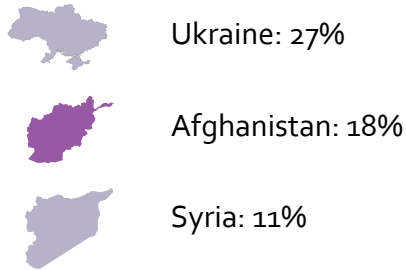


Dari: 19%



Arabic: 17%

Top 3 Countries:
Language Assessments



Beyond classroom instruction, LINC students actively participated in various events, workshops, and information sessions. In May 2023, they took part in the launch event for the booklet of the “Sneneymuxw, a Welcome to Newcomers” at the Nanaimo Museum. Some students showcased their learning by performing a Snuneymuxw prayer recital, offering them insights into Indigenous history, culture, and community.

CVIMS takes great pride in supporting our students on their language learning journeys and being a cornerstone in their settlement experiences.

LINC Activities



LINC year-end celebration at Bowen Park on June 23, 2023

Family Programs

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

Home Instruction for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is an evidenced based program for preschool children. HIPPY believed that the parent, primarily the mother, is the first and best teacher of the child. The parent receives instructions from a Home Visitor and the parent teaches the child using a structured curriculum. HIPPY strengthens families and communities by empowering parents to actively participate in Canadian society and prepare their children for their success in school and life. One parent shared,



10th
year



6 countries
of origin

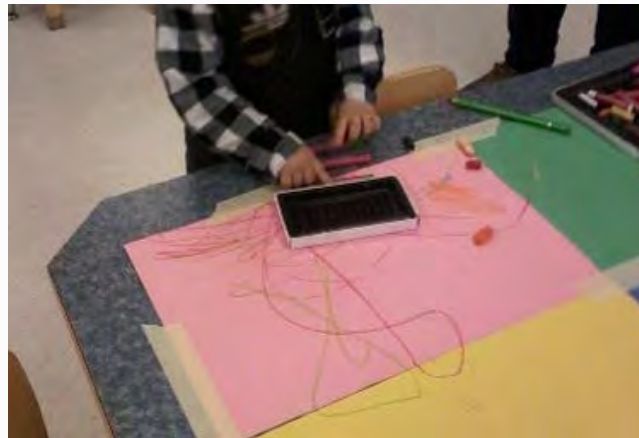
"I really appreciated to be part of this program to connect with other moms. Sometimes I feel isolated because of different backgrounds but participating HIPPY program and connecting with other moms makes me feel better. I feel much confident about being a mom in a different country"

-- HIPPY Parent

The monthly group meetings give the parents the opportunity to share information regarding community resources, share personal experiences, connect to other parents in the community and socialize. Also, at each group meeting, the parents have the opportunity for personal development and enrichment through presentations by professional guest speakers.

Childminding

The Childminding Program at CVIMS has played a pivotal role in supporting parents learning English as an additional language. By providing a safe and stimulating environment for 56 children, we enable parents to attend English classes with peace of mind, knowing their children are engaged in meaningful activities. This support enhances parents' language acquisition by allowing them to focus on their studies and boosts their confidence in navigating educational systems and integrating into the community.



Children and staff actively engage with Early Learning Framework, guiding their exploration and documentation of learning experiences. A notable highlight has been an ongoing mark-making activity, nurturing children's creativity and communication skills through drawing and experimenting with various materials. This initiative has been enriched by our collaboration with a community Early Childhood Pedagogist, ensuring our program meets diverse developmental needs.

We take pride in the inclusive and nurturing environment we have cultivated, where every child's emotional well-being is cherished and supported.

Youth Connections



Over the past, we have launched the Youth Connections program in alignment with Nanaimo's Youth Resilience Strategy to combat gun and gang violence. Securing funding and developing this initiative in partnership with the city and other stake-holders was a significant achievement. Six youth mentors were trained and are now ready to lead future activities in our community, focusing on guiding and supporting youth.

The program aims to empower young people through mentorship and constructive engagement, fostering resilience and reducing risks associated with violence. By providing meaningful opportunities for youth involvement, we are working to enhance community safety and well-being.

Looking ahead, we are dedicated to expanding and improving the Connections program. With continued support from partnerships and the community, we are committed to making a positive impact on youth resilience in Nanaimo.

Employment

Employment

The Employment programs at CVIMS underwent significant changes in 2023-2024. After serving as a subcontractor to the WorkBC program since its inception in April 2019, CVIMS concluded its role at the end of July 2023. We are honoured to have assisted our client in finding employment, conducting credential assessments, and accessing training during this period.



Responding to client feedback and concerns, CVIMS received approval from our funder to provide additional employment counselling support to newcomers with Permanent Residency status. Additionally, in January, we expanded our team by hiring a Newcomer Employment Specialist to support individuals with Work Permits, Study Permits, Naturalized Citizenship, and Refugee Claimants.

Key highlights of our activities include:

- Transfer of 52 cases from Work BC services concluded in July 2023
- Assistance provided to 4 stream-2 and, 7 stream-3 clients under CPSI
- Over 50 clients connected with the Newcomer Employment Specialist from January to March through BCSIS
- 174 IRCC clients received assistance with resume writing, cover letters, interview skills, and workshops.



Job Placements



Financial Support



Employment Assistance



Workshops

Employment



We continued our partnership with the Immigrant Employment Council of BC to deliver the Applied Skills Curriculum to Empower Newcomer Development (ASCEND) program. Furthermore, we established new partnerships with community employers such as Island Health, VIU Pathways to Trades, RBC, Tim Horton, and the Canadian Armed Forces.

These changes reflect our commitment to enhancing employment support for newcomers and ensuring their successful integration into Canadian society.

"In the Career Path Program, I attended a program called ASCEND, which helped me realize there were many important aspects I was missing when it came to finding a job in Canada. I gained valuable insights from interviews with HR professionals and learned effective workplace communication through helpful video examples. This has been incredibly beneficial for me."

"I had numerous opportunities to practice speaking English during classes, which is often limited for immigrants outside of a workplace setting. Additionally, I participated in multiple mock interviews, and the more I practiced, the more comfortable and confident I became. Thank you, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society! I couldn't have gotten this awesome job without all of your help."

Community

Community

During the past fiscal year, CVIMS has actively advanced community inclusivity and cultural understanding through several key initiatives:

- **Newcomer Wellness Fair:**

Attracted over 250 newcomers and featured more than 40 organizations, Indigenous communities, and dignitaries. The fair provided access to essential services, recreational resources, and networking opportunities in a welcoming setting.

- **Indigenous Booklet Launch:**

"Snuneymuxw, a Welcome to Newcomers," authored by William A. White and Kevin A. Brand, was launched at the Nanaimo Museum. The event, featuring a ceremonial celebration and diverse cuisine, promoted Snuneymuxw culture and encouraged cross-cultural dialogue.



- **Bikes For Kids Partnership:**

Provided bicycles to children and families in need, promoting community connectivity.

- **Truth & Reconciliation:**

We conducted training sessions for staff and clients to enhance understanding of Indigenous history and culture.

- **Community Dialogues:**

Collaborated with Resilience BC to facilitate discussions on racism and prejudice, fostering greater awareness and inclusivity.

Our involvement in local events has strengthened connections with newcomers and the broader community. We look forward to continuing these efforts in the coming year.

Community

