

**IWC** IMMIGRANTS  
WORKING CENTRE

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020-  
2021





# OUR MISSION & VISION

## ● OUR MISSION

To deliver innovative models of integrated employment-focused settlement and language programming to support immigrants' success in a just and supportive Hamilton.

## ● OUR VISION

Immigrants achieve social and economic success as essential partners in Hamilton's prosperity.

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are so excited to share with all of you highlights from the year in review. 2021 was a remarkable year for IWC in so many ways. We experienced a significant transition in leadership, which ushered in the first Executive Director Claudio Ruiz-Pilarte, since our founder, Ines Rios retired. Claudio has received since his arrival overwhelming support from both the board and the staff to lead the organization. He and the staff embarked on a journey towards the IWC's renewed mission, vision, and strategic objectives. The organization embraced new challenges including a strengthening of the virtual operation model adopted during the pandemic and the implementation of innovative projects that amplify our impact. During this unprecedented time, all the staff has continued serving the Hamilton immigrant community with the same dedication and commitment that has characterized the organization from its inception. Some of our accomplishments during this period include the following:

- Successful negotiation of a new collective agreement
- Enhancements to MyIWC database to implement an effective flow of internal referrals
- Technological improvements – new computers, cameras, and cybersecurity tools
- Significant improvements in virtual service model and protocols
- Effective implementation of a virtual operation model to give clients more options

Change has been our only constant over the past couple of years and this year is no different. We are very excited to share that Luc Bonaventure Amoussou will step into the role of Chair of the Board after the AGM and we are already so grateful to him. We want to express our deepest thanks to all those who volunteered their time and energy to the IWC, with special mention to 2021-2022 Board of Directors for their contributions.

IWC continues to be in solid financial health. As a not-for-profit organization, our goal is to provide excellent services to newcomers to Canada while maintaining the financial strength and transparency this Board is committed to.

In closing, it has been an absolute pleasure to get to work alongside such dedicated and talented IWC staff, volunteers. We want to express our gratitude to them for all the resiliency and adaptability they demonstrated, especially during the last two years. We are looking forward to another year of exciting endeavors ahead.

# OUR BOARD

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## Current

Gentiana Collaku  
Miekela Singh  
Erin Hallock  
Krista D'Aoust

Serah Jacob,  
Rebecca Smyth  
Luc Bonaventure Amoussou  
Kim Zarzuela

Blake McCall  
Nidhi Nagori, CPA

## 2021

John Ariyo

Gentiana Rezhda

Maria Antelo



# OUR IMPACT

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**3919** unique newcomers

received support with their  
**settlement, employment**  
and **language training** needs



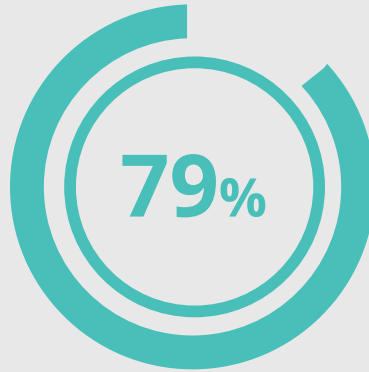
**OVER 13000** services were delivered across all IWC programs



**IWC CLIENTS** reported improvement using English to engage in **social and community activities & services**



reported improvement in using **English to connect with others**



reported improvement in **speaking English** and **understanding English conversations**



reported improvement in their **confidence using English**

I can **find answers** to my questions **make informed choices** about how to adapt to my **new life in Canada.**

## KRYSTYNA'S STORY

Krystyna came to IWC seeking assistance with her Verification of Status for her citizenship application after being in Canada for 30 years. She faced a number of complicated roadblocks while on her journey to citizenship including not having a passport. The pandemic posed another barrier as she had to navigate her citizenship application through virtual services. After many unsuccessful trials, Krystyna sought out IWC's services at the last minute.

There was a tight timeline to have Krystyna's paperwork submitted yet she did not have access to the technology required to submit her application. Fortunately, Settlement Services provided Krystyna with computer access, a quick how-to session, technical support, and helped review her IRCC letter.

**After three decades of residency, Krystyna successfully received her Canadian Citizenship!**



9537

front-line settlement  
services were delivered to

2717

newcomers seeking  
support in meeting  
immediate settlement needs

1654 

newcomers had their **needs assessed** and **made plans** for settlement in Hamilton

37 group  
sessions



delivered to **434 participants**, providing key settlement information and increasing access to community supports and services



I can leverage my **international skills** and **experience** at work in **Canada**, and **contribute** to the **local economy**.

## ARINOLA'S STORY

Arinola joined the NSCO-Project Management program to pursue a career in her original occupation as a Supply Chain professional and to get certified as Project Manager.

She had extensive experience as a Variety Control Analyst in her home country of Nigeria. Her dream was to start a career in the Canadian Supply Chain and came to IWC for support and direction.

Arinola was actively looking for a job in her field but struggled due to lack of Canadian credentials. She was referred to the NSCO program where she received intensive sector orientation training, covering all aspects such as qualifications and education requirements, certification and more. Arinola successfully earned her Foundation and Advanced Project Management Certification and now has a **full-time job as a Sourcing Analyst with a large Canadian supply chain company.**

# EMPLOYMENT



**74**  
**work-ready**  
**certifications**  
including **GH WHMIS**  
and **Workers Health**  
and **Safety**

**102** newcomer participants  
in IWC's **networking**  
and **job fair activities**



**1076**  
newcomers accessed  
**specialized employment**  
**support services**

Since completing the  
Newcomers in Supply Chain  
Operations Program (NSCO):

**100%**

of participants agreed that  
since joining the program  
their competency in Project  
Management had increased.

**94%**

of participants agreed that  
they had increased knowledge  
of developing a targeted,  
industry-specific resume.

**100%**

agreed that they have  
increased knowledge of how  
to develop a job plan and  
achieve their career goals.

I can build my **confidence** and **knowledge** about workplace language and **Canadian workplace culture.**

## SABRA'S STORY

Sabra arrived in Canada from Tunisia and came to IWC in search for help with improving her English skills. Sabra recalls feeling self-conscious about her English and used this as a motivator to enroll in IWC Academy classes. She joined the Academy in 2021 in hopes of building her English-speaking skills and achieving her dream of becoming a teacher in Canada.

Today, Sabra is giving back to her community as an active member of the Ontario Tunisian Association, helping French school children receive free support classes. More recently, she assisted in hosting a free iftar event for Tunisian students in the GTA and Gatineau.

With her determination and encouragement from her Academy instructors, Sabra will begin studying at the University of Ottawa in September 2022. This amazing accomplishment will bring her one step closer to **reaching her goal of becoming a school teacher.**



# 357

clients supported through LINC to Work courses to develop **English communication skills for the workplace**



## LANGUAGE

# 43%

of participants progressed at least one Canadian Language Benchmark in **LINC to Work** courses

# 69%

of students progressed in IWC Academy classes, improving their **reading, writing, listening and speaking skills**

# 69

newcomers gained Ontario Secondary School Credits through **IWC Academy** with a total of **123 credits earned**

I feel **supported** and **empowered** to build connections and grow my network in my **local community**.

## SUAD'S STORY

Suad arrived to Hamilton as a refugee from Sudan in 2014, having to leave behind her 6 children. She initially sought support with her immigration and settlement needs but ended up cultivating a deeper relationship with IWC over the years.

The pandemic was a stressful time for Suad. She was let go from her job and her family faced many challenges. When the Women's Gardening Group was created by the Community Connections team, Suad played a key role in helping the management of this initiative. The group had an amazing turn out where newcomer women had the chance to build lifelong friendships, grow their knowledge, and build gardening skills. It was an opportunity to connect with others and feel supported during a difficult time.

Since connecting with IWC, Suad has completed training to teach ESL, has become deeply involved with many community activities, and was able to **reunite with her family**.

**1958**  **hours**  
were volunteered **in total**



**COMMUNITY  
CONNECTION**

**36** **volunteers**  
donated their time and  
effort towards **IWC**  
**programs and services**

**250**  **newcomers**  
participated in a total of  
**64 sessions** designed to  
build connections while  
**developing skills** and  
**community information**

## ABOUT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

During the pandemic, staff at IWC saw a growing need for clients to connect with their community. Factors such as isolation and mental health posed challenging barriers for newcomer clients.

In response to this, the Community Connections program was developed. The program was created to help clients grow their networks, enhance skills, and build community partnerships.

The program became a way for clients to connect with others who may have a similar story to theirs, share their journey, all while learning about how to integrate into a new city.

I feel **confident** that my child is **enhancing** their vocabulary and **improving** their cognitive skills.

## ALI'S STORY

Ali joined IWC's Childcare program in June 2021 as a toddler. This was his first time being in a daycare setting.

During EduBox sessions, Ali and his entire family would join in. They say that they are also learning. When speaking, Ali has shown that he can easily switch between Arabic and English. He very organized and independent – being able to complete puzzles on his own. Since joining the Childcare Program, Ali has learned his primary colours, can count in English and is beginning to recognize his own name!

It has been so rewarding to see Ali meet his developmental milestones and work with his supportive family. **We can't wait to see what his future will bring!**



# CHILDCARE



were delivered to **74**  
**newcomer** families with  
a total of **125 children**

**86%** of parents  
reported that EduBox  
activities have **helped their  
children learn new skills**

**97%** reported  
that the EduBox program  
has given them ideas on how  
to **keep their children busy  
during the pandemic**

## THE EDUBOX PROGRAM

For the last two years, the CNC team has been offering an EduBox program for eligible families with young children.

Once a week, the team sends each family a box containing resources and supplies for engaging early year activities including information cards for parents. Every week, IWC's Early Childhood Educators meet with each family to deliver a virtual session.

Through this program, children enhance their knowledge, and learn new skills.



# OUR PARTNERS



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ACCESS Employment  
Access to Housing - ATH  
Adult Basic Education  
Advanced Welding Techniques Inc  
ASCY  
Brock University  
Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling  
Canadian Hearing Society  
Canadian Mental Health Association Hamilton  
Care for Nurses  
Catholic Family Services  
Catholic Cross Cultural Services  
Centre[3]  
Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara



Central Health Institute  
Children's Aid Society Hamilton  
City of Hamilton  
CNIB  
Conestoga College  
College Boreal  
Colombian Refugees Association  
Community Legal Education Ontario  
Commercial Heavy Equipment Training Ltd.  
Community Action Program for Children  
Compass Community Health Centre  
Contact Hamilton  
Credit Counselling Society  
Circle of Friends  
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board  
Empowerment Squared  
Five Save Life  
Finishing Trades Institute  
Good Shepherd Centre  
Goodwill Employment Services  
Greater Hamilton Health Network  
Green Linings  
Green Venture  
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce  
Halton Multicultural Council  
Hamilton-Brantford Building Trades  
Hamilton Community Foundation  
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic  
Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion





Hamilton Chamber of Commerce  
Hamilton Food Share  
Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council  
Hamilton Police Services  
Hamilton Public Library  
Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre  
Hamilton Wentworth District School Board  
Hamilton Wentworth District Catholic School Board  
Holiday Helpers  
Housing Help Centre  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
Iron Workers Local 736  
Interval House/Women's Centre of Hamilton  
LiUNA Local 837  
Legal Aid Clinic  
LUSH  
LUSO Community Services  
Matthew House Toronto  
McGraw Hill  
McMaster University  
Men's Addiction Services Hamilton  
Mishka Social Services  
Mohawk College  
Neighbour 2 Neighbour  
Niagara Furniture Bank  
Nipissing University  
Nisa Homes  
NPowerCanada  
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Ontario Energy Support Program  
Ontario Works, Hamilton  
Ontario Works, Halton  
Out of the Cold Hamilton  
Path Employment  
Punjabi Community Health Centre  
Redeemer University  
Refuge Centre for Newcomer Health  
Schulich Executive Education Centre, York University  
Service Canada  
Skills For Change  
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton  
St. Charles Adult Education Centre  
St. Joseph's Hospital  
St. Matthew's House  
Stoney Creek Community Food Bank  
Trios College  
United Way Halton & Hamilton  
United Way Simcoe Muskoka  
Upskill Institute  
VPI  
Woman Abuse Working Group  
Welcome Inn  
Wesley Urban Ministries  
Wilfrid Laurier University  
Womankind Addiction Services  
Workforce Planning Hamilton  
YMCA of Hamilton, Burlington, Brantford  
YWCA of Hamilton



THANK YOU TO

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

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Aaron Penciner  
Albany Sutherland  
Amorena Minculescu  
Caitlyn Groot  
Carlie Pagliacci  
Cole Shulman  
Denise Fernandez  
Donald Muzofa  
Ethan Raizman  
Farhan Mall  
Faten Hussein  
Gajani Baskaranathan  
Garima Sharma

Halle Gibson  
Jared Bongard  
Josh Joseph  
Juhainah Hussein  
Komal Kaur  
Laura Hernandez  
Louai Moghrabi  
Mariel Lopez  
Mattheus Roest  
Matthew Chau  
Maya George  
Momal Khan  
Narissa Horning

Nicola De Vries  
Reade Bai  
Rima Channan  
Rosemary Howarth,  
SSND  
Sean Mekli  
Shilpi Walia  
Simi Solayus  
Sister Roseann's  
Sulemane Saaka  
Wilkesse Dorcinvil

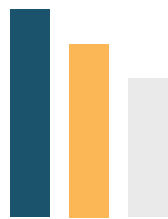


THANK YOU TO

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Laura Fenwick-Sehl  
Lauren Dayes  
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Aqueduct Foundation  
Yanyan Xu

# 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT



[VIEW HERE](#)

# OUR FUNDERS

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Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



Ontario  
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario  
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United Way  
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