

Inspiring

DREAMS

Accelerating Success







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Welcome

from the **Board Chair**

The CIWA Board of Directors has diligently worked over this last year to strengthen its foundation, beginning with our updated bylaws approved by our membership at the 2023 AGM, and subsequently ratified in July 2023. In parallel with that, we have worked to strengthen our policies and better align our Board oversight responsibilities. Last but not least, we are proud of the work we are doing on Board succession to ensure that the Board and committee volunteers better reflect the client communities we serve and can share their own immigrant experiences.

I could not be prouder to watch this organization grow and embrace the future. I would like to say a special thank you to our CEO, Paula Calderon, for her exceptional leadership and to the CIWA leadership team for your dedication and commitment to the important work we do. To our staff and volunteers: we couldn't do it without you. Thank you to my fellow Board and Committee members. You are leaders in your Board work and in the community. You give countless hours of your time and lead with vision and positivity.

All this would not be possible without the continuous support from funders, donors, and partners. We are proud of the work we do, and grateful for your continued support of CIWA. CIWA is truly making a difference in the lives of immigrant women and their families.

Sandy O'Connor
Board Chair

With record numbers of immigrants coming to Canada and to Calgary, CIWA continues to make a difference in the lives of over 25,500 individuals and their families. CIWA's work has perhaps never been more important than it is today.

As the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association completes the second year of its 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, CIWA is hitting its stride. The first year of the Strategic Plan was about building a strong foundation upon which we could grow, and that hard work is paying off. The accreditation earned from the Canadian Accreditation Council was an important step in that journey. The accreditation process was an enormous undertaking, and the outcome an enormous success. CIWA is well set up to move forward and realize our mission of becoming a national leader in transitioning immigrant women to success in Canada.

A Word

from our **CEO**

Another year gone by, and we find ourselves wondering where time went. As we sit back, only for a while, and reflect on the last twelve months, we realize how much we accomplished as an organization and how inspired we all are by the work that CIWA does.

We had a busy 2023/24 indeed. This past year, we saw the culmination of an arduous but rewarding accreditation process that resulted in a very satisfactory outcome. In October 2023, CIWA received a three year accreditation through the Canadian Accreditation Council for its governance, management practices and intervention-based programming. In addition, internal transformation and continuous professional development occupied a big part of our focus during the year, and continue to position us to build our capacity and grow our skills and resources into the future. By forging a steady path towards growth and expansion, we can truly be leaders in transitioning immigrant women to success in Canada.

I continue to be inspired by our clients, the women and families that embrace change and welcome the support that CIWA has to offer. Their stories of perseverance, ambition and adaptability are what make us stronger each day. The passion that every single CIWA staff member puts into their work, the energy that inundates our aging walls is the fuel that keeps us going despite the challenges that we are constantly facing. Although this year was like many others in some ways, increased demands and more complex needs in our community necessitate that we remain steadfast and focused on addressing evolving client needs, delivering outcomes, measuring progress, innovating with a growth mindset, and improving our communications processes. The strides we have made towards our digital transformation goals are starting to bear fruit, and we continue to measure

and demonstrate the far-reaching impact of our work with those who place their trust in us.

I would also like to thank our staff, Board of Directors, funders, partners, volunteers, and supporters. You make it possible for us to serve immigrant women with the targeted and customized approach that characterizes our organization. You have shown us that you want to join us on this journey of inspiring dreams and accelerating success for immigrant and refugee women, girls and their families.

Paula Calderon
Chief Executive Officer



Discovering CIWA

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association has been inspiring dreams and accelerating success since its inception in 1982. A non-profit charitable organization, CIWA is a beacon of hope for the thousands of immigrant and refugee women, girls and their families who make Canada their home.

OUR VISION

**Empower immigrant women.
Enrich Canadian society.**

OUR MISSION

**National leader in transitioning
immigrant women to success in
Canada.**

OUR VALUES

**Equity. Excellence. Collaboration.
Inclusiveness. Empowerment.**



- ◆ We offer 59 programs and services in over 160 community locations
- ◆ We provide access to emergency housing support for clients fleeing family violence and/or facing eviction
- ◆ We extend childcare support to all clients accessing CIWA programs and services (including services in community locations)
- ◆ Certified interpreters and translators offer services in 45 languages
- ◆ We collaborate with 365 community and business partners to accelerate client success

Achieving Excellence

CAC Accreditation

In October 2023, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association received a three year accreditation through the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) of its governance, management and service delivery practices against internationally-accepted standards. This feat is a testament to CIWA's commitment to self-improvement and is an indicator that the organization's practices are ethical, safe, and of superior quality.

CAC uses standards that were developed and are continuously revisited by a Canadian peer-review committee composed of industry professionals, along with the integration of ongoing research, legislation, and professional experts. The accreditation process involved an extensive review of the following aspects:

- Internal governance structures
- Board governance model
- Information management practices
- Quality assurance
- Outcomes data management
- Ethical practices
- Human resource practices
- Health and safety practices
- Service delivery

CIWA's mission of becoming a national leader in transitioning immigrant women to success in Canada is a commitment to making a difference in the lives of those that we serve. From inspiring dreams to accelerating success for individuals that access programs and services to ensuring achievement of excellence in all facets of our work, CIWA's steadfast dedication to being the best in the gender-focused culturally-responsive space resulted in this remarkable accomplishment of achieving accreditation status.



Honouring Contributions

Women Economic Forum (WEF)

Exceptional Women of Excellence Award

Women of the Decade Award

Recipient: Paula Calderon



Immigrant Champion Awards

Inclusive Professional Award

Recipient: Kounandi Diarrassouba



Because Mothers Matter Awards

Outstanding Canada-wide Coordinator Award

Recipient: Luz Buritica



Alberta Bhayana Family Foundation Awards

Partnership, Collaboration and Connection Award

Recipient: Azita Afsharnejat



Investing in Futures

Scholarship & Awards Donors

- ◆ Daughters Day Awards through Gerda R. Bloemraad, Shirley Turnbull and The Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
- ◆ Gerda R. Bloemraad Educational Scholarship through Gerda R. Bloemraad
- ◆ Ron Ghitter CM Scholarship Fund through Ronald Ghitter
- ◆ Jeam Dream International Women's Day Scholarship through Jeam Dream Fund
- ◆ Yvonne Nhan Scholarship Fund for Young Immigrant Mothers through James Mitchell

\$50,500
in scholarships were awarded to
25 recipients



Reflecting on the Year

Our Events

- ◆ Journey Forward Walkathon: Over 100 participants walked to Calgary's Prince's Island Park to observe Victims and Survivors Crime Week
- ◆ Multiple job fairs: CIWA and community partners hosted 1000+ job seekers exploring labour market opportunities
- ◆ Collaborative Action Symposium: More than 90 attendees discussed gender-based violence in immigrant communities and learned about resources available to them
- ◆ Immigrant Business Expo: Approximately 700 participants attended panels and workshops on entrepreneurship and business development
- ◆ Annual Youth Forum: CIWA provided a platform for over 600 youth participants to engage in discussions and activities relevant to their interests and concerns
- ◆ International Women's Day: In partnership with Alberta Ballet, CIWA shared the joy of performing arts with 100 newcomer families



Recognizing Commitment



Volunteering with the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA) has been a transformative journey that enriched my experience in numerous ways. As an ESL Teacher for the Everyday English for Seniors Program, I had the privilege of helping elderly immigrants navigate the intricacies of the English language, fostering connections, and empowering them to engage more confidently with their new surroundings. Additionally, my involvement in the Pursuit of Happiness program allowed me to offer vital translation support to CIWA clients, bridging language barriers and facilitating access to essential services. These experiences not only enhanced my teaching and communication skills but also deepened my understanding of cultural diversity in Canada.

Olha Levchenko

I started teaching English for the online Everyday English for Seniors class about a year ago. I had no teacher training or experience but wanted to possibly make some money by teaching English part time someday. The job ads told me I needed at least one year of experience. Well, thanks to CIWA, I now have my year of experience.

I have really enjoyed teaching, which is something I have always wanted to do. I enjoy the freedom I have in choosing subjects and how to teach them, and I always have support when I need it. I am also quite fond of my students. They, and CIWA, make me feel so appreciated! I will be taking a course on teaching ESL over the summer so I may not be back as a regular teacher in the fall but I have asked to be put on the substitute list in case they need me. I can't bear to sever my ties with CIWA as they have given me a chance at my dream and so much self-esteem!

Janice Whitley

14,108

hours were generously contributed by volunteers

591

volunteers provided their time and skills throughout the year



Volunteering is one of the most important things I experienced in Canada. It made me proud of myself and gave me self-confidence. Volunteering taught me how to make others happy and to work as a group with respect. I feel happier when I see a smile of love from others.

Fatima Chaouki

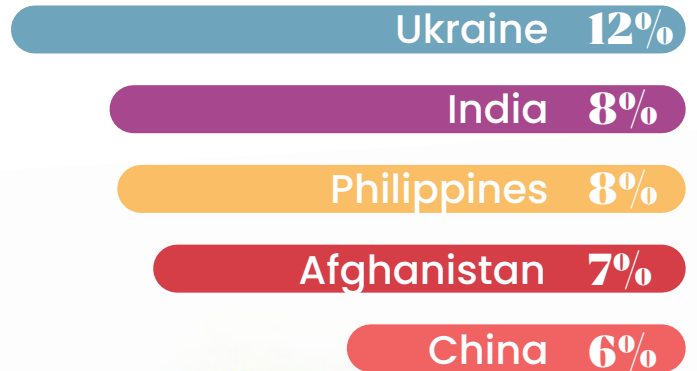
Celebrating Diversity

Client Profiles

25,577

individuals supported from
147 countries

Top 5 Leading Countries of Origin



73,425

services provided to address settlement and integration needs of immigrant women, youth, and seniors in the areas of employment, education, social, health, legal, and community needs



- 25% Bachelor's degree
- 14% Master's degree
- 12% High school diploma
- 9% College diploma
- 9% Not disclosed



Top 5

Spoken Languages



535

children were supported by CIWA Childcare; 191 of children received childcare services in the community

Accelerating Economic Integration

91%

clients expanded their professional networks and connections with employers



Line Cook Training from CIWA has been a wonderful time for growth. Training under Chef Liz's guidance introduced me to a variety of cuisines and cooking techniques, providing me with my first experience working in a professional kitchen in Canada. Numerous lectures from guest speakers showed me how to better integrate into Canadian life and improve my English. Resume writing and interview training allowed me to believe in myself and quickly find my first job at Heritage Park. Additionally, this training helped me find friends with whom I still communicate after program completion. Most importantly, these three months gave me confidence in myself, because when there are people around you who believe in you more than you do yourself, you begin to believe in your abilities and knowledge. Thank you to the CIWA team for their care and support throughout.

Kateryna Onufriieva
Client

79%

clients successfully transitioned into employment following their completion of various programs offered by CIWA



Certification training programs tailored to labor market needs are essential for newcomers to integrate into a new society. Recognizing the language barrier and the lack of certified female interpreters in my community, I joined CIWA's Labour Market Bridging for Volunteers: Interpretation and Translation program. This program was highly effective, teaching not only interpreting and translating skills but also resume writing, job searching, and computer literacy. The one month work practicum provided valuable experience, making me feel professional and self-confident. After obtaining my certificates, I began working as a freelance interpreter with Immigrant Services Calgary. This job offers a good income and enables me to help my community.

Sheila Qayumi
Client



Since arriving in Canada from Macedonia as a Government Assisted Refugee on October 6, 2022, Shazia Fitri has made remarkable strides with support from CIWA. Initially facing significant language barriers, she enrolled in LINC classes at CLB level 2. Her determination and CIWA's comprehensive support have enabled her to access crucial services such as the Legal Clinic for immigration consultations and assistance with CRA communication, leading to the activation of her GST and Climate Action benefits. Additionally, referrals to the Pre-Employment Skills Program, Financial Coaching, Tax Clinic, and family services have equipped Shazia with essential skills and knowledge for successful integration. The ongoing settlement services provided by CIWA have been instrumental in her journey, transforming challenges into opportunities and paving the way for a brighter future.



CIWA worked with our childcare to foster and establish a meaningful partnership. It enhanced our learning experience by collaborating with other ECE professionals. CIWA services are all empowering especially to the women and families served. I will like to further liaise with them in future.

*Shirley Epule
Oaks @ Acorns Montessori Childcare
Midnapore*

1393

clients accessed financial coaching, educational resources, a tax framework, personalized tax clinic assistance, and RESP education

Fostering Social Integration

93%

clients enhanced their English language skills by engaging in various programs at CIWA, clients improved their speaking, listening, reading, writing and communication abilities



Joining NFNG was a big change for my life in Canada. It helped me become more confident in my English-speaking skills. At first, I was very shy and lonely in Canada, but now I am studying full time and have a part time job. I am looking forward to getting a better job soon. Thank you for everything.

*Yana Yakovenko
Client*

95%

clients experienced an increased sense of belonging. The programs facilitated the environment to build meaningful connections, develop a sense of community, and combat isolation and loneliness

Arriving in Canada as a Government Assisted Refugee with no prior education, Friba Samadi faced immense challenges, including illiteracy, social isolation, and a language barrier that made basic tasks difficult. Referred to CIWA's Pebbles in the Sand program, she began learning the basics of reading and writing with the patient guidance of her facilitator. Over 16 months, Friba made remarkable progress, transforming from struggling with phonics to fluently reading common sight words and understanding personal-related vocabulary.



The Civic Engagement Program helped boost my confidence. My experience at CIWA directly connects to my current role as Communications Coordinator for the Alberta Securities Commission, where investor education through community engagement is a key mandate. When I create content, deliver financial literacy sessions, or engage with Albertans on recognizing, avoiding, and reporting investment fraud, I often think back to the CIWA presentation sessions. I remember the women I met and the issues they raised — this drives me to create resources that would be critical for them.

*Rebeca Vargese
Client*

88%

clients demonstrated an active commitment and participation in the community. They attended social gatherings, participated in community events, and helped others within their community, showcasing dedication to communal involvement and support

94%

clients developed and maintained support networks

Esther Josefina Iturriza Garcia, a newcomer to Canada, joined the Everyday English for Seniors program to connect with others and improve her language skills, which were essential for overcoming social isolation. Living with her daughter's family, Esther had few opportunities to meet new people and faced isolation due to a language barrier. Her family, concerned about her mental wellbeing, looked for programs to help seniors with depression and anxiety caused by social isolation. Eager to improve her English, Esther inquired about CIWA's services for immigrant seniors. She wanted to stay engaged, overcome communication barriers, build friendships, and achieve short-term language goals for everyday life.

Nurturing Family Resiliency



Alma Francisco migrated to Calgary with her husband and daughter, seeking a brighter future. Her family faced various challenges, including cultural unfamiliarity, language barriers, and job insecurity. Despite these obstacles, they remained determined to build a better life. CIWA provided crucial support and a sense of belonging during their toughest times. Through hard work, they saved enough to start a small cleaning business. Grateful for the community's support, Alma began volunteering at CIWA, helping newcomers as they once were helped. Today, their cleaning business thrives, a testament to their perseverance and CIWA's assistance. The family is thankful for the opportunities they received and strive to pay it forward by aiding others in their journey to adapt to life in a new country.

92%

clients demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to foster and sustain family cohesion



Ye Lu joined the HIPPY program to enhance her own and her child's English skills and school readiness. Facing family challenges and anxiety, she initially had difficulties with power struggles and program anxiety. With support from her home visitor, Ye began enjoying HIPPY activities, which resulted in reducing her stress level and increasing her enthusiasm for enrolling her youngest child in the HIPPY program. Through services received through the Family Services Department and other CIWA programs, she gained valuable resources and strategies, significantly improving the wellbeing of her entire family.

84%

clients possess the skills and knowledge essential for effectively preparing, guiding and supporting their child's educational journey

91%

clients have an increased capacity to care for their children, actively facilitate their positive holistic development and foster their overall well-being



Bonnie Xu is from China and before taking the Cross Cultural Parenting Program, she knew very little about child abuse laws and regulations. She likens living without legal boundaries to sailing without a compass, which left her feeling quite confused. Bonnie is very happy to have had the opportunity to learn this content from the parenting facilitator, as it has given her more confidence in her life in Canada. Her husband has also shown interest in taking the course after witnessing the positive changes it has made in her life.



You gave me hope and helped me to grow when I was about to lose hope. I have a job in my field now, I never imagined the life where I am today, I am mentally relaxed and working to improve my skills day by day. Without your support I couldn't have progressed.

*Zuha Khan
Client*

Appreciating Our Supporters

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of Canada

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gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Alberta

 **CALGARY
FOUNDATION**
FOR COMMUNITY, FOREVER

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Employment and Social Development Canada
Canadian Heritage
Justice Canada
Prairies Economic Development Canada
Service Canada
Women and Gender Equality Canada

Advanced Education
Children and Family Services
Immigration and Multiculturalism
Jobs, Economy and Trade
Seniors, Community and Social Services
Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction
(AGLC)

Daryl K. Seaman Foundation
DT Karya Fund
Luminata Fund
Maria K. Eriksen and Harold Hanen Fund
Stinkweed Legacy Fund
Turner Family Foundation



United Way
Calgary and Area



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Trevor McDonald
Unifor Social Justice Fund
University of Calgary
Varinder Chana
VIMY HR
Wolf Midstream Inc.
Yewande Esan

Event Sponsors

IWD 2024 - Inspiring Women's Dreams: Fasken, Scotiabank, Calgary TELUS Convention Centre

Financial Statement

CALGARY IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Revenue:		
Federal Government	\$ 12,082,559	\$ 12,476,803
Provincial Government	4,551,895	2,969,149
Municipal Government	583,032	523,149
Community and Foundation	763,724	499,517
Corporate Grants	223,564	120,299
Donations	241,843	278,006
Fundraising (note 10)	21,737	169,975
Interest income	336,945	96,517
Fees and Other Revenue	200,500	204,230
Amortization of deferred contributions related to property and equipment	184,624	243,443
	19,190,423	17,581,088
Expenses:		
Salaries and benefits	12,658,255	11,751,417
Materials and supplies	1,792,716	2,125,117
Rent	1,774,453	1,170,602
Contract fees	735,505	485,576
Technology and Support	221,338	267,562
Repairs and maintenance	32,275	50,536
Travel	208,746	264,977
Amortization	184,624	243,443
Equipment and equipment rental	58,162	190,577
Professional fees	320,469	181,554
Telephone, postage and courier	118,271	119,938
Miscellaneous	99,734	115,887
Staff and volunteer development	71,716	51,319
Insurance	57,402	49,754
Photocopying and printing	28,174	34,652
Goods and service tax	31,815	30,110
Advertising and publicity	29,367	21,896
	18,423,022	17,154,917
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 767,401	\$ 426,171

Committee

Celestina Akinkunmi
Eva Szasz-Redmond
Leanne Casuncad
Novelyn Banatao
Punam Dalal
Shaimaa Elfeky

Design

Fatima Narvaez
Lana Graph

Photography

Lana Graph

Production

Copy Repro Inc.



