



OUR COMMUNITY. OUR FUTURE.

2022 - 2023

# Annual Report





## Vision

An inclusive society where immigrants and refugees can reach their full potential.

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## Mission

In partnership, we empower immigrants and refugees to successfully settle and integrate in our communities.

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At CCIS, we believe that through understanding and appreciation of the Indigenous experience, we will be better positioned to serve our clients and our community.

We acknowledge Calgary and area as Treaty 7 territory. We acknowledge the Treaty 7 nations; the Piikani, Siksika, Kainai, Iyârhe Nakoda and Tsuut'îna First Nations. We acknowledge the ancestral territory of Siksikaitstapi, the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the home of the Métis Nation of Alberta—Region 3.

We are all treaty people.

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# Mike Shaikh

## Chair, Board of Directors

The 2022-23 fiscal year was an incredible period of growth and change for CCIS, characterized by remarkable achievements and significant milestones. On behalf of the CCIS Board of Directors, I would like to congratulate CCIS' management, staff, and volunteers, for their resilience, hard work, and dedication throughout this remarkable period.

Firstly, this year marked the end of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the crisis, the CCIS team showed tremendous flexibility and commitment, working diligently (from select CCIS locations and from their own homes) to ensure that all newcomer clients, including the most vulnerable, received the services and supports they needed to achieve economic and social success. After more than two years of operating within the COVID-19 context, 2022-2023 marked a full return to in-person service delivery for CCIS. It is wonderful to know that newcomers

are once again being welcomed into the vibrant sense of community that exists among clients and staff at all of CCIS' various service locations.

This was also a historical year in terms of newcomer arrivals in the Calgary area. In 2022, Calgary's population grew by over 29,500 through international migration. This far surpasses the city's previous high of 19,750 new immigrants and refugees in 2013. These new arrivals included record numbers of immigrants, Government-Assisted Afghan refugees, and thousands of displaced Ukrainian evacuees seeking refuge in Calgary and across Southern Alberta. As a result of this influx, many of CCIS' programs and services saw increased demand, and CCIS teams have been going above and beyond to ensure that newcomers to the Calgary area are welcomed, supported, and positioned for success.



Looking ahead, these high arrival numbers are expected to continue, with the Federal Government expressing its commitment to increasing annual immigration targets for years to come. As we move forward, the Board of Directors and CCIS' management will be focused on ensuring that CCIS is well prepared to rise to new challenges, and to play an instrumental role in serving the thousands of future newcomers who will be calling Calgary and area home.

Finally, in 2022-2023, CCIS underwent a landmark leadership transition. The Board of Directors recognized that this would represent a profound change for the organization. After careful consideration, we introduced a unique transition model that we felt would best suit the organization's singular culture and needs. We would like to thank Fariborz Birjandian for agreeing to share his many years of leadership experience and rich sector knowledge with his successor, and the Board is extremely pleased that Gordana Radan will be leading CCIS into its next chapter.

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Bill Campbell | Darren Henry | Imran Gulam | Josephine Naicker | Lauren Andre | Njide Harris-Eze | Pat Firminger | Patrick Etokudo | Ross Piché | Rudy Ticzon

# Gordana Radan

CEO



Stepping into the role of CEO at CCIS has filled me with an overwhelming sense of honour and gratitude. Having been welcomed by CCIS as a newcomer to Canada 28 years ago, and experiencing firsthand the transformative power of our services, I am deeply committed to expanding our impact and strengthening our position as a leader in the field of settlement and integration. My initial months as CEO have been an exciting time for CCIS, with the achievement of many important milestones, the creation of innovative new initiatives, and the increasing recognition of CCIS' crucial role in the lives of newcomers and the community.

We successfully transitioned from remote work to office operations, and I have been inspired by the energy and vibrant atmosphere of collaboration across the organization. This renewed sense of community has become the catalyst for new ideas among our dedicated staff and volunteers. With this energy, optimism, and collaborative mindset, we will no doubt continue to fulfill our mission of supporting newcomers by pioneering new solutions and setting new benchmarks in immigrant services.

I am thrilled to share that we recently conducted a comprehensive staff experience survey, and the feedback was resoundingly positive. Despite the challenges of

the past years due to the pandemic, our exceptional team has demonstrated unwavering dedication and resilience. The insights from the survey will serve as valuable building blocks for future strategic initiatives at CCIS, ensuring that every team member continues to feel valued, empowered, and motivated to deliver exceptional services to our newcomer clients.

Looking ahead, we will remain committed to expanding our footprint in rural communities across Southern Alberta. This strategic growth will ensure newcomers in underserved, small and mid-sized centres can access comprehensive services that address their settlement needs. Already operating in 14 rural locations, we are determined to further align our efforts with the goals of the three levels of government to promote the resettlement of refugees in rural communities, and to encourage immigrants to embrace the opportunities that rural living has to offer. My recent visits to our offices in these areas have affirmed the immeasurable value of our presence in these centres, and I look forward to continuing our work with rural municipalities and supporting the cultivation of inclusive and thriving communities across Southern Alberta.

Over the last year, CCIS welcomed record numbers of refugees and projections indicate that these unprecedented numbers will continue in the coming years. Drawing upon our experience successfully resettling large numbers of Afghan and Ukrainian refugees, we are well-positioned to continue welcoming and supporting vulnerable newcomers from all corners of the globe. As someone who has personally experienced the journey of a refugee, I deeply understand the aspirations and challenges that refugees face as they strive for a better future. This first-hand experience is a driving force behind my advocacy for refugees, and my commitment to ensuring that resettlement is a seamless and positive process for our refugee clients and our community.

CCIS has established a reputation for innovation by designing and delivering ground-breaking programs that address the evolving and diverse needs of newcomers. Our newest initiatives, such as the recently launched Mindfulness-Based Employment Support project for newcomers with disabilities, and our Settlement through Sport program for refugee youth, exemplify our efforts to provide creative, holistic programming. We look forward to exploring more innovative solutions that will empower specific groups of newcomers to overcome their challenges and build fulfilling lives in Canada.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our funders whose support, commitment, and belief in our work have been instrumental in allowing CCIS to fulfill our mission and make lasting impacts in the lives of newcomers. We value your partnership and look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts in the journey ahead.

I would also like to thank our Board of Directors for their strategic guidance and support. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you as we lead CCIS into its next chapter. Furthermore, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our former CEO, Fariborz Birjandian, for his remarkable leadership and for laying the foundation of excellence that we stand upon today.

Lastly, I extend my deepest gratitude to the incredible team at CCIS, whose inspiring commitment and tireless efforts propel us forward. It is your dedication, compassion, and expertise that drive our mission and ensure that every newcomer who walks through our doors feels welcomed and empowered. The future holds boundless possibilities, and together, we will continue to navigate the complexities of our sector, drive innovation, and create lasting positive change for newcomers and the communities we serve.

# Fariborz Birjandian

## Outgoing CEO

The 2022-23 fiscal year will truly be remembered as one of the most eventful and exciting periods in CCIS' long history.

This year we saw the end of the global COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic posed one of the greatest challenges that our organization has ever faced; however, it also provided an opportunity for CCIS to learn, adapt, and emerge as a leader in our community. Recognizing the needs of the most vulnerable newcomers in Calgary, CCIS continued to provide seamless services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We developed an emergency protocol for meeting the needs of high-risk newcomers; introduced new safety practices to protect the health of our clients, staff, and volunteers; and supported many employers and partnering organizations as they navigated the crisis. Looking back, CCIS can be very proud of our response, and we can rest assured that we are well equipped to meet any challenges that may arise in the future.

Over the last year, Canada experienced record numbers of refugee arrivals (including Afghans and refugees from other countries). When it came to refugee resettlement, CCIS played an important role locally, regionally, and nationally. I personally had the honour of co-chairing the National Afghan Project, which has seen the successful arrival of over 30,000 Afghan refugees to date. I was also involved in the creation of a National Secretariat, and the coordination of 42 organizations from across the country who have been collectively working to ensure that Afghan refugees successfully resettle and thrive here in Canada.

On the local level, Calgary has welcomed over 10,000 refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine, and other countries. CCIS has been actively engaged in ensuring that newly landed refugees are welcomed and supported, and provided with the information and resources they need to become happy and productive members of our communities in Calgary and across Southern Alberta.

This year marked another significant change for our organization, which was the introduction of a new CEO. When CCIS was first incorporated in 1981, the organization





was made up of small group of volunteers and a few staff members. Over the last 42 years, the agency has grown to become a world-class settlement and integration organization, widely known for being innovative, entrepreneurial, client-centred, and community focused.

I have had the pleasure of being a part of CCIS' evolution and growth over the last 35 years. This year, however, I transitioned out of my role as CCIS' CEO. To ensure a smooth and seamless process, the Board of Directors developed a unique and forward-thinking transition plan, which resulted in appointing Ms. Gordana Radan as the new CEO as of January 2023, and which has provided me with an opportunity to

remain a part of the organization for the next two years, so that I can continue to share my knowledge and support.

I have the utmost confidence that the CCIS board, staff, and our new CEO, Ms. Gordana Radan, will uphold the organization's mission and vision and lead our organization into the future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who supported me throughout my 35-year journey with CCIS as a new refugee, a settlement worker, a division manager, and CEO. I am especially thankful to those who trusted my vision and helped me to build an organization, a community, and a sector that supports newcomers in reaching their full potential.



# Gordana Radan Takes the Helm at CCIS

On January 1, 2023, Gordana Radan became our new CEO. Until her promotion, Gordana was the Director of CCIS' Business, Employment, and Training Services (BETS) division where she led a team of over 100 employees in developing and implementing innovative employment and training programs that support the labour market integration of immigrants and refugees in Southern Alberta.

With a remarkable journey from refugee to a respected leader in the immigrant-serving sector, Gordana brings a unique perspective and deep empathy to her role. Her journey at CCIS began in 1995 when she arrived in Canada as a refugee from the former Yugoslavia. During her early days in Calgary, CCIS played a crucial role in providing her with a new home at our refugee reception house, the Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre (MCRC). This experience ignited her passion for helping newcomers and paved the way for her remarkable career within the organization.

Gordana joined CCIS in 1997 as an employment counsellor and steadily rose through the ranks, demonstrating her commitment and expertise in serving and empowering newcomers. In 2007, she assumed the role of Director of BETS where her visionary leadership guided the design, development, and delivery of several transformative programs and services, some of which were recognized nationally as promising practices.

Beyond her role at CCIS, Gordana actively contributes her expertise to various boards and committees, focusing on community and migrant-based initiatives. She currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) and is a member of the Stakeholder Advisory Board of the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration.

As we embark on this new chapter with Gordana Radan as our CEO, we remain committed to the values that have guided us throughout our journey even as we continue to build an inclusive community where newcomers can thrive and contribute to our shared future.



# Newcomers Served



**Languages Spoken**  
Top 3  
Dari, Tigrinya & Ukrainian



**Countries of Origin**  
Top 3  
Afghanistan, Eritrea & Ukraine



**Largest Age Group**  
26 - 40 | 59.5%



# 25 Years of Welcoming Newcomers at YYC

1,033

Syrian refugees were welcomed by CCIS' Airport Reception Program destined to Calgary, with thousands more transferring to Prairie regions.

January 2016 - December 2016

1,793

Temporary Foreign Workers were welcomed by CCIS at the airport.  
January 2021 - November 2022

28,000

Refugees fleeing from political, social, gender, & racial persecution & violence were welcomed by CCIS' Airport Reception Program.

1997 - Present

120,000

Immigrants, refugees & temporary foreign workers were welcomed by CCIS' Airport Reception Program.

1997 - Present

4,149

Afghani refugees were welcomed by CCIS' Airport Reception Program.

August 2021 - October 2022

300

Yazidi refugees arrived in Calgary & many are still waiting to be reunited with their loved ones.

February 2017 - December 2020

CCIS' Airport Reception Program welcomed large influxes of refugees arriving from Sudan, Colombia, Tibet, Karen, Somalia, Former Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria & Ukraine.

1997 - Present

CCIS' Airport Reception Program plays a vital role in providing a safe haven for refugees. It is also a place where refugee families meet after years of being apart.

1997 - Present

We reached a significant milestone as we commemorated 25 years of providing airport reception services to newcomers at the Calgary International Airport (YYC). Our airport reception program has played a crucial role in warmly welcoming and supporting thousands of newcomers arriving at YYC and fostering an immediate sense of connection and belonging within the community.

For a quarter of a century, CCIS has welcomed over 28,000 refugees, including Syrians, Yazidis, Kosovans, Somalis, Afghans, and more recently, Ukrainian evacuees. As the designated organization responsible for receiving refugees in the Prairie region, encompassing Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, we have been instrumental in ensuring a smooth and welcoming entry for those seeking refuge and a new beginning in Canada.

In January 2021, we began providing airport services to Temporary Foreign Workers and in July 2022, our airport services expanded to include other immigrants to Southern Alberta, through the Community Airport Newcomers Network – Calgary (CANNYYC) initiative.

The impact of CCIS's airport reception program extends beyond the airport itself. By partnering with the Calgary Airport Authority to create a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers as they set foot on Canadian soil, we have contributed to Calgary's transformation into the third most culturally, racially, and religiously diverse city in Canada. This achievement underscores the significance of the services provided by CCIS and the positive influence we have had on shaping Calgary's inclusive and vibrant community.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our funders and partners, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Calgary Airport Authority and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), whose invaluable support has been instrumental in the success of our airport reception program over the years.



# Resettlement & Integration services

14,793 Newcomers Served





While we continued serving Afghan refugees arriving through the Calgary Hub and other Port of Entry destinations in Canada, one of our additional highlights was receiving Ukrainian evacuees arriving through CCIS Port of Entry Services.

We received funding from IRCC under the Settlement Program Stream in July of 2022 to provide Ukrainian evacuees arriving through Calgary Airport with port of entry services and connect them with required resources in the community.

We served 6,703 newcomers arriving under the CUAET Program.

In addition to assisting Ukrainian evacuees, we received and served a total of 4,918 refugees from Afghanistan and 640 refugees from other countries.

Ten charter flights conveying Afghan and other global refugees landed in Calgary where port of entry services were provided along with COVID 19 testing, interpretation, urgent medical care and transportation to temporary accommodation.

During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, we operated from five hotels, MCRC and our 1310 Block of transitional apartments, where we provided initial resettlement services to Afghan and Global Refugees arriving to our city.

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Newcomer Child & Youth Connections (NCYC) continued to provide immigrant and refugee children & youth with on-going support for their settlement needs throughout the last year.

With the influx of refugee arrivals in temporary accommodations, the NCYC team used their programming experience to provide daily educational, pro-social and recreational activities to over 400 children and youth in hotels. NCYC staff, in collaboration with their City of Calgary partners, facilitated ELL classes, life skill workshops, crafts, games and field trips.

While their families were receiving resettlement services in the hotels, refugee children and youth learned how to skate at Village Square, did nature walks through the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, played soccer games in Stanley Park, explored Telus Spark and the Calgary Zoo, and celebrated holidays with their CCIS community.

The NCYC team is also excited to report that in 2022-2023, CCIS received confirmation that NCYC has been awarded multi-year funding through Sport Canada to support novel programming beginning in 2023 for refugee youth.

CCIS has played a pivotal role in providing invaluable support to over 10,400 Ukrainian arrivals in Calgary and surrounding areas.

Through our dedicated Ukrainian Services and Airport Reception teams, and collaborations with other service providers, we have gone above and beyond to ensure a seamless and welcoming experience for those seeking refuge. The commitment and professionalism of our teams were highlighted in March, when they welcomed over 2,200 individuals, constituting a substantial portion of the total Ukrainian arrivals to date. Our rural team has been instrumental in helping over 500 Ukrainians integrate into various rural communities. Some team members have personal connections to the ongoing crisis, having experienced it themselves or having family members directly affected. Despite their own challenges, they have exhibited unwavering resilience and strength in supporting their fellow Ukrainians.

Furthermore, our comprehensive support for Ukrainian evacuees was bolstered by generous contributions from esteemed partners. Airbnb's donation of temporary housing has played a vital role in connecting displaced Ukrainians with safe and secure accommodations. Our fruitful partnerships with the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance (CISSA-ACSEI) and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Calgary Branch have been instrumental in coordinating immediate settlement services and facilitating a smooth transition for the arriving individuals and families. We value these partnerships and recognize the significant contributions they have made in supporting the Ukrainian community during their resettlement journey in Southern Alberta.

Our efforts have been further strengthened by the overwhelming response from the community with hundreds of volunteers stepping forward to offer temporary housing and extend a warm embrace to the newcomers. We thank them for their incredible generosity and compassion.

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing ongoing support to Ukrainian arrivals and other vulnerable populations. By fostering a spirit of compassion and innovation, we will continue to create welcoming and inclusive environments where newcomers feel empowered to build promising futures in Canada.

# Welcoming Ukrainian Arrivals



Support for Arrivals from Ukraine: [www.ccisab.ca/support-for-arrivals-from-ukraine.html](http://www.ccisab.ca/support-for-arrivals-from-ukraine.html)

# Family & Children's Services

3,167 Newcomers Served

The Newcomer Research Library began in 2020 with exploratory research to better understand some observed trends in the newcomer research space. Supported through a MITACS research project and co-funded by CCIS, the project identified several key opportunities which this Library aims to address.

- Availability of evidence in a timely and accessible manner
- Meaningful engagement of Service Providing Organizations
- Divergent accountability structures
- Knowledge mobilization on non academic evidence
- Over and Under researched topics

[www.newcomerresearch.ca](http://www.newcomerresearch.ca) is a centralized place to find research on immigrants, temporary residents, and refugees in Alberta. The Library is made up of simple research summaries, with a focus on key findings. It is designed for useability by service providers, evaluation consultants, community members, and academics – all of whom are invited to contribute their work.

The Library also facilitates monitoring of the quantity and nature of research taking place on and with newcomer communities, helping to mitigate over researching certain populations or issues.

The Library launched in late 2022 and efforts to refine and update the Library are ongoing.



# Community Development & Integration Services

5,742 Newcomers Served





As part of our work in community development, the Regional Outreach Program (ROP) strives to empower leaders and communities to find unique solutions that honour culture and integration.

We recognize that both formal and informal ethnocultural leaders are often the first point of contact when others are in need. In fact, they are important in supporting the most vulnerable community members and visioning for the whole community.

ROP works with a group of diverse community leaders who come together to collectively share ideas and input.

As part of this, ROP organized a Community Leadership Symposium that builds the capacity of formal and informal ethnocultural leaders to enhance their efforts in their own community work.

The main theme was: The Role of Community Leadership in Facilitating the Integration of Newcomers into Canadian Society. It was focused on trends and realities related to integration, a good basic grounding in understanding integration and stirring imagination about the role of community leaders.

# Rural Alberta Services

## 4,682 Newcomers Served

Recognizing that newcomers who settle in rural areas often have unique needs and barriers to service access, CCIS seeks to provide accessible services for newcomers across Southern Alberta communities, including specialized services for newcomers in rural Southern Alberta communities. To increase the accessibility of services within these rural communities, CCIS has local presence in:

- Brooks, serving the communities of Brooks & Newell County through Brooks and County Immigration Services (BCIS).
- High River, serving the community of High River and surrounding areas through Foothills Community Immigration Services (FCIS).
- Okotoks, serving the community of Okotoks and surrounding areas through FCIS.
- Strathmore, serving the community of Strathmore through FCIS.
- Rocky View, serving Airdrie, Chestermere, Cochrane, and the county of Rocky view through Rocky view Immigration Services (RVIS).
- Claresholm, serving the Municipal District of Willow Creek, Claresholm, Stavelly, and Nanton through Willow Creek Immigration Services (WCIS).
- Additionally, CCIS is offering services locally in Drumheller, Hanna and Medicine Hat.

Review of our client data revealed that the services offered to newcomers in Southern Alberta's rural communities are being accessed frequently by a high volume of clients who most typically receive information, orientation, needs assessment, and referral support. The client data suggests that an appropriate group of newcomers is being reached.

Perspectives shared by clients as part of our last evaluation indicated that they are very satisfied with the services offered through BCIS, FCIS, RVIS, and WCIS, and that they are experiencing positive social outcomes as a result of accessing these services.

Perspectives shared by community stakeholders indicated that CCIS is effective in engaging partners in rural communities to advance the wellbeing of newcomers and create more welcoming and inclusive communities for all. These stakeholders felt that CCIS plays a key role in Southern Alberta's rural communities in terms of collaboration as well as positively impacting community perspectives towards newcomers (including approaches within mainstream services).

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BCIS' Mentorship Program is designed to bring mentors and mentees with similar education, skills, experiences and background together for the benefit of both. This career-based matching will help support foreign-trained and educated mentees integrate into the Canadian workforce. This volunteer-based program will also help mentors enhance their leadership skills. The program will also aid employers in our region with addressing their labour shortages through the attraction and retention of newcomer professionals. Additionally, mentorship programs have a proven track record of improving the

leadership skills of individuals who choose to become mentors.

We are currently working with five active pilot matches that have joined the program in February of 2023. These matches have been participating in one-on-one mentoring as well as group information sessions. The second cohort of matches is expected to launch by the end of May or beginning of June 2023.

# Business, Employment & Training Services

19,213 Newcomers Served



In partnership with Alberta Mindfulness Association, we launched the new Mindfulness-Based Employment Support (MBES) project this year. Funded by the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, the MBES project provides newcomers with physical or mental disabilities with skills and support for finding employment, managing stress, and succeeding at work.

Over the past few years, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in ongoing job losses and long-term unemployment that impacted not only the financial health of clients but also their physical and mental health.

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We recognize the critical role of our clients' mental and emotional well-being in their job search and employment success. We took the unique approach of providing participants - newcomers with physical or mental disabilities with Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy to foster calm, concentration, and intention in clients' job search and on the job. In addition to teaching mindfulness techniques, the project will enhance the participants' job search strategy, socio-emotional skills for the Canadian workplace, and psychological health and safety.

As Alberta has the lowest corporate tax in Canada and no provincial sales tax, the province continues to attract new Canadians with entrepreneurial mindsets to start a business. The province continuously welcomes talented immigrants and job-creating entrepreneurs who will move to, live and work in Alberta.

Our Build Your Business (BYB) program continues to be a program of choice for many newcomers. Funded by IRCC, the BYB program aims to enhance our clients' knowledge, abilities, and connections to become successful business owners in Canada.

The program offers in-depth and practical entrepreneurial training to support our clients in

getting the confidence, ability, knowledge, and skills for breaking down barriers commonly encountered by newcomer entrepreneurs and successfully planning, launching and managing their small businesses in Canada.

The program helps clients make a viable business and marketing plan to help them organize their business operations, apply for a business loan or use it as a persuasive tool to find investors. The clients expand their network of local entrepreneurs and professional advisors to ensure a successful continuation of their entrepreneurial journey.








## Welcoming Refugees from Africa

In line with our commitment to providing a warm and hopeful start for those seeking refuge in Canada, we welcomed 342 Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) on a charter flight from Uganda. The refugees were destined for 16 centres across western Canada—from Edmonton and Fort McMurray in Alberta to New Westminster in British Columbia and a couple of other centers in Saskatchewan. The charter flight, which arrived at the YYC International Airport on March 29, held profound significance on multiple fronts. It represented the first charter we had received consisting primarily of PSRs and the first charter since the start of the Afghan refugee resettlement effort conveying non-Afghan refugees. The diversity of the arrivals was evident in the range of languages spoken, with 11 different languages represented, including Tigrinya, Amharic, Kinyarwanda, and others.

CCIS, in collaboration with Service Canada, provided Social Insurance Number (SIN) clinics at the airport to the arrivals, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their final destinations, had the opportunity to obtain their SIN. The provision of SIN clinics at the airport was a unique feature of our approach in welcoming this group of refugees, exemplifying our commitment to providing comprehensive support and needs-based services for newcomers.

The successful coordination of the charter by CCIS staff underscored our unwavering dedication to welcoming newcomers with empathy and professionalism. By setting a positive tone for the refugees' journey to a better life, CCIS continues to embody the values of compassion, respect, and excellence that define our mission.

# Volunteer Services

|  | CALGARY | RURAL ALBERTA |
|--|---------|---------------|
|  new volunteers             | 591     | 60            |
|  volunteer hours            | 25,822  | 4,744         |
|  retention from 2022 - 2023 | 57%     | 57%           |



As staff began to return to the office close to the end of 2022, so did CCIS volunteers. New programming developments this year were in direct response to the Afghan refugees and the Ukrainian evacuees:

Below are two examples of new programming for this fiscal year.

1. Conversation Class. The Language Support team became concerned about the long wait times for Afghan Refugees waiting to be admitted to Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC). To respond to this situation a volunteer supported basic Conversation Class was created and designed specifically for Afghan refugees while they waited.

Wait lists were long and this class provided interim language support and social support for our clients.

2. Ukrainian Speaking Switchboard/Reception Administration Volunteers. We hired four Ukrainian arrivals as volunteers and provided them with the opportunity to develop their administrative skills and obtain valuable Canadian experience.

One of these volunteers, who was an attorney in Ukraine, was recently hired by a law office. We are delighted that her volunteer opportunity with CCIS played a part in securing her first paid position in Calgary.





# CARF Accreditation 2022-2023

CCIS has been accredited by CARF International\* since August 2017 under the Diversion/ Intervention Program with Governance added. We delivered CCBP services virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic as Children's Services offices were closed. In April 2022, the program returned to in-person services with an online option for clients.

During the 2022-23 fiscal year CCIS has been preparing for our upcoming re-survey which takes place every three years. Significant events have included two workshops by Penny Gagnon, Chief Advisor for CARF Canada. One workshop covered all current applicable standards for CCIS and was attended by CCIS leaders and Cultural Brokers. The second workshop focused on Governance Standards and was presented to the Board of Directors.

The CCIS 2023 CARF survey will take place on July 17th and 18th at the main office.

The results of the survey will decide CCIS's accreditation status going forward.

\*CARF International – A group of companies that included CARF, CARF Canada, and CARF Europe.



# Donations Report



As a non-profit founded by dedicated volunteers, CCIS has always been driven by community partnerships, volunteerism, and charitable donations. Despite significant growth, these core values continue to define us. We humbly recognize that CCIS serves as a conduit for Calgary's inherent spirit of generosity, proudly representing and facilitating the community's unrestricted acts of kindness.

In the midst of COVID, Calgary was part of Canada's response to dire world events, receiving thousands of evacuees from Ukraine, and a sudden influx of thousands of refugees from Afghanistan; at the same time we continued to work with greatly increased numbers of new arrivals from all over the world.

Meanwhile, the pandemic disrupted services and response times, so that on many occasions people had to wait for days, weeks and even months for paperwork to catch up with reality: while adults can sometimes wait, hungry children cannot. And of course, there are always the gaps and cracks in our social support systems that the vulnerable can fall into, and these demand a response from us, no matter what else is going on.

Calgarians stepped up. In the 2022-23 fiscal year, they entrusted us with over \$223,000 in cash donations, as well as in-kind donations of goods and services valued at \$70,000, to support newcomers in dire circumstances. We do not charge fundraising or administrative fees; every dollar donated goes to someone in need. This represents

a significant increase from the cash donations of \$159,000 we received in the previous fiscal year.

Through their boundless generosity, Calgarians helped us achieve the following

- Children's clothing, diapers, and formula worth over \$4000 were purchased for 10 families.
- Over \$17,000 in groceries were purchased for 85 families thanks to the generosity of donors like Walmart and Calgary Foundation.
- The Calgary Consular Corps "adopted" the Sadiqi family, refugees fleeing from the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Calgary Consular Corps has undertaken to provide long-term financial, social, and personal support.
- Mako, a refugee from Somalia fleeing family violence and a single mother with a young child and a newborn baby, faced delays in accessing support and was in need of diapers and formula. We were able to meet their needs until they finally got needed access.
- Liliana and her husband from Colombia recently had twin girls. One of the girls was born with multiple congenital malformations and has had to undergo two major surgeries (to date), one of them out of city. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have been able to support this family through this difficult time with groceries and other essentials for both newborns and parents.
- Many refugees with complex medical needs were able to attend critical appointments, at

the height of COVID, in the depths of winter, through the generous support of Uber.

- Multiple families from Afghanistan and Ukraine were able to use transitional housing donated by Airbnb while waiting and searching for new homes in Calgary, or waiting to relocate to another province and/or city. They were able to spend time in a home-like environment, with access to a kitchen so they could prepare their own food; they were able to enjoy Calgary's communities, neighborhoods, parks and amenities while they waited. This was a true "welcome to Calgary" gesture.

Here are some of our donors:

Amazon | Boris Rochman Fund | Brewster Travel  
| Calgary Consular Corps | Calgary Foundation  
| Calgary Zoo | Canadian Tire | City of Calgary |  
Farmor Architecture | Jereh Canada Corporation |  
Mardon Fund | Peg & Nick Taylor Family Foundation  
Fund | Project Linus Canada | Prospect | RBC  
| Sheiny Polipowicz Family Fund | Todd Hirsch  
Consulting Ltd | United Way Donor Choice Donations  
| Walmart

And literally hundreds of individual Calgarians who donated anonymously and/or through our website!

# Fariborz Birjandian: A Visionary Leader with a Legacy of Service and Impact



Our former CEO, Fariborz Birjandian, transitioned into an advisory role following a remarkable 28-year stint at the helm of our organization, leaving an incredible legacy of service and impact that shines brightly.

Starting as a refugee client of CCIS and progressing through various roles as an employee, he became the CEO in 1994. Under his visionary leadership, CCIS evolved from a small charity founded by church volunteers to a recognized leader in settlement and integration in Canada and the largest immigrant-serving agency in the Prairies, with locations in 14 rural communities across Southern Alberta. His lived experience as a refugee was a constant driving force behind CCIS' mission to provide support, empowerment, and opportunities for newcomers to thrive and create meaningful lives in their new home.

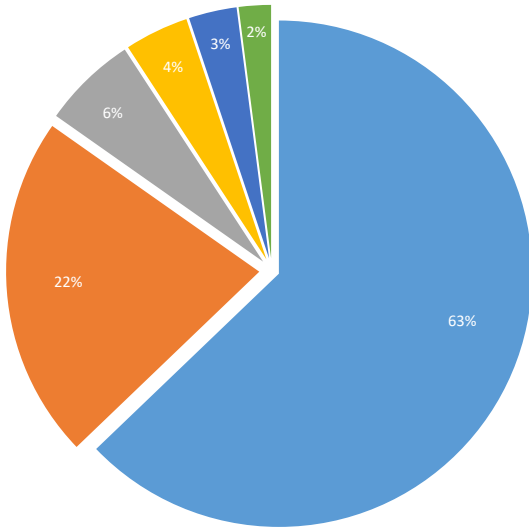
Our refugee reception house, Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre (MCRC), stands as a testament to Fariborz' enduring legacy, symbolizing the profound impact he has made in transforming the

lives of refugees and shaping the compassionate and inclusive community we strive to build. His foresight and commitment to supporting refugees led to the creation of MCRC, providing a safe and welcoming space for vulnerable newcomers as they embark on their journey of resettlement.

Until the end of Fariborz' tenure, his dedication to building welcoming communities for immigrants and refugees remained steadfast. Notably, he played a pivotal role in CCIS' preparations to welcome over 5,000 Afghan refugees through the National Afghan Refugee Resettlement Project, solidifying Calgary as a point of entry.

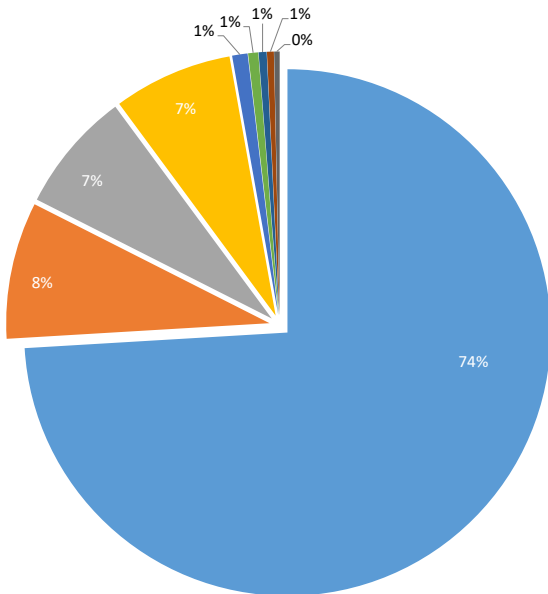
Fariborz' departure as CEO signifies a moment of reflection and gratitude for his invaluable contributions. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Fariborz for his transformative leadership, compassion, and unforgettable service to CCIS and our clients. His vision and tireless efforts have laid a strong foundation for our organization's continued success and ongoing commitment to serving immigrants and refugees.

## ALLOCATION OF REVENUES TO PROGRAM AREAS



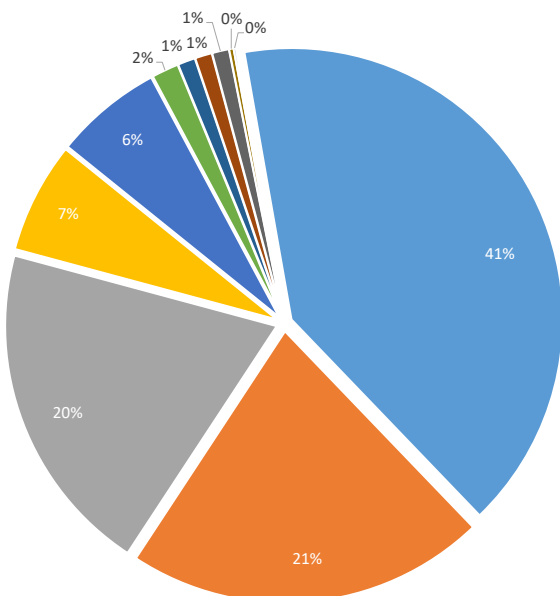
- Resettlement & Integration Services
- Business, Employment & Training Services
- Community Development & Integration Services
- Rural Programs
- Family & Children's Services
- Administration

## REVENUE BY SOURCE



- Federal Programs - IRCC
- Federal Programs - Other
- Alberta Programs
- Revenue - Other
- City of Calgary
- User Fees
- United Way of Calgary and Area
- Alberta Health
- Donations

## EXPENSES BY TYPE



- Wages & Employee Benefits
- Office & Other
- Temporary Accommodations
- Education Training
- Professional Fees & Program Consultants
- Automobile & Transportation
- Amortization of Capital Assets
- Non-recoverable GST
- Rent, Utilities & Other
- Conference & Staff Development
- Interest on Long-Term Debt

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our funders and partners:





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