

Accelerating  
Engagement



Since 1952

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# President's Report



2017/18 was a significant year for COSTI, as we celebrated 65 years of service to the community. A series of events were held throughout the year, ending with our 65th Anniversary Celebration at the Aga Khan Museum.

For COSTI, the evening was not only a celebration to mark the significant milestone, it was a celebration of diversity and multiculturalism, for as the community has evolved, so too has COSTI.

The occasion provided an opportunity to launch the Corvetti Academic Scholarship Fund and recognize individuals and organizations who help accelerate the engagement of newcomers. CIBC was presented with the Excellence in Accelerating Engagement and Diversity Award for demonstrating leadership in hiring a diverse workforce, and Rex Power Magnetics received the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Award. The founders of Rex arrived in Canada as refugees and achieved great success in the creation of their own business and demonstrated an ongoing commitment to hiring newcomers. Senator Ratna Omidvar received the Lifetime Achievement Award, who, as an immigrant herself, achieved outstanding success in working in the community and with newcomers, ensuring their success.

Over the years, COSTI has adapted to suit the changing face of immigration and the evolving needs of its clients. Our Board of Directors understands that in order to effect change, we need to continue to challenge ourselves and strive to ensure that COSTI continues to be a leader in the community. In keeping with this philosophy, our Board is actively developing a Board Succession Plan to ensure the immediate and long-term success of the COSTI Board.

In addition, the Refugee Services Division was created in order to further enhance our services to refugee claimants and government-sponsored and privately-sponsored refugees. A rebranding process that resulted in a new logo design and new marketing approach was also finalized in 2017/18.

Our organization's mission and vision could not be accomplished without the countless hours of commitment and dedication from our Board, volunteers and staff, as well as the generosity of our funders and individual and corporate donors.

Coming to this country as an immigrant boy myself, and remembering the difficulties that others and I faced, I always felt I had a duty to help immigrants. As volunteer President for COSTI, together with community partners who have for many years worked to help newcomers settle and become successful in Canada, I will continue to work diligently and passionately to eliminate the many obstacles faced by newcomers and ensure that Canada's new citizens get the opportunities to achieve success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruno M. Suppa', written in a cursive style.

**BRUNO M. SUPPA**  
PRESIDENT

# Executive Director's Report



The responsibilities undertaken by COSTI Immigrant Services to resettle 2,200 government-sponsored Syrian refugees occupied us for most of 2016 and 2017. The majority of those refugees are either working or are taking English classes. However, the challenges in serving such a large group with a broad range of needs, inspired a review of how COSTI delivers services to refugees. As a result, a Refugee Services Division was established to bring greater focus and innovation to refugee services.

As the new Division was being established, COSTI received a number of refugee families who were victims of Daesh. It became clear that the trauma suffered by these families required a more intensive and supportive response. Consequently, staff in the Division were trained in trauma informed care and a wraparound service approach was instituted for high need clients.

This approach includes the involvement of volunteers and specialized community services to support the families. For example, it was identified that the children of these families needed summer activities and a number of organizations stepped forward to help. The York District School Board offered free space and other organizations offered a variety of resources resulting in a summer camp for 200 children and youth, set-up quickly and without additional funding.

COSTI's Family and Mental Health Services worked with the Refugee Services Division to develop a Wellness Centre to more holistically address the mental health needs of the refugees. Training was provided to COSTI staff working with refugees on mental health literacy and a mental health screening tool was deployed for all government-sponsored refugees shortly after arrival to identify the need for wellness supports.

Wellness supports now include clinical counselling and exercises in sustainable coping strategies such as meditation, mindfulness and yoga sessions. For those women experiencing difficulties in accessing English language classes, we have established small group sessions near their home and individual tutoring at home in partnership with the Syrian Canadian Foundation. Additionally, those who are socially isolated and not engaged due to emotional or traumatic experiences are provided recreational, socialization, cultural and community activities through COSTI's Community Engagement Office. This includes field trips to parks, winter tobogganing and trips to museums.

These initiatives are proving effective in helping individuals suffering from trauma move to a more functional state.

More broadly speaking, our community partners have been working with COSTI to provide a variety of opportunities to our clients to engage more fully in the community. The Centre for Refugee Studies at York University provides field trips, the Sick Muse Project provides art therapy sessions, CultureLink provides music sessions and cycling, Snug Harbour Media provides dance lessons in Canadian and Dabbkeh idioms, the Toronto Public Library provides story-telling and arts and crafts and Camp Engies provides a summer weekend engineering camp for girls. This is a small example of the many activities available to our clients to expose them to Canadian culture and to help them integrate.

We and our newcomer clients are fortunate to have such support from the community. Ultimately, Canada is the beneficiary.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mario J. Calla". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**MARIO J. CALLA**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# COSTI's work in the community continues to be a high priority.

Through active participation in local, provincial and national committees, advisory groups and ad hoc coalitions, we have represented the voice of immigrants and the immigrant serving sector in planning, service development, coordination, research, public policy and education.

COSTI's over-arching goal is to contribute to creating conditions that enable immigrants and vulnerable populations to become valuable and contributing members of society. COSTI's leadership team works to promote public policies that facilitate the integration of immigrants and support their communities to build internal leadership and capacity.

In 2017/18, COSTI continued to foster a collaborative approach to service-delivery by developing new programming and partnerships that support new delivery models. Over 30 new partnerships were developed with community

health organizations, grass-roots community groups, faith-based organizations, settlement agencies and educational institutions.

Some examples include our work with the Labour Education Centre in providing clients with safety training, certification and referral to construction unions for job placement, as well as with the Syrian Canadian Foundation, where home and community-based English language training is delivered to newcomers, with tutoring provided by the University of Toronto.

COSTI's Stakeholder and Volunteer Engagement General Manager, continued to work with existing and new partners to deliver services to all government-sponsored refugees that support their integration: housing support services; activities, community events and workshops that engaged children and parents; help with introducing them to services available in their local community; and donations of food, clothing and household items.

In addition, a family-matching initiative that saw Canadian host families paired with refugee families continued in 2017/18 with the Together Project. Host families provided invaluable support and assistance to refugee newcomers - from the day they move from temporary housing to their new home. They provide support in receiving furniture; setting up their households; shopping for essential items such as food, bedding, etc.; escorting families to

local financial institutions, parks and community centres; exploring nearby public transportation routes, and help in registering children in school. This year, the program expanded through partnerships in London, Ottawa and Thunder Bay, matching over 375 volunteers with government-sponsored refugees.

As part of our community engagement initiatives, COSTI continued to screen the Clouds Over Sidra virtual reality short film to the public, after the initial project and collaboration between the United Nations and Artscape came to an end. A partner in the initiative, COSTI's goal in acquiring the virtual reality equipment and presentation materials, is to sustain interest and support for refugees to ensure their successful resettlement in Canada.

COSTI supported the continued development of local community groups, such as the South Asian Women's Rights Organization serving Bangladeshi women in Scarborough and Refugee JumpStart. COSTI worked with hundreds of partner organizations to coordinate the International Student Connect Program, Problem Gambling, Orientation to Ontario Program and the Welcome Centre Immigrant Services network in York Region. Collaborative and innovative approaches to service delivery allows COSTI and key partners the opportunity to meet the needs of under-served communities and also develop internal capacity to build, enhance and sustain services.

## 2017/18 SNAPSHOT: A BREAKDOWN OF VARIOUS PARTNERS

Partnership and collaboration amongst organizations is key to the successful integration of newcomers. COSTI is represented on many community planning networks, umbrella organizations and advisory committees. We work in partnership with organizations and service providers across Ontario in the planning and delivery of services to the community.

194

COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

55

INTER-AGENCY PLANNING GROUPS AND LOCAL SERVICE PLANNING COORDINATION GROUPS

16

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

5

HOSPITALS

5

SCHOOL BOARDS

# Partnership and collaboration

COSTI is proud to have been a part of key organizations including the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), the Consortium of Agencies Serving Internationally-trained Persons (CASIP), Local Immigration Partnerships in Toronto and the Regions of Peel and York, Canadian Council for Refugees, the Peel Syrian Refugee Settlement Support Group, Ryerson University Employment Round Table, and the Resettlement Adaptation Program Working Group.

## ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT INTEGRATION PROJECT

Led by Vancouver-based SUCCESS, the Active Engagement Integration Project (AEIP) provides pre-arrival services to support the settlement, adaptation and integration of individuals moving to Canada. COSTI promotes community and labour market engagement by providing settlement and employment information and referral and initial orientation online to overseas clients prior to their departure and arrival in Ontario.

## PLANNING FOR CANADA

Led by Colleges and Institutes Canada, the Canadian Immigrant Integration Project (CIIP) aims to consolidate and expand the delivery model of online advisory services to individuals overseas through a coordinated model that fosters more effective partnerships among key stakeholders in the settlement sector, college partners across the provinces and employment support organizations.

COSTI provides pre-departure support to individuals overseas who are destined to arrive in Ontario. Services include referrals to community agencies, educational institutions and employment support organizations in communities across Ontario.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONNECT

The International Student Connect Program supports international students wishing to settle in Ontario. It represents an innovative collaboration between settlement service providers and post-secondary institutions. The program offers resources, information sessions and workshops on a variety of settlement topics.

Workshops and sessions address issues such as features of life in Ontario, accessing local services, consumer awareness, housing and health care. The program is led by COSTI, in partnership with 16 settlement agencies and 20 colleges and universities in 15 Ontario communities: Barrie, Brantford, Chatham, Hamilton, Leamington, London, Mississauga, Niagara Region, Orillia, Ottawa, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay, Toronto and Windsor.

## NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS AND FAMILIES (NFF)

NFF is a province-wide public education campaign that raises awareness of the signs of woman abuse so that those close to a woman at-risk can recognize the signs of abuse and know what actions to take in response. Last year, COSTI developed an animated video and lesson plans for Instructors of English language classes on the themes of recognizing indicators of violence, responding to the women-at-risk and referring women for help.

We are currently developing two-five minute videos to correspond with NFF materials: Safety Planning for Women Who are Abused and How to Talk to Men Who are Abusive.

## NEWCOMER YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

The Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Project addresses the national priority of increasing civic engagement among newcomer youth. Approximately 140 newcomer youth between the ages of 16-21 are recruited from four partner sites across Canada to participate in the series of activities, aiming to increase engagement among newcomer youth.

COSTI and project partners provide program development, training workshops, a community project, and a national youth gathering. Youth receive 25 hours of programming through leadership training workshops and participate in a youth-led community project and a national gathering, where they present on their community project and are able to network with peers from across Canada.

## ORIENTATION TO ONTARIO (O2O)

A bilingual initiative, O2O is designed to ease the transition of newcomers by providing access to standardized information about settling in Ontario and connecting newcomers to community services upon arrival. O2O is delivered by 31 community agency partners in 8 Ontario communities across the province. COSTI, in collaboration with Centre de santé communautaire Niagara/Hamilton, OCASI and George Brown College, provides program development, evaluation, promotion and staff training to support the delivery of the program.



Photo Credit: Lisa Kannakko for Together Project, Tides Canada Initiatives Society

Resources include a website, workshops, workbooks, fact sheets, YouTube videos and webinars available to newcomers pre-arrival or already living in Ontario. In addition, COSTI is currently working with Ryerson University on the development of a Mobile Chatbot.

#### **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

COSTI provides advice and expertise on newcomer problem gambling issues to service providers who provide mental health and addiction services to ethno-cultural communities in need of culturally and linguistically appropriate treatment and services.

In 2017/18, COSTI was supported by Gambling Research Exchange Ontario, in the development of an outreach and prevention program for ethno-cultural communities in Toronto. The pilot project consisted of three-day training sessions offered to community participants on training information ambassadors to promote help-seeking behaviours in gamblers from ethno-cultural communities.

#### **WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES**

The Welcome Centre Immigrant Services is a one-stop service in York Region, designed to guide and support immigrants through the maze of information and resources.

Core services provided at each of the five Centres by a partnership of agencies include: settlement and integration services; language training and enhanced language training; accreditation and qualifications assistance; and employment supports.

#### **WELCOME GROUP MODEL**

In 2017/18, COSTI partnered with the Together Project in developing a standardized model of volunteer engagement with government-sponsored refugees. Together Project connects refugee newcomers and Canadians to build stronger, more integrated communities through three program areas: matching, community and research.

Together Project developed the “Welcome Group” model in close partnership with COSTI. The model builds on existing family matching programs and connects Canadians with government-sponsored refugees from all countries of origin who arrive at COSTI’s Ralph Chiodo Family Immigrant Reception Centre.

Together Project and COSTI developed a series of four manuals to empower volunteers, as well as develop tools for volunteering with refugee newcomers. Over 250 volunteers in London, Ottawa, Thunder Bay and Toronto were trained using the manuals, available online, and were provided with information and training to best support refugee newcomers, and to understand the role of volunteer support in fostering durable integration.

# Accelerating Engagement by Providing Opportunities for Success

Last year, 7,900 individuals with international work experience, young adults, high school and university graduates came to COSTI looking for help to get them one step closer to finding the right job or career. COSTI believes that access to sustainable jobs puts people on the right track for success and enriches our communities. We work with over 1,000 employers who share in the same belief.

Newcomers come to Canada and bring with them new ideas, energy, skills, resources, and a strong desire to succeed and contribute to their new country. In order to contribute, they must first be given the opportunity to develop the tools and skills needed to secure employment and pursue a career in their new country. We want everyone who comes to Canada to be successful. That's why we are making it a priority to extend our work beyond bricks and mortar buildings by engaging with newcomers both online and in-person.

Offering professional development, pre-employment training and employment opportunities at the local and provincial levels, and also providing pre-arrival information, referrals and consultations internationally, allows COSTI to connect with clients no matter where they are in the world.

The development and delivery of employment training and placement opportunities for newcomers who arrived as refugees was a key objective in 2017/18 and will continue to be a priority next year. A number of pre-employment workshops, one-on-one assessments and referrals to job finding and skills development training were offered in 2017. Last year, 27 Syrian newcomer professionals participated in the Internship Project for Syrian Newcomer Professionals, sponsored by La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso.

All 27 were successful! 23 found employment in the Accounting, Banking, Information Technology, Architecture and Health & Safety Training in Construction fields; 2 returned to school in pursuit of certifications; and the remaining 2 participants joined English classes and are considering self-employment.

We are currently working to secure new funding so that we can continue to offer this successful service-delivery model to newcomers and future arrivals.

## 275

NEWCOMER PROFESSIONALS WERE MATCHED AND SUPPORTED BY A MENTOR WHO WORKS IN THEIR FIELD IN CANADA THROUGH THE TRIEC MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

## 3,547

UNEMPLOYED AND UNDER-EMPLOYED ADULTS AND YOUTH ACCESSED E-FACILITATED WORKSHOPS TO HELP IMPROVE THEIR JOB SEARCH SKILLS; OR CONNECTED WITH COSTI ONLINE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CREDENTIALS ASSESSMENT, DOCUMENT TRANSLATION, AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE COMING TO CANADA



From left to right: **Ara Hasserjian**, Vice President of Operations, **Manmohan Panach**, Production Manager and former COSTI client, and **Angelo Delfino**, former President of the Italian Immigrant Aid Society

COSTI has worked with Rex Power Magnetics since 2005. Over that time, they have employed over 200 of COSTI's clients in front-line and management positions.

All of them newcomers to Canada, they come from around the world - India, Pakistan, Philippines, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka. The owners of Rex Power Magnetics, brothers Simon and Levon Hasserjian, originally came to Canada as refugees from Aleppo, Syria.

They, like so many others, were moved by the Syrian refugee crisis and created a business plan to secure new jobs for refugees arriving from Syria. Today they employ 46 Syrian newcomers.

Rex Power Magnetics is a model of diversity and serves as an example of the contribution made by newcomers to Canada. The Hasserjian family, through their entrepreneurship and vision, are making a significant difference in the lives of newcomer families.

In recognition for their commitment and dedication to accelerating the engagement of newcomers to Canada by providing opportunities for employment, COSTI recognized Rex Power Magnetics with the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Award at its 65th Anniversary Celebration. The award is presented to an immigrant who has achieved success in the creation or operation of a business or entrepreneurial endeavour or has applied innovation resulting in business success in Ontario and Canada.

Rex Power Magnetics is a leading manufacturer of dry type power transformers and is located in Vaughan. With nearly 290 employees, Rex supplies transformers for Canada, the U.S. and overseas, for a variety of commercial, industrial, and utility applications.

# 75%

OF THE EMPLOYERS WE WORK WITH ARE SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED COMPANIES

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

Career Assessment and Planning, Job Search and Placement, Job Maintenance Support services for adults (including internationally trained professionals/tradespeople) and youth are provided through a comprehensive service model intended to address individual needs. Services include: individual assessment, counselling, pre-employment training, group workshops and employment and job maintenance placement. Individuals can also benefit from a range of on-the-job placement and training opportunities relevant to their specific career goals. Exploration of trades apprenticeships, customized job searches and mentoring opportunities are available.

The Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG) provides resources to employers to undertake training and professional development in their workforce. COSTI is a designated provider of the COJG.

**HOMELESS INITIATIVES FUND - EMPLOYMENT**

Supports individuals accessing COSTI's Housing Help programs. Participants undergo an employability assessment, individualized return-to-work action plan, pre-employment workshops and career exploration that lead to self-improvement and/or employment.

**LIFE SKILLS TRAINING**

Employment preparation workshops to develop life and management skills and career exploration options. Services for residents of York Region or social assistance recipients include career planning, résumé development, interview skills and creation of a personal job search plan.

**ONLINE SERVICES**

Using an interactive online platform e-facilitated by Employment Consultants, online services are available to unemployed and under-employed individuals who face multiple barriers and cannot otherwise access on-site services. An Employment Resource room is available for specific job search techniques and tools, and a Virtual Library listing key websites related to employment research and job search.

**ONTARIO WORKS**

The Hospitality Options Program Essentials (HOPE) and Internationally Trained Individuals Program, provide basic training on career planning, résumé development, interview skills and creation of a personal job search plan. Services for job-ready social assistance recipients include assessment, four weeks of group instruction, individual job placement and follow-up support.

**RESOURCE AND INFORMATION**

Individuals access information on careers and occupations, local job market, training opportunities and job search strategies to successfully find and maintain employment. Resources include: computerized job banks, internet access, fax/photocopier, video library and written materials.

**LOCATIONS**

**BRAMPTON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

10 Gillingham Drive  
Suite 300  
905-459-8855

**MISSISSAUGA EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

6750 Winston Churchill Blvd.  
Unit 8A  
905-567-0482

**TORONTO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

2301 Keele Street  
416-789-7925

**VAUGHAN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

3100 Rutherford Road  
Suite 102  
905-669-5627

**WESTON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

416-588-2240

**53%**

OF ADULTS AND YOUNG ADULTS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT HAVE POST GRADUATE OR BACHELOR DEGREES

**3,674**

ADULTS AND YOUTH FOUND A JOB OR DECIDED TO PURSUE FURTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION

# Transforming Lives One Person at a Time

Women of all races and ages face personal systemic barriers every day. Many immigrant women who come to Canada are well-educated and experienced professionals, but overlooked by employers because they are not able to communicate at a high level of English. Others need access to housing, mental health services, settlement and counselling services.

COSTI believes all women deserve a supportive environment in which they can feel empowered. Our goal is to offer specialized employment services, supportive counselling, workshops on financial matters, health, parenting, and much more to over 15,000 adult and young women who come to COSTI for help.

With the year-to-year increase in the number of women accessing our services, COSTI's priority for 2017/18 and in the coming year, is to explore funding opportunities that will allow us to sustain successful programs for women such as the Women of Courage Program – where 86% of participants found employment in their field and increased their annual income, or went on to further their education.

4,697

ADULT AND YOUNG WOMEN CAME TO COSTI TO  
SECURE EMPLOYMENT AND UPGRADE THEIR SKILLS

57%

OF COSTI CLIENTS  
ARE WOMEN

## WOMEN'S SERVICES

Operating with the shared objective of developing the full and equal participation of women in all facets of our communities, COSTI staff help women of diverse background and experiences in overcoming economic, health, legal and cultural barriers.

The goal of COSTI's programs and services for women is to address systemic and personal barriers that impact on immigrant women and provide a supportive environment that move women from a situation of dependency and isolation to a more empowered state.

Immigrant women have access to workshops on topics relevant to their wellbeing: health, parenting, domestic violence, etc. *COSTI's Trauma Group for Spanish-speaking Women* offers individual and group counselling for Spanish-speaking women and their children experiencing trauma.

The *Lifeskills Counselling Program* provides workshops combined with individual counselling for women to improve their self-confidence and increase their employment potential. Located in the Region of Peel, *Pathways to Success* provides low-income women opportunities to explore self-employment and stabilize their personal and family situation. *Ubuntu Talks - Women to Women Speakers Series*, provides refugee women with opportunities for civic engagement, confidence building and empowerment through the art of story-telling. Women in need of housing support services are provided childminding and travel supports in order to access services.

### WOMEN OF COURAGE PROGRAM

Provides women with a college certificate in office administration. Combined with group counselling, life skills workshops and job search activities, women are prepared for employment. Offered in partnership with Humber College.

## LOCATIONS

### BRAMPTON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

10 Gillingham Drive  
905-459-8855

### TORONTO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

2301 Keele Street  
416-789-7925

### CORVETTI EDUCATION CENTRE

760 College Street  
416-534-7400

### FAMILY AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1700 Wilson Avenue, Suite 105  
416-244-7714

## Increasing Independence and Reducing Isolation

Through recreational, educational and cultural activities, as well as supportive counselling, COSTI's Seniors' Services effectively engage and involve this fast growing, yet often overlooked segment of our community. We believe that all older adults deserve to continue to live enriched lives. We accelerate their engagement by providing support to older adult immigrants and their families through programs such as the Elderly Persons' Centre, CBAO Seniors Day Program, and Chinese and Spanish seniors clubs.

In 2017/18, COSTI continued to explore partnerships and programming for older adults and focused on new employment programming for unemployed adults. A new initiative, offered in partnership with the Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations and COSTI's Employment Services for older workers aged 50 to 70 years old, offers a workshop series to assist older adults in assessing and pursuing job options based on their many years of accumulated skills and experience. Participants establish effective work search strategies and also receive ongoing pre-employment support. The goal is to help participants find work, consider entrepreneurship, or volunteerism.



**Josie Badali** (right) with her mother **Antonina Di Lisi**, a participant in the CBAO Seniors Day Program

Funded by the Calabrian Benevolent Association of Ontario, the CBAO Seniors Day Program has successfully evolved from a traditional care-based support program into an education-based care support program that focuses on learning and enhancing the short-term memory of seniors.

The emphasis on learning, not only helps seniors to improve the meaningfulness and value of their activities, it enables them to activate and exercise their short-term memory more frequently.

Antonina Di Lisi was born in Sicily in 1931 and arrived in Canada by ship in 1951. As a young woman, she settled in Winnipeg, Manitoba and lived with her aunt and uncle who immigrated to Canada a few years earlier. Antonina married, started her own family and moved to Toronto eight years later.

Having raised their family, Antonina and her husband were enjoying their grandchildren and family, as many seniors do. Her husband noticed that she was having some memory issues, such as forgetting where she had put things, or whether she had added salt to food or not.

Antonina's husband, Peter, passed away in October 2016. She moved in with her daughter Josie Badali and started attending COSTI's CBAO Seniors Day Program over a year ago.

*"We had a caregiver at home right after my mom moved in with me, but she didn't like that situation. She was very bored. The caregiver didn't drive so they didn't do very much. She would sit at home all day and wasn't stimulated enough. It was just not working for her. Now she comes to the Centre four to five times a week, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. We have breakfast together every morning, she gets ready and then I drop her off on my way to work.*

*I chose this program because she needed social stimulation and the CBAO Seniors Day Program offers lots of activities for seniors: baking, cooking, crafting, games, exercises and live music. It's also because of the Italian component. She's very fluent in English and I think it is good for her to speak English because it keeps her mind going, but keeping the Italian is important too,"* comments Josie.

*"I am very happy and I have friends!" says Antonina with a big smile on her face. "One of the many benefits of the program is that it has given my mother a purpose, something to look forward to," Josie explains.*

*"Every morning, she gets up, takes a shower, and does her hair. She has somewhere to go and looks forward to socializing. She's much happier and calmer. It's been very beneficial for her and she enjoys it very much. She is always mingling and talking with the other ladies and gentlemen. Her favourite activities are cooking, baking, dancing and exercising. She is very healthy and fit and I think she enjoys moving around more and having some extra physical activity. The live music concerts are also among her favourite things and mine too! I try to attend every time program staff invite us because it is so much fun and I always find my mom dancing with her friends.*

*This program has been a Godsend for us. It is such a blessing. My mom enjoys it very much and the staff are kind and gentle. When my mom comes here, as soon as she walks through the door, everyone is so positive and inviting. It is truly invaluable!"*

# 1,900

**SENIORS ATTENDED ENGLISH CLASSES, RECEIVED HELP WITH ACCESSING GOVERNMENT INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS OR COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES, WHILE OTHERS ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES THAT HELPED THEM STAY ACTIVE AND INDEPENDENT**

## SENIORS' SERVICES

Organizational support provided to the Canadian Italian Family Assistance Association (CIFAA) and to seniors of the Caravelle Club and the Association of Spanish-speaking Seniors to assist them in their social, educational, and recreational activities.

Elderly Persons' Centre allows Italian seniors the opportunity to take part in daily social, cultural, recreational and educational activities; Encuentro Latino, a group for Spanish-speaking seniors is designed to provide socialization, reduction of social isolation and mutual support in the settlement process. In addition, workshops and information sessions are offered to Chinese and South Asian communities.

Operated by COSTI and funded by the Calabrian Benevolent Association of Ontario (CBAO), the Seniors Day Program supports Italian-speaking elderly who have been diagnosed with early-stage dementia and/or Alzheimer's disease as well as their families and care partners.

### LOCATIONS

#### CBAO SENIORS DAY PROGRAM

7730 Islington Avenue  
905-605-3622

#### CORVETTI EDUCATION CENTRE

760 College Street  
416-534-7400

#### NORTH YORK CENTRE

1700 Wilson Avenue, Suite 114  
416-244-0480

# Investing in the Future

COSTI's Children and Youth Services are designed with the understanding that all young people have the right to be provided with support and guidance. The goals of our programs are to inspire confidence in youth, ensuring that they stay in school, secure employment and become successful role models for other young men and women.

COSTI's Youth Leadership, Recreation and Community Connections programs continued to provide recreational and civic engagement training to young men and women. In 2017/18, over 300 youth volunteered for park cleanup, community gardening, and gift-wrapping over the holiday season. Homework help; practice test sessions to help prepare students for exams; discussion groups on internet safety, identity theft, college and university options,

including loans and scholarships; as well as sports and recreational activities, helped build confidence, develop leadership skills and exposed the youth to activities in which they would not normally have the opportunity to engage.

Young women and men who come to Canada as refugees have the greatest challenge in engaging with their peers and in the community because of the trauma they experienced, lack of English skills and adolescent insecurities. Programming priorities continue to be the development and delivery of services that address the needs of children and youth who arrive as refugees and require additional supports given their age and lack of English.

## GEORGE QUARCOO

A FORMER PARTICIPANT OF COSTI'S YOUTH RECREATION PROGRAM AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED ATHLETE, QUALIFIED FOR THE CANADIAN COMMONWEALTH GAMES TEAM IN 2018

# 2,200+

YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN RECEIVED EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS, INCLUDING PLACEMENT

# 420

CHILDREN STAYING AT THE RALPH CHIDO FAMILY IMMIGRANT RECEPTION CENTRE WERE PROVIDED WITH A LIFELINE AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK THROUGH THEIR FEARS BY EXPRESSING THEMSELVES THROUGH ART THERAPY



Winter wonderland – a day at Black Creek Pioneer Village

## CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

### REFUGEE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Youth Leadership Program is a youth-friendly initiative for Syrian refugees that engages youth through an ESL-fellowship program, leadership training and community partner exchange and engagement. Youth-led Community Councils empower refugee youth through community engagement projects, themed workshops, volunteer activities, leadership development and sports and recreation, allowing refugee youth to shape their experiences and continue to be leaders in their communities.

### YOUTH JOB CONNECTION

Assists young people between the ages of 15 to 29 facing multiple and/or complex barriers to employment build better futures. Participants receive a minimum of 60 hours of paid training to prepare them for the workplace, a job for up to 6 months and mentorship, job-coaching and help with the transition from school to work, or to ongoing employment once the service ends.

### YOUTH JOB CONNECTION - SUMMER

Offers high school students planning to stay in or return to school, or to move on to post-secondary education with at least 20 hours of paid training to prepare them for the workforce, mentorship, job coaching and help in securing summer jobs that last up to 8 weeks; and part-time and after school jobs. This service is available at our Keele Street location only.

### YOUTH HEALTH AND RECREATION

Empowers youth by encouraging and building leadership skills through positive engagement in physical activities and sports, healthy eating and dialogue on issues such as risky personal behaviours for youth between the ages of 13 and 24. Youth and seniors come together to grow, cultivate and cook vegetables from a community garden. This exciting initiative engages participants in a dialogue and activity where they will gain a better understanding of their similarities and differences and come to value the contributions of both generations.

### YOUTH JOB LINK

Participants improve their knowledge of career options and today's labour market; building the life skills to successfully plan and manage a career; write a résumé, search and apply for jobs and prepare for interviews; prepare for the workplace by learning about team work, customer service, health and safety and labour rules. A job-matching component to help connect participants with employers offering job opportunities that match their skills and interests is also available.

### YOUTH MENTORING

Program matches out-of-school unemployed youth with older mentors. Mentors provide advice and coaching on career planning and life skills.

### YOUTH NETWORKS

An employment focused youth networking and mentoring program. The program includes wrap around supports to assist youth facing multiple barriers to access and utilize the program including the online netWORKS hub.

### YOUTH SETTLEMENT SERVICES

One-on-one help and group workshops provide orientation, referral, information, interpretation, completion of government documents, advocacy and supportive counselling for immigrant youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who need assistance. Youth Community Connections focuses on youths' recreational and social needs as well as promoting respect, addresses issues such as conflict and anger management, racism and sexism through mediation activities, education and community engagement activities. The program builds character and enhances the mentorship skills of the participants.

## LOCATIONS

### BIRCHMOUNT STADIUM

(April to July and  
September to October)  
100 Birchmount Road  
647-827-1462

### MISSISSAUGA EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

6750 Winston Churchill Blvd.  
Unit 8A  
905-567-0482

### SQUARE ONE SHOPPING CENTRE

100 City Centre  
Suite 501  
Mississauga

### VARIETY VILLAGE

(November to March)  
3701 Danforth Avenue  
416-367-2828, ext. 270

### VODDEN CENTRE

227 Vodden Street East  
Suite 3  
905-459-6700

### BRAMPTON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

10 Gillingham Drive  
Suite 300  
905-459-8855

### SCARBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE

55 Town Centre Court  
Suite 401  
Scarborough

### TORONTO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

2301 Keele Street  
416-789-7925

### VAUGHAN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

3100 Rutherford Road  
Suite 102  
905-669-5627

### WESTON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

416-588-2240



Adham Al Azhari, 1st Prize: Grades 9 to 12, COSTI Refugees & Human Rights Child & Youth Poetry Contest

COSTI's Annual Refugees & Human Rights Child & Youth Poetry Contest provides all young women and men, no matter where they were born, with an opportunity to express their feelings through the written word. School-age children across Ontario and current and former COSTI clients, are encouraged to participate.

Adham Al Azhari is the 1st Prize Winner of COSTI's Refugees & Human Rights Child & Youth Poetry Contest. Adham was born in Syria and arrived in Canada in 2015 through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. In his poem Jasmine Scented Memories, Adham reflects on his experience as a refugee fleeing war and loss.

*"I was living in Homs, a Syrian city, when a missile struck our house and killed my mom. I got burned – my hair, brows and eyelashes were all gone – and 39 pieces of metal got stuck in my body. My dad was injured also. We were taken to different hospitals and reunited afterwards."*

*After the missile attack I moved to Damascus, Syria's capital, with my dad and brother. We lived there for about two years and then Jordan. We lived in Jordan for almost four years and lost my dad there to a heart attack. My brother and I had to work to survive and didn't have the chance to keep studying. Then, suddenly, we received a call from the Office for Refugees of the Archdiocese of Toronto (ORAT) letting us know that we could go to Canada through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.*

*My brother and I arrived in Canada approximately two and half years ago. I didn't speak a word of English and struggled a lot because I was not able to communicate, I couldn't even ask for a glass of water. I was also feeling very scared because we didn't know our sponsors, but thank God they turned out to be angels. They helped us with everything: renting a house, buying furniture, finding a job for my brother, putting me in school, financially, and emotionally. I was young when the war started in Syria and lacked affection. My sponsors gave me that affection. And now that we're both established, they continue to support us. They are really nice people and treat us as if we were their own sons. They're like my family.*

*I started taking English classes as soon as I arrived in Toronto and attended the City Adult Learning Centre where I won a scholarship to study at Keystone International Schools. I just finished high school and I am going to George Brown College to pursue a Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management. My brother is currently working as a plumber and is looking forward to getting his Certificate of Apprenticeship."*

Adham learned about COSTI's Refugees & Human Rights Child & Youth Poetry Contest through his teachers at Keystone International Schools. He wrote the poem to fully express his feelings and share what he experienced.

*"Speaking about what I have been through is very complex and people don't always get what I'm trying to convey, so I decided to write about it to make people understand. The title of my poem is Jasmine Scented Memories because my mom's name was Jasmine, and also because I love jasmine and its smell brings back so many memories..."*

*My experience as a refugee has taught me that life without kind and grateful people is nothing. I don't want to judge everyone but most people, when they try to help others, they're also expecting to get something in return. But here in Canada it is different. I have seen people helping others selflessly. Look at me, I am here, I am safe, I am happy, and I am building my future! Canada gives opportunity to so many people. Here you have the chance to do whatever you want to do, and to become whoever you want to be."*

# 365

**STUDENTS IN 80 SCHOOLS ACROSS  
ONTARIO PARTICIPATED IN COSTI'S  
REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS CHILD &  
YOUTH POETRY CONTEST**



## Jasmine Scented Memories

I look up into the blue sky  
A familiar face says hi  
I remember my mom's face  
I long for her warm embrace  
Jasmine scented hugs  
Hot chocolate mugs  
The warmth fades  
And now comes the razor blades  
Dark grey skies  
Blood teared eyes  
Buildings on fire  
Lives hanging on a wire  
Tomorrow is our only hope  
Resilience is the only way to cope  
There is never enough time to heal  
Struggling every day for a single meal  
I've resisted but for what reason  
I ask myself every passing season  
I'm all alone and lost  
I've survived only to be tossed  
Into a political game for people to gain  
I'm tired of this never ending chain  
Bombs are dropping stormily  
My only wish is to live normally

## Providing Access to Appropriate Care – Engaging Individuals & Families

We believe that the mental health of newcomers greatly impacts on an individual's ability to integrate into society. COSTI also believes that everyone deserves access to appropriate care. In keeping with this philosophy, in 2017/18 COSTI expanded the availability of mental health services offered to Syrian newcomers to all Arabic-speaking newcomers who arrived as government-sponsored refugees. We continue to make the mental health needs of newcomers a priority and are seeking additional support to broaden the availability of mental health services to all clients.

Last year, over 950 immigrants and refugee newcomers and their families received culturally competent counselling services. COSTI also continued to provide ongoing support for individuals, couples and families experiencing challenges, including victims of violence.

A priority for the coming year is to expand COSTI's psychiatric services and explore the feasibility of engaging another psychiatrist to address the wait-list which has now increased to one year, and to further expand trauma counselling for government-sponsored refugees.



**Khatoon** (her name has been altered to protect her identity)  
Government-sponsored Refugee

Khatoon arrived in Canada as a government-sponsored refugee in December 2017. She is 25 years old and a survivor of the Sinjar massacre, a genocide and abduction of thousands of people by The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Daesh) that took place in Sinjar, in August 2014.

Before arriving in Canada, Khatoon lived with her parents and eight brothers in a small village in northern Iraq. Her family owned a small piece of land where they grew all types of vegetables and raised goats. She never went to school.

*"On August 3, 2014 three Daesh vehicles with armed men arrived at our village. There were about six men in each car. By 6:00 pm, ten more cars arrived. The men carried guns and ammunition belts around their waists.*

*They rounded us up and divided us in groups of men, women and children. My father and brothers were taken to Ba'aj.*

*They put the women and children in cars and brought us to a two-story prison in Tal Afar. It was very dirty and filled with so many people that you could not even walk. I saw sick and dying children.*

*They kept us in Tal Afar for three days and then took us to the Prison of Badush, a prison for women and girls. We were there for fifteen days and then I was taken to Mosul - Daesh headquarters in Iraq. After four days they took me to some sort of theatre located in Raqqa where they were selling women as slaves.*

*I was sold to one of Daesh's religious leaders. He kept me as his servant for ten months. Then he sold me to a soldier who later sold me to another Daesh leader. They treated me as their wife and servant. In total, I was sold three times and experienced all types of violence. I was constantly beaten, sexually abused and isolated in a tiny room with no water, food or sunlight for days. They killed people in front of me and forced me to learn The Quran.*

*In August 2016, other prisoners and I decided to escape. We were in Aleppo and convinced a taxi driver to take us to Kobane. It took two days and two nights to get there, where I reunited with my mother and three brothers.*

*I arrived in Canada as a government-sponsored refugee in December 2017. One of my brothers currently lives in Toronto with me, two remain with my mother in Kurdistan territory and as of today, I still don't know where my father and five brothers are."*

Khatoon began accessing COSTI's Mental Health Services and attending English classes in February 2018.

Her counselling sessions provided her with the support she needed to start her new life in Canada and to work through the trauma and violence she experienced.

She currently attends English classes offered through COSTI three times a week and meets with her Clinical Counsellor once a week. Khatoon no longer feels isolated and is now more confident and comfortable in connecting with others. She travels the city on her own using public transit and smiles whenever she gets the chance to engage in a conversation and practice her English.

*"It is very difficult to forget what has happened to me, but the counselling sessions at COSTI have been very helpful. My Counsellor has taught me a breathing technique that I now use every time I start feeling anxious and sad. I also practice art therapy. I was having nightmares and flashbacks about the face of a Daesh man. They taught me to draw the face on a sheet of paper, rip it apart into little pieces, and throw them away.*

*I am feeling much better and I really enjoy learning English. I feel safe in Canada and going to classes makes me happy!*

## FAMILY & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

### FAMILY COUNSELLING

Individual, couples, and family counselling; groups for women victims of violence and for men who abuse their partners; psychiatric assessment and follow-up services for individuals of Hispanic and Italian background.

### PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICE

Culturally and linguistically appropriate counselling for individuals experiencing gambling problems. Services are available to individuals and family members of Hispanic, Italian and Portuguese background.

### LOCATIONS

#### FAMILY AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1700 Wilson Avenue, Suite 105  
416-244-7714

#### VAUGHAN CENTRE

3100 Rutherford Road, Suite 102  
905-669-5627

*I also feel stronger and have the confidence to go outside and engage with others. This past summer I even went to Queen's Park to take part in the fourth anniversary commemoration of the Sinjar massacre.*

*My plan for the future is to keep learning English, find a job where I can put my skills to service, and reunite with my mom and brothers."*

# 930

INDIVIDUALS ACCESSED ON-SITE PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES IN ENGLISH, ITALIAN AND SPANISH

# Responding to the Needs of English Language Learners

COSTI's English language programs help newcomers broaden connections with employers, advocate on behalf of their children, and feel engaged with their new communities. In 2017/18, 3,900 newcomers enrolled in English classes across Toronto, Peel Region and York Region, with more than half completing a minimum of one level within the year.

Our priorities for the coming year are to introduce curriculum to support financial literacy, woman abuse and Indigenous history, and to partner with organizations in the delivery of English language training to newcomers who came to Canada as refugees.

## 1,532

PEOPLE PREPARING TO IMMIGRATE TO CANADA WERE REFERRED TO LANGUAGE TRAINING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS



**Rajeev Kumar, CPA CGA**  
Enhanced Language Training Program Participant

Finding a job in their field is one of the biggest challenges that internationally trained professionals face when they arrive in Canada.

Receiving labour market information, learning job search strategies and getting workplace training at the moment of their arrival increases their chances to access a job in their respective industries, and accelerates their full engagement in Canadian society.

COSTI helps individuals who have acquired professional qualifications outside of Canada and who are unable to access employment in their field of expertise through its Enhanced Language Training (ELT) program.

Rajeev Kumar arrived in Canada from India in July 2013. He had a Bachelor Degree in Commerce from the Punjabi University and was an Associate Member of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India. He is an example of how COSTI's ELT program makes a difference in the lives of newcomers with international work experience.

*"The biggest problem I faced when I arrived in Canada was finding a job in my field. Back home I was working as a Manager in Finance at a multinational corporation. But here, when I applied to managerial positions the employers replied that I didn't have the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation and when I applied to entry level jobs they said that I was over-qualified.*

*I started working as a labourer at a candy factory to be able to pay the rent for my basement apartment and buy food for my family. I also contacted COSTI and registered for their ELT program in September. I attended COSTI's classes during the day and then went to the factory to work from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm. I did that for three months. In November, I found a job at Bhanot Professional Corporation, an accounting firm located in Mississauga.*

*While working at the accounting firm, I started to pursue my Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation. I worked and studied at the same time for three years.*

When I obtained my designation, a colleague asked me to join him as a partner. In January 2017, we opened Kang & Kumar, CPA and began our own practice.

COSTI showed me how to navigate the labour market to find a job. I learned how to contact prospective employers, make cold calls, build a résumé and showcase my skills. I was trained to use the accounting software that is used in Canada and learned everything a newcomer needs to know about the Canadian workplace culture, like punctuality and discipline. What I liked the most about the program were the group discussions at the end of each class and the mock interviews. COSTI staff practice with you and give you the confidence you need to succeed.

Another important component of the program is arranging internships and co-op opportunities with prospective employers. At the end of the program, at least 75% of the students get a job. And if they don't get a job, they gain exposure and knowledge.

I am very happy. I have established my own company and created a job for someone else. Actually, our current employee is a newcomer who graduated from COSTI's ELT Accounting program, just like me! We look forward to expanding our business and being able to hire more staff in the next five years."

COSTI's ELT program is available for professionals with international work experience in Accounting, Office Administration and Customer Service, Teaching, Information Technology and Health Care sectors. The course provides clients with Canadian workplace training, specific language and terminology classes, job search, pre-employment preparation, computer skills upgrading, and an unpaid internship placement.

70%

OF NEWCOMERS ATTENDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES HAVE A POST GRADUATE DEGREE, BACHELOR DEGREE, OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE DIPLOMA

90%

OF ENHANCED LANGUAGE TRAINING PARTICIPANTS SECURED EMPLOYMENT OR MOVED ON TO FURTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

## LANGUAGE & SKILLS TRAINING SERVICES

### LANGUAGE TRAINING

English language classes available at all levels, language training in the workplace and enhanced English language training in the administration and customer service, health care, teaching, accounting, information technology and finance fields, including language terminology, job search and placement.

### SKILLS TRAINING

Skill and special courses, including computer courses, citizenship acquisition courses.

### CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN

Child-minding support for LINC students at the North York Centre and Welcome Centres.

### LOCATIONS

#### CORVETTI EDUCATION CENTRE

760 College Street  
416-534-7400

#### ENHANCED LANGUAGE TRAINING SERVICES, BRAMPTON

10 Gillingham Drive, Suite 109A  
905-451-7147  
227 Vodden Street East, Suite 3  
905-459-6700

#### LANGUAGE AND SKILLS TRAINING SERVICES, NORTH YORK

1700 Wilson Avenue, Suite 206  
416-244-9980

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES, MARKHAM NORTH

8400 Woodbine Avenue  
Suites 102-103  
289-846-3645

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES, MARKHAM SOUTH

7220 Kennedy Road, Unit 8  
905-479-7926

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES, NEWMARKET

16655 Yonge Street, Unit 26  
289-841-3032

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES, RICHMOND HILL

9325 Yonge Street, Unit 31A  
289-842-3124

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES, VAUGHAN

9100 Jane Street, Building H  
Units 56-67  
905-761-1155

# From Hope to Opportunity

Newcomers who arrive in Canada as refugees, come with renewed hope to create better lives for themselves and their families. They bring with them valuable skills and knowledge that contribute to the social fabric of our country. Whether they are government-sponsored, privately-sponsored, or refugee claimants, our role is to welcome them, make them feel secure, and connect them with housing and local communities.

In order to ensure that all resettled refugees receive the same level of service that anyone that immigrates to Canada receives, COSTI's priority for 2017/18 was to create a service division that focused exclusively on services for refugees. The objective of the Refugee Services Division is to enhance current programming and ensure that anyone that comes through our doors is able to have their medical needs addressed, access mental health counselling, housing and employment opportunities, as soon as they arrive.

COSTI believes that a connected and collaborative community leads to the successful settlement and engagement of refugees. COSTI's partnerships and volunteer and stakeholder engagement activities increased significantly in 2017/18.

An example is our work with the Syrian Canadian Foundation, Muslim Welfare Centre, Together Project, and the Armenian Community Centre, providing a range of supports, settlement and referral services to newcomers who are government-sponsored refugees, refugee claimants, and privately-sponsored. Our partnerships and generous supporters helped welcome over 1,000 recently arrived refugees with donations of food, clothing and household items, and helped to engage them in social and recreational activities, community events and workshops.

Newcomers want to give back to the country that welcomed them. They want to have the ability to communicate in English and want to secure employment as soon as possible, allowing them to independently support their children and families. COSTI is working with donors and community partners to further develop programming that addresses the mental health, employment, language and settlement needs of our clients. Enhancing services and partnerships ensures that we are doing all we can to help in the adjustment, settlement and engagement of newcomers.

## 53

GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED FAMILIES WERE MATCHED WITH VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED THEM WITH DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES AFTER THEY LEFT COSTI'S RALPH CHIDO FAMILY IMMIGRANT RECEPTION CENTRE

## 350+

FAMILIES RECEIVED MOVE-OUT PACKAGES CONSISTING OF DRY GOODS, LINENS, CLEANING PRODUCTS AND KITCHEN ESSENTIALS FOR THEIR NEW HOMES

## 500+

WINTER COATS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO RECENTLY ARRIVED CLIENTS THROUGH THE QUAKER OATS "WARM WELCOME" INITIATIVE; 150 FAMILIES RECEIVED HOLIDAY PACKAGES FROM THE TORONTO STAR - SANTA CLAUS FUND

## 2,500+

REFUGEES FROM AROUND THE WORLD WERE WELCOMED TO TORONTO AND RECEIVED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AND HELP WITH THEIR SETTLEMENT, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS



Afra Hassen (left), with Maria Corvetti, Christine Corvetti-Prez and Christopher Corvetti

Afra Hassen arrived in Canada the spring of 2017. She is a refugee from Eritrea and is studying at York University in the Atmospheric and Earth Science Program. Afra is here in Canada with her sister. She is one of the first award recipients of the Corvetti Academic Scholarship Fund launched in 2017.

*"When I was first told that I was selected as one of the recipients of the scholarship, I wanted to know more about who the scholarship was named after and why. I was amazed to hear about the challenges faced by Mr. Corvetti and his own struggles in securing employment as an immigrant to Canada.*

*I left Eritrea for Egypt because of political reasons and knew in my heart that Canada was the country where I could be safe, reach for the stars, make my dreams come true and graduate in my field of education. Even now I am uncomfortable in sharing why I left. I wanted to come to a country where you were not obligated to work for the government in a job that they selected for you. I wanted to come to a country where education meant freedom and success, freedom to work anywhere you want and receive a salary that equaled your worth - something that I could have never achieved in Eritrea.*

*I live with my sister who came to Canada ten years ago. Unfortunately, her time here has not been all positive and recently underwent brain surgery. Every morning we enjoy a meal together before I go to class and every night when I return to our apartment, we make dinner and eat together before I begin my studies. She inspires me, she encourages me. My sister is a motivation for me to do well at school and excel! My success is her success! Once I have finished school I will be able to help others who are experiencing difficulties in their lives, just like me.*

*COSTI was my first home in Canada and Ontario. When I went from the airport to COSTI's Ralph Chiodo Family Immigrant Reception Centre, I said to myself 'today I started living, I start my life today.' COSTI and my Welcome Group helped me through the first few months - from informing me of my rights and responsibilities in Canada to helping me fill out my application for university. I want to be like everyone I have met and helped me - the person who welcomes a newcomer to Ontario by making them feel at home.*

*I am lucky to have had COSTI enter my life and I am honoured to receive this award named after an immigrant who struggled, achieved success and built a life here for him, his wife and his children. Mr. Corvetti's dream became a reality just as my dream is becoming a reality today, by getting an opportunity to continue my education and to build a life for myself and my sister, who continues to inspire me every day."*

The Corvetti Academic Scholarship Fund Award is named in honour of the late Panfilo Corvetti, the initiator and driving force behind COSTI's education and employment programs. In naming this scholarship after him, the COSTI Board of Directors celebrates Panfilo Corvetti's unique contribution to the agency's mission, celebrating all immigrants and their children who have established themselves in this country and are now part of the fabric and greatness of Canada.

The Corvetti Academic Scholarship Fund Award is funded by the Corvetti family, COSTI and individual donations. It is designed to recognize high academic achievement and financial need by a newcomer who is under the age of thirty and enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution.

At COSTI's 65th Anniversary Celebration, held in October 2017, COSTI was honoured to have Panfilo's widow Maria Corvetti and his children, Christine and Christopher present at the event to recognize the first three award recipients of the Corvetti Academic Scholarship Fund - Afrah Hassen, Khajag Papazian and Annie Sahagian.

3,100

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS PARTICIPATED IN STORY-TELLING AND PARENTING SESSIONS, RECREATIONAL AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, ENGLISH LANGUAGE CIRCLES, WEBINARS ON EMPLOYMENT AND LANGUAGE TRAINING

REFUGEE SERVICES

Government-sponsored refugees receive temporary accommodation and a range of initial settlement services, including orientation, completing applications for essential documents (OHIP, SIN), medical referrals, housing acquisition, life skills support, trauma counselling and support. Refugee Claimants are provided with temporary accommodation, settlement services and housing assistance.

ART THERAPY PROGRAM

Directed to the psycho-emotional needs of refugee children and youth, offers traumatized refugee children the opportunity to express themselves through art.

CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Government-sponsored refugees receive life skills, assessment, information and referral, group orientation, interpretation, advocacy, completion of government documents, and supportive counselling through a case management approach.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

Delivered by the Syrian Canadian Foundation, Arabic-speaking newcomers receive English language training delivered in-home, or in community settings.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Employment programs provide life skills, pre-employment and employment supports to semi-skilled and skilled refugee claimants and other vulnerable populations. In partnership with the Labour Education Centre, the *Arabic Construction Safety Training Program* provides targeted labour market integration supports for eligible clients, and supports specialized programming that combines language learning and work experience, while facilitating job placement.

LOCATIONS

CORVETTI EDUCATION CENTRE

760 College Street  
416-534-7400

FAMILY AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1700 Wilson Avenue, Suite 105  
416-244-7714

RALPH CHIODO FAMILY IMMIGRANT RECEPTION CENTRE

100 Lippincott Street  
416-922-6688

TORONTO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

2301 Keele Street  
416-789-7925



## Housing Services

COSTI believes in breaking down barriers to sustainable housing. We accelerate access to housing by helping adults and young people search for homes, working with landlords to understand how we can address their needs, and providing workplace training for those who are homeless, or in danger of becoming homeless.

Our priority for 2017/18 was to establish relationships with new landlords and enhance current relationships with landlords and community partners in an effort to secure housing more quickly and permanently for our clients.

### HOUSING SERVICES

Housing search assistance, eviction prevention, housing stabilization, crisis intervention, information, referral, education workshops for tenants and landlords, Rent Bank and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program and an Identification clinic.

The Housing Program provides meaningful volunteer work experience, mentoring and workplace training to people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless in an effort to increase their housing and employment opportunities.

### LOCATIONS

#### NORTH YORK CENTRE

1700 Wilson Avenue  
Suite 114  
416-244-0480

Housing Services are also provided at various satellite locations across Toronto that temporarily house government-sponsored refugees.

# 3,750

PEOPLE WHO WERE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS WERE HELPED TO SECURE PERMANENT HOUSING

# Settlement Services

COSTI's Settlement Services, from pre-arrival, to initial assessment and interpretation services, advocacy and counselling, promote a greater sense of security and wellbeing, helping newcomers and their families engage in their communities faster. At COSTI, we believe that with support early on, we can help reduce the stress and anxiety experienced by newcomers when they first arrive to Canada.

COSTI's priority for 2017/18 was to continue to enhance and strengthen our settlement support services to settled immigrants and newcomers, both adults and young people who live in the Greater Toronto Area, within the province, or overseas. Last year, over 10,000 people received counselling and help with accessing government services, completing government forms, translation, interpretation and referral services to support in their local communities.

## 33,097

REFERRALS TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES, REGULATORY BODIES, AND EDUCATIONAL AND BANKING INSTITUTIONS

## 6,205

NEWCOMERS LEARNED HOW TO NAVIGATE THROUGH THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS BY ATTENDING ORIENTATION TO ONTARIO WORKSHOPS IN 24 CITIES ACROSS THE PROVINCE

## 2,700

INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS RECEIVED INFORMATION, ORIENTATION AND ONLINE SUPPORT TO HELP THEM PREPARE FOR SETTLEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PROCESSES BEFORE ARRIVING IN CANADA

## 1,607

INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATED IN LIVE WEBINARS FOCUSED ON SETTLEMENT INFORMATION AND SERVICES

## SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Services include assessment, orientation, referral, information, interpretation, completing of government documents, advocacy, supportive counselling for new immigrants and settled immigrants.

Planning For Canada and the Active Engagement and Integration Project (AEIP) provide information and referral and initial orientation online to overseas clients to help them prepare for settlement and employment processes prior to arrival in Canada.

### LOCATIONS

#### CORVETTI EDUCATION CENTRE

760 College Street  
416-534-7400

#### NORTH YORK CENTRE

1700 Wilson Avenue  
Suite 114  
416-244-0480

#### VAUGHAN CENTRE

3100 Rutherford Road  
Suite 102  
905-669-5627

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES RICHMOND HILL

9325 Yonge Street  
Unit 31  
289-842-3124

#### WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES VAUGHAN

9100 Jane Street  
Building H, Units 56-67  
905-761-1155

# Thank You

The Board of Directors of COSTI Immigrant Services acknowledges with thanks, the outstanding contributions, support, and inspiration received from our funders, donors, partners, clients, volunteers, and staff, for over six decades.

## FUNDERS

### GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

#### Employment and Social Development Canada

- Canada Summer Jobs

#### Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

- Client Support Services
- Community Connections
- Information and Orientation
- Labour Market Access
- Language Training
- Orientation to Ontario
- Resettlement Assistance Program
- Support Services

### GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO

#### Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

- Canada-Ontario Job Grant
- Employment Services
- Youth Job Connection
- Youth Job Connection - Summer
- Youth Job Link

#### Ministry of the Attorney General

- Ontario Victim Services Secretariat

#### Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

- Innovative Programming
- International Student Connect
- Matching Volunteer Welcome Groups with Government-Assisted Refugee Newcomers
- Newcomer Settlement Program
- Orientation to Ontario
- Settlement and Integration Services for Refugees and Vulnerable Newcomers

#### Ministry of Community and Social Services

- Violence Against Women

#### Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

- Addictions Programs, Mental Health and Addictions Branch
- Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network

#### Ministry of Labour

- Employment Standards Training and Education Program

#### Ministry of Seniors Affairs

- Elderly Persons' Centre

#### Ministry of the Status of Women

- Neighbours, Friends and Families
- Women in Skilled Trades and Information Technology

#### Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

- Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund

#### The Ontario Trillium Foundation

#### CITY OF TORONTO

- Community Services Partnerships Program
- Ontario Works Employment Programs and Supports
- Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

#### REGION OF YORK

- Life Success Strategies
- Transit Ticket Program

#### CALABRIAN BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

#### COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES CANADA

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#### TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

#### UNITED WAY GREATER TORONTO

- Anchor Agency
- netWORKS
- Women United

#### U.S. EMBASSY OTTAWA

- Refugee Youth Leadership Program

#### YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

#### FOUNDATIONS

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- The Bennett Family Foundation
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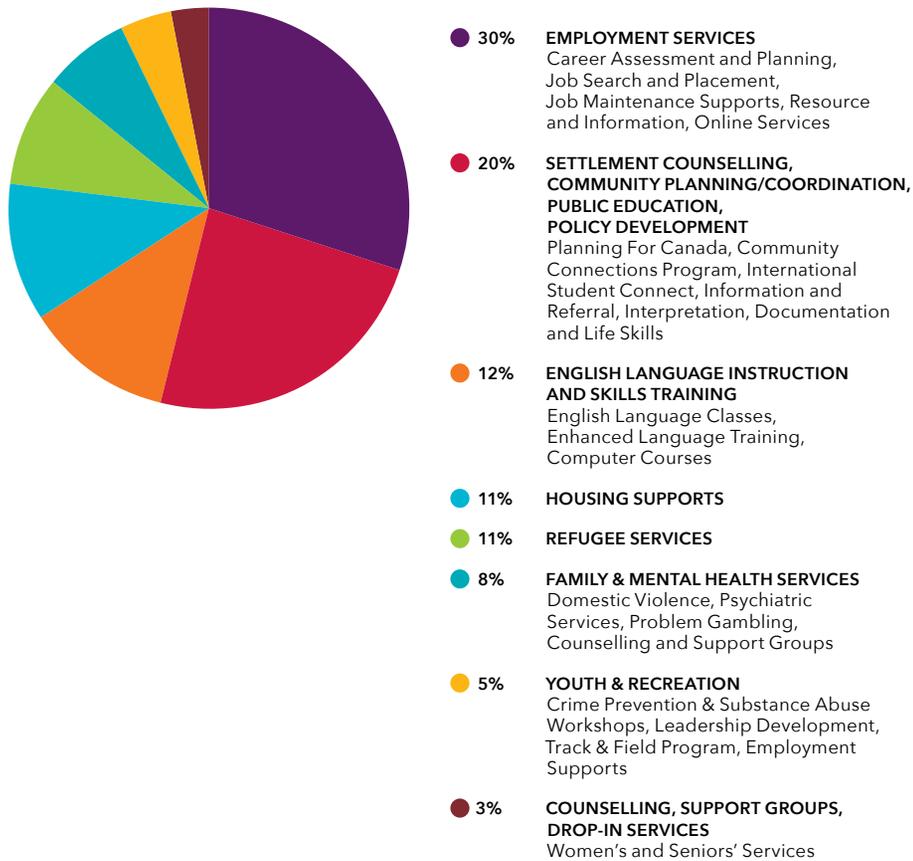
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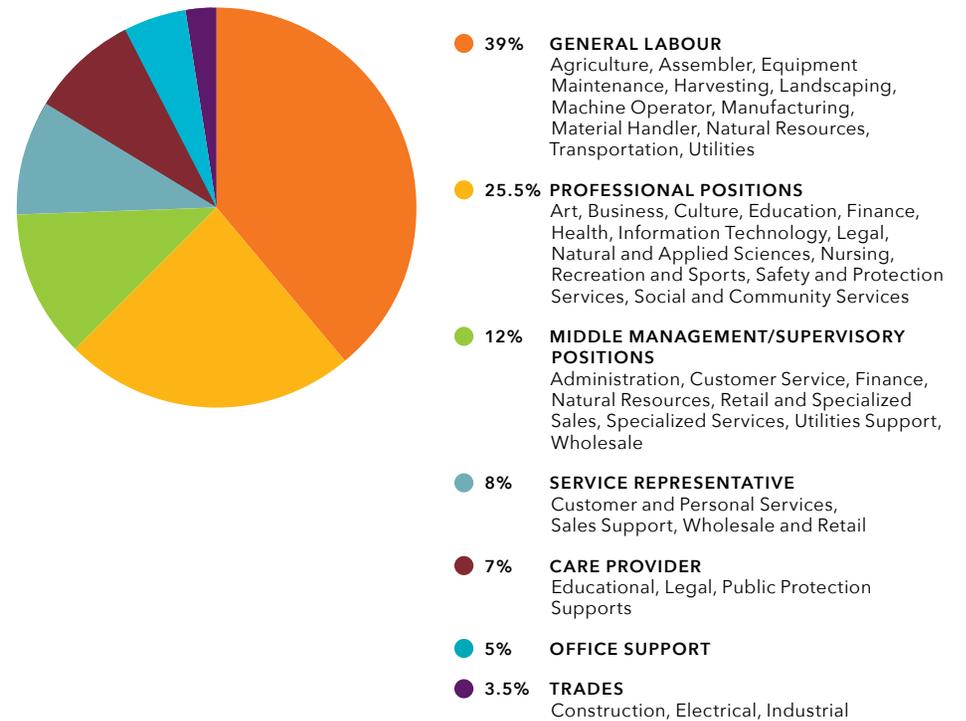
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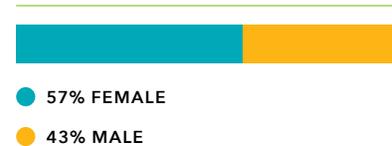
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## GENDER



## AGE



# Our Clients' First Home Country



# Mission

To empower people from diverse communities to succeed and achieve their full potential by providing educational, employment and social services.

# Vision

A prosperous and inclusive Canada built on the success of every individual.

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