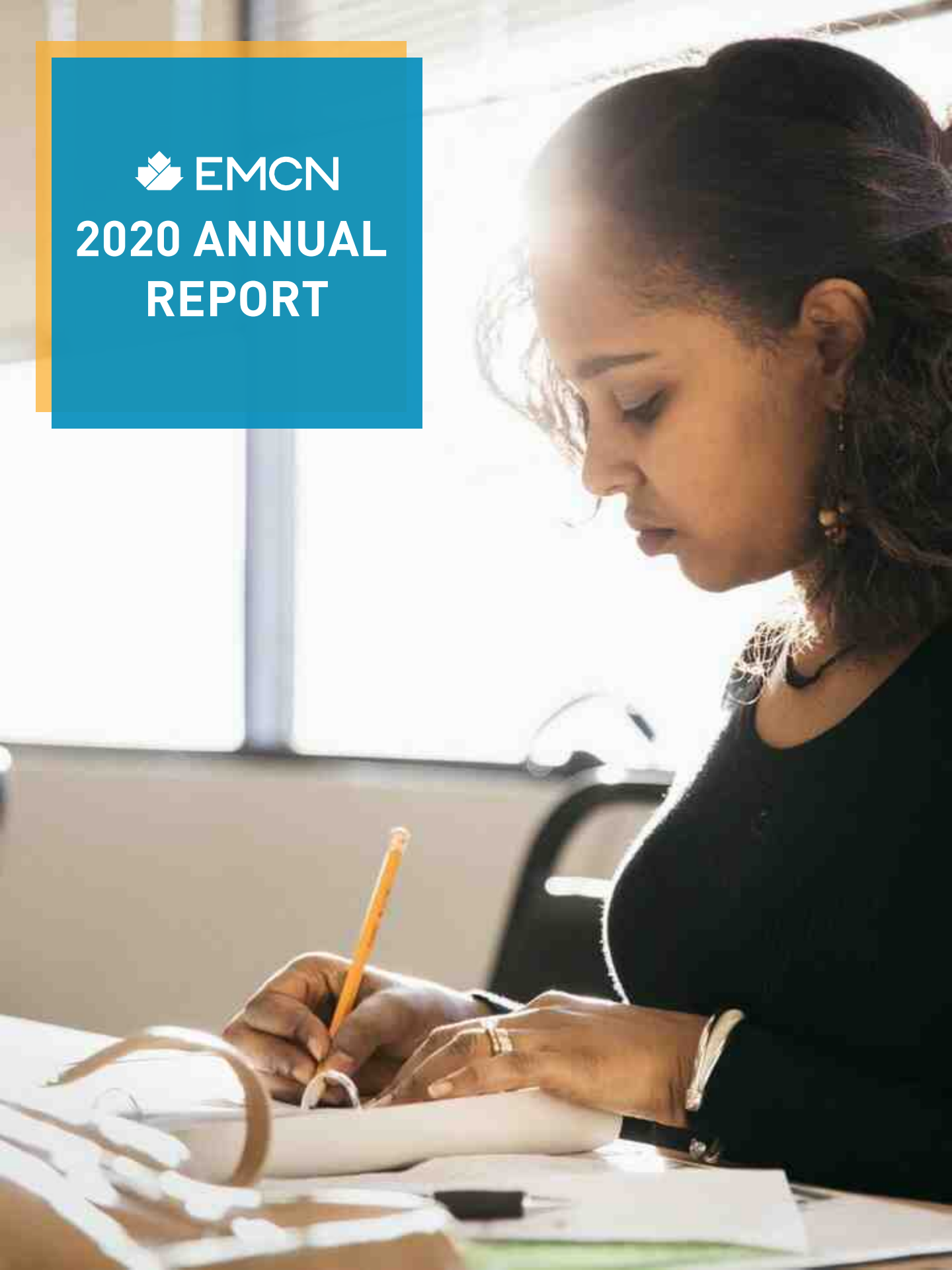




EMCN

2020 ANNUAL REPORT





MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Like most organizations, it has been a challenging year for EMCN, and I want to acknowledge the hard work, sacrifices, and difficult year it has been for everyone in the organization, and in the settlement sector more broadly. I know messages from the Chair are supposed to be celebrating and affirming, but I also see great importance in acknowledging the kind of year it has been and its very real effects on the people here, staff and newcomers alike.

Our not-so-new anymore Executive Director, Meghan Klein, celebrated her one-year anniversary with EMCN! We are continually impressed by Meghan's professionalism and commitment to the organization. She came to EMCN during the start of the COVID lockdown and has navigated public health orders, managed staff working from home, ensured clients still have access to high-quality services, and dealt with deep budget cuts from Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). It has been a year of huge challenges and deep learning and we are grateful for Meghan's hard work.

As mentioned, this has been a difficult year financially. EMCN received news of significant budget cuts across all programs and services, leaving the leadership team with some very difficult decisions about the future of EMCN and its programming and services. Despite these, I know that the staff and leadership remain committed to helping support newcomers to thrive in Edmonton.

The Board of Directors remains committed to achieving the goals of our Strategic Plan. This year we have worked hard at updating and revising our board policies to ensure that we have clear and consistent guidelines for how we conduct ourselves and the business of the board. We also worked together with the leadership team to initiate a staff engagement survey to assist us in keeping our fingers on the "pulse" of the organization, and as a tool to help us support and evaluate our Executive Director to the best of our ability, as part of our strategic plan outcomes.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we are very proud of the EMCN team and their commitment to helping newcomers thrive during a global pandemic. I want to personally thank our Board Directors who have left us this year – Anna Priemaza and Nasim Charkhandeh – and I would like to welcome our new board members – Daniela O'Callaghan, Kirsha Campbell, Sunny Chattha, Ejike Ohuegbe, Helen Ngan-Paré – to the team. This is my last year as Chair of the Board of Directors of EMCN. Next year, I will step down from this role but remain on the board as Past Chair. It has been a great honour and privilege to serve this organization and the community in this capacity. I am thankful for such a wonderful experience and for all of the people I have worked with along the way. This is truly inspiring work, and I am proud to have been a part of it.



Jennifer Braun

Dr. Jennifer Braun
Chair, Board of Directors



MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello friends,

There is no denying that this year has tested our endurance. In March 2020, EMCN had to pivot from in-person to virtual services, adapting day to day to changing public health orders as the COVID-19 virus hit in waves. On top of the workload, our team carried their own personal emotional burdens. After twelve months of upheaval and continuous adjusting, we experienced funding reductions at the end of the 2020/2021 fiscal year. Despite fewer team members to distribute the work, the needs of our community members remained high.

Yes, it has been a difficult year. However, through adversity, we grow and learn. From my perspective, the story of the past year is not one of struggle, but rather one of courage and optimism. Through it all, the EMCN team was steadfast in delivering essential services, rising to challenges with creativity and curiosity when people needed us more than ever.

My thanks to the dedicated volunteers on our Board of Directors for giving their time and skills to see EMCN succeed. I am grateful for the compassion and fortitude of the leadership team. I wish to offer a special thanks to Brian Truckey, who came back from retirement to support EMCN through a vacancy in the role of Director of Finance & Operations. My sincere appreciation to our conscientious staff, caring volunteers and community partners, and generous donors, funders, and supporters. You were there to sustain Edmonton's newcomer community during a year unlike any other, providing support for individuals and families who found themselves vulnerable as the pandemic upended so much of what we previously took for granted.

Two frequent buzzwords of this year have been resilience and the new normal. It was my first year as EMCN's Executive Director and it was a gift to serve some of the newest members of our Edmonton community. These are people who have what it takes to thrive under volatile circumstances. Immigrants and refugees have already taken big leaps, embraced unpredictability, and learned to thrive when faced with more unknowns than knowns. In those moments when it felt overwhelming, I took my inspiration from the resilient folks EMCN works with every day, reflecting on how they chose to embrace a 'new normal' by building a life here in Edmonton.

We still cannot predict the long-term impacts of this global pandemic. We do know there is no going back. We learned new ways of doing and being, discovering ways of connecting that remove barriers. We carry these learnings forward, evolving how we do our work so we can continue to serve our community members both in person and virtually.

I wish to close my message by acknowledging Don Baergen. Don retired from EMCN on May 31, 2021, after 40 years of continuous service as both volunteer and employee. I offer heartfelt thanks to Don and his wife Joyce. Don's legacy of kindness and service will echo for many decades to come.

Every person in our global community shared a disruptive experience this past year. Now is the time for us to rise strong, together.



Meghan Klein

Meghan Klein
Executive Director

HAPPY 40TH ANNIVERSARY, EMCN!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EMCN is fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people leading our organization. We want to thank our Board Members for their leadership, commitment, and support over the past year. Thank you for bringing your passion, intellect, and experience to this organization and supporting our mission of enhancing the quality of life of newcomers by bridging their transition into the community.



Jennifer Braun
Chair



Bin Lau
Vice Chair



Harman Kandola
Secretary



Paola Matallana
Treasurer, Chair,
Audit & Finance Committee



Barry Andres
Chair, Governance
Committee



Allison Peters
Chair, Human
Resources Committee



Thomas Bumbeh
Director



Don Douglas
Director



Anna Priemaza
*Completed 6-year term
in February 2021*



Nasim Charkhandeh
*Completed term in
August 2020*



PROGRAM &
SERVICES



Employment Services

- Job Ready
- Constructing Futures
- Careers In Business
- Engineers and Technologists Integration Program (ETIP)
- Accountants Bridging Program (ABP)
- Payroll Professional Program (PPP)

Settlement Services

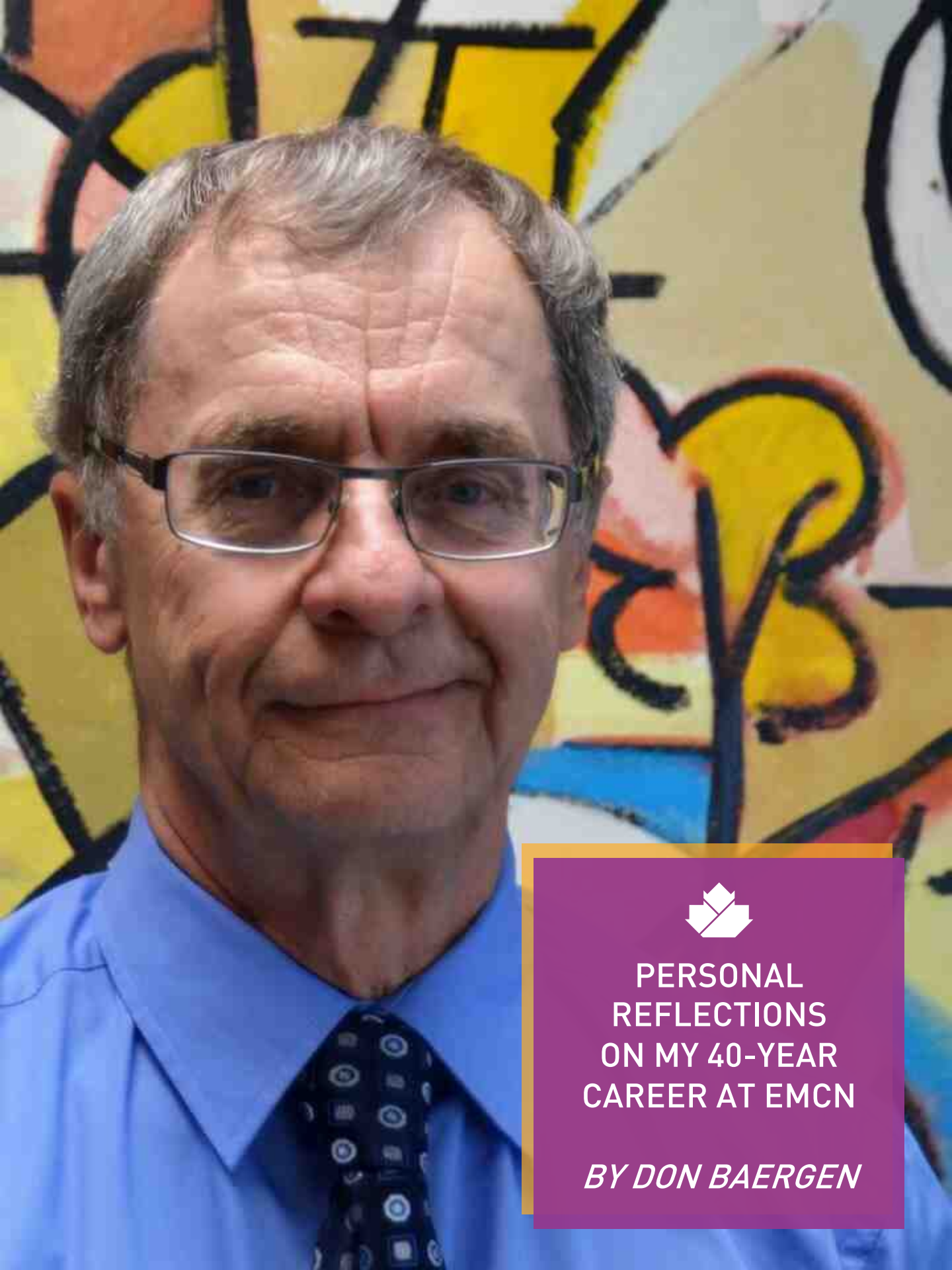
- Settlement and Orientation services
- Complex Case Management
- Enhanced Settlement Workers in School (ESWIS)
- Rainbow Refuge

Language Services

- Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC)
- Community-based English as Another Language (EAL)
- Advanced Consulting for Education TESOL
- Care for Newcomer Children
- Community-based Care for Newcomer Children
- Parenting & Literacy

Community Programs and Therapeutic Services

- Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
- Empowered Communities: Putting Down Roots, Global Girls, Global Garden, Global Choir, Wintergration, SKY Club (Support for Kids & Youth), Civic Engagement by Newcomer Youth (CENY) & Safe Families
- Immigrant Women's Integration Network (I-WIN)
- Volunteer Services: Seniors' Conversation Circles



PERSONAL
REFLECTIONS
ON MY 40-YEAR
CAREER AT EMCN

BY DON BAERGEN

What I have loved about my work at EMCN is being part of an organization that espouses values that resonate deeply in my own life. Cultivating an active spiritual life has been foundational and a source of strength for me in living out EMCN's core values of Social Justice, Diversity, Compassion and Responsibility. Having a strong spiritual center has empowered me to demonstrate compassion, grace, love, humility and hope to staff and newcomers when faced with complex and challenging situations.

Below are some reflections on learnings coming out of the lived experience with EMCN's values.

I learned the importance of demonstrating respect when communicating with newcomers and staff from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, religious faith traditions, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, educational and professional backgrounds, ableness, nationality, political persuasions, etc. I came to value the richness of diversity that newcomers bring to the Canadian social fabric.

I learned the value of working from a strength-based approach when communicating with program participants and staff. I strived to build relationships on recognizing and affirming the strengths of capabilities, knowledge, and skills that people bring to their situation, not the deficits or barriers. In conversations with participants, this often meant listening to their stories, and engaging and validating the meaning they find in their accounts. The end desire was always to honour the strengths and contributions newcomers bring to our community.

I learned the value of a team approach when working with colleagues and participants. I valued the input from colleagues in team meetings and the trust and accountability that was built. Accomplishing program goals and outcomes that I was privileged to be part of would not have been possible without the full participation of team members. In assisting newcomers in their settlement journey, getting their full participation in the setting of goals and action planning was a key to their successful integration.

In my various leadership roles at EMCN, I became aware of skills that I could share with others. Throughout my career at EMCN, I was blessed with many opportunities to mentor colleagues, volunteers, social work practicum students and program participants. I found it most rewarding to take the time to mentor and affirm the development of new skills in colleagues and newcomer participants. I was challenged to find ways to mentor people rather than doing it for them. Being a good mentor taught me much about the qualities of patience, humility, being a good listener, encourager and supportive colleague.





Professional development was an important value that I will treasure from my working career at EMCN. I am thankful to EMCN and its funders for creating internal and external opportunities for professional development. I always had a positive attitude towards continuous learning and a willingness to challenge myself. Completing a Social Work diploma, Career Development, AAISA Mentor and Management program certificate are some of the professional development highlights and many internal learnings coordinated by the Senior and Extended Leadership teams.

Change has been a constant at EMCN. I learned to be flexible and adaptable, whether this was changes in programming, funding, staff, leadership, service delivery best practices, immigrant/refugee needs, etc. In most situations, I attempted to be open to considering change that would support EMCN's mandate, commitment to immigrant and refugee participants and their communities, and improving service standards.

In conclusion, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work in such an engaging community-based organization as EMCN and, in small ways, make a positive difference in people's lives. My life has been deeply enriched by the many interactions and relationships built with colleagues and newcomers to Canada. My hope is that EMCN will continue to live in its mission and core values of compassion, justice, inclusion and responsibility and be responsive to the emerging needs of newcomers to Canada in the years ahead.

*The legacy of kindness and values-based community leadership
that Don leaves will echo for many generations to come.*

Thank you, Don and Joyce!



CELEBRATING 40
YEARS OF
SUPPORTING
NEWCOMERS
TO THRIVE



GREETINGS FROM THE MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Minister of Immigration,
Refugees and Citizenship



Ministre de l'Immigration,
des Réfugiés et de la Citoyenneté

Greeting from the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship On the occasion of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers 40th Anniversary

As Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, I am delighted to offer my congratulations to the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) on your 40th anniversary.

Drawing upon the historical Mennonite experience of persecution and displacement, EMCN founders reached out in 1980 to support the settlement of Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian refugees. Since then, the EMCN has built on its humble roots to become a vital organization of service, cross-cultural understanding and compassion operating in over 50 languages. This is truly an impressive accomplishment.

Coming to a new country under any circumstances is a daunting experience. The challenge is greatly eased when a welcoming hand is extended. The EMCN has extended many hands of friendship over the past four decades.

Your ongoing commitment to supporting newcomers has a positive and profound impact on your clients, as well as the community as a whole. Edmonton, Alberta, and indeed all of Canada are richer thanks to the team, staff, donors, and volunteers of the EMCN.

The Government of Canada recognizes that the successful settlement and integration of newcomers benefits Canada by building a more inclusive, diverse and productive nation. This can only be achieved with the dedication of organizations like the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.

Congratulations on 40 years of success. May you continue to deliver your excellent programs for many years to come.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Marco E.L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship



Canada



SALUTATIONS DU MINISTRE DE L'IMMIGRATION, DES RÉFUGIÉS ET DE LA CITOYENNETÉ

Ministre de l'Immigration,
des Réfugiés et de la Citoyenneté



Minister of Immigration,
Refugees and Citizenship

Salutations du ministre de l'Immigration, des Réfugiés et de la Citoyenneté

À l'occasion du 40^e anniversaire de l'Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

À titre de ministre de l'Immigration, des Réfugiés et de la Citoyenneté, je suis ravi de féliciter l'Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), qui célèbre son 40^e anniversaire.

En 1980, en réaction aux persécutions et aux déplacements mémorables vécus par les mennonites, les fondateurs de l'EMCN se sont mobilisés pour soutenir l'établissement de réfugiés vietnamiens, laotiens et cambodgiens. Depuis lors, le centre s'est appuyé sur ses humbles racines pour devenir un organisme vital de prestation de services, de compréhension interculturelle et de compassion exerçant ses activités dans plus de 50 langues. Il s'agit d'une réalisation impressionnante.

Le fait de s'installer dans un nouveau pays, quelles que soient les circonstances, constitue une expérience intimidante. Le défi est grandement atténué lorsqu'une main accueillante vous est tendue, et l'EMCN a tendu de nombreuses mains amicales au cours des quatre dernières décennies.

Votre engagement continu à soutenir les nouveaux arrivants a une incidence positive et profonde sur vos clients ainsi que sur la communauté dans son ensemble. Edmonton, l'Alberta et le Canada tout entier sont plus riches grâce à l'équipe, au personnel, aux donateurs et aux bénévoles de l'EMCN.

Le gouvernement du Canada reconnaît que l'établissement et l'intégration réussis des nouveaux arrivants profitent au Canada en favorisant la création d'une nation plus inclusive, diversifiée et productive. Cet objectif ne peut être atteint qu'avec le dévouement d'organismes comme l'Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.

Félicitations pour ces 40 années de succès. Puissiez-vous continuer à offrir vos excellents programmes pendant de nombreuses années.

Veuillez agréer l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

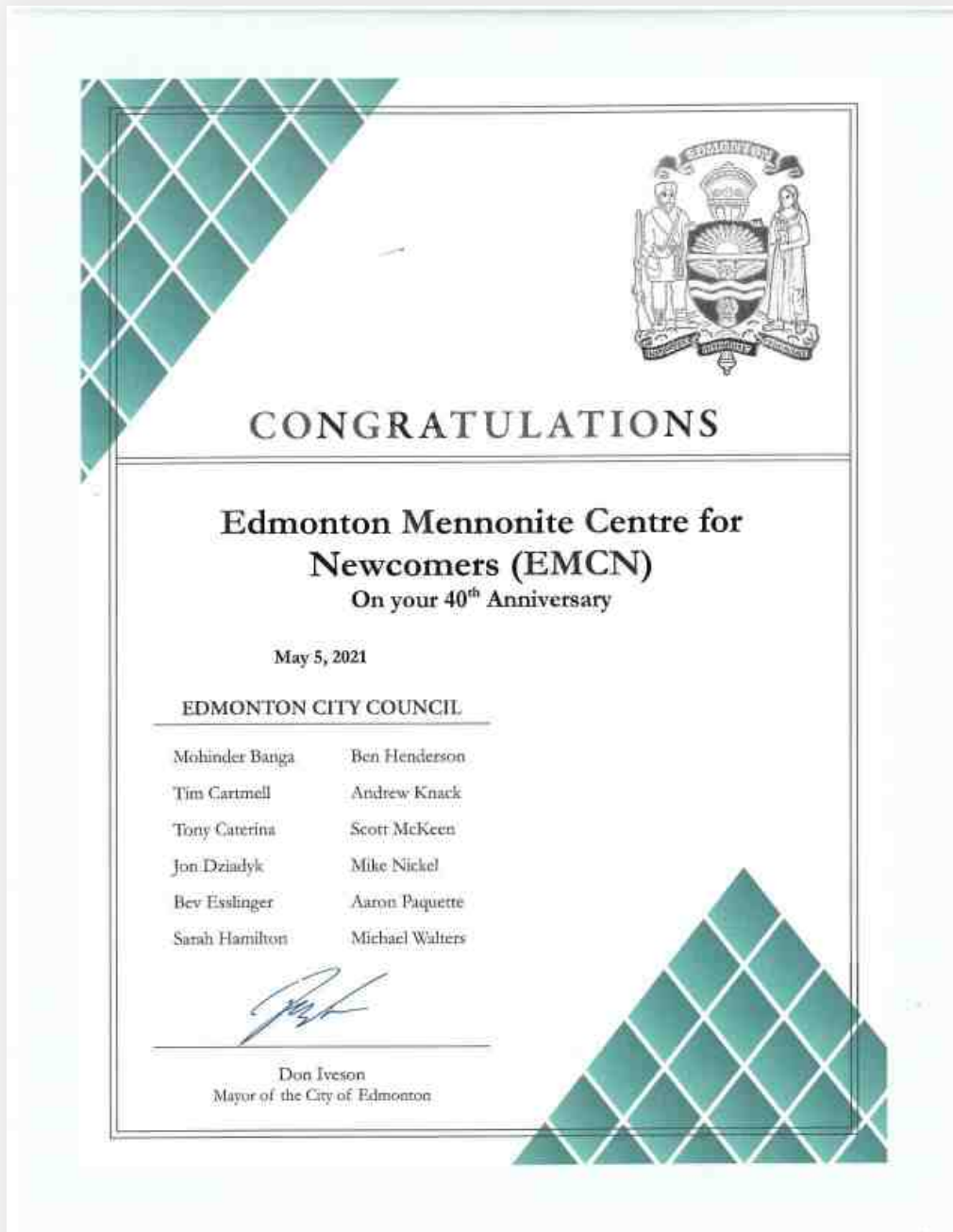
L'honorable Marco E. L. Mendicino, C.P., député
Ministre de l'Immigration, des Réfugiés et de la Citoyenneté



Canada



CONGRATULATIONS FROM JAMES CUMMING, MP EDMONTON-CENTRE





CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FROM HER HONOUR, SALMA LAHKANI, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ALBERTA





CONGRATULATIONS FROM PREMIER JASON KENNEY



April 8, 2021

This certificate is presented to the

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

In recognition of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers' 40 years of outstanding service, dedication and commitment to welcoming newcomers and helping with their transition into the Edmonton community.

Please accept my sincere thanks and appreciation for your many contributions along with best wishes for continued success.

Her Honour, the Honourable Salma Lakhani, A.O.B., B.Sc.,
Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Alberta



CONGRATULATIONS FROM MAYOR DON IVESON AND EDMONTON CITY COUNCIL



EDMONTON MENNONITE CENTRE FOR NEWCOMERS

*Congratulations as you celebrate
your 40th anniversary
on May 5, 2021.*

Thank you for four decades of dedicated service supporting new arrivals to Alberta as they settle into the community. I appreciate your efforts to ensure our diverse capital region and province continue to be welcoming places for newcomers. Congratulations again on this remarkable milestone, and best wishes for many more years to come.

Hon Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta





EMCN 40th Anniversary Poem

By Timiro Mohamed

ARRIVAL

Cool morning air and the promise of a 1000 tomorrows,
the sky is alit with prayers of bright futures,
this is how we begin again.

ROOTS

I plant roots as far as the eye can see,
turn the soil of ancient earth and break bread with familiar strangers.
I give thanks for the land and its people,
my home fits in the creases of worn shoes
which is to say I carry my history with me.

BRIDGES

I build bridges that reach deep like the shoulders of giants.
Maybe home is in the hearts of the people,
maybe family is in open arms,
maybe community looks like me.

GROWTH

So how do we nurture the new beginning?
By engineering dreams into reality,
walking alongside our sisters,
building beams and raising ceilings,
Creating bright futures for youth,
we sing ourselves into a new tomorrow and rise.

RISE

Community exists in the way we grow roots tangled.
So, take this as gentle reminder,
For an agency that knows community
For years spent branches tangled, leaves to the sun, elbow deep in love
Lost in the growth of it all.



In the 1980s, North America welcomed a whole new culture of people – the Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian refugees of a long-protracted war in their homelands. Here in Canada, the Edmonton community was doing its part to welcome these new arrivals, but some realized there was little in place to help them settle once they were here. Mennonites, whose pasts were marked by migration due to religious persecution and who have international relief experience through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), understood the issue and three founding churches came up with a potential response. Members of these founding churches brought in the wisdom of Ann Falk, who understood the Vietnamese people, the Vietnamese culture, and the language through her time as an MCC volunteer in Vietnam. The work started in 1980 under the direction of a Board consisting of appointees from First Mennonite Church, Holyrood Mennonite Church and Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church.

And so the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) was born – to walk with newcomers in their integration process – to fill out forms they couldn't understand – to advocate for newcomers in a system that did not always serve them adequately – to build relationships through language classes taught by volunteers – to pile newcomers into cars in search of employment – to reflect the new cultural landscape by hiring Vietnamese, and later, people of other nationalities who were now themselves established and who could mentor newcomers – and to support these communities as they founded their own organizations.

These remain the main pillars of today's EMCN: language, employment, settlement, and community engagement. At first, **EMCN operated through only 1.5 paid staff and many volunteers**. Soon after, by shifting to a community agency model, government funding grants allowed EMCN to grow its paid staff as needs and opportunities allowed.

In the mid-1990s, as more and more skilled immigrants moved to Canada, the need for bridging programs emerged as a solution to immigrants unable to find work in their professional field because of barriers in language and credential recognition. They needed support in understanding Canadian workplace culture and also needed Canadian work experience. This developed into multiple Bridging and Training programs, an innovative collaboration between EMCN, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), and the professional bodies.

In 2001, the Federal government made changes to refugee sponsorship, which resulted in an influx of more vulnerable refugees. With this change came the need to provide support in a much more comprehensive and holistic manner. As a result, EMCN embraced principles that include community-based, team-based, client-centred and client-driven approaches to sustainable support for successful settlement outcomes.

Today, EMCN serves all newcomers to Edmonton free of charge, no matter their origin, age, faith, culture, sexual orientation, or circumstance.

EMCN works with up to 12,000 newcomers each year, out of three locations and, now, virtually. EMCN currently has a staff of 171 that, together, speak over 50 languages.



*EMCN serves all newcomers to Edmonton
free of charge, no matter their origin, age,
faith, culture, sexual orientation, or
circumstance.*



**TIMELINE OF
SIGNIFICANT
MILESTONES
FOR EMCN**

1982 - 1984

EMCN office moves to former Kings College building to increase capacity for language classes

1984

Than Nguyen hired to support Vietnamese newcomers; Central American refugees begin requesting support

1985 - 1986

Dave Hubert becomes first Executive Director for two years, followed by Dale Taylor for one year; Adrienne Wiebe hired to support growing settlement needs of Central American refugees; offices move to 109 Street and 107 Avenue; community gardens on Grey Nuns Hospital site

1987

Shirley Philips becomes Executive Director

1990

Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program established in 1990

1992 - 1994

Laurel Borisenko becomes Executive Director; offices move to 101 Street and 107 Avenue

1995

Edmonton Centre for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (ECSTT) established; Prime Minister Jean Chrétien visits EMCN to honour this achievement

1998

Welcome Centre for Immigrants opens in Millwoods; Anne Falk dies

2001

Jim Gurnett Becomes Executive Director

2001

September 11, terrorist attacks in USA (commonly referred to as 9/11)

2002 - 2003

Multi-cultural Family Connections established, which initiated many programs: the multicultural childcare centre, World of Story, Cultural Brokers in Schools, Parenting and Literacy, the Global Voices Choir, and Learning the Language, Learning the Land: Camping with Newcomers program

2004

First RISE (Recognizing Immigrant Success and Endeavour) Awards gala; Trinity Manor housing for refugees opens

2008 - 2009

EMCN moves to 82 Street location (11713 – 82 Street) and Nova Plaza (8920 – 118 Avenue)

2010

Kelly Sloan becomes Executive Director

2012 - 2013

Erick Ambtman becomes Executive Director; I-WIN: (Immigrant Women's Integration Network) receives funding

2014

EMCN a founding member of C5 collaboration with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Terra Centre for Pregnant Teens, Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre, and Boyle Street Community Services

2015 –2016

Syrian refugee crisis begins; EMCN plays a leading role in the community to harness community collaboration and engagement contributing to sector best practice; the number of LINC classes doubles; EMCN expands into Eastwood School (12023 – 81 Street); EMCN expands to open West End Community Connections (10030 – 167 Street)

2017

Truth and Reconciliation Commission concludes with 94 "Calls to Action"; Canada celebrates the 150th anniversary of Confederation

2019

EMCN embarks on a campaign to move to new offices on 112 St. and to purchase and renovate the leased building on 82 Street

2020

Meghan Klein becomes Executive Director

March 16, 2020

Province-wide lockdown to slow the spread of the global COVID19 pandemic begins; programs and services move abruptly online; in-person services and public gathering restrictions in place for 16+ months

May 5, 2021

EMCN Celebrates 40 years



TRANSFORMING
82 STREET INTO
A LANGUAGE
CENTRE

In Alberta, English language skills are critical to settling in Canada and getting a job. The language barrier is often one of the biggest problems newcomers face when they move here. Learning and strengthening speaking and writing skills helps newcomers find productive employment, get involved in their communities, participate in meaningful ways, be confident, and express themselves. EMCN offers various language services that help newcomers gain the practical skills they need for everyday life. To meet the growing number of students and to optimize our service delivery, we completely transformed our 82 Street location into a language school in 2020. Through this expansion, EMCN is now able to reach more people so they can thrive and prosper, both socially and economically.



“We love the new look of 82 Street, with 11 additional classrooms, a great resource room for teachers and space on each floor for students to get together. We can't wait to have our teachers back on site, collaborating over coffee in the lunch room. We miss the sound of students in the hallways, and the sight of staff and children in the Care for Newcomer Children daycare singing songs or playing outside. We are hopeful this beautiful building that EMCN created will be full of people in the very near future.”

— Jacqueline Scott, Senior Manager,
Language Services

“Having a central office for our Language Services LINC program has many benefits. It will give our students a place to come together, learn, and make friends once on-site classes can resume. The classrooms have beautiful windows to allow natural light, the new colours are vibrant and inviting to encourage comfort and learning. Having all the teachers in one location will mean more collaboration that allows for amazing learning opportunities. In essence, this space gives our program a place to call home, a home designed to help enhance our services and supports for our LINC team, the LINC learners and their families.”

— Meghan Klettke, Coordinator,
Language Services



“Transforming 82 Street into a Language Centre”

1,200

students with 18 full-time teachers
and 22 part-time teachers

500+

children in daycare through 88
daycares, including an on-site
daycare at 82 Street



ENHANCED
SETTLEMENT
WORKERS IN
SCHOOLS (ESWIS)



In 2020, we evolved our Settlement in Schools program to meet the demands of more complex cases in schools. We now offer ESWIS, which supports newcomer children, youth, and families who experience challenges beyond their basic settlement needs, especially children and youth with underlying health and academic conditions such as functioning challenges, physical, mental, cognitive, and learning disabilities.

The ESWIS team is there to serve newcomer children and youth, and their families, when complex needs are present. This can include high-risk factors which severely put their integration goals in jeopardy such as pre-, trans-, and post-immigration complex challenges due to extreme poverty, social isolation, poor mental health or family instability.

Goals

To support and closely work with school administrations, teachers, communities, families, and other settlement agencies by providing:

- Referrals to therapeutic counselling
- Emotional supports
- Systems navigation
- Multicultural brokering
- Social work services
- Complex cases settlement and crises management
- Group-based information and orientation sessions in schools and community settings

The transition to online because of COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the ESWIS Youth Workers – Complex Cases team provided sessions via Zoom, Google Meets, Microsoft Teams, Skype, and over the phone to support schools and students both in person and virtually at various settings and access levels for the convenience of the clients.

The transition to online service delivery during the COVID-19 has contributed to the successful delivery of the virtual services in collaboration with Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic School Division, and external service providers. As a result, the program has developed strong relationships and essential services by connecting students to the SKY Club virtual tutoring program, which helps with school and homework assignments and further academic supports.

Through EMCN's ESWIS program, students gained access to online platforms, including getting free Chromebook laptops. The ESWIS team supported the pandemic response by directing clients to reliable and multilingual public health and provincial resources for public health guidelines and vaccinations, in addition to delivering information and orientation sessions at various settings. Other comprehensive services provided include registering clients in schools, referrals to therapist supports and counselling via video conference, providing social and emotional support and strengthening and identifying clients with mental health, disability, and other underlying health conditions and concerns.



Barriers that participants might be facing because of the pandemic

The ESWIS Youth Workers - Complex Cases team supported and advocated for children and youth's needs in schools and in community by helping them overcome some of the following barriers and addressing specific issues around:

- Children and youth with disabilities and developmental challenges
- Families experiencing relationship breakdowns
- Complex issues that require more intensive care and crises management
- Children and youth struggling with behavioural and social issues
- Children and youth experiencing family violence, and bullying at home or school
- Youth at risk of violence, drugs, addiction, gang involvement and police contact
- Children, youth, and families at risk of negative influences at home or outside the home
- Children and youth at risk of homelessness
- Children and youth who are experiencing barriers in their social and academic engagement
- Communication, language, and cultural barriers
- Mobility issues and access to Information and resources
- Financial hardships
- Education (limited or interrupted formal schooling, appropriate placement)
- Access to technology and access to online platforms; digital literacy
- Housing issues
- Discrimination and racism
- Cross-cultural barriers (Parenting in Two Cultures)
- Grief, loss, trauma
- Transportation and mobility issues
- Systemic barriers and gaps in systems supports

The ESWIS team speaks the following languages: Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi, Tigrinya, Russian, Amharic, Somali, Swahili, Ukrainian, and Urdu..

ESWIS Program Services

Over the last year, ESWIS staff were able to deliver information and orientation sessions in-person and virtually by supporting newcomer children, youth, and their families who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing severe challenges in their settlement experience by delivering the following sessions:

- Inclusion and Diversity, Reconciliation, anti-racism, and Discrimination
- PDD transition to AISH and FSCD
- Helping parents navigate systems, policies, and access to resources
- Workshop on Relationship and Problem-solving
- Referral for Employment Supports (for older clients who are able)
- Supports for Parents with Children with Disabilities (FSCD, AISH, Mental Health, and family counselling, PDD and Transition to AISH)
- Info and Orientation session about LGBTQ identities, disabilities, stereotypes and stigma
- Helping parents navigate through systems, school policies, and access to academic resources.
- Workshops on Youth Expressive Arts
- Workshop on Essential life skills for children, youth and families
- Children and Youth Recreation and Motor Development in collaboration with other Service Provider Organizations (SPO)
- Workshop on Relationship Development
- Workshop on Skills for volunteering for youth and parents
- Employment Supports (for older participants who are able) in collaboration with EMCN's Employment department
- The ESWIS program has delivered information and orientations sessions covering the above topics at NorQuest College and in both public and Catholic school boards for Grades 3-12. The ESWIS program launched in September 2020, serving over 620 students between January - June 2021.





**EMPOWERED
COMMUNITIES**

The Empowered Communities department aims to:

- Work alongside ethnocultural leaders to create thriving, sustainable communities
- Provide newcomers with information, experiences, and skills to support their growth into knowledge holders and sharers in the community
- Empower communities and community members through holistic settlement experiences built on strengths-based, long-term relationships

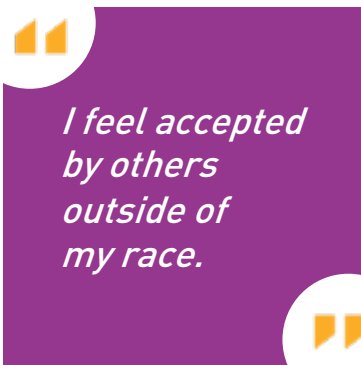
We achieve this through our community-based and participant-driven programs: SKY Club, Civic Engagement by Newcomer Youth (CENY), Safe Families, Global Girls, Wintergration, Putting Down Roots, and Global Garden.

GLOBAL GIRLS

Global Girls is a safe space for young women from various ethnocultural backgrounds to build new relationships, develop their sense of self-confidence and identify pathways to be able to achieve their goals.

We wanted to hear what participants thought of the program, so we asked, "What difference has coming to Global Girls made in your life?"

HERE ARE SOME QUOTES FROM THE YOUNG WOMEN:



*I feel accepted
by others
outside of
my race.*



*I feel like this is
a second family
that is there for
me always*



*You're the only
people I can
talk with.*



*I can be my
true self.*



*I feel like I
belong.*



SKY Club

SKY Club (Support for Kids and Youth) offers newcomer children a range of activities and learning opportunities to give them the coping skills that will help them integrate into the Canadian school culture and form strong relationships.

This past year we welcomed back former SKY Club participants who are now attending university and wanted to give back to the club. They helped tutor the students at SKY Club. It is incredible to see former SKY Club kids coming back and giving back, bringing their journey full circle. To them, we say thank you so much for your help!

Civic Engagement by Newcomer Youth (CENY)

The CENY initiative helps participants identify key issues for newcomer youth and supports them in exploring ways to tackle these issues within their communities.

Working from a youth-led principle, the CENY program offered newcomer youth an opportunity to be leaders in their communities, getting personally involved in issues that affect them and engaging with their communities.

For example, a CENY student who volunteered at the Food Bank was amazed by all the generously donated food and volunteers who show up day after day to help low-income families get enough to eat. Having once been a recipient of the Food Bank and now volunteering and helping other families is an empowering and dignifying experience for this newcomer youth.



Putting Down Roots

When Empowered Communities was connected to Urji Women Support Association of Edmonton, they were a group of women comprised of immigrants from various parts of Ethiopia with a passion for helping their community and a drive to make a difference. Urji was already informally collecting donations of clothes and furnishings to help newcomers set up their new homes, but they had dreams of doing more. EMCN Empowered Communities supported Urji to first engage in strategic planning and create a vision and mission for their organization. Next, Empowered Communities and Urji collaborated to designate Urji as a registered non-profit and set up a website and social media accounts where the group could receive online donations and promote their cause.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Canada, their community was deeply impacted by the pandemic's social, health, and economic effects. Urji came to Empowered Communities wanting to do something to help their community with basic food security during the pandemic. Empowered Communities assisted Urji in applying for emergency funding through Canadian Red Cross, and with the funding, the group has fed over 25 families and 10 seniors for three months. This has involved doing monthly grocery trips, cooking, and meal deliveries to seniors who would otherwise be isolated by the pandemic. Families were ecstatic to receive the food, especially since it was culturally appropriate and allowed them to cook the dishes they know and love. There were some trials and tribulations figuring out the logistics of undertaking food delivery to so many families. While Urji volunteers put in long days, the food made its way to every family in need. Now Urji are practically pros at purchasing, sorting, and delivering food to hungry folks in their community! Empowered Communities received a thank you from the group for all their recent assistance as well as for being able to use the central office to coordinate their last grocery delivery. Check out the videos!

Empowered Communities and Urji Women Support Association of Edmonton wanted to capitalize on the momentum created by their first COVID-19 initiative and have applied for another Canadian Red Cross grant to get food to even more families in need. Urji has bold plans for continuing to support and uplift their community, and Empowered Communities will be there every step of the way to help them as needed. If you would like to learn more about Urji or contribute to their cause, please visit their website at: <https://www.urji-women.com/>.

Safe Families

Some programs have seen increased participation during the pandemic, as programs migrated online. Safe Families is one such program. Participation during COVID-19 has been very encouraging, with the number of participants increasing in every session we hold. The participants are on time and contribute to the session through questions and comments.

One unique thing is the allocation of extra time to address some of the individual family concerns such as how to adapt to the ways of conflict resolution without the use of physical and emotional means. Parents have been given extra time to talk one on one about the strategies of parenting and disciplining children without the use of physical means which could be deemed as assault and criminal. We found that we have been able to reach many men and their partners virtually. In the in-person programming before the pandemic most of the men used to come alone, leaving their partners at home. The virtual programming has changed that indeed. It is now learning together and rising together as one family and one people.



*Safe Families program participation
INCREASING in the pandemic*

Wintergration

The Empowered Communities team had to work hard to ensure they could still hold activities to provide opportunities to immigrant and newcomer communities to experience the joys of winter, while still adhering to the ever-changing COVID-19 guidelines. They are happy to say they pulled off four events from December 2020 to March 2021.

Through door decorating, sledding, a Winter Scavenger Hunt, and a Winter Walk, EMCN was able to bring winter fun to many immigrant and refugee families throughout Edmonton.

Global Garden

Despite COVID-19 moving most programming online, we were able to modify our program and run the Community Garden in 2020. The Global Garden program not only has the benefit of increasing urban food security for participants, but also providing a place to connect, which has become even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the participants said they appreciated having the garden as a space to safely social distance and connect with each other – the food was just a bonus! While gardening is good physical exercise, it also benefits participants' mental health as it reminds them of their home countries and provides a rewarding sense of purpose. Additionally, the garden is a place of cross-cultural learning and sharing, as participants exchange knowledge about gardening and farming in other parts of the world, how they use the food, etc.

The harvest was plentiful this year, with many buckets of potatoes, carrots, tomatoes and beets. Other food from the garden included chard, lettuce, corn, beans, cauliflower, peas, strawberries, edible flowers, kale, parsnips, herbs, radishes, garlic and more! The garden committee also tried a few new vegetables this year: cabbage, broccoli, Jerusalem artichokes, and kohlrabi – all of which were successful! After food was distributed amongst garden participants, leftovers were delivered to Boyle Street Community Services to be used in their kitchen. The participants are also taking pictures of the meals they prepare with their harvested food, to be compiled into a recipe guide for next year.





2020: A YEAR OF CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCE



In what seemed like an instant, COVID-19 turned the world upside down and forced us to pivot as quickly as possible to a new way of working and living. There is not a person who has been left untouched by the changes and challenges of the pandemic. That is especially true for newcomers, who often carry the weight of inequalities in our social systems.

It was imperative that we swiftly adapt to offering virtual programs and services to decrease the space in which our communities are waiting on us for support. We are immensely proud of our employees who all contributed to success of transitioning to online and overcoming the many obstacles. Many program participants did not have adequate technology, had language barriers and were new to online learning. Despite all the challenges, we worked collaboratively to ensure that no newcomer was left behind.

“*LINC program staff have demonstrated noticeable dedication and commitment to their students to ensure that they are able to continue onward with their language training in these exceptional circumstances. The Recipient’s response to the situation has undoubtedly allowed students the ability to progress in their English language training, as well as has provided students the supports they have needed amid COVID-19.*”

— IRCC (Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada) Program Review



C5:
COLLABORATING
FOR CHANGE



About C5

C5 is a formal collaborative involving Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Boyle Street Community Services, Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre, Terra Centre for Teen Parents, and EMCN. We invest in social innovation in the community and advocate on behalf of the 30,000 Edmontonians we collectively serve.

The C5 Market

During the pandemic, the C5 saw food insecurity rising and successfully received several grants to supply community members with food hampers, operating out of the North East Hub. These were for C5 agencies' clients across the city. Approximately 80 volunteers from all the agencies came together to support the C5 Hub staff in preparing and delivering hamper to 800 families (about 3,200 individuals).

Leveraging the food hamper funding, the C5 has now opened the C5 Community Market in partnership with the Food Bank and local businesses. The Market offers community members' 'shopping' in a grocery store type setting. Families can choose their food according to their cultural and dietary needs, together with other daily living essentials. We are currently serving 700 families.

C5 Family Resource Network (FRN)

Through the FRN, Norwood offers early childhood development and caregiver support programming. Bent Arrow's Earth Walk youth programming and intensive supports for families with in-home visitation programming is infused with Indigenous culture, spirituality and ceremony. Most of the work has moved online through the pandemic, with some in-person outdoor connections when conditions have allowed. Families are desperate to reconnect in person, and we are hopeful that we will be able to do that as the summer unfolds.

C5 Gardens

One great way to get outside is to garden. In partnership with the City of Edmonton and Belmont School, the C5 gardens allow families to grow vegetables at Homesteader and Belmont. This is a great way to connect with families in a safely distanced way while supporting families to contribute to their food security.

C5 Communities of Practice

The C5 agencies have several different communities of practice to provide staff opportunities to connect, exchange ideas, and work on joint initiatives.

The HR, Communications, and Volunteer communities of practice have been particularly active during the pandemic. The Volunteer group has organized two joint C5 events celebrating volunteers throughout our organizations with Zoom fun. The Communications group, many of whom are sole practitioners in their home agency, have leaned on each other during the pandemic to amplify the voices of our community members and their experiences as marginalized people during the pandemic.



Gardening is a way to support families to contribute to their food security.



THANK YOU
TO OUR
DONORS!



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

to all our donors for your generosity! Your support during this challenging year allowed us to continue making a positive impact in the lives of our community members. Your donations were pivotal in furthering our mission.

A sincere thank you also to all the EMCN friends who have volunteered, donated, participated in the Ride for Refuge campaign, or contributed in a meaningful way.

Aaron and Alyson Neufeld

Abe Brown

Amanda Kunyk

Amelia Souliere

Andy Smith

Anna Priemaza

Bob Griffith

Brian Caney

Brittany Zerr

Calvin Towns

Cinnamon Stacey

Darryl Diletzoy

Deborah Yee

Della Paradis

Denise Potvin

Derek and Andrea Watts

Don Douglas

Don White

Donald Baergen

Donald Paradis

Donna Yamniuk

Donna Zubko

Douglas Sanderson

Elaine Warick

Fraser Charles Wilson

Gary Garrison

Gary and Lydia Harder

Genia Rodnyansky

Ghenette Houston

Harvey Voogd and Marie Butler

Hazel Benson

Helen Lees

Herman and Lola Neufeld

Ilham El Bakkouchi

Isaac and Mildred Glick

Janice Tofsrud

Janti Ali

Jason Ridderikhoff

Jeremy Wiens

Jessie Letendre

Johanna Wasyluk

John Kolkman

John Watson

Joseph Luri

Judy Unterschultz

Katherine Schoepp

Laurie Hauer

Lynette Toews-Neufeldt

Marilyn and Wes Doyle

Mark Heule

Markus Vuorensola

Mary Kutschke

Maureen Best

Meghan and Jorey Klein

Morley and Val Blanch

Murray Lauber

Paola Matallana

Paul Neufeldt

Richard Klassen

Riayaz Sharan

Roger and Rhonda Epp

Ron Guetter

Roy and Trudy Nickerson

Rudy and Tena Wiebe

Ryan Andres

Sandra Maygard

Shah Khalid Ahmad

Shelly Stevens

Sheron Pickard

Surinder Sohal

Suzanne Gross

Tarek Selmi

Tim Wiebe-Neufeld

Valerie Dennis

Wendy and Gordon Baergen

Yolanda Quintanilla

630 CHED Santas Anonymous
Bennett Jones LLP
CanadaHelps
First Mennonite Church
Gallagher Benefit Services
Holyrood Mennonite Church
Human Dimensions Licensed
Interior Design Services Inc
IKEA
Lendrum Mennonite Church
North Edmonton Seniors
Association (NESA)

Priority Mechanical
Shores Jardine LLP
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
Team RBC at EMCN
The Cable Family Community
Endowment Fund at ECF
The Cinders Fund at ECF
The Eldon & Anne Foote Fund at
ECF
The Larry & Janet Anderson
Learning Access Endowment
Fund at ECF

The Slavik Family Fund at ECF
United Church Thrift Shop
United Way of The Alberta Capital
Region
Westmount Christian Council



*Your generosity helps us enhance the quality
of life for Newcomers and all Canadians.*



VOLUNTEER TRIBUTE: REMEMBERING JERRY

In August 2020, Gerald (Jerry) Nicholas Tighe of Edmonton passed away at the age of 78, following a long battle with kidney disease. Jerry was an enthusiast of life with an immense sense of humour and love for his fellow human beings.

After he finished his studies and got his Master of Social Work from UBC, he engaged in many community-oriented activities. Jerry shared with his many friends his passions, including gardening and cooking. His art (pointillism, oils, watercolours and sketches) expressed his talents which he freely shared. Jerry spent much time in the Indigenous world as he worked for Indian Affairs and Canada Mortgage and Housing.

EMCN is incredibly thankful to Jerry Tighe because of his many years of volunteer work for English language students. He took the job seriously, although he often made his students and fellow teachers laugh. He never failed to come once, sometimes twice a week, for the drop-in conversation classes. He would be the go-to person if some other volunteers were unable to attend a class.

During those years, he developed his admiration for his students' tenacity and determination to learn English. The stories of hardship and resilience of those he came to know touched him deeply. After the drop-in conversation program ended, he continued to be in touch with some of his EMCN friends. Elsie Johnson remembers:



Jerry volunteered with me when I taught in the LINC 1/Literacy class. When I left LINC at EMCN, I would occasionally meet with him for a coffee. Jerry had a great sense of humour. He loved joking with the students. Jerry took his volunteering seriously, and you could always count on him. He will be missed.



Jerry's connection with EMCN never ended. In his will, he left a generous donation to his EMCN friends that went a long way to support the organization's mission.

**THANK YOU, JERRY, FOR SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS TO
START STRONG A NEW LIFE IN EDMONTON!**

RISE AWARDS:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EMCN decided to postpone our Annual RISE Awards Gala from 2020 to 2021. We took the year to evaluate the celebration and explore new and meaningful ways of honouring those who have contributed so much to our great city, the Award Recipients! On October 8, 2021, we will host our first-ever hybrid event with both in-person and virtual engagement opportunities. This format not only allows us to be flexible to possible changing public health regulations, it allows us to celebrate the accomplishments of those we are honouring with more people than ever before, and from all over the world! We hope that you will join us either in person or through the online virtual ceremony. There is room for everyone!

**RISE AWARDS RETURNS ON OCTOBER 8, 2021!
THE EVENT WILL BE BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL**

THERE IS ROOM FOR EVERYONE





OUR
VOLUNTEERS



Amid the many disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are incredibly proud of how our volunteer services were able to pivot into an online format while still offering meaningful volunteer experiences and support for our community members. A sincere thank you to our volunteers who adapted so swiftly and caringly throughout the pandemic to continue supporting our program participants. We are so grateful for your involvement and everything you do on a daily basis!

📌 *In my time tutoring at SKY Club (1 year and 7 months in person) and the past year (online) I have been blessed to meet many committed people: staff, other volunteers, parents and students. From my various roles as an educator for 35 years, I have been able to work with elementary-aged SKY Club students using my background knowledge of the Alberta curriculum, as well as knowledge of strategies for ESL students. I have also had the opportunity of offering suggestions and resources for Grades 4, 5, and 6 in Math that matched the Alberta curriculum. But, mostly, I feel blessed to have worked and connected with several students who not only demonstrated improved understanding but also taught me about life from their perspective. It was truly wonderful to have the students' trust and see them smile and be more enthusiastic about learning. Thanks for the opportunities to the folks at EMCN who make this all possible. 📌*

— Brenda Metcalfe, EMCN Volunteer

“ I started as an EMCN volunteer teacher just over two years ago in the SAGE ESL program for seniors. I had about 18 regular students in a beginners' class and loved every minute of it. Of course, the in-person teaching ended abruptly in March 2020. When we started up again digitally last August, I didn't think that I would like to teach online. Some students kept their videos off. Sometimes, I was teaching to a tiny part of the screen showing the top of a student's head. Over the winter, I came to enjoy teaching online more. It became a challenge to find online resources that were interactive and even fun! We now go to sites like Quizlet, Learning Chocolate and Games to Learn English, where students can have fun while learning English vocabulary. I've discovered that it is possible to build relationships with students online and that there are some activities you can do online that you can't do in person. ”

— Kathy, EMCN Volunteer



“ Dear EMCN volunteers and practicum students, it's really hard to come up with adequate words to describe how much your support means to us in the last year. For all of you who came forward during the pandemic and went the extra mile to help support the community. We cannot thank you enough for all the support you have provided to the newcomers and EMCN. Thank you for showing the community with so much kindness and compassion; thank you for all that you do. ”

— An To, Volunteer Coordinator



Volunteer & Practicum Student List:

Abigail Li	Ellen Nygarrrd	Madi McCullough
Ahmed Abdulhafid	Emily Macdonald	Madi Corry
Aisha Saidat	Emma Allenson	Makaela LeMaistre
Alma Fadi	Erin Kelly	Manveet Kals
Alyssa Mcphail	Esther Yangi	Maria Mosquera
Amilia Hill	Faith Wierenga	Maria Gracia
Ammara Mirza	Fenny Septiani	Martin Lubajo
Amy Lei	Feza Mudesi	Montunrayo Ajasa
Andrew Jimaga	Gerrard Ooi	Namo Rousseau
Ardra Ravindran	Gregory Ooi	Nelson Angulo
Ashvaria Rai	Guillermo A. Jimenez	Nguyen Tran
Barnabas Kenyi	Hannah Keyes	Nikky Aderinto
Becky Toronchuk	Hannah Ziff	Olayedi Adebayo
Brenda Beekman	Jackson Sawatzky	Raeesa Kudoos
Brenda Metcalfe	Jashanjot Gogia	Rebecca Toronchuk
Bushra Kambo	Jie Deng	Rico Imperial
Camryn Moak	Judy Lo	Rohan Wilson
Chelsea Woo	Kamyar Pooyeh	Sadaf Farooq
David Strayer	Kathy Garnsworthy	Sarah Coffin
David Brandenburg	Katia Youssef	Susan Joro
Dineli Fernando	Khalid Shaheen	Thomas Jaques
Donna-Jean Zubko	Kiara Bowler	Tracy Tan
Dorcas Nguala	Kieran Fong	Yasmeen Abuomar
Dustin Ham	Laiba Rizwan	Yaxing (Helen) Jin
Eamon Tan	Laura Wait	Yu Zhao Shi
Elena Lopez	Lori Mckee	Yuan Ye



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



Employment and
Social Development Canada



United Way
Alberta Capital Region



ccdf

Canadian
Career Development
Foundation



Club of Edmonton Glenora



MFRS
Multicultural Family
Resource Society



EDMONTON



FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIALS

Sources of Support	2021	2020
Federal	\$10,623,469	\$11,954,807
Federal subsidies	1,016,051	0
Provincial	2,828,676	3,804,227
Other Organizations	989,170	1,349,747
Local Government	730,673	245,234
Amortization of deferred lease inducements	246,841	246,841
Fundraising events	2,090	74,559
rent	11,401	67,514
Donations	192,440	51,432
Investment Income	17,501	30,339
Course fees	24,138	28,788
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	15,770	14,994
	16,698,220	17,868,482

Use of Resources	2021	2020
Salaries, wages and benefits	11,641,451	12,095,540
Rent, utilities and maintenance	1,963,222	2,588,305
Contracted Services	1,147,377	2,189,461
Administrative	517,551	598,796
Resources	747,528	405,386
Amortization	542,390	390,372
Interest and bank charges	213,654	166,436
Supplies	172,582	79,918
Bad debt expense	7,998	36,218
	16,953,753	18,550,432
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	-\$255,533	-\$681,950

DATA

15

Teachers trained in our
ACE TESOL Program

95

Parents supported in our
Community Based CNC

132

Supported in our
Community Based CNC

65

Chromebooks on loan to
Language Students

412

Students attended the
ECALA program

677

Students attended
LINC in 2020



THANK YOU