



Centre for Information & Community Services of Ontario



Annual Report 2009



United Way Member Agency

CICS Serving the Community Since 1968

We Serve for a Better Future

Highlights from 2009

CICS was awarded the lead to build Welcome Centre Markham South, part of a new vision of providing settlement services in an all-in-one centre with other agencies.

The Immigrant Youth Centre, the first of its kind in York Region, welcomed youth and provided various programs since September.



Left to Right: David Pao (President of CICS), Albrey Yeung (Gala Co-Chair), James Chiu (Co-Founder of Mandarin and recipient of the CICS Distinguished Immigrant Award), Linda Tam (Gala Co-Chair), Minister Michael Chan, Fina Ching (President of CICS Foundation), Moy Wong-Tam (Executive Director of CICS), and Alan Ho (CICSF Vice President).

VISION STATEMENT

Fully integrated immigrants participating in and contributing to all spheres of Canadian society

MISSION STATEMENT

To empower immigrants in settling and integrating as contributing members of Canadian society through diverse, professional and innovative services

CORE VALUES

Cultural diversity
Integrity
Compassion
Solidarity

LANGUAGES

English, French, Arabic, Cantonese, Dari, Farsi, Hindi, Hungarian, Korean, Kurdish, Mandarin, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Sindhi, Tamil, Ukranian, Urdu, Spanish, Somali and Punjabi

Honorary Patrons & Board of Directors



*Front Row (Left to Right): Albrey Yeung, Fina Ching, Yonnie Chung, Moy Wong-Tam (Executive Director), Luxmi Vasan, Linda Tam, Connie Lau
Back Row (Left to Right): Amado F. Cabanela, Raphael Lai, Steven Yu, David Pao (President), Dr. Thomas Li, Samuel Luk, Ernest Cheung, Sean Hu*

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Ms. Albrey Yeung

Mr. Steven Yu

Mr. Alan Ho

Immediate Past President



MESSAGE From the President and ED

Message from the President & Executive Director

It is with great pleasure and a sense of privilege that we report about a year of exciting developments, both in programs as well as bricks and mortar.

The year of 2009 saw the launch of the Library Settlement Program, the Host program, and the opening of a new settlement service location in Markham. Furthermore, with the support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), we started an Immigrant Youth Centre that is unique in York Region. It offers a safe place where otherwise alienated young newcomers may feel at home. Newcomer youth may partake in a range of programs from language classes, Canadian life skill workshops, to the creative and fun interest classes we offer.

We completed renovation of phase two of the Immigrant Resource Centre at 2330 Midland Avenue, which is now equipped with a youth studio, youth loft, wellness centre, and gym that doubles as our community hall. We anticipate for it to become a hub for immigrant youth and families in the coming years. In the meantime, we will strengthen our capacity to engage newcomers in all age groups to give more prominence to their voices. Furthermore, we will provide them with a community space for building supportive networks, as well as harness their skills and talents to chart new courses to address their needs and aspirations. Building the social capital of our newcomers is one of the keys to their successful settlement and integration; the space for youth as well as for seniors and families will doubtless facilitate that process.

With the northward movement of significant number of immigrants into York Region, CIC has funded the establishment of four new Welcome Centres in the region, and CICS has served as the lead in developing the Welcome Centre in the southern part of Markham. The Welcome Centre model is aimed at providing seamless services to clients through the involvement of multiple service providers, all under one roof. The strong network of five Welcome Centres in York region will enhance the accessibility of settlement and integration services to newcomers tremendously. We look forward to its official opening in the Fall next year.

With immigrants as the main driving force behind Canadian population growth, it is imperative that the immigrant serving sector adopt new approaches to provide services to facilitate newcomer settlement and integration. On the other hand, it is also incumbent upon us to work with various institutions to facilitate systemic change and foster cultural competency, in order to engender social cohesion in the ethnically diverse Greater Toronto Area.



Mr. David Pao
President



Ms. Moy Wong-Tam
Executive Director

Community Services

Serving seniors and helping them to engage in the community is at the heart of Community Services at CICS. Our programs ranged from community visits, health-related activities, computer training to electronically simulated exercise sessions. Participants learn new skills that help them keep up with changing times.

“The Seniors Digital Garden opened up a whole new world to me. I was so excited to send email to my granddaughter for the first time”. “Though I was only a basic learner, I started to volunteer to help other seniors”. “I met so many friends...I never imagined that we can play tennis in a classroom!”

At the same time, training youth to serve is one of our missions. We couldn't be happier to see them grow and mature through volunteering. “I have never been in such a volunteer program where I felt my supervisors really cared about me, giving me valuable feedback and chance to improve... I really got to practice the new skills I was taught...I want to volunteer in the kids camp next year...” Summer Kid is a fun, interactive ESL-intensive camp that builds the language skills of new immigrant children while at the same time introduces them to the Canadian culture. We were so touched when one mother from this past camp wrote to our staff: “Thanks for keeping in touch though I only inquired about your program during my short visit to Canada three months ago. Your kindness and attention to our needs have made our move to Canada significantly easier. Our little girl attended the Summer Kid 2009 Program once we landed in Toronto. She loved her counselors and she enjoyed the camp so much that she couldn't stop talking about it. You have helped my daughter embrace her new home in Canada. Thank you.”

Our Community Services (CS) unit strives to deliver a wide range of quality services to our clients, including individual supportive counseling, community workshops and trainings, as well as educational and social activities.



Participants were enthusiastic to learn more information on Canada Border Services and Programs



Many immigrants were interested in 'How to start your own business' workshop at Markville Office

Our New Immigrant Youth Centre in York Region!

The CICS Immigrant Youth Centre (IYC) opened its door in the fall of 2009 with the goal to reach out and provide programs and services to benefit the immigrant youth of York Region. This centre is the first of its kind in York region that caters to newcomer youth and their families to help them settle into their Canada. Facilities at IYC include: Drop-in Centre with various games, Computer Lab, Full Kitchen, Audio/Visual Studio, Multipurpose Room for workshops and seminars and much more!

Our Mission is to enhancing immigrant youth's sense of community that is **youth-led, youth-centered and youth-developed** in an inclusive, supportive and diverse environment.

We offer many fun programs as well as practical workshops and seminars to teach youth important life skills. Youth can find help for school as well as services for social and emotional support such as supportive counseling and mentoring programs.



Client Contacts

• Employment	19152
• Community Services	21834
• Settlement	46329
• Language and Training	236379

Total 323694



■ Employment
■ Community Services
■ Settlement
■ Language and Training

Client Served

• Employment	718
• Community Services	48883
• Settlement	12664
• Language and Training	17066

Total 79331



■ Employment
■ Community Services
■ Settlement
■ Language and Training

Settlement Service

With funding from Citizenship & Immigration Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration, CICS offers a variety of settlement programs. Newcomers have benefitted tremendously from the services provided through Immigration Settlement & Integration Program, Settlement & Education Partnership in Toronto, Job Search Workshop, Library Settlement Partnership, Host and Newcomers Settlement Program. Different cultural groups enjoyed the variety of services in CICS.

Settlement services were provided at various places in Toronto and York Region such as schools, community centres, public libraries, places of worship, shopping malls in the format of information and referral, interpretation and translation, newcomers' groups, homework club, English conversation circles, cultural visits, information workshops etc.

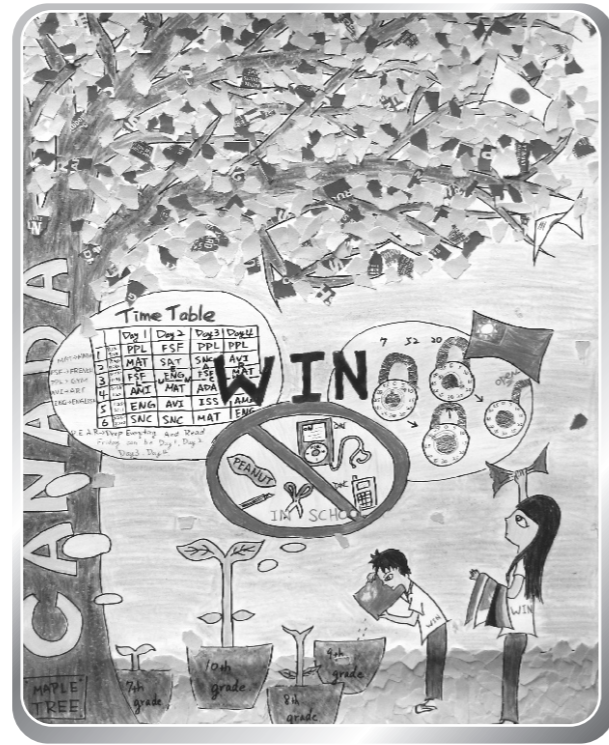
Newcomer job seekers were offered intensive help in resume writing and interview skills through participation in job search workshops, Canadian workplace culture workshops, resume clinic and mock interviews. The series of small business workshops received overwhelming responses from new immigrants.

In February of 2009, settlement service was added to the Georges Vanier Reception Centre. Settlement workers organized 'Newcomer Orientation Session' and provided information and referral service to parents while they are waiting for the assessment of their children. In 2009, the settlement program at the Reception Centre served 181 clients. 34 group orientations were conducted with a total of 211 participants.

The Newcomer Orientation Program (NOW) conducted in six high schools during the summer was very successful in preparing newcomer students for smooth entry to school, reduce their stress and anxiety about the transition and prepare them for earlier participation in their new school. Students were trained to be Peer Leaders to lead newcomer students. 133 students attended the 4-day program and 122 parents were involved.

The Welcome and Information for Newcomer (WIN) Program was organized in two middle schools. The Program was very successful with excellent outcome. Altogether 40 students and 50 parents attended the Program.

The Host Program was officially launched at CICS in July 2009. The program is a friendship program designed to help newcomers overcome the stress of moving to a new country by matching them with volunteers who help them learn about available services, practice English, develop social network,



Chin Chin Ying- first prize winner in the WIN poster contest

and participate in community activities. In addition, there are group activities such as English conversation group, potluck and outings were scheduled each month to give volunteers and newcomers more opportunities to bond and get to know each other. Volunteers from various walks of life were recruited and received training on communication, conflict resolution, mentorship and community resources.

CICS started to deliver settlement services in public libraries in February 2009. It is a settlement service partnership program with public libraries. CICS Library Settlement workers speaking Arabic, Bengali, Mandarin, Tamil and Urdu are available at Milliken Mills Library, Albert Campbell Library, Bridlewood Library and Morningside Library to assist newcomers in settling and integrating into the Canadian society. Library Settlement Workers also outreach and network with different organizations in the community to promote the program and bridge community services and newcomers.

Client Testimonies about our Services:

Immigrants Settlement & Integration Program & Newcomers Settlement Program

"I am leaving CICS today with a very happy heart. Thanks so much to the settlement worker. She never failed me in any question I asked. She is very knowledgeable and most of all she is very willing to help in every way. She is the best helper for the client."

"I am very satisfied with the service of CICS, very efficient and professional. You have a lot of knowledge and you understand our needs"



Friendly chats at the Host Christmas Luncheon



The "Settling and Living in Canada Fun Fair" had attracted many newcomers from different cultural groups. They enjoyed the information sessions and the performance very much.

Settlement & Education Partnership in Toronto

"I feel I am very lucky to know the SEPT program and the settlement worker at my early settlement days. It makes my transition become much easier." – From a parent

Host

"My volunteer not only helped me as a mentor in a professional way, she also helped me a lot in my English pronunciation and improved my communication skills."

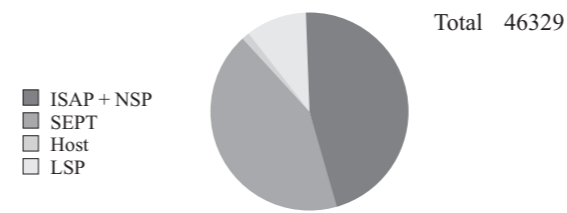
"I am very grateful for being able to learn more about the Canadian culture through the Host Program."

Library Settlement Partnerships

"It is good to have this type of help in the library"

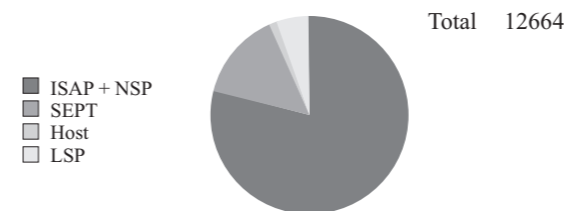
Client Contacts for Settlement

• Immigrants Settlement & Integration Program and Newcomers Settlement Program (ISAP + NSP)	20866
• Settlement & Education Partnership in Toronto (SEPT)	20084
• Host Program (Host)	430
• Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP)	4949
Total	46329



Client Served for Settlement

• Immigrants Settlement & Integration Program and Newcomers Settlement Program (ISAP + NSP)	9994
• Settlement & Education Partnership in Toronto (SEPT)	1873
• Host Program (Host)	136
• Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP)	661
Total	12664



Employment Service

- 282 clients attended Job Search Workshops (JSW) training. The success rate was 41%. Around 29.4 % found jobs within three months. Over 95% of the JSW participants were Mandarin-speaking.
- A mini job fair was held at our Midland office on April 21. Twelve participating companies set up their booths for recruitment and around 300 job seekers came to explore job opportunities.
- Our annual Job Fair - - Pathway to a Bright Future -- was held at the Market Village located at Steeles and Kennedy in Markham on August 20. There were 17 employers participating in the event, including some large corporations and governmental departments such as CIBC, Language Line Services, Staff Plus, Tai Pan Tours, Correctional Service of Canada, Canadian Forces, Toronto Police, etc. We also provided on-site employment counseling to people who needed assistance in their job hunting. There were approximately 2,000 job seekers who showed up to seek employment.
- Four training courses were held in 2009, including 1 Child Care Training Course and 3 Hairstyling Training Courses.
- Four employment-related workshops were held, and the total number of participants was 89. One workshop was in partnership with the Correctional Service of Canada, to provide information on its recruiting process and the requirements for upcoming positions.

"Hearty thanks for your training. Everything is perfect, very useful materials, very helpful workshop and most important is to have your facilitation."

"I followed your instruction and the information, I applied for the position and I got my present job finally. I cannot get it without your continuous help."

"I want to say 'Thank You' sincerely here. Thanks for your training, information and encouragement. Your job search workshop is very useful for my job hunting."

