

Everyone  
welcome.

EST  1979



NEW  
CANADIANS  
CENTRE

PETERBOROUGH

**ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT  
2023-2024**

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



When I came to Canada from England as a boy, organizations like the New Canadians Centre didn't exist. Much has changed since then. In a world that is ever more complex, newcomers to Canada face so many more challenges than what my family faced and I am heartened that NCC is here to help all newcomers – regardless of their immigration status – find their feet and find community.

As you will read in this report, this year NCC served more people than ever before through our client services and community activities. I am proud of the work that the New Canadians Centre does to ensure that all newcomers are supported whether they be refugees, international students, economic migrants or their family members.

Canada remains a global leader for welcoming diverse newcomers, yet this year saw a shift in Canadians' views. Amidst the housing and affordability crises, some pointed to immigrants as the cause or contributor. This is far from the truth. In fact, years of failure in public policy by all levels of government has led to these issues being at such a critical point today. New Canadians have always been an easy target. In this context, bringing people together and providing leadership to foster a welcoming and inclusive community is as important as ever.

The board of directors is responsible for governing the overall wellbeing and direction of the New Canadians Centre. We have experienced substantial growth in recent years and I can confidently say that we are in a strong position to continue to meet the needs of the communities we serve. Our talented staff and committed volunteers bring passion and dedication to their work. And we are on a strong financial footing, thanks to relationships with multiple funders including all levels of government and hundreds of committed individual donors.

As we mark our 45th year, I think back with gratitude to the group of volunteers who founded our organization in 1979 – what a remarkable transformation over the ensuing years. May the next 45 years be as transformative!

**Simon Liston**  
Board Chair

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Simon Liston  
Petra Kukacka  
Ghada Hussein  
Edward Kloosterman  
Jamey Coughlin  
Jeeniraj Thevasagayam

*Chair*  
*Vice-Chair*  
*Secretary*  
*Treasurer*  
*Director*  
*Director*

Kim Blackwell  
Ponvily Ravindranathan  
Robert McDonald  
Dr. Saji Mon Ravi Mannosseril  
Shelbi Kilcollins

*Director*  
*Director*  
*Director*  
*Director*  
*Director*

## A LOOK BACK AT THE PAST:



Our first location - 205 Sherbrooke Street



Newcomer children at Central Public School  
1986-87



Sewing Program at 205 Sherbrooke

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Respect, Equity and Inclusion, Collaboration, Dedication, and Celebration: these are the values that underpin all our work at the New Canadians Centre.

We enter this work with a deep **respect** for the courage, skills and resilience of all the newcomers we serve. More than 2,000 newcomers sought out our services this year and trusted us to help guide their settlement journey in Canada. This was our highest number of clients ever – and a 50% increase over the previous year.

In developing and delivering our programs and services we centre **equity and inclusion**, meeting people where they are at and prioritizing the needs and perspectives of those who face the greatest challenges and barriers. Our new Life Skills Program, which helps empower recent newcomers who need extra support, is just one example of how we put this value into action.

Now in its 15th year, the Peterborough Immigration Partnership is a powerful forum for **collaboration** towards creating a community where newcomers feel welcome not just walking in the door at NCC, but walking in any door. More vibrant than ever, we are grateful to have so many engaged partners who dedicate time and resources to our shared goals.

The **dedication** of our more than 250 volunteers and nearly 50 employees continues to inspire me. We are a diverse group of individuals, representing dozens of countries, religions, cultures and languages, and all united towards NCC’s vision of a vibrant and inclusive community where people who are new to Canada thrive and are valued.

What is life without a little (or a lot!) of fun and **celebration**? Dancing, sharing food, making music, and playing games: thank you for joining in our many events and activities and being with us at the heart of community building.

Amidst the good times, we are sobered by the local and global challenges and conflicts affecting all of us and often the newcomer community even more acutely. We hold these struggles close in our hearts and hope that our work makes the impact of these struggles even just a bit more bearable.

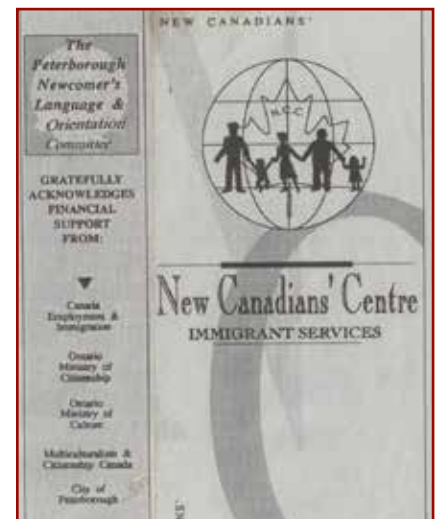
**Andy Cragg**  
Executive Director



Article from Peterborough This Week (undated)



Article from Peterborough Examiner (Apr 28, 1989)



Our old logo and brochure

**2082**

**CLIENTS SERVED**

**1216**

**NEW CLIENTS**

**866**

**RETURNING CLIENTS**

**104**

**SOURCE COUNTRIES**

**76**

**LANGUAGES SPOKEN**

**NEW CLIENT IMMIGRATION PROFILE**

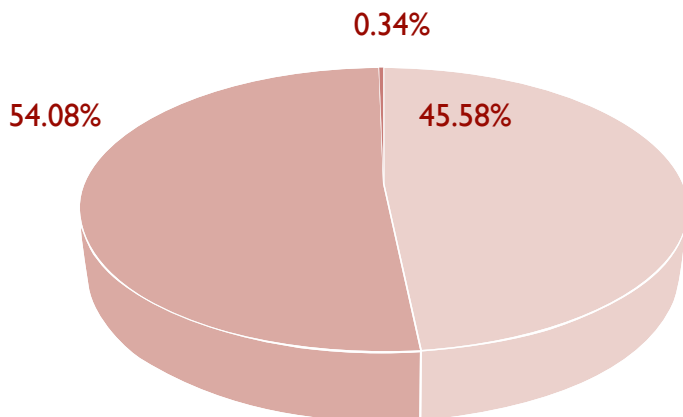
Immigration Category	2023-2024	2022-2023
Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel	121	256
Canadian Citizens	69	30
Convention Refugees	2	2
International Students	259	72
Other Temporary Foreign Worker	179	119
Permanent Residents		
Family & Economic Class	136	247
Protected Class	249	170
Refugee Claimants	50	12
Unknown Status	48	23
Visitor	154	62
Other	28	
<small>(no status, application in progress, temporary resident permit etc.)</small>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1216</b>	<b>993</b>

**Top 10 Countries**  
 Syria, Ukraine, India, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Philippines, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Colombia

**Top 10 Languages**  
 English, Arabic, Ukrainian, Spanish, Russian, Farsi, Dari, Hindi, French, Urdu

**GENDER BREAKDOWN**

- 1126 FEMALE**
- 949 MALE**
- 7 UNKNOWN / OTHER GENDER IDENTITY**



**AGE BREAKDOWN**



## SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Our Settlement team must always be ready for any question or situation as they are often the first staff to meet our clients. Over the past year, clients who came to NCC included permanent residents who needed to renew government documents, international students looking for work, and refugee claimants who had arrived with no supports at all.

Through drop-in services or by appointment, the team had to be resourceful and prepared to offer immediate assistance or refer the client to other services either within NCC or in the community at large.

**Language assessments** were a key service for newcomers as they needed a certified assessment of their language level to be eligible for federal or provincial English Language Learning classes. With the addition of a second part time assessor, we surpassed our goal and provided over 200 assessments.

Notably this year, staff saw that many newcomers were experiencing a higher level of financial instability, with precarious housing and employment situations, and many barriers to accessing available community services.

The team provided information and pointed these clients to resources that are available in the community; staff also provided emotional support to clients who were in distress. In these cases, clients were also encouraged to participate in any of our social and community connections activities, such as the Women's Group or a community potluck, to help build their support network.

Another important way for newly arrived families to become part of the community was through our Welcome Pass. This booklet of coupons and tickets encouraged new NCC clients to experience the many community programs and services that make Peterborough such a great place to live. We are grateful to our community partners who offer these opportunities to help newcomers feel welcome.



Newcomer women came together to participate in the first Home Maintenance workshop series.



### OSCAR'S STORY

Oscar's journey to Canada is a testament to ambition and a desire to make a positive impact. Hailing from Tanzania, Oscar brought a wealth of experience with him, having excelled as a mechanical engineer during a four-year stint on a ship. Beyond technical expertise, Oscar possessed a global perspective and strong sense of social responsibility. In Tanzania, he actively championed the rights of the marginalized albino community.

After he arrived in Canada as a visitor in December 2019, Oscar's plans shifted due to the global pandemic. This unexpected turn of events led to a life-changing encounter with his future wife, Sylvia, in March 2020. They married in 2022, and Sylvia sponsored him for permanent residency.

While initially employed by Algoma Shipping Liner, Oscar did not give up his dream of starting his own company in Canada. The NCC Settlement Services team played a pivotal role in supporting Oscar's goals. Since November 2022, Oscar received invaluable support, including being matched to an English language tutor, referrals to financial assistance and community resources, employment counselling, and guidance on how to navigate the Canadian business landscape.

With NCC support, Oscar established a general partnership company focused on mining precious metals, with an integrated import/export operation.

Oscar's dedication to building a successful business in Canada not only embodies personal achievement but also contributes significantly to the nation's economic well-being. We are proud to have played a part in Oscar's inspiring journey.



The Newcomer Youth Volunteer Club came together to make sandwiches to be distributed by One City Peterborough.

## YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS (INCLUDING SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS)

NCC's Youth and Family Programs team offers supports and activities for children, youth and their parents through one-on-one counselling, group activities, and targeted programs and initiatives.

This past year was a hectic one. International students who came with their families, particularly from Nigeria and India, sought support for their children in schools. We had many more referrals to assist families living in the Clarington and Northumberland areas. We also received a high number of government-assisted refugee families again this year.

**SWIS program** support often begins with referrals from schools to help students and parents with education-related issues; but SWIS workers also field a wide range of settlement questions related to employment, housing, and health care. While much of their work was assisting with information and practical supports, NCC staff played a key role in offering empathy and compassion as newcomers adjust to the many new situations and challenges they face.

Outside of school-related services, our youth program was a highlight again this year: the **New Canadians Centre Young Leaders (NCCYL)** organized a number of activities for their peers, volunteered for other community agencies and initiatives, and represented newcomer youth at meetings with the school boards and other community leaders.

Newcomer youth met others from different schools and neighbourhoods, learned together and developed leadership skills; the benefits were both immediate and for the long term. There was so much interest in this newcomer youth program that NCCYL plans to expand to a larger group next year, with an Executive Committee and regular members.

### ANASTASIA'S STORY



When Ukrainian newcomer Anastasia Matusiak moved to Canada nearly two years ago, she was shy, homesick and confused by the new system she now had to navigate – but that didn't stop her.

Anastasia pushed herself out of her own comfort zone, and sought opportunities to build skills and connections in her new home.

Anastasia started volunteering at the New Canadians Centre. She joined the New Canadians Centre's Young Leaders (NCCYL) group to meet and work with other newcomers and build leadership skills. She really came out of her shell as she related to other newcomers through meaningful events and projects. Anastasia shares, "it was such a great opportunity to open up to people, and meet like minded individuals. Everyone on NCCYL was also a newcomer, and non-judgmental, so this safe space made me comfortable and confident. This was a good experience for my future."

With the help of Steve, Settlement Worker in Schools, and Patrick, Youth Employment Counsellor, Anastasia was able to find a part-time job, volunteer at the Peterborough Humane Society, and apply for university.

Through hard work and perseverance, Anastasia was able to excel at a new school system, and get accepted to Trent University's Undergraduate Business Program. She is awaiting to hear back from scholarship opportunities, and is very excited for the future as she continues her journey to becoming an active and contributing member in Canada.



Laser Tag and Bowling were some of the activities that the youth enjoyed together after school.

# WORKPLACE INTEGRATION

## 53

## CLIENTS MATCHED TO EMPLOYMENT

Our Workplace Integration program engages both youth and adult newcomers.

The core of our employment program is **one-on-one counselling**. Many clients who sought help from NCC this year were unfamiliar with the expectations and steps of the Canadian hiring process, so they were coached on completing online applications, resume writing and cover letters, interview skills and etiquette. With client goals in mind, NCC staff also worked hard to match potential employers to these clients.

An essential component of our program is collaborating with community partners to provide quality **skills training and certification** opportunities for clients to improve their employability and ensure they are on equal footing with their Canadian-born peers in the job market.

Thanks to partnerships with organizations such as HRS Training Solutions, Employment Planning & Counseling, Peterborough Public Health, and Community Development Council Durham, a variety of employment training was provided to clients. This included: Working At Heights training for Ukrainians, Emergency First-Aid & CPR training for Arabic-speakers, Food Handler training, and Customer Service & Cashier training for youth.

We look forward to continuing this partnership to deliver more opportunities for clients to break into industries such as Hospitality & Tourism, Construction & Manufacturing, and Healthcare.

Our newest strategy to improve employment outcomes for clients is the **English in the Workplace** program. This past year, NCC delivered customized workplace language training to clients working with 6 different employers: Nefab, Chemong Home Hardware, SGS Lakefield, Curtis Construction, Kawartha Butterscotch Factory, and Cameron Steel. The training not only developed clients' English skills and increased vocabulary related to their roles, but it boosted their confidence. The clients also learned about Canadian workplace culture and helped them relate better with their co-workers.



Newcomer youth at the Youth Explore Program, a 4-day career exploration camp over March Break supporting youth with skills building for employment & career exploration through interactive activities.

## MYKHAIL'S STORY

Mykhail Rychik is an experienced stomotologist\* from Kyiv, Ukraine. He arrived in Canada from Germany in the first wave of Ukrainians under the CUAET program.



Once in Peterborough, he contacted NCC and was assisted with various services such as a language assessment and referral to English classes, community connections activities, tax clinics and employment counselling. Mykhail worked as a dentist in Ukraine and he wanted to continue his career here.

NCC's Employment Counsellor, Olga Stetsyuk, provided information and options for Mykhail to pursue the dental profession recertification process. Meanwhile, other members of Mykhail's family also came to Canada, and now there are 3 generations of the family living in Peterborough.

One day, Olga received a call from Maple Leaf Dentistry, a local dental office. They had heard that there were professionals coming from Ukraine and asked if NCC knew any dentists who were planning to undergo the Canadian certification process. Olga connected Mykhail, and he was offered a position. Later, they hired two more Ukrainians.

Mykhail is currently preparing for the National Dental Examining Board exams, and once he passes, he will be able to pursue his career in dentistry here in Canada.

*Stomatology is the study of the mouth, its disorders and diseases.*



Team Unity meets regularly with different activities planned, from English lessons to fun Soccer Socials! From the left: volunteer Sarah Lake, clients Kembazi, Ibrahim, Alam, Aodom, Yasin, Adnan, Abaker, Legentil, and Grace A Dieu. Volunteers Paul Plant and Wayne Cornack.

## A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

In the past year, RAP saw an unprecedented diversity among its clients, with a significant increase in individuals arriving alone. Twelve single individuals, fluent in seven languages, sought assistance within a brief period. Many found themselves sharing temporary accommodations, navigating the complexities of language and culture together.

Living in such close quarters could have easily led to overwhelming pressure and confusion, yet amidst the challenges, these clients discovered avenues for communication, mutual support, and shared laughter. Those who had arrived earlier naturally assumed leadership roles, guiding newcomers through the transition.

For instance, Ibrahim from Sudan formed a close bond with Alam from Myanmar/Burma, with their friendship strengthened by shared activities like biking to the Y and attending classes. Similarly, individuals like Aodom, proficient in multiple languages including English, Arabic, and Tigrinya, served as invaluable interpreters within their circles, facilitating cohesion in communal living spaces.

Others, such as Yasin from Afghanistan, emerged as community linchpins, integrating newcomers into local services and social gatherings. Supported by Sara, our RAP Volunteer Administrator, and a team of enthusiastic volunteers - dubbed "Team Single Squad," later rebranded "Team Unity" - these individuals were nurtured to embrace their potential and derive joy from their experiences.

Though they arrived alone, these individuals displayed unwavering positivity and courage, extending kindness and fostering enduring friendships. Their collective spirit serves as a beacon, illustrating the transformative power of community engagement and the remarkable resilience of those given the chance to give back.

# RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RAP)

## 176

NEW GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED REFUGEES (GARS)  
67 from Afghanistan

## 47

NEW GAR FAMILIES

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) welcomes government-assisted refugees from around the world to Canada each year. NCC is one of 35 RAP Centres across Canada. This past year, NCC's program grew as we saw 176 refugees come to Peterborough – the highest annual number of arrivals since the Syrian crisis in 2016. While we continued to see families from Afghanistan and Syria, individuals and families came from a diversity of other countries, including Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Venezuela and Central African Republic.

After welcoming the families and gathering essential documents like OHIP and SIN, our staff provided orientation sessions on many aspects of life in Canada. This year, with the support of both a Fleming College and Trent University placement student, we were able to initiate several **essential training programs** while families were living in temporary housing: for example, waste management – sorting garbage, green waste, and recyclables – is a key skill for anyone living in Peterborough and particularly in preparation to becoming a tenant. Clients also were oriented to grocery shopping in Canada and how to ride the bus and navigate Peterborough's transit system.

Perhaps the biggest challenges for these newcomers were housing and health care. Finding affordable housing took significant efforts and networking with a range of landlords and real estate agents. Some clients made the decision to move to other communities.

For those who chose to make Peterborough their home, staff continued to support the families, particularly around accessing health care as clients had immediate and urgent medical needs, as well as long term issues that had not been addressed for many years. Volunteer support teams also played a crucial role in supporting families in their day to day activities and connecting them to our community.

Once families were in their own rental units and more settled, other NCC staff teams assisted them with school and pre-employment counselling, and ultimately these families moved to our Case Management program for further ongoing support.



# CASE MANAGEMENT

Our Case Management team provided comprehensive services and supports to newcomers who face significant barriers to settling successfully in Canada. Many of these clients came to Canada as refugees, fleeing conflict and persecution and needing additional support in the areas of health, literacy, poverty, and overcoming trauma.

This year, among the many families who were part of the Case Management program, there was an increase in the number of single mothers. As the only adult in the family, these women faced more challenges and complexities to navigate not only housing and finances on a low income, but healthcare issues including pregnancy support, schooling for their children and other family-related services.

Facing few childcare options, they struggled to find opportunities to learn English, earn an income, or even to socialize with others. NCC staff have been working to support these clients through matching families with compassionate and dedicated volunteers, offering childcare at NCC for both meetings and social activities, and advocating for our clients with other service providers and supports.

We aimed to help all case management clients to stabilize their lives and build their knowledge and skills to be able to better integrate in the community and manage more independently.

Staff helped clients build their confidence and knowledge through a combination of coaching, advocacy and assistance with navigating the many systems and services they require. In addition, clients participated in **one-on-one and group training in skills for life in Canada**, such as learning how to email and use online tools, and financial management and banking, while also developing new networks to begin to thrive in their new home.

Once clients have reached the goals that they set out when they joined the Case Management program, they can then move out of this program and continue to access NCC services as needed through our Settlement team.



## NOORIA'S STORY

Nooria Quraishi arrived in Canada from Afghanistan with her family in 2022. Caring for five young children and her aging mother-in-law, Nooria looks forward to the future with hope and optimism.

In Afghanistan, Nooria was a supporter for women who ran their own businesses. That spirit of fairness has followed her to Canada. Determined to build a new life for her family, Nooria has tackled everything head-on.

She has been an active participant in the Life Skills program organised by the Case Management team, learning about different systems in Canada such as healthcare, finance and education, and how to navigate them. She has become a champion and an advocate for her family, making sure they have access to everything they needed.

Even with a busy family life, Nooria's love of learning has not stopped! She enrolled in college and completed a certificate in Accounting and Payroll Administration. Since 2023, she has also been volunteering with teams that support government-assisted refugees who are new to the community.

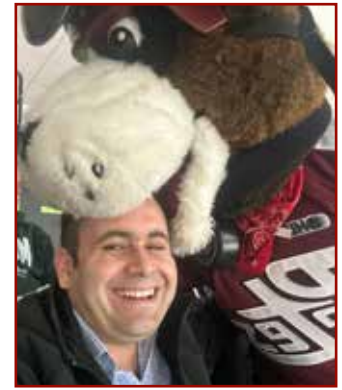
Sharing her own experiences, Nooria empowers others to build their own dreams in Canada.

Nooria is a shining star. You can find her at many NCC events, making new friends with a warm smile. She is an inspiration to everyone, showing that you can build a good life for yourself while helping others along the way.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



*Pumpkin Carving*



*Peterborough Petes Hockey Game*

Feeling at home in Canada starts with feeling connected. Our Community Connections programs and activities are designed to help newcomers build that sense of belonging.

We have kept a vibrant selection of ongoing group programs this year, including English conversation classes, our Women’s Group and Sewing program.

We host monthly activities that connect newcomers to the community and help them build friendships.

Some of the highlights from this year include:

- Women’s Only Swim
- Fall Harvest Potluck
- Soup and Salsa
- Family Craft Day
- Visit to the Curve Lake Powwow



*Art Workshop*



*Cooking with the Women’s Group*



*Winter Potluck*



*Winter Fun Day at Lakefield College School*



*Trip to Cobourg Beach*



*Sewing Group wearing their beautiful creations*



*Spring Wreath Workshop*

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We celebrated diversity at the annual **Canadian Multicultural Festival** in Peterborough in June. Through “Try It” workshops, newcomers and community members alike had the chance to explore new cuisines, sports, and crafts. Through the month, we partnered with the DBIA and several newcomer-owned restaurants for the Multicultural Food Crawl. We also commemorated World Refugee Day with a panel discussion at the Peterborough Public Library.



Learning how to roll rice paper rolls at “Try It -Vietnamese Cooking”

On July 1, we hosted the annual “**Lessons from the Land**” event. This is a day to reflect on how we heal our relationship with the land and with Indigenous Peoples. Participants were encouraged to join medicine walks, traditional games, drum teachings, and a beading circle.



Traditional drummers led by Janet McCue (right)

Honouring our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, we also hosted Jaida Ponce, a passionate Kichi Siibi Niizi Mniidoo Anishinaabe artist and teacher. Jaida facilitated a **Wrap-Style Beading Workshop** for newcomers and hosted a rich dialogue.



Jaida sharing her knowledge with the group

As part of **Welcoming Week** in September, we organised “One Night in Kampala”. This event featured traditional songs and dances performed by the Neema Choir from Uganda.



Neema Choir engaging the audience

In February, we launched the “**Our Neighbourhood**” video series. What does it mean to be a good neighbour, to welcome people who are new to Canada, and to build a more diverse and just society for everyone? Our speakers explored these important topics in their videos. You can watch the videos at [www.nccpeterborough.ca/OurNeighbourhood](http://www.nccpeterborough.ca/OurNeighbourhood)



To mark International Women’s Day, we organised “**Women Helping Women**”. Newcomer women came together to share their journeys of settling in Canada, and found strength and support in connecting with others. Carmela Valles inspired everyone as the guest speaker for the day - “Immigrants - we get it done. Immigrant women - we got it done yesterday!”



A group photo at “Women Helping Women” with one of the vision boards that was created

# NORTHUMBERLAND



Hiking in the Ganaraska Forest



Apple Picking at Moore Orchards

NCC's office in Northumberland had another eventful year with over 350 clients. In addition to our regular settlement counselling appointments, staff also saw clients at the office for language assessments, and employment counselling sessions. Our Settlement Worker in Schools was contacted by teachers in both Public and Catholic schools to help newcomer students – 27 new families were helped by our SWIS worker. We particularly noted more referrals to schools in the Clarington and Newcastle area this year.



New friends at Jungle Cat Zoo

Our Community Connections program was very active with monthly activities focused primarily on family-friendly events such as apple picking, a family day at the Cobourg Museum and the Squishy Goose event. The Northumberland Women's group gathered monthly and enjoyed cooking or making crafts together while making new friends. These activities helped newcomers feel more a part of the community.



Latin Potluck



Pumpkin Carving

NCC was fortunate to hire a new Volunteer Administrator who will help build our volunteer base in the Northumberland region in the coming year.



Women's Group Volunteering at the Northumberland Fare Share Food Bank



Trip to the Cobourg Public Library



Making winter wreaths



Family Day at the Cobourg & Area Museum

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



CERTIFICATE FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICE AT THE  
**NEW CANADIANS CENTRE**

This certificate is awarded with gratitude and many thanks to

## *Our Volunteers*

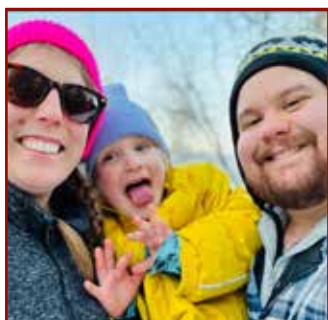
for your contributions to the community,  
going above and beyond to support newcomers,  
and dedication to making Canada a better place to live.

Volunteers are at the heart of the New Canadians Centre. They work with our clients as tutors, support team members, community navigators, drivers and social conveners. They also played key roles as presenters and facilitators of English language classes and conversation groups, our Women's Group, Canadian citizenship preparation courses, arts programs, special events and activities.

***From the bottom of our hearts  
– Thank You!***

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

### PETERBOROUGH



#### **THE WARREN FAMILY**

Emily and Matt began volunteering in 2016 and paused to welcome their daughter Brookey into the world. Once she was old enough, they saw a gap and returned to fill it as a family, with Brookey who became NCC's youngest volunteer. The Warren family rented a storage unit and during the 2023-24 fiscal year alone, have helped furnish over 34 homes including sourcing, collecting, storing, delivering and getting homes set-up to welcome our newest refugee families. This has allowed families to walk through their doors not to an empty space, but a space that is warm, homey and most importantly, a space that shows each family that the community cares and they are welcome here.



**PAUL AOKI** began volunteering at the NCC in 2019 as an Assistant Facilitator in the Spanish Conversation Group after being a participant himself. With growing community interest even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Paul enthusiastically stepped up to facilitate a Beginner level group online. Today, this group has grown into four sections all led by Paul. In five years, hundreds of community members have attended the group to strengthen their conversational skills and have all been met by a friendly and generous Paul. In addition, he also assists with the Beginner English Group and fills in as facilitator for other groups. In this role, he helps lead activities and conversations that help some of our newest clients not only build critical language skills but more importantly build confidence and comfort in speaking English. Paul is well-regarded by participants in his groups for his kindness, compassion, approach to teaching and humour.



**SHIRLEY LOPEZ** is a newcomer from Honduras who has been volunteering at the NCC since June 2023. In this short space of time, her volunteer roles have included events support, serving on a GAR Support Team, supporting with administrative tasks, and facilitating a group. Shirley is often the first person to respond to a callout with "Count me in!" Drawing on her own experiences as a newcomer coupled with her warm personality and kindness, Shirley has been a dedicated member of a support team for a Venezuelan family. She tutors them in English to supplement their language classes, attends several community events with them to help them build their community, including taking them to Northumberland to see other parts of Canada. Her newest role is as a Spanish Group facilitator where her personality shines. Shirley's volunteerism transcends helping into true connection and friendship.

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

## YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### PETERBOROUGH



#### MATTHEW CABANLIG

Originally from the Philippines, Matthew Cabanlig is a Gr. 12 Holy Cross student who has lived in Canada for two years. He is a talented musician and has harnessed the power of music to help him step out of his comfort zone, connect with others, and reach his full potential. Matthew heard about the New Canadians Centre from a friend and immediately saw the value of such an organization in Peterborough. The sense of community that the NCC helped restore in Matthew's life compelled him to give back and become more tapped into Peterborough on a grassroots level. Currently, Matthew regularly volunteers at both the NCC and the Kawartha Youth Orchestra, where he's become a member of the Senior Orchestra thanks to his efforts, and is sitting at close to 600 volunteer hours. For Matthew, volunteering releases stress, helps him cope with daily challenges, and is a way to say thank-you to the community that welcomed him.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### NORTHUMBERLAND



#### TANIA AGUILA-WAY

Tania's impactful contributions are evident in her assistance to a young immigrant settling in Cobourg. Her proficiency in both Spanish and English facilitated a seamless transition despite language and cultural barriers. From advocating and interpreting to ensuring a sense of acceptance and encouragement, Tania went above and beyond to ensure newcomers felt supported.

Not only did Tania assist with daily tasks, she also handled urgent situations. She was the sole point of contact for a lonely individual in Canada. Tania's actions not only benefited individuals directly but also enriched the community as a whole, fostering a culture of support and belonging.

In addition to her remarkable volunteer work, Tania holds a PhD in Canadian Literature and serves as an Assistant Professor in the English department at the University of Toronto. Despite her busy schedule, she remains committed to making minorities feel welcomed and supported.

## YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### NORTHUMBERLAND



#### IBRAHIM ALMADANI

Since arriving in Canada, Ibrahim has consistently demonstrated his unwavering commitment to helping others. He actively sought out and engaged in numerous volunteer opportunities within Northumberland since 2022, showcasing his eagerness to contribute positively to his community.

His reliability and punctuality have been invaluable to the NCC staff, making their work smoother and more efficient. Even after fulfilling the mandatory 40 hours of community involvement for his OSSD graduation, Ibrahim continued to volunteer at NCC and explore other avenues recommended by staff.

Witnessing Ibrahim's transformation from shyness to leadership has been a joy for the NCC staff, as he now inspires others to join him in volunteer activities, further amplifying the impact of his efforts.

Ibrahim's consistent desire to help, coupled with his genuine kindness and leadership skills, makes him an exceptional candidate for the Youth Volunteer Award, deserving of recognition and appreciation.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## BECKY ROGERS COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

*This award is dedicated to the memory of Becky Rogers (1955-2017), a tireless advocate for immigrant integration, diversity and multiculturalism in our community*



**CAMP KAWARTHA** is an accredited, not-for-profit organization offering a broad range of innovative year-round outdoor and environmental programs. A long-standing NCC partner, Camp Kawartha is at the forefront in providing welcoming and inclusive opportunities for newcomers to learn about and experience nature.

Over the years, NCC clients have participated in numerous sessions of activities at Camp Kawartha's locations on Clear Lake and in Peterborough. In 2022, camp staff worked to create a truly authentic and immersive Canadian experience introducing a large group of newcomer families to maple sugar tapping on the grounds of their Clear Lake camp.

Camp Kawartha has facilitated camper spots yearly for newcomer children and youth in their award-winning summer camp. Camp staff are well-trained, kind, flexible and accommodating - and have worked to create the best experiences possible for children who attend. In recent years, Camp Kawartha's Leaders in Training (LIT) Program has collaborated with NCC to create a new summer program that brings families participating in our FLIP (Family Literacy in Ptbo) Program out to enjoy camp for a day.

By welcoming newcomer families and giving them a taste of Canadian outdoor life, Camp Kawartha is not only providing them with fun experiences but also helping them feel a sense of belonging in their new home.

Thank you Camp Kawartha - you are the very best at what you do!

## DINDIN VILLARINO COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

*This award is dedicated to the memory of Dindin Villarino (1970-2017) who believed in the power of human connection and kindness to create a thriving and inclusive community in Northumberland.*

Established in 1983, **CORNERSTONE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION CENTRE** is an accredited violence-against-women agency. It works to end gender-based violence by providing accessible, compassionate, and best practice-modeled programs and services inclusive of shelter, counselling, housing support, and prevention. They provide a support system that inspires hope, creates safety, and fosters resilience while working to end gender-based violence.

Through the years, Cornerstone has helped numerous individuals by offering support, guidance, financial support and counselling. They provide connections to local organizations in order to help women, their children and youth, to gain confidence and transform their lives.



For many years. Cornerstone has assisted a significant number of newcomer women and their children to start anew. Congratulations and our thanks to the Cornerstone team!

**Thank you for walking with us, every step of the way!**

The New Canadians Centre gratefully acknowledges our



**NEW  
CANADIANS  
CENTRE**  
PETERBOROUGH

**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP  
CANADA (IRCC)**

**EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
CANADA (ESDC)**

## WE ARE...

The New Canadians Centre Peterborough is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to supporting immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers in Peterborough and surrounding areas. We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

## OUR VISION

A vibrant and inclusive community where people who are new to Canada thrive and are valued.

## OUR MISSION

We empower people who are new to Canada, so they can be recognised as equal and valued members of Canadian society, and we provide leadership to cultivate their meaningful economic, social, and cultural inclusion in our community.

## OUR VALUES

Respect, Equity and Inclusion,  
Collaboration, Dedication,  
Celebration

**DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**THE FUND FOR GENDER EQUALITY,  
SUPPORTED BY A COLLABORATION  
BETWEEN COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF  
CANADA AND THE EQUALITY FUND, WITH  
SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF  
CANADA.**

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, IMMIGRATION,  
TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
(MLITSD)**

**MINISTRY OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES -  
CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT (MCU)**

**CITY OF PETERBOROUGH**

**UNITED WAY OF PETERBOROUGH & DISTRICT**

**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER  
PETERBOROUGH**

**LLOYD CARR-HARRIS FOUNDATION**

**GREATER PETERBOROUGH HEALTH SERVICES  
FOUNDATION**

**PETERBOROUGH FOUNDATION**

**PETERBOROUGH DOWNTOWN BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT AREA**

**DONORS**

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Everyone  
welcome.

