

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



Growing with Canada



POLYCULTURAL
IMMIGRANT & COMMUNITY SERVICES

YOUR PARTNER IN SUPPORTING A HEALTHY, VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Polycultural has been serving residents of Ontario for over 44 years, helping them to connect to resources in their communities that will enhance their well-being. We are a registered charitable organization that prides itself in providing client centred and community-led programs and services for youth, seniors, families and newcomers of all nationalities to Canada.

We have a vibrant multicultural team working at our 5 locations throughout the GTA, ready to support our clients need. We thrive on collaboration and believe that no client should ever be turned away. We accomplish greater results working together than on our own.



FUNDERS



Funded by:



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



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CANADIAN MENTAL
HEALTH ASSOCIATION
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POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
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United Way
Peel Region



SPONSORS



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BOARD CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Nedal Ismail
Chairman

2017 was a memorable year for the Polycultural family – we celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary and our 44th year of service to the Greater Toronto Area community. Our amazing team assisted many newcomers who traveled across the world to Canada in hopes of a more promising future for their families. We were proud and honoured to welcome them home, and give them the tools to help them grow and prosper as productive members of our country.

To our funders, sponsors, and partners we thank you for your continued support. Without your generosity and assistance we could not have made such a huge impact on the communities we serve.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow members of the Board of Directors. I am humbled and inspired by your generosity in volunteering so much of your time and energy to Polycultural – your dedication and service has had a tremendous impact on our community, and your strategic vision will ensure that Polycultural will continue for another 44 years.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Marwan Ismail
Executive Director

With the end of the 2017 fiscal year we celebrate another incredible year for the Polycultural family. Our agency was the first stop on the long journey for so many new Canadians in hopes of a better life for their families. We have renewed our commitment to providing the best services and programs that will fit the needs of newcomers, and to shape and grow them to be productive members of their communities and contribute to the rich Canadian mosaic.

Our greatest asset is our dedicated staff, and I would like to congratulate them on the wonderful role they have played in advancing the everyday lives of individuals in our community. We acknowledge the incredible work that they do with limited resources to so strongly impact their community. We appreciate your hard work and dedication to the mission of Polycultural.

A major highlight of this fiscal year is the 3-year project grant we received from Ontario Trillium Foundation to support the 'Post Discharge Program'. The Post Discharge Program evolved from the 'After the Discharge' pilot project, an initiative to reduce isolation among seniors discharged from the Etobicoke General Hospital – and this year we were honoured that Brampton Civic Hospital, and St. Joseph's Health Centre Toronto have joined us in this crucial initiative. We want to thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for providing funding for the project, a much needed initiative for our growing aging community.

I believe that in continuing our valuable work together we are capable of having an even greater impact on the communities we serve, and we have committed ourselves to developing more innovative programs, services, and strategic partnerships to improve the lives of our clients. Our goal is for Polycultural to continue to reflect our Canada's unique qualities: a place that embraces diversity, shows respect to all, and strives to better the welfare of our citizens. We recognize the numerous challenges that we face, but as we reflect on the important milestones we have celebrated as a community, we look towards a future embodying the best of what Polycultural has to offer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018



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FINANCE

We continue to make progress towards our goal of increasing funding to expand and diversify the programs and services we offer. Importantly, we have maintained stability through careful fiscal management of program budgeting. Our greatest challenge lies in increasing funding to support our operation and capacity functions required to support our programs and services. We have been actively executing plans to increase funding to expand the services and programs offered to youth and seniors.



20 TOTAL NUMBER OF FUNDERS

We gained strong financial support through our funders and sponsors. Polycultural is funded by all levels of government, foundations and private sector institutions. During this period, we worked with 20 funding institutions, securing funds for 27 programs and services.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Promote Human Resources Excellence

The department is the central hub supporting over 200 active employees including full-time, part-time, on-call and supply staff. The work that we do is important in sustaining the programs and services we offer to our clients.

Our emphasis this year was to 1) attract and retain high-caliber individuals who will grow with us over the long term and 2) encourage staff to seek personal and professional development in order to attain recognized designations in their fields. We believe that our employees are the most valuable asset and this year we focused on training front-line staff to meet benchmark standards within the industry. There were 14 in-house training sessions along with certification initiatives to ensure we have the most qualified and experienced staff serving our clients.



Staff Recognition

We appreciate our employees hard work and dedication to clients and the organizational goals. This year, we recognized 42 individuals from our high-performing team for their commitment to quality, their continuous improvement to increase efficiency and accountability. They were recognized at the first of our annual Staff Appreciation event. Thank you all for your commitment to excellence.

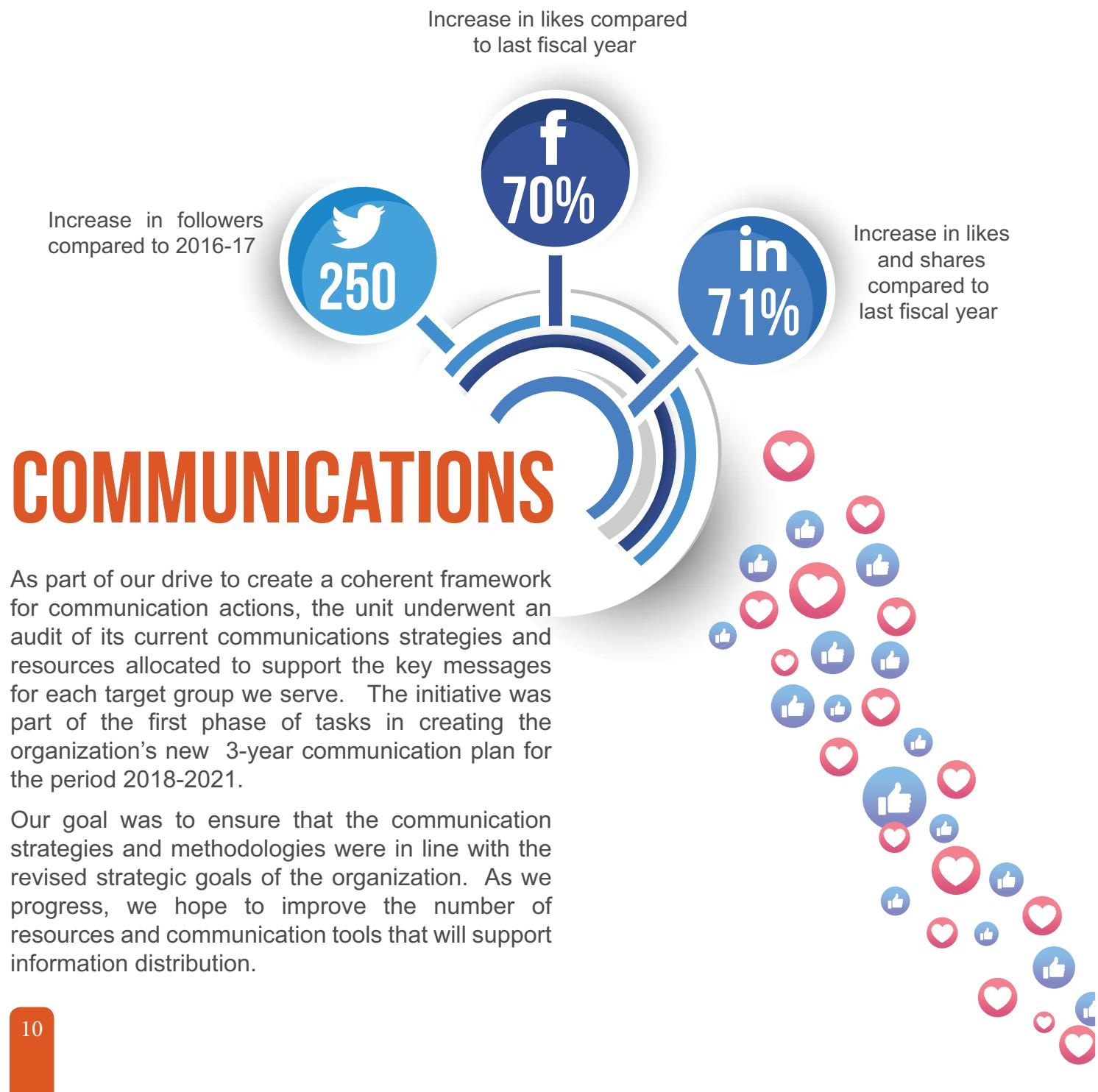


Volunteerism

Our volunteers continue to be instrumental in helping to provide quality of programs and services. This year we had 64 volunteers serving in roles such as intake, interpreters and classroom assistants. We would like to thank all volunteers for offering so much of their time and for sharing their talents with us. Your input is important to the success of our organization. We would like to share Nancy's experience engaging with clients of different cultures:



"I have learned a great deal about other cultures from my work at Polycultural. Working with the students and clients, both as a supply teacher and a volunteer, has exposed me to the diversity of our population more than I ever would have imagined. I've spent most of my life in Canada, and have always been surrounded by people from other countries, other faiths, other types of eating and dressing. But since I've been with Polycultural going on 8 years now, I've seen that people can learn a lot about each other just by listening and sharing. Thanks to the multi-cultural potlucks we have at Polycultural, I've also learned to love hummus!"



COMMUNITY WELLNESS PROGRAMS



The Community Wellness Programs focused on the health promotion, recreational and social programs for individuals and families. This year we focused on the well-being of children with projects geared at nurturing and developing their skills and abilities.

Effective Parents Raise Healthy Kids

The project served 94 participants with goals to improve newcomers' abilities to maintain and promote the health and well-being of their children. Through needs assessment, we found that many came from war-torn nations needing help understanding parenting in the Canadian context. The project was promoted to women with children and targeted Tamil, Arabic and Urdu speaking communities. In addition to the three targeted language groups, women with additional cultural backgrounds (mainly Bengali, Afghani) also participated in the project.

Sheridan Neighbourhood Family Program

The program this year had 3 projects:

- **Global 180 Youth Drop in Centre** - provided a safe space to complete home work and enjoy fun activities.
- **Robotics Program** - geared at school age children to develop skills and knowledge of science and technology while engaging them in the world of designing and building robots. This was done in partnership with Theory 6 Team from Rick Hansen Secondary School.
- **Coding program** - provided coding lessons to school age children. The program geared at developing participants critical thinking and organizational skills through basic programming exercises. This was done in partnership with Coding Skills Development – Easy Peasy.

SERVICES FOR SENIORS

Active Seniors

Social isolation is a major issue for many aging adults. We are committed to providing seniors with opportunities to live active and productive lives. The following programs were created to reduce the risk factors of isolation of seniors within the communities we serve.



Post Discharge Program

The Post Discharge Program significantly grew this year to 282 clients from the pilot project intake of 78 clients in 2016-2017 due to the addition of Brampton Civic Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre Toronto as partners. We recognized that the need of the community was great and saw the opportunity to extend the services to accept self-referrals and referrals from other hospitals.



New Horizons for Seniors Program and Multicultural Women Wellness

The New Horizons for Seniors and Multicultural Women Wellness project, served 155 and 18 clients respectively. Seniors were exposed to a wide variety of activities including: art and craft, yoga and dance for fitness, and overall wellness programs. Our hope is to get them connected to the community to reduce isolation and marginalization.

"The Polycultural seniors programs encourage seniors to get out of their homes and socialize with people of similar ages and make new friends. The seniors at Polycultural are so diverse and we learned from each other cultures and share ethnic foods, cakes and salads. There are a variety of programs, educational ones such as Diabetes clinic, Naturopathic Medicine, government issues; outings to Queen's Park, Royal Ontario Museum and Science Centre. The computer classes helped us to communicate better with young people, check on bus routes and updates on social media.

The kitchen at Scarborough Village enabled seniors to try different cooked meals and learn from each other about food preparation.

I enjoyed the arts and crafts classes and the experienced art instructors helped bring out the creative side of each person. We use our paintings to decorate the hallways of the classrooms.

Since joining the seniors program at Polycultural, I've become much happier. I look forward to attending classes a felt joy in attending the classes each week and the encounters with my peers." Norma

NEWCOMER SERVICES

We served 12,372 clients in our newcomer programs, this included clients served in the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) and Case Management program. Our clients had the opportunity to access a wide variety of services that assisted them in integrating into Canadian society.

The services included: information and awareness sessions where clients were exposed to daily tasks such as using public transit, accessing health care and educational facilities and connecting them to networks within their communities. We also offered counselling services to assist individuals and families in crisis situations. Our settlement counsellors provided one-on-one service to clients and collaborated with other agencies to ensure their needs were met.

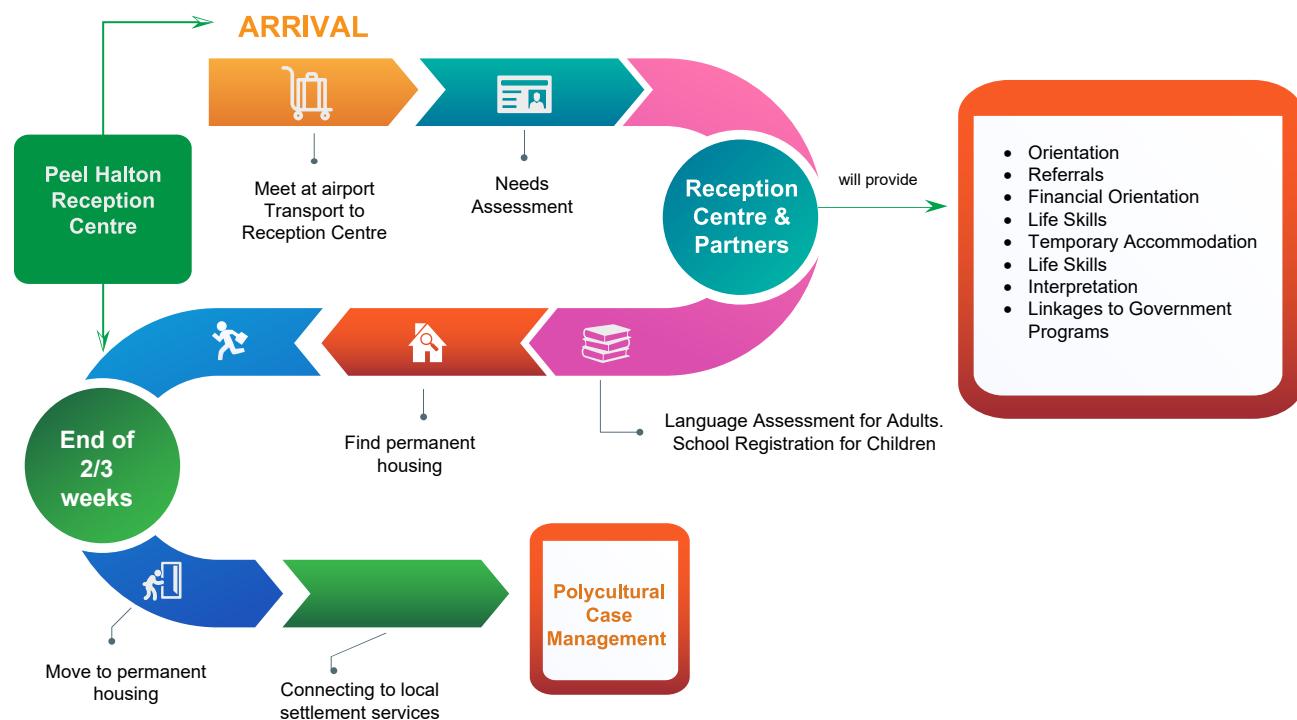


Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)

Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) offered essential services to Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) that arrived in Canada. The refugees were hosted at our Peel-Halton Integrated Services Reception Centre otherwise known as the Reception Centre. This year we hosted 338 individuals at the Centre.

RAP is funded by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and provides settlement at arrival with accommodation and daily necessities. The program also provided clients with the knowledge, skills and abilities as well as connections with the broader community to live safely and independently.

PEEL-HALTON INTEGRATED SERVICES RECEPTION CENTRE FRAMEWORK



Khadija is a newcomer to Canada

Khadija and her family escaped to Turkey from Syria carrying only their most basic belongings. Khadija and her husband arrived to Canada with no knowledge of the English language and a whole new social and economic system to navigate. The family arrived in Canada heavily reliant on the resettlement sector. As soon as they arrived, Khadija and her husband worked closely with the RAP program and Polycultural workers to find adequate housing for them and their six children. Finding housing for a family of eight was a challenging feat, but was quickly accomplished when an adequate rental unit was found for them in Brampton. At the same time, their government income support was set up for them, along with receiving their PR cards, registering for Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) and filling out their Canada Child Benefit (CCB) application. They also had bank accounts set up through our partnership with RBC. Our partnership with the Brampton Multicultural Community Centre (BMC) meant that their settlement needs would be taken care of once they had moved to Brampton.

After the language assessment was completed at the Language Assessment Centre, Khadija was enrolled in the LINC program with Muslim Community Services where she continues to learn English.



SPECIALIZED COUNSELLING



360

Crisis Counselling Program served 360 clients accessing specialized care from our 2 mental health professionals. A collaborative approach with caseworkers and other crisis intervention groups was used to provide holistic care to clients. Crisis counselling can be accessed at the Etobicoke Central and Mississauga South West locations.



118

Partner Assault Response Program served 118 clients and addressed domestic violence. The participants were mandated by the court to attend the PAR program in response to a criminal charge involving domestic violence. We diversified the program to include sessions for women, same sex couples and transgender individuals. The program is offered at our Toronto South West location.



735

Family Support Program served 735 clients and families. It provided counselling, referrals and advocacy for individuals or families facing issues such as family breakdown, violence, parenting, addictions, separation, financial difficulties, homelessness and others. The program is offered at our Toronto South West location.



30

Problem Gambling Counselling Program served 30 clients. It specialized in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention and counselling to individuals. The program is offered at our Toronto South West location.

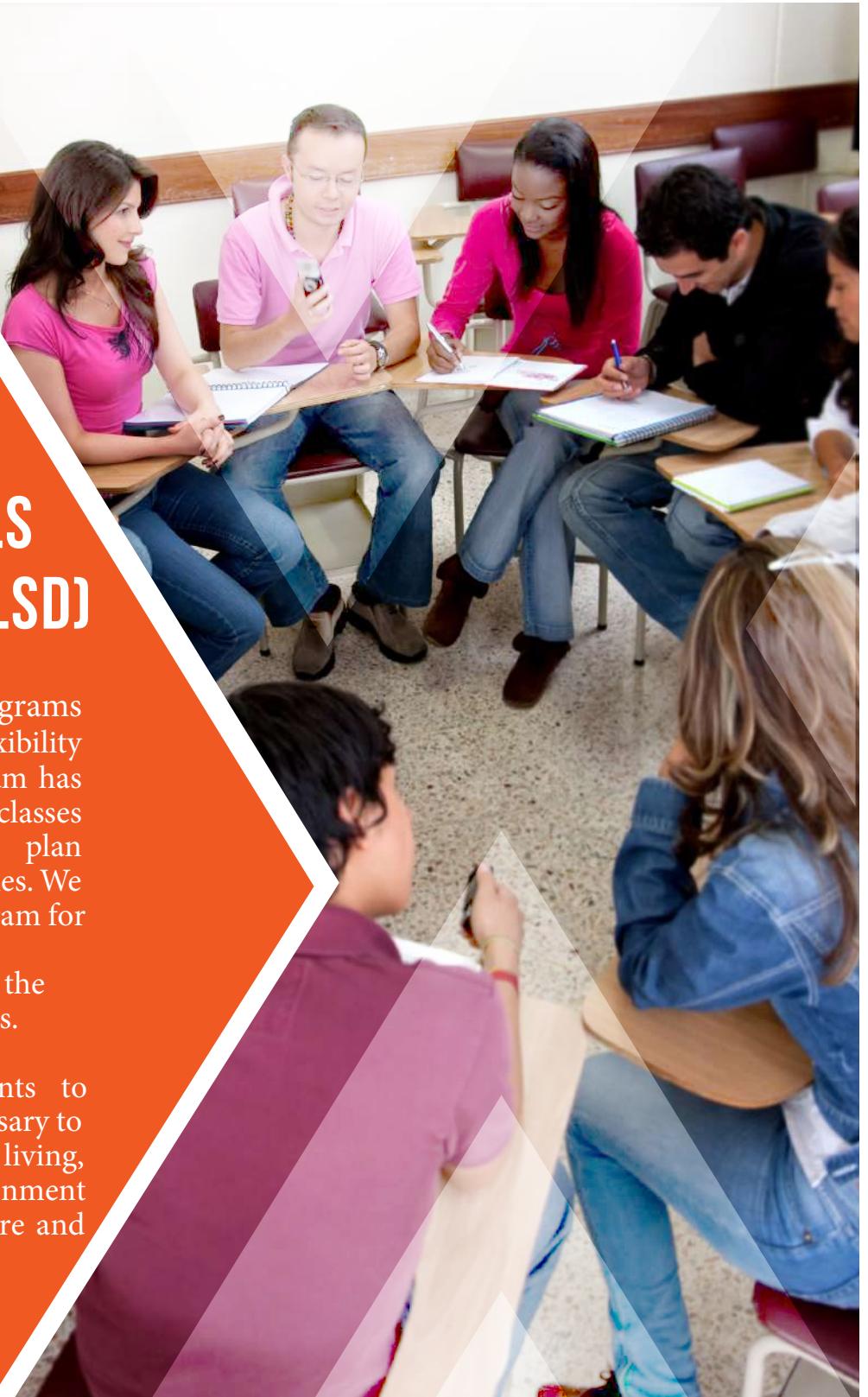


HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

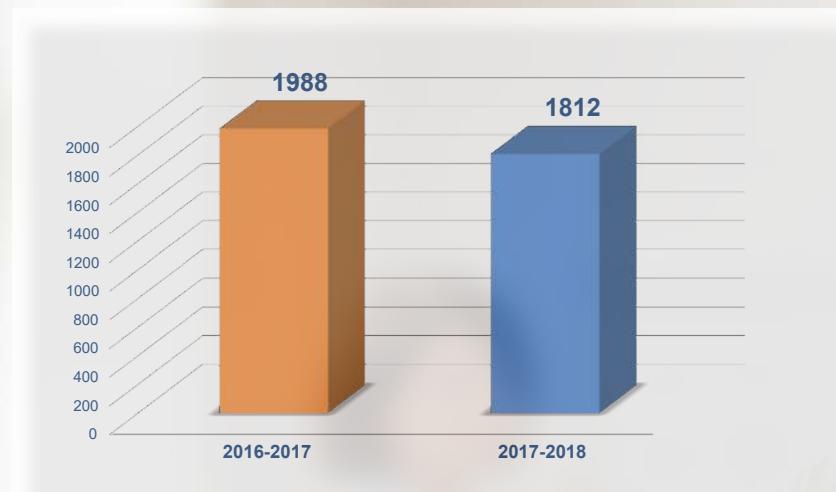
LANGUAGE LEARNING & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (LLSD)

Our language training programs were designed to adapt to the flexibility of our clients. The LINC program has both full-time and part-time classes giving clients the option to plan working hours around their studies. We also offered the ESL online program for those wanting to advance their language skills but may not have the time to attend face-to-face classes.

The programs allowed students to develop the language skills necessary to actively participate in day-to-day living, understand workplace environment and to adapt to Canadian culture and values.



LANGUAGE LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



"I am so lucky and happy that I joined the Polycultural ELT course. It helped me to understand the Canadian culture, improve my communication, interpersonal skills and gain techniques needed to find a job. Without your help I wouldn't be employed so quickly. Many thanks for all the hard work and time you invested to help me out."

Hilda





TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

Our employment counsellors worked very hard to connect job seekers to resources including training and workshops preparing them for the workforce.

This program offered to various groups of job seekers including Ontario Works recipients, internationally trained professionals and skilled individuals, provides an opportunity for them to successfully get started on their career path.

Excelling in Customer Service Program

This program is geared at assisting women to obtain knowledge and develop skills needed for employment in the customer service/ food and beverage service sectors.

CEEAP

The Career Exploration & Employment Assistance Program is designed for Ontario Works recipients with an extended history of unemployment, multiple barriers to employment, and those who are unclear about career choices or pathways to employment.

Milan is an Internationally Trained Doctor

Attending an IMG study group really helped me to soften the academic shock I experienced when I attempted to take on the competitive medical exams in Canada. Having experts from various medical/surgical specialities helped me broaden my perspective on competent and safe medical practices as a whole. I am grateful to the IMG study group because I passed my first and second test with very good marks. In addition, I want to say that meeting kindred spirits engaged in similar conditions and struggles as myself, really motivated me to push forward, especially in times of adversity. I would strongly suggest every fresh IMG coming to Canada, to get acquainted with Polycultural's IMG study group, in order to get a grip on exam essentials - reference materials, exam pattern & style, possible study partnerships." Milan



INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED PARTICIPANTS

The Enhanced Language Training (ELT) focused on occupation specific language training for newcomers.

Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) Mentoring Program – this is the first year of our partnership where mentorship is provided to guide clients to get a better understanding of Canadian work culture, job search and connecting them to professional networks.

YOUTH AND CHILDREN SERVICES

We strongly believe in giving youth a platform to develop leadership skills, an opportunity to serve their community and network with others to build their interpersonal skills. Our youth and children programs were designed to help them to overcome obstacles, work on their team building skills and navigate their ways to be successful members of society.



YOUTH ACHIEVERS

This program provided youth ages 14-18 years with workshops geared at leadership, team-building, and civic engagement. The program is funded by United Way of Peel Region



BEAUTIFUL GIRLS

With funding from RBC foundation we provided girls 14-19 years of age the Beautiful Girls program geared at developing confidence and leadership skills.



YOUTH JOB CONNECTION SUMMER

YJC Summer is a pre-employment training and work opportunities for high school youth with multiple barriers. Funded by Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development



YOUTH JOB CONNECTION

Provided employment preparation and paid placement for at risk youth 15-29 years of age who are not employed or in school. Funded by Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.



SUMMER CAMPS

Summer activities geared at having fun and developing social skills through meaningful activities. Funded by Service Canada and private donors.



CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN

Care for children for parents participating in language training. Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

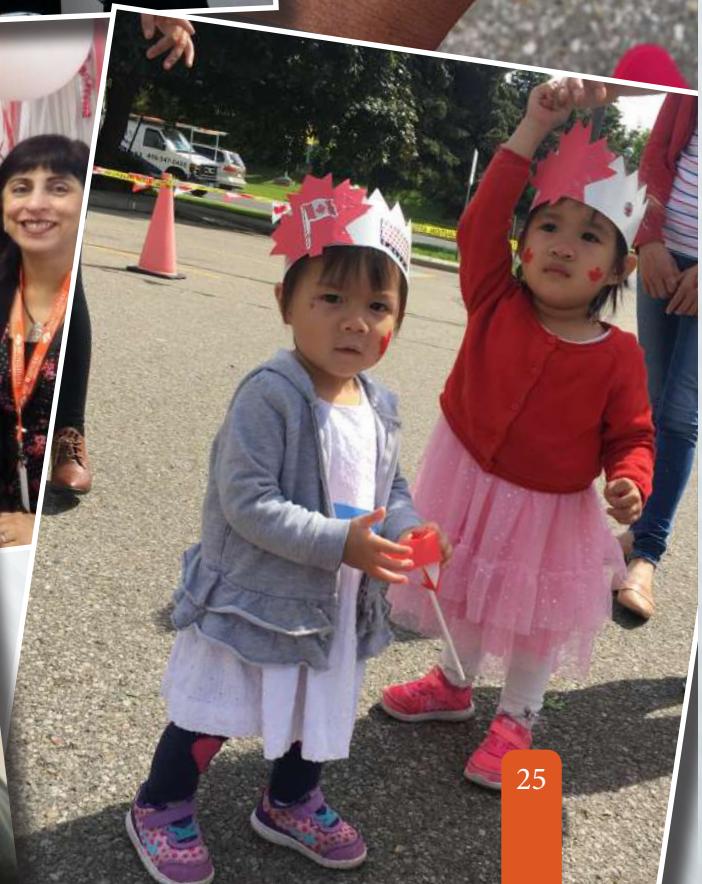
"My Name is Heba, I came to Canada with my husband and two kids (Safi and Rafi) from Syria. We have been here in Canada for one year. Actually, we are very happy because the first place that we came to learn English was at Polycultural Center, which has an amazing daycare. Rafi was three years old when he started his first day at the Care for Newcomer Children Program at Polycultural. I remembered he stayed under the table the whole day... ohh that was so funny, but the teachers helped him to feel safe and he started to integrate with other kids. I would like to say that the teachers were very helpful in assisting Rafi to become more confident and independent. I was very surprised when he started to speak English fluently, and now if I don't know the meaning of a words I will ask Rafi. Really that is amazing. Now after one year of being in this great place, Rafi is very comfortable and sociable with his friends. I think he is ready to join the preschool in September. Thanks from the bottom of my heart for taking care of our kids, and I recommend the Polycultural Center which includes the amazing day care to everyone". Heba

POLYLICIOUS 2017



Our annual fundraising event held on May 26th, 2017 at Roma's Hospitality Centre in Mississauga. The event featured food, dance and culture unique to Canada. Proceeds were in aid of our Peel-Halton Community Hub.

Canada 150 Celebration







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SCARBOROUGH SOUTH

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