



EDMONTON MENNONITE

centre *for*
newcomers

2016

**COMMUNITY
REPORT**

VISION AND BOARD

vision

We see a future where many citizens walk with newcomers to bridge their transition into community. To achieve this vision we will serve as a key catalyst and leading collaborator in positively shaping the attitudes, behaviours and practices of organizations and individuals to value the diversity that newcomers bring to communities.

core purpose

To enhance quality of life for newcomers and all Canadians.

2015 board members

WRAY STEEDSMAN

ANNA PRIEMAZA

SCOTT KEY

PATRICK KUKANU

RICK ENNS

MIKE EDIGER

DARRELL WEINS

BRADLEY GINGERICH

HERB KUEHNE

GERALD PENG

TONYA SYVITSKI

CECILIA RAN

ADRIENNE WIEBE

BRYAN KWAN

Dear EMCN friends and supporters,

Last year was one of the most challenging and rewarding in our 35 year history. Much like the arrival of Vietnamese Boat People 35 years ago, the arrival of Syrian refugees in 2016 brought out the best in us and our community. Knowing that EMCN was at the forefront of the Syrian settlement effort in Edmonton, the community came forward with offers to volunteer, and provide an unprecedented volume of monetary and physical donations. Because of all the community support, we were able to support Syrian families not only typical settlement supports but with donations, greeters at the airport, welcome packages, cultural staff and welcoming events. It was Edmonton at its best and it was a great privilege to be a part of such an incredible national effort.

For years to come, we will continue to work with Syrian families and support their effort to learn English, adjust to Canadian schools, and slowly integrate into the community and work force. However, their arrivals and the subsequent out pouring of support will have a legacy beyond their own settlement and integration. A new partnership was formed with Edmonton Emergency Relief Services and going forward, all refugees will receive welcome packages with basic household goods. The public interest in the challenges of refugees is now better understood and our community better understands the importance of welcoming people. At welcoming events it was First Nations people who welcomed the newest Canadians and this is a tradition that will continue going forward. A long list of other positive changes have resulted from the arrival of Syrian refugees. While we as a community did all we could to help them feel welcome, ultimately they spurred us to change our community for the better, both for ourselves and for any new arrival.



Erick Ambtman
executive director









**EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES**

**LANGUAGE
& CULTURE
SERVICES**

**SETTLEMENT
SERVICES**

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

bridging and training

- Engineers & Technologists Integration Program
- Immigrant Youth Employment Program
- Payroll Certificate Program
- Accountants Bridging Program

employment preparation

- Career Planning and Employment Readiness
- Career and Employment Services for Immigrants
- Helping Immigrants Reach Employment

language services

- Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
- English as Additional Language

children and youth

- Sky Club

community connections

- Global Choir
- Global Cooking
- Immigrant Women's Integration Network
- Operational Development for the Somali Canadian Women & Children Association (SCWCA)

settlement

- Settlement Services
- Settlement in Schools
- Orientation

health and wellbeing

- Trauma Support
- Mental Health Services
- Safe Families
- Relentless Connectors



DONOR STORY

Harvey Voogd

Harvey Voogd has been a loyal and proud supporter of EMCN since the mid 1980's. He first started as an ESL volunteer for the organization around that time, too. Moreover, in the early 1990's Voogd worked for the organization for a few years. His admiration for EMCN developed from personal experience, for his parents emigrated from Germany in the 1950's to start a new life in Canada. He witnessed firsthand the struggle and obstacles presented; nonetheless, he also witnessed the strength exhibited by newcomers in a dissimilar country and what it takes to rebuild a life for oneself under such circumstances. Harvey's appreciation for EMCN strengthened after his first trip to India. There he experienced a cultural shock caused by being an outsider for the first time. At that point, he felt, to some extent, how it feels to experience life in the midst of a foreign culture. Therefore, he learned to empathize with those that are resettling everyday here in Edmonton. In other words, he lived similar experiences that the people here in Edmonton are experiencing, so the ability of connecting with the people in that manner makes him see things differently and appreciate the courage and tenacity they have.

“It takes courage to start your life again.”



CLIENT STORY

Nirmal Singh

When Nirmal and his wife, who at the time was 8 months pregnant, landed in Edmonton, it was -35 degrees. To add to the shock, they were arriving from Australia and before that they used to live in India, cold was not something they were accustomed to. Settling in Edmonton was more challenging than they anticipated, especially in regards to finding employment. It was during this struggle that they began to feel discouraged and thought that moving to Canada was a mistake. Nirmal sought out employment support and that is when he discovered the Welcome Centre for Immigrants. It was here that he got help with his resume and job search. Eventually, he found a job at a large department store. Nirmal and his wife are both trained social workers with years of experience; ultimately that is what they wanted to be doing here in Edmonton. WCI introduced him to a volunteer with experience at Big Brothers, Big Sisters, which eventually led to a paid position within the organization. Nirmal, after three years of living here, established a fulfilling career at Big Brothers, Big Sisters. They bought a house and have a beautiful daughter. Today Nirmal is giving back to the community through his work as club coordinator at Big Brothers, Big Sisters.

FACTS

- 3 years working at Big Brothers, Big Sisters
- 35 when he arrived in Edmonton



SYRIA

In 2014, EMCN heard from many Syrians living here in Edmonton. These people were crying out for relatives trapped in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq. Basel, a former refugee now living here in Edmonton, describes life in the camps as “a graveyard for your dreams.” Getting these people to safety was “mission critical.”

The Canadian government wanted to help, but they had few resources on the ground. They were missing one key element they would need to spring into action: the names of the people who had registered with the UN as refugees.

The Syrian Edmonton community sprang into action. “We can give you names—and we can sponsor these families!”

Mennonite Central Committee Alberta stepped up and stood up, launching a sponsorship agreement program. Partnerships began to form between the Mennonite Central Committee of Alberta and several Middle Eastern Groups, including the IFFSA, and the Edmonton Syrian Council. MCC began putting in applications to sponsor Syrians in November of 2014.

In March of 2015 we welcomed the first of our Syrian families onto safe Canadian soil. It was a joyful occasion! Many members of the Edmonton community joined the Syrian sponsor family to welcome the new arrivals.

The newcomers would be the first of 48 families that EMCN would have the privilege of helping during the 2015 year.



“Perfect love drives out fear.”

EMCN became the Settlement Agency in the partnership between the MCC and the Canadian government. In this role, we got to see the generosity of the Edmonton community.

For example, on September 29, 2015 we hosted a Syrian Support Information Session, where we gathered 180 requests for more information from concerned Edmontonians who wanted to know how they could respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. Several sponsorship groups eventually emerged from this event.

We had the opportunity to see more evidence of Edmonton's big heart over the coming months. Attacks in Paris inserted fear into the refugee narrative on November 13, 2015. On November 14, we were awed by a new outpouring of support.


We received a flood of phone calls from the community. People wanted to help. They wanted to open their homes. They wanted to know how they could send clothes or money. Some property owners offered housing...sometimes for reduced rates, and sometimes for free.

On November 24, EMCN set up an Emergency Relief fund for the refugees. By the time the effort closed on January 31, 2016 we had raised c. \$175,000, allowing us to settle even more refugees, as well as to meet supply needs as they arose.

a word of thanks...

We want to say “thank you” to everyone who was involved with this effort. Without your collaboration, support, and kindness we never would have been able to support these refugees and their families.





*“Because of
Sky Club, I get better
grades and try new
things like yoga.”*

SKY CLUB

Sky Club is a program that provides homework tutoring, literacy support, workshops, fieldtrips, and physical activities, such as yoga and basketball to school aged children and youth individuals. The club runs every Saturday morning at Eastwood School and it typically has a range of attendance between 40 and 60 children every week. Participants enjoy Sky Club because it gives them the opportunity to finish their homework and excel at their education while having fun at the same time. It is also a social place where they have a sense of belonging and community. Thanks to Sky Club, the children have a higher probability of completing a post-secondary education and gain the opportunity to a better future because of the benefits that they get out of the program. All of the children here learn while having fun and building companionships with other children in the program.

ACTIVITIES THAT ARE OFFERED

- Literacy support
- Yoga
- Basketball
- Variety of workshops
- Life Skills
- Field Trips: Swimming, Recreational Sports, Valley Zoo

TOGETHER C5 ENHANCES THE LIVES OF 30,000 PEOPLE



EMCN continues to play an active role in C5. C5 is a formal collaborative of 5 Edmonton Agencies, including: Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Terra Centre, Boyle Street, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, and Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre. Together we give a voice to

the 30,000 people we work with. We collaborate on specific initiatives where collective action achieves stronger outcomes. One of those is Relentless Connectors: we know that by working together and by working differently, children and families can thrive. Often we create barriers for families as they try to navigate the complex world of government and agency services. Relentless Connectors breaks those barriers down. Working differently means focusing on families' strengths: instead of asking what they would like to fix, we find out what is working well that parents and caregivers would like to build on. Early evaluation of this and other programs C5 is involved with shows that our approach empowers families to take control of their lives and ensure theirs is a healthy and safe home for their children. C5's work also involves bringing the voices and perspectives of the thousands of people we work with policy and decision making tables. Many people struggle with finding secure, affordable housing Edmonton. Over the last year, C5 has met with politicians and decision makers to advocate for more affordable housing in the city and for changes to legislation that would make housing more accessible. EMCN is already a respected voice for newcomers in Edmonton. As part of C5 we are able to use the strength of our collective reputation to make meaningful change.

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sage

One of the partnerships that continues to evolve in wonderful and complementary ways is EMCN's partnership with SAGE – Senior's Association of Greater Edmonton. Through this partnership, newcomer seniors are able to join programming designed specifically for those wanting to improve their English skills, as well as integrate into the broader seniors' programming through what SAGE offers. Seniors enjoy the regular routine of ESL classes, are able to gather with their friends, work on English together and explore issues of interest to them. The experience offers newcomer seniors a place to belong, as well as a chance for life-long learning. Many of the seniors we serve have been in Canada a long time, often having worked in contexts where they were able to speak their first language. They are eager to learn English to gain a greater degree of independence, and are happy to be in classes that learn at a pace that is comfortable for them. After each ESL class they have access to SAGE programs and amenities that include, but are not limited to, Zumba, photography clubs, arts and crafts classes, and the ability to socialize with other individuals.

2015 ATTENDANCE

3 sessions

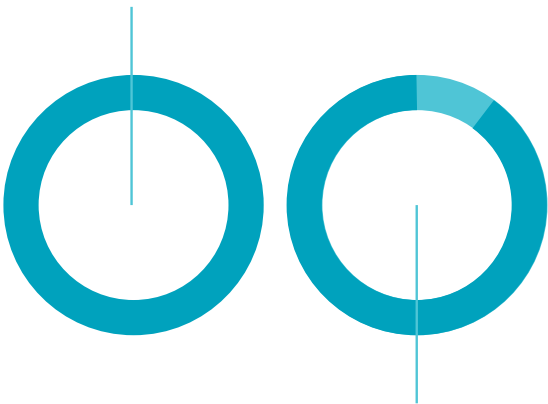
243 seniors

“It’s so much more than English class, it’s a community.”

*This program empowered us...
this program empowers women*

POLLED PARTICIPANTS

100% would recommend I-WIN to a friend



felt an increased sense of confidence after I-WIN **96%**



I-WIN

I-WIN stands for Immigrant Women's Integration Network and it refers to a program that was specifically designed to assist women with professional backgrounds. The Immigrant Women's Integration Network is a comprehensive 50 hour program created to help internationally educated women rediscover a meaning and purpose in Canada. At I-WIN, women reflect on their personal goals, develop their resumes, expand their interview skills, learn how to search for appropriate jobs, and feel more confident navigating the Canadian workforce. I-WIN also serves as a place for women to meet a supportive group of new friends, gain self-confidence, and take advantage of the opportunities available in the community. Throughout the ten weeks of the I-WIN program, women are encouraged to consciously identify areas in their life to work on and to make plans of action to improve their quality of life and fulfill their career aspirations. After completing the I-WIN program, the women will know which path they want to pursue, have the information required to reach their goals, and the confidence needed to take the next steps in their careers. The outcomes usually include further education, gaining skill appropriate employment, and community connection through volunteerism.



REVENUE	2016	2015	2014
Federal Government grant	\$ 5,927,581	\$5,013,715	\$ 4,044,052
Provincial Government grant	3,591,101	3,434,245	3,430,146
Other Organization's grants	642,135	528,083	553,542
Municipal grant	266,593	238,822	259,416
Fundraising	162,460	184,024	133,568
Donations	106,099	157,421	59,689
Registration Fees	45,551	37,413	59,094
Investment Income	7,333	10,017	22,018
Rent	3,465	6,143	3,885
	\$ 10,752,318	\$ 9,609,883	\$ 8,565,410

EXPENSES			
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$7,468,571	\$6,192,089	\$ 5,407,480
Rent, Utilities & Maintenance	1,388,281	1,347,844	1,273,466
Contract Services	622,106	698,096	759,776
Resources	452,296	308,888	340,114
Administrative	335,799	363,474	320,114
Amortization	174,759	176,794	116,881
Equipment, Repairs & Maintenance	29,927	13,256	130,264
	\$ 10,471,739	\$ 9,100,441	\$ 8,348,828

EXCESS REVENUE OVER EXPENSES			
Current Assets	\$ 280,579	\$ 509,442	\$ 216,582

ASSET RATIO			
Current Assets	\$ 2,759,541	\$ 2,490,380	\$ 1,812,829
Current Liabilities	1,871,550	1,872,261	1,721,667
	\$887,991	\$618,119	\$91,162
Total Assets	\$3,116,689	\$ 2,830,056	\$ 2,012,665
Total Liabilities	2,193,337	2,187,283	1,879,334
	\$923,352	\$642,773	\$133,331

FUNDERS



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Service
Canada

Alberta
Government



United Way
Alberta Capital Region



Edmonton
Community
Foundation



wellness
NETWORK



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