

Annual Report 2020-2021



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President's Report

The fiscal year of 2020-2021 brought significant changes to the Ottawa Chinese Community Services Centre (OCCSC).

With the unforeseen events of the COVID-19 pandemic arriving in Ottawa in March 2020, nearly all our services transitioned online as lockdowns were implemented. Staff were forced to find new ways to deliver services to our clients, and we all had to readjust to the new realities of working from home.

Simultaneously, our Executive Director at the time, Sharon Kan, announced her intention to retire. And thus, despite a global pandemic, the board began its search for a new ED, and ultimately decided on Sharon Deng, who began working with us in late-2020. Sharon was able to transition into the position quickly, and we immediately began to feel the impact of her leadership. Within several months she made the important decision to strengthen OCCSC by bringing in an HR manager. OCCSC's strength has always been the dedication and quality of our staff, and ensuring we have strong support and processes for our employees is of high priority to the board.

Looking back, I am amazed to see how resilient and flexible the staff have been throughout all the changes over that year. Their continued hard work through the pandemic has been awe-inspiring. Further still, I am honored to be working alongside a group of hard-working and dedicated board members. To all the staff, and my board colleagues, it is a privilege to be given the opportunity to continue to serve with you all for an organization that has such a long history of dedication to immigrants, newcomers, and refugees.

I am proud of the work we have done thus far, and eagerly anticipate what the future holds for OCCSC. While the pandemic has certainly affected the way we deliver our services, I am confident that the organization will be well-positioned to continue to serve our clients well as our environment continues to change in unexpected ways. While the pandemic has changed the way we do business, it has not changed our mission; to help newcomers realize their full potential and to build a more welcoming community together.

Robert Parungao
President - Ottawa Chinese Community Services Center



Executive Director's Report

Change doesn't quite capture the full meaning of 2020, and yet there isn't another word that comes to mind to describe all of the developments that occurred between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. The Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre confronted the global pandemic head on and was there, as always, to support our clients.

Our main office on 400 Copper Street and all remote location closed in mid-March 2021 as per provincial mandate due to the outbreak of COVID-19. As a result, traditional in-person, face to face programming had to quickly adapt. This affected every staff, volunteer and client of the organization.

By early April 2021, all three departments were able to serve clients through online conferencing, email and telephone. As you hear directly from the Managers of each department, you will see that staff worked harder than ever before to ensure that newcomers received settlement assistance, employment support, and language training. While the world may have felt as though it has stopped, OCCSC did not.

2020 also saw a change in leadership with the retirement of Sharon Kan. Under her guidance, OCCSC's services not only grew, but gained greater recognition throughout Ottawa. These are great shoes to fill and I am excited to continue the good work.

While many nonprofit organizations across Canada and around the world cancelled their annual events, the Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre hosted our first virtual gala celebrating 45 years of service in November 2021. Long time sponsors returned and continued their generous support. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Diamond, Gold, and Silver sponsors.

I wish to also thank our three level of government funders, who showed great flexibility, patience and understanding as we navigated all of the changes to programming. OCCSC's work this year was possible through public funding from:

- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development Canada
- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- City of Ottawa



A lot of our targeted programming is made possible through partnership opportunities that includes:

- Jewish Family Services
- Lighthouse Labs
- Somerset West Community Health Centre
- World Skills

In a year with as many changes both internally and externally with the world, I wish to highlight the tremendous work of the management team, who was there for their staff and ensured programming remained relevant and timely. As this “next normal” is beginning to unfold, I am confident with their support in strengthening OCCSC.

Finally, I wish to thank the Board of Directors for their time, energy and insight that I can count on at every board meeting. I count myself fortunate to have been able to work with such knowledgeable individuals who all share in the vision of advancing the Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre.

Sharon Deng

Executive Director

Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre
Strategic Plan 2021- 2025

戰略計劃

Mission

The Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre is a non-profit, non-partisan, charitable organization that provides programs and services to advance the social, cultural and economic integration and participation of all newcomers, immigrants, refugees, as well as, people of Chinese heritage.

Values

The Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre is committed to upholding the values of:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Respect & Professionalism
- Commitment to our community and partnerships

Strategic Directions

Service Excellence

- Maintain & build our current services while adapting to changing client needs.
- Build on our current services to provide additional supports to clients
- Adapt services to changing client needs
- Implement hybrid service delivery models
- Maintain partnerships to ensure services meet client needs

Financial Resiliency

- Ensure financial sustainability & diversified funding sources
- Maintain IRCC funded contracts
- Diversify our funding sources
- Explore innovative funding strategies
- Develop/enhance fundraising capacity

Communication & Brand Recognition

- Build recognition to ensure we meet the needs of the community
- Effective communication with our clients and community
- Consistent brand messaging
- Timely & effective internal communication
- Increase our membership

Organizational Excellence

- Ensure a sustainable infrastructure that supports organizational excellence to achieve our mission.
- Implement HR policies & practices that meet the needs of our staff and attract & retain the talent we need
- Ensure IT infrastructure that supports excellence in service delivery, data and efficiency
- Ensure our governance evolves with the organization and our community



Client Services

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused widespread death and destruction across the globe. Canada, like many other countries, has been hit hard. To protect its citizens, the Ontario government has enacted a series of measures, including province-wide lockdowns, in order to prevent its spread but at the same time hoping to protect commercial activities, big and small.

OCCSC, like all social service organizations, has been forced to adapt to government measures such as lockdowns and stay-at-home orders in order to protect our clients and staff. Given these circumstances, our agency has implemented a number of health and safety policies including the introduction of more technology in service delivery.

During any lockdown, we instructed all our workers to work from home by providing each of them a cell phone and a laptop computer so that they could continue to be accessible to their clients. We have also moved all our group activities such as information sessions, topical workshops and community connection activities such as parenting groups, senior and women support groups online, regardless of programs.

When a lockdown was lifted, we would re-open quickly. We divided our workers into two teams. Each team would take turns to work in the office on a weekly rotational basis. This was to ensure that we could provide in-person service to clients who needed assistance e.g. in filling out application forms for certain benefits or helping with other pressing matters such as translating the content of correspondence sent by different government offices.

We know that no matter how much efforts we put in trying to maintain our mandated services, we could not escape from the negative effects caused by the pandemic. There was a significant drop in the number of newcomers admitted to Canada resulted from the restrictions imposed by different countries in international travel, and newcomers' concerns about their own safety. Similarly, newcomers already in Canada would be less likely to access our one-on-one and group services in-person even when our office was re-opened.

Programs of the Client Services Department:

Programs

Funders

1. Canada My
New Home



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada
Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

2. Newcomer
Settlement
Program



Ministry of
Children, Community &
Social Services

3. Mental Health
Support for Chinese
Community

Champlain LHIN
RLISS de Champlain

4. Chinese Family
Services



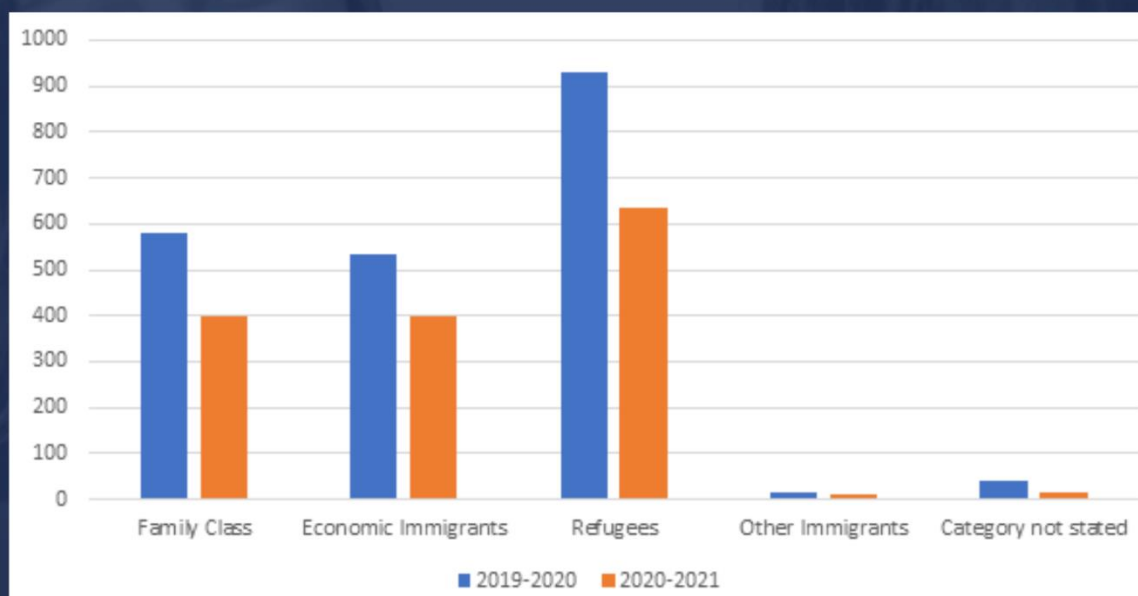
5. Diverse Seniors
Support Services

Champlain LHIN
RLISS de Champlain

Canada My New Home

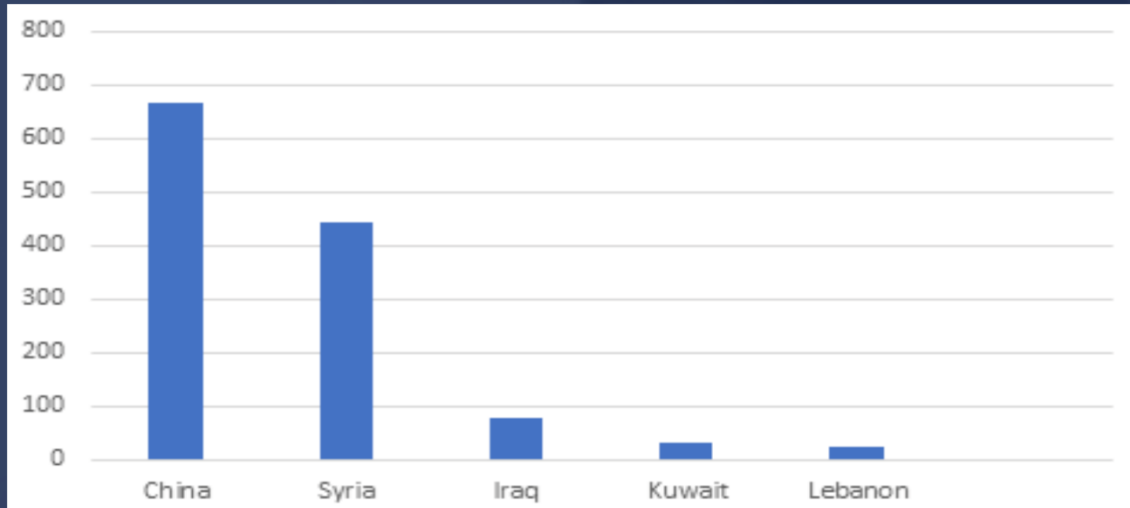
This is the federally funded settlement program for newcomers. In 2020-2021, we experienced a significant drop in the number of newcomers served. We believed this was clearly caused by the restrictions in international travel imposed by other countries and Canada. During the previous year, we served a total of 2,093 newcomer clients but this number dropped to 1,456 during 2020-2021, a drop of 637 or by a whopping 30%. Chart I below shows a comparison of clients served during the last two fiscal years, broken down by the immigration categories to which our clients belong. The drop was consistent across all immigration categories. It is important to note that the federal government did try its best to maintain the processing of all kinds of immigration application. However, the imposition of the 14 days quarantine for all incoming travelers/newcomers was believed to be one of the greatest factors in the reduction in the number of landings.

Chart 1: Comparison of clients served in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021



Although the overall number of newcomers served by OCCSC dropped in 2020-2021, immigrants born in China remained our top client group, numbered at 667. They were followed by Syria at 445, Iraq at 76, Kuwait at 33 and Lebanon at 24, all from the Middle East. In As a matter of fact, newcomers from the Middle East were actually our second targeted group, in addition to those from China. Chart II below illustrates our top five client groups.

Chart 2:-2021 Top Five Countries of Birth



As we have described at the beginning, the pandemic forced us to deliver our settlement services virtually instead of in-person, regardless of one-on-one or group sessions. Our settlement workers conducted one-on-one information inquiry or counselling sessions remotely by phone, emails and sometimes on the Zoom platform. Similarly, they have also moved all the group sessions, from information/orientation to community connections on Zoom as well. We are very proud that our workers have managed to maintain the normal frequency of these group sessions. For example, in the previous fiscal year, we delivered a total of 230 in-person information/orientation sessions. In 2020-2021, we delivered even more sessions—332 in total.

When we first began to switch to the online delivery of group sessions, we were unsure how our clients would react to the change. However, it turned out that our worries were not necessary. We can say, now in hindsight, that our clients really warmed up to the idea that they could attend our group sessions in the comfort of their own homes. At least, this saved them the trouble of travelling to our delivery sites, an inconvenience especially on snowy and cold days in the middle of the Canadian winter. In 2020-2021, a total of 5,738 clients attended our online settlement information sessions, compared to only 3,902 back in 2019-2020.

A similar trend was also evident in our community connections activities that included virtual women and senior support groups, parenting groups and simply social gatherings. In 2020-2021, 5610 clients took part in our in-person group sessions, compared to 5375 clients back in 2019-2020. This was attributable to the same reasons mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Newcomer Settlement Program or NSP

In practice, the NSP is similar to the federally funded Canada My New Home program, delivering both one-on-one and group sessions by one settlement worker. While eligible clients under Canada My New Home were confined to newly arrived newcomers to Canada, the NSP has a far broader clientele. In addition to permanent residents, eligibility for the service is also extended to naturalized Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, international students, temporary foreign workers and those approved under the Provincial Nominee Program.

In 2020-2021, our lone settlement worker was able to deliver settlement services to 473 clients, 271 of whom were permanent residents, 169 naturalized Canadian citizens and only 3 refugee claimants. She also delivered 8 virtual settlement workshops with topics ranging from social housing to Covid-19 related assistance programs such as special ED, CERB and CRB. Total attendance at these workshops amounted to 265.

Mental Health Support for the Chinese Community

This is a new program that was launched in 2020 and is one of two of our programs that involves OCCSC partnering with another community organization. Our partner, in this case, is the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) which is one of 13 community health and resource centres in Ottawa and has special programs catering to the needs of various cultural groups in its catchment area.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE CHINESE COMMUNITY

- WE OFFER -

One-on-one assessment & counseling
Mandarin speaking social workers and counselors will work with you to discuss how to deal with the following life challenges:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Family relationships
- Caregiver stress
- Coping with grief and loss
- Workplace stress and mental health
- Parenting and effective communication
- Other distressing issues

Support Groups
Led by professional social workers and counselors, people with similar back-grounds or concerns can meet regularly to learn about resources available in the community and skills to cope with life challenges.

Mental Health Workshops
Through the workshops, we will discuss wellness, common mental health issues, symptoms and treatments, as well as advice on how to maintain good mental health.

- CONTACT US -

OTTAWA CHINESE COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTRE
Oscar Lu (MSW, RSW)
Social Worker (Need Assessment & Referral)
(Cantonese & Mandarin)

☎ 613-236-4875 ext. 119; 613-402-2159
✉ oscarlu@occsc.org
📍 400 Cooper St, Suite 2000, Ottawa

SOMERSET WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
Wendy Tang (MSW, RSW)
Mental Health Counselor (Mandarin)

☎ 613-402-2159 (Intake)
✉ wtang@swchc.on.ca
📍 55 Eccles Street, Ottawa

The Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre (OCCSC) partner with Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) to provide free assessment, counseling services, support groups and workshops for the Chinese community in Ottawa. If you are facing life challenges and want to meet with our professional workers, please feel free to contact us.

This project is funded by Ottawa's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

OTTAWA CHINESE COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTRE

SOMERSET WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Chinese Family Service

For more than three decades, this program has been continuously funded by the City of Ottawa's Community Program Funding which targets vulnerable population in the city, particularly those in low-income households and seniors. We had one generic counsellor and one part-time social worker in this program.

Over the years, this program has been increasingly used by Chinese seniors who do not live with their families. Our counsellor helps them in applying for social housing, the Old Age Security pension and the Canada Pension Plan. Our part-time social worker works with seniors who have more complex needs such as sponsorship breakdown and mental health issues that could come with aging.

In addition to one-on-one encounters, our counsellor also provides workshops that have special relevance to seniors such as health topics from understanding Covid-19, the importance of vaccination to prevention of cardiovascular diseases. In 2020, she delivered 12 online workshops on Zoom, which attracted, on average, 73 senior participants.

Diverse Seniors Support Services (DSSS)

As mentioned above, this is the second collaborative program which OCCSC has been key partner. In fact, OCCSC is one of five settlement agencies, one community centre and one cultural community group in this partnership.

When it was launched almost a decade ago, it was part of the Aging At Home initiative put forward by the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). The main purpose was to provide some necessary support for seniors in social housing buildings so that they could continue to live in their homes for as long as it was safe to do so. Another purpose was to reduce the number of admissions to hospitals or long-term care facilities.

The lead organization in this partnership is the Jewish Family Services of Ottawa whose job is to administer the funding and coordinate the program on behalf of the partners. A full-time volunteer coordinator has been seconded to OCCSC to recruit Chinese volunteers to organize educational, cultural and recreational activities in selected social housing buildings for seniors.

Although the pandemic has forced us to cancel all in-person activities, we have successfully switched these services online by using WeChat, text messaging and phone calls. During the year, the program received additional funds from Champlain LHIN to enable funded agencies to provide additional support to seniors. This was exactly what we did.

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To help Chinese seniors who did not have equipment to access the internet, we distributed 10 tablets to identified seniors and showed them how to use the devices as a communication tool so that they could connect with their friends and families. We also distributed vitamins and over-the-counter medication to others. We wanted to make sure that they could remain healthy and connected to the community during the pandemic. We could not have done all these things without the great efforts chipped in by our dedicated volunteers. Between April 2020 and March 2021, our volunteer coordinator and volunteers organized a total of 1495 events, mostly online. Our volunteers contributed 8348 hours of their time to serve our seniors.

Other Services

Fees for Services

Over the years, our agency has been responding to other requests for assistance from members of the Chinese community in Ottawa. As these requests for assistance lie outside the mandate of all the above-mentioned funded programs, we have decided to respond to these needs by charging a small fee for our service. Most of these requests for assistance come from clients who need our workers to help them complete such as their personal income tax returns, family sponsorship applications, permanent resident card renewal, Old Age Security applications, Canadian passport application, visa applications to other countries etc.

We also had a worker who is an Ontario-licensed commissioner for oaths and taking affidavit. She can certify photocopied official documents made from the originals. A small fee is also charged for this service.

Legal Aid referral

OCCSC has been recognized by Legal Aid Ontario to become a referring agency for the Family Violence Authorization Program.

This program provides two hours of free legal advice for domestic violence survivors in Ontario who need immediate advice and assistance in relation to family law, immigration and refugee law. There is no financial eligibility requirement. People who are experiencing domestic violence are eligible for up to five twohour authorizations in a year (one per legal issue).

Clients who need this service are advised to contact us. After a brief initial assessment by our designated worker, clients will be provided a referral voucher so that they can get two hours of free legal advice from a lawyer. Only lawyers with experience in domestic abuse issues can provide this service

Volunteer Program

The OCCSC volunteer program recruits, trains and deploys volunteers within the community in order to assist newcomers in making new friends, connecting with their community and helping them gain Canadian work experience that will be helpful in their search for their first job in Canada. From April 2020 to March 2021, 173 OCCSC volunteers have contributed 6,384 hours to OCCSC's variety programs. Even with the advent of COVID-19, OCCSC continues to offer its services online to those who need it.

2020 presented new challenges to OCCSC through the lockdown imposed due to COVID-19. These measures however only increased the need in our community for our services. In order to assist vulnerable seniors that were isolated during the pandemic, the OCCSC partnered with The Ottawa Chinese Music Association (OCMA) in May of 2020 to provide phone order, purchase and deliver groceries to support isolated seniors. We made over 600 trips. In order to increase awareness of the OCCSC and its services during the pandemic in the newcomer's community, our Outreach Ambassadors promoted the OCCSC's services through social media such as WeChat, Facebook and email in order to establish connections and refer newcomers to sign up for our services and events. Further, in order to maintain seniors' mental health through the lockdown, our Barrhaven senior volunteers assisted OCCSC's worker served more than 3,394 seniors through 106 online activities. These activities covered a variety of topics, including photography, literature, singing, talent shows and health topics related to COVID-19.

On February 26th, 2021 the Happy Kitchen Program had the first virtual Chinese New Year Celebration through Zoom. Our first Virtual Celebration event was a huge success! During the 90 minute live virtual event, there were 20 talent shows, prize draws and a photo slide show displaying our volunteers in action! More than 117 families celebrated the event with us.

To assist in the administration of our volunteer services and events, our volunteers assisted with translation, editing and proof reading of our newsletter, promotional materials and volunteer data management. Event volunteers assisted in planning and organizing a variety of events including with logistics, registration, sponsorship and donations, producing promotional content, graphic design, video and photography. With their help, we successfully hosted our first Virtual Gala on November 26th, 2020 to celebrate our 45th anniversary. A total of 653 people registered and the event has received 1,247 views on YouTube to date.

This year, we also launched the OCCSC's official WeChat account on January 25th, 2020, which provides the most current OCCSC community news, service notifications, information on community resources and the latest announcements regarding the OCCSC's events and workshops. With the help of our WeChat volunteer designers and editors, the OCCSC has reached over 4300 subscribers and published 320 articles.

We also found success with the OCCSC Mentorship program. This program recruited Canadian Mentor Volunteers to help newcomer participants find their dream job in their professional backgrounds with 80% of mentees finding employment in their industry within 4 months of completing the program. On average, 55% of mentors return to volunteer in the program each cohort and as of 2020, 10% of new volunteer mentors are In-TAC/Mentorship Program Alumni who want to give back.

Additionally, volunteers from the Settlement Services for Middle Eastern Newcomer (SSMN) program were involved in research and development, providing critical instruction, conversational classes, Citizenship classes, assistance with filling out Immigration forms and many more services.

The Chinese-Canadian Culture and Language Exchange Group Program is a recurring, new community connection program that began on March 6, 2021. The Chinese newcomer volunteers share their cultural, living and work experience with local Canadians. Chinese volunteers learn about Canadian culture from established community members. The volunteers make new friends and gain work experience by teaching Chinese to community members. The local Canadians also learn about Chinese culture by speaking directly with native Chinese speakers.

For newcomers, participating as volunteers in our organization is a great opportunity to make new friends and gain Canadian work experience that will help them find their first job in Canada. Community connection activities provide social, cultural and professional interactions between newcomers and the established community. Local Canadians also contribute their time, energy, skills and talents to help newcomers integrate into the community. Our volunteer programs are helping newcomers integrate into Canadian society and better serve Ottawa's newcomers as well.

Employment Services

2020 was an unprecedented challenging year, due to both the Covid-19 pandemic and end of the government funding to NaviCanAccounting project. On one hand, we had to change and redesign our service process and delivery models to cope with the lockdown due to pandemic; on the other hand, to deal with the interruption of services and lost of capacity as a result of funding cut.

Thanks to the enormous efforts from the team, In-TAC has once again successfully surpassed all program targets for its government funded programs and continued supporting clients to find employment during this difficult time.

Decrease in Federal Funding to the Employment Services

Federal government funding by IRCC still focused on core services to new immigrants, i.e. settlement and languages services. In the new 5-year IRCC funding bid, we have submitted 4 proposals on employment related services, secured only one program, which is a 75% decrease in funding comparing with previous year. This has significant and long-lasting impact in our capacity to provide employment services to new immigrants, especially considering the change of funding cycle from 3 years to 5 years.

Breakthrough in Diverse Funding Sources

Efforts to secure diverse finding sources achieved exciting break through, with the successful winning of 2 provincial government funded projects and 1 city funded project (Details in featured programs). This has enabled us to maintain our service capacity for 2020.

Digital Service Platform Capacity and Service Expertise

The digital platform capacity and service expertise, developed over the years as a result of self-sustainability effort, played a pivotal role in combating the pandemic and lock down. Moreover, it contributed to the successful and seamless transition of our services from in-person to online services, and helped expediate the implementation of the new projects.

Featured Programs

ALES program entered into the final year of the funding.

Advanced Literacy and Essential Skills (ALES) program developed, tested, and evaluated an advanced essential skills training model for newcomer IT professionals. This is a national program with services in Ottawa, Calgary and Vancouver. 199 participants were registered in the training and 130 employers involved in the training model development.



GO4IT: Photo of Ontario Minister in OCCSC

GO4IT project is an employer led training initiative to offer upskill and reskill training to fill the skill gaps of employers in ICT sector, to help incumbent employees improve and upgrade their skills to meet the changing needs of employers and the technology, and to retain their employment and move to new jobs in the companies.

70 employers have joined in our GO4IT program and 410 Ontarians took part in the GO4IT training, with 47.22% having immigrated to Canada, 40.28% being women, and 28% being visible minorities. The project is funded in part by the Government of Ontario.

Navigating the Canadian IT Workplace



This is a unique IT career bridging program in Ottawa. Our 12-week training with 12 modules walk through with our clients from Canadian IT workplace culture to cyber security career. The program also connects our clients with ICT employers seamlessly to obtain jobs commensurate with their skills.

In 2020 to 2021, 104 newcomer ICT professionals attended training and 76% of the graduates found professional jobs commensurate with their skills.

The Women IT Teleworkers (WITT) program

WITT takes a unique approach to finding and placing tech talent. We focus on connecting tech employers with women immigrants who already have international training in IT skills and prefer to Work From Home. This proved to be a cost-effective approach to help employers diversify the workforce from both racial and gender perspectives.



Partnered with Lighthouse Labs, this project provided upskill training for newcomer women in IT to become full stack developers. 62 newcomer women received the training and work placement.

Digital Service Platform

To reduce the lockdown and pandemic impact, we moved our client and employer outreach and recruitment on to our digital service platform. The digital service platform started a result of our self-sustainability efforts over the past 2 years, and has played a key role and contributed immensely to the success of program delivery. The live webinars and events provide clients with easy access to updated information on living and working in Canada. The innovative service, interactive platform also attracted partners across the country to showcase services and opportunities to give clients more options to make informed decisions, and help client recruitment and employer engagement for the government funded programs. We hosted 112 live webinar sessions and 2 virtual career expos during the year and attracted 37,866 participants.

This year, we hosted 138 live webinars with 14800 registrants from 123 countries, specially the Thursday's "Meet the Employer" webinars connect clients directly with hiring employers. We also hosted 2 National Virtual Career Expos (VCEs) with 120 employers/agencies, 18000 registered job seekers from over 120 countries. In-TAC VCE has become a brand name and the largest online job fair in Canada.

Outlook for 2020-21

This coming fiscal year remains challenging as never before. Four of the government funded programs will be expired by the end of the year or are facing competitive bids for renewal. With the economic uncertainty and the impact of the lingering pandemic, government funding priorities will focus on helping those most affected by the pandemic and economic recovery. How this will affect our funding situation remains a question.

Summary of Services

Statistics about In-TAC Services (2020-21)

Number of clients served: **7,073**

Number of new clients served: **3511**

ICT and Accounting professionals trained : **204**

Employed and professional job placements: **153**

Countries of origin of clients: **123**

Hours of training offered: **1,960 (hours)**

Number of new hiring employer partners: **132**

Number of volunteer professional mentors and mentees trained: **90**

Number of Virtual Career Expo registered: **22645**

Client testimonials (authentic, non-edited)



I really appreciated In-TAC staff to let me know such great training program and finally get the job.

I really appreciated In-TAC IT bridge training program which is not only give us so professional and detailed training, but also I developed networking here with instructors and classmates. If I rate the satisfaction level with In-TAC IT Bridge Training Program, it would be 10.

Under the help of In-TAC, I finally got my dream job in Canada as permanent full time D365 Consultant. The salary is CAN \$10K/year. I can't believe it's so perfect to match my interest and employment goal.

IT program graduate



The personalized care and support that I got from the moment I've been enrolled into the program.

It gave me useful tips about how to set-up my mind that I can win the job, also helped in writing my resume and answering the interviews' questions professionally leaving a good impression

It provided me with the know-how of preparing my workstation at home, how to get the appropriate break and how to be engaged with the rest of the team.

I was very depressed and overwhelmed because of not finding a job, so I was finally relived and became very positive, enthusiastic and initiative.

I landed my first job here in Canada, which positively affected my whole life.

WITT program graduate

Language Program

In this reporting period, April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021, the following has been provided in the OCCSC LINC:

Number of LINC students enrolled: **651**
Number of LINC instruction hours provided: **4536**

LINC classes were about to continue in-person, as always before, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world – everything took a completely new turn:

- OCCSC LINC started on-line classes on April 6, 2020 (as an immediate implementation) via Zoom. We still don't know for how long it will continue, but we know that we are now well-versed in delivering our services on-line, having gained invaluable experience and knowledge in delivering it remotely.
- All teachers and LINC staff have been through an on-line Zoom training a week before we started those classes, so the first sessions went exceptionally well and continued to improve as the time and delivery went on, discovering many useful Zoom features. The number of students being interested in our on-line classes rose constantly and we even had short waitlists for some classes.
- We continued having on-line presentations, such as a Protect Your Money that included COVID-19 related frauds and scams and other valuable financial information (on May 14); then the head of the Hate Crime unit of the Ottawa Police contacted us and we delivered 2 sessions (June 8 & 9) on this subject and the overall police service under the pandemic, a huge hit among our students and teachers; a former teacher recorded several YouTube sessions on different topics, one included a virtual guided tour of the National Gallery of Canada (June 15), etc.

Even the PBLA Progress Reports were done for the first time ever on-line (twice in this reporting period). From the beginning of the Zoom classes the focus was on listening and speaking, so we advised the teachers to allocate the last half hour of each 3-hour session for writing and reading tasks, so that the students could perform them in front of the teachers, enabling the teachers to take notes of their writing and reading abilities, having in mind that the actual portfolios could not be used. Therefore, the on-line PBLA reports had everything covered through the virtual classes.

- Moving forward - OCCSC LINC does not have the capacity to safely accommodate 20 students per class, if going back to the classroom teaching becomes an option, under the pandemic/post-pandemic strict requirements to ensure safety for all. If the pandemic situation persists, our implementation will likely remain on-line for all LINC classes, since they are already going smoothly, aligned with the CA.

We always try to do our best in delivering the services, under any circumstances, but it is how the recipients feel about it what counts the most! Here it is, about the brand-new, on-line classes:

Student testimonials (authentic, non-edited)



I would like thank LINC & all the staff especially instructor Susan of her hard job & support of Chinese community center for doing great effort to keep classes continue while the whole world passing the huge crises of COVID19, try their best to keep us safe by doing online classes in great & unique way, it is really great experience for me. As the handouts given were also great that let me improve my English language as it's my second language, I had learned a lot & gained a lot of information especially while meeting the police detective online, discussion in class regarding subjects was also great, so i thanks again everyone to keep online classes in great shape & improving it.

Mohamed Raafat



I'm a student of LINC class and studying online since the pandemic getting worse. Online studying is an education that takes place over internet. Online studying is just one type of "distance studying". E-learning is a challenge for both teachers and students over technology and access, but it is keeping everyone busy in listening, reading, writing, changing oral reactions or comments regarding the article we are reading through video call. Learning through online helps students to correct automatically especially in pronouncing difficult words. Since I started joining online classes, I really enjoyed it and gives me a lot of time doing some stuff at home after class. It helps me a lot to improve my speaking, writing and listening. Online classes is a big help for me as a student because it helps me not to get the virus from outside especially when using public transportation. It's a big help for me and to other students just to limit the risk of gettto think positive and to look beyond and to become more confident in speaking of ing infected outside. With the help of my teacher it helps me English. I encouraged myself to continued and finished my first level in studying to improved and become more confident.

Olivia Hernandez

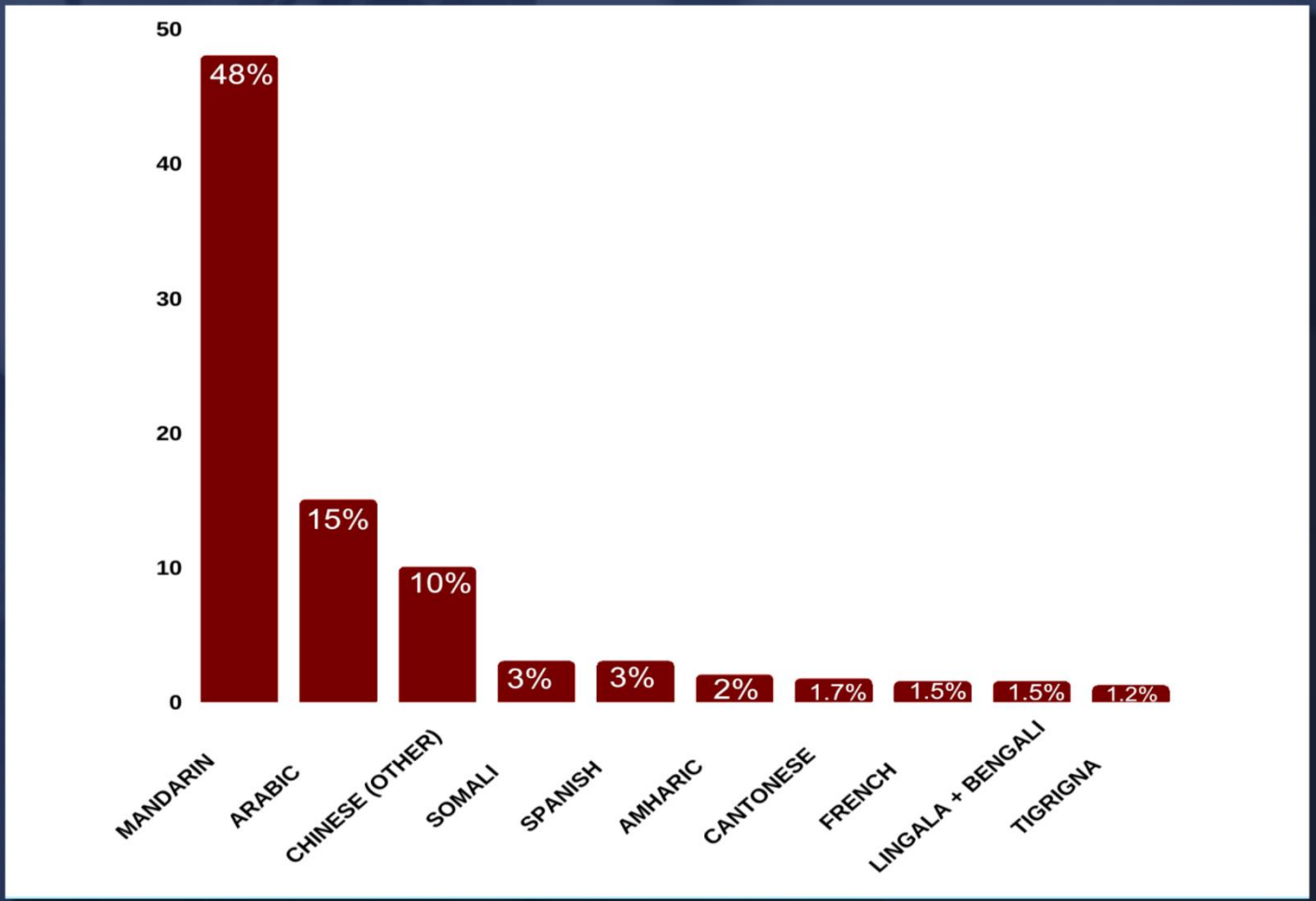


Thank you for LINC class and the teacher to accompany me during this special pandemic. Due to the interesting teaching, I learn a lot of useful information, meanwhile I improve my English language skills obviously. I love to take the LINC class, just like a happy journey the teacher takes to us, such as to virtual travel maritime provinces to see pot rocks or to attend Ottawa tulip festival to watch awesome flowers or to understand how Canadian First Nations develop. The LINC class also helps me to release my pressure and keep my mental health safe during COVID 19 all because of the happiness the teacher takes to us.

Lianghong Gu

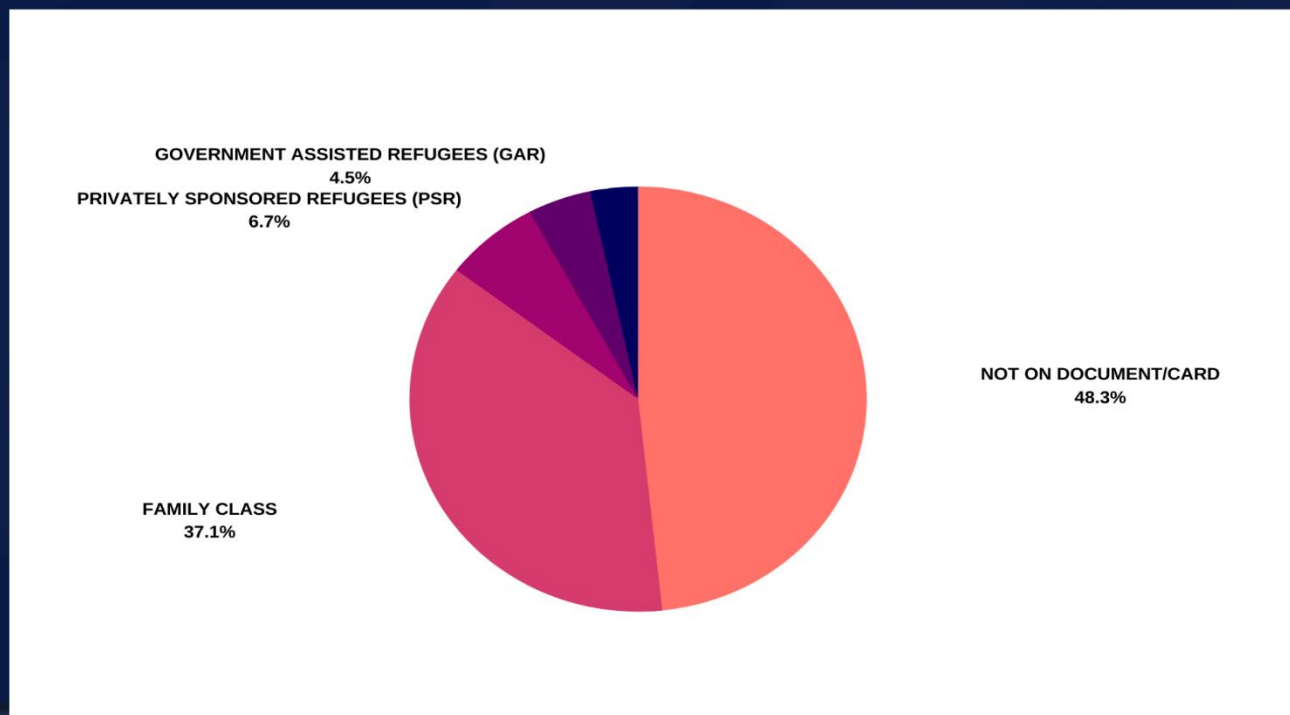
We are proud to have students from all over the world in our classes. In this reporting period, they spoke 36 different languages! Please see the chart below as an illustration.

Language Spoken by the LINC Students (2020-2021)



Immigration categories of our LINC students are quite interesting:

LINC Students Top Immigration Categories:



“NOT ON DOCUMENT/CARD:” This category came out when documents started no longer having the immigrant code on the PR cards.

We have also been delivering on-line English courses for a fee (Beginner, Low and High Intermediate and Advanced), as well as a French Beginner course throughout the year, for non-LINC eligible clients, responding to the demand for such courses in the community.

What Else is New?

OCCSC Language Program is now an official Test Centre for CELPIP & CAEL!



TESTING ENTERPRISES
Paragon

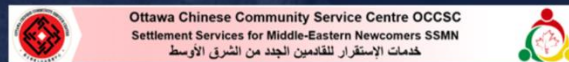
SSMN program

Settlement Services for Middle-Eastern Newcomers (SSMN) is a settlement initiative launched by the OCCSC to provide various settlement services to the Arabic-speaking newcomer population in Ottawa. This program replaced the previous Settlement for Syrian Refugees Program (SSRP) that OCCSC started in 2016.

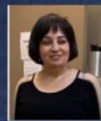
Under the "Canada My New Home" five-year agreement, it was signed between OCCSC and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in 2020. SSMN provided a suite of settlement services.

Team

The SSMN team consists of five full-time employees: four settlement counsellors and a project manager. They are available five days a week from 9:00 to 17:00 and provide services in two office locations in Ottawa.



Hanadi



Fidaa



Hassan



Hussein



Nada

Services

Initial Needs Assessment

Arabic-Speaking settlement counsellors provide Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services (NAARS). The NARRS program mainly offers assessment solution options, ongoing settlement counselling, referral, and social integration matters that impact Middle-Eastern newcomers' day-to-day life.

Information & Orientation

We provide various in-office and remote services that relate to the following: citizenship, employment, digital literacy, income, education, housing, health, financing, transportation, communication, media, sources of information, rights, freedom, law and justice.

Community Connections

We offer cultural, social and recreational engagements, volunteering opportunities, field trips, conversation circles, and women, seniors and youth support activities.

| | SESSIONS # | SESSIONS COMPLETION % | CLIENTS # | CLIENTS COMPLETION % |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| INITIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT | | | 679 | 95 % |
| INFORMATION & ORIENTATION | 120 | 133 % | 1,797 | 220 % |
| COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS | 41 | 82 % | 720 | 139 % |

Demographic Characteristics

Unique clients who received at least one settlement service:

| | COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP | COUNTRY OF BIRTH | MOTHER TONGUE | COMPLETION % | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| SYRIA | 478 | 445 | 648 ARABIC | | | |
| IRAQ | 83 | 76 | | | | |
| EGYPT | 23 | 21 | | | | |
| LEBANON | | 24 | | | | |
| SUDAN | 14 | 12 | | | | |
| JORDAN | 10 | 10 | | | | |
| LYBIA | 7 | | | | | |
| PALISTINE AUTHORITY | 9 | | | | | |
| SAUDI ARABIA | | 20 | | | | |
| KUWAIT | | 33 | | | | |
| STATELESS | 40 | | | | | |
| OTHERS | 11 | 37 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 679 | 679 | | | 679 | 95% |

Source: April 2021 detailed iCARE data extract; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, RDM

Partnership and Cooperation

We have cooperated with more than 20 community resource centres and community service providers.

Three main partners contributed significantly to our program:

- We have an ongoing partnership with YMCA. One SSMN settlement counsellor provided full-day settlement services in the Newcomer Immigration Centre (NIC) for the YMCA Arabic-Speaking eligible clients each week. Later on, this service moved online.

- A unique partnership with College Universel in Gatineau provided a field placement practicum for their social worker students. As a result, this year, SSMN hosted three graduate social workers students who assisted our program for approximately three months.
- The Ottawa-based Arabic CanAr TV channel offered us the opportunity to promote our program and talk to the Arabic-Speaking population in Ottawa through their screen. They systematically refer their clients who need settlement services to our settlement counsellors.

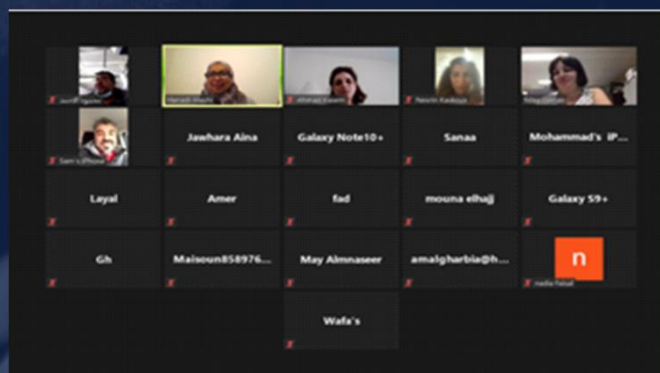
Volunteering

Around 15 volunteers contributed to our program throughout the year in providing a wide range of assistance, like providing 13 workshops of digital literacy and computer classes and offering translation and interpretation support to our clients.

Conclusion

Despite the pandemic, the OCCSC successfully transformed all our office services online, and all services remained available to our clients except the community connections outdoors activities.

The online service delivery was the most efficient and convenient way to offer services to clients during the pandemic. This has received favourable feedback from the clients—especially during different lockdowns where the clients needed a lot of support to understand the government benefits, support programs and measures required to deal with COVID-19 risks. The clients' adaptation to the technology was remarkable. Before the pandemic, clients had to leave the workshop at least one hour early to pick their children up. The clients' preference has changed to online because they did not have to leave workshops early because their children were already at home. The attendance turnout was excellent, as we accommodated the client's preferences for workshop time delivery, especially during the lockdown when there was online schooling. We conducted the workshops after school so there would be little disruptions. On average, we exceeded the target numbers significantly. We believe that the hybrid service delivery would be the optimal option even after returning to the pre-pandemic conditions.



Testimonials (authentic, non-edited)



My name is Jacynthe Carrière-Lalonde, and I am the Program and Field Practice Coordinator for the Social Work Program at the College Universel in Gatineau. Our students are very much enjoying doing their placement in your organization.

Thank you very much for all the work that you are doing with our students.

Jacynthe Carrière-Lalonde



**COLLÈGE
UNIVERSEL**
CAMPUS GATINEAU



I started to follow the activities of OCCSC since I came to Canada. It was initially because of the English course I was taking online due to Covid 19. Our teacher Mary Gold was supportive. LINC of OCCSC introduced me to Nada Itani, who gave us all the one-to-one care and encouraged us to participate in several workshops and women-related topics. Not to forget the experience of Hussein Kassem in teaching us how to deal with conflicts and educating us about citizenship. This exposure to the OCCSC team has improved our capabilities in communicating with others.

Thank you, OCCSC and happy to see the program that takes care of Arabs coming newly to Canada.

Client, Tahni Shukri



I am one of those who have received from OCCSC day-to-day assistance while settling here in Canada. I am the father of 3 kids, 2 of them are disabled, and I had a tough time starting a new life here. I came to Canada in 2016 and got to know the team members of OCCSC. I was so lucky to have them beside me, especially that I needed to communicate with doctors, lawyers, immigration staff, and many other parties. The team of SSMN was so helpful even when I used to talk to them after working hours and sometimes on the weekends. They never turned me down or made me feel I was a burden. On the contrary, they supported me with all that I needed and, to my surprise, they kept asking about me even after I started to feel settled and independent. I appreciate what you did for me, and I witnessed that I would have never made it without you. I owe you big.

Sincerely,
Riyad Huseyin



With all my words of thanks, I offer you the most beautiful expressions of gratitude, respect and appreciation for the integration services you have provided us.

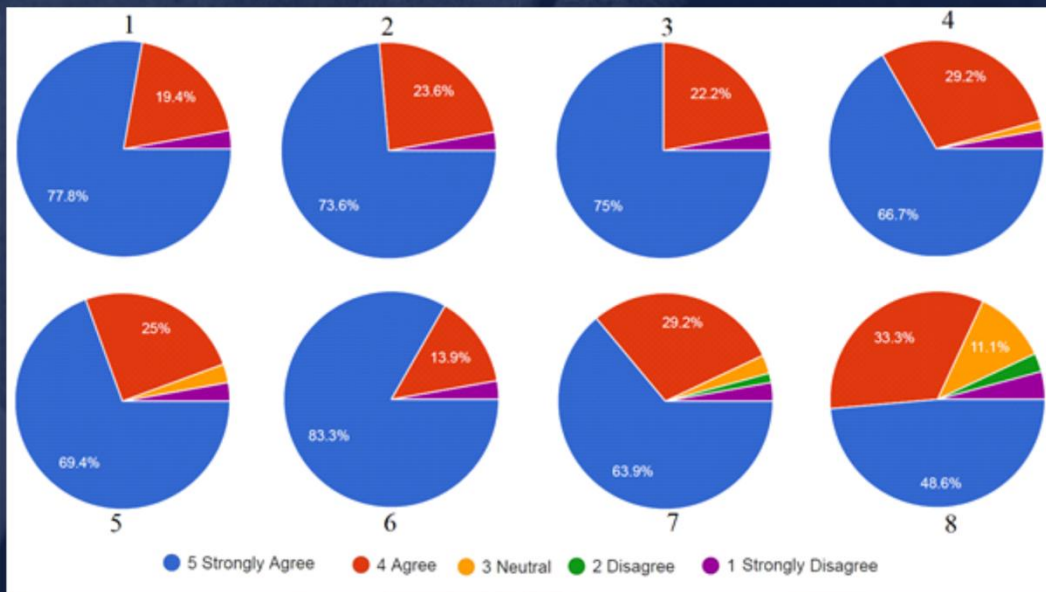
I also thank all the OCCSC organization members for their educational services and information to my family members and other newcomers.

Thank you all.
Client, Nefesa Yousef

Clients Feedback and Evaluation Survey Results

At the end of the fiscal year, SSMN did an online survey about the information and orientation given workshops. We got 72 responses, and here below the results received upon answering the following questions:

- 1- I was well informed about the workshop objective
- 2- The workshop objectives were met
- 3- The content was relevant
- 4- Activities stimulated my learning
- 5- Pace and level were appropriate
- 6- Facilitators level were appropriate
- 7- I will be able to use what I learned
- 8- Handouts were distributed



Treasurer's Report

April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 was a good and stable year after a very challenging one. A strong and conservative leadership helped OCCSC operate navigate the first couple of months and the remainder of the year was very steady.

Total revenue for this fiscal year was \$4,266,759 compared to \$4,750,581 in the previous year. Expenses were \$4,179,387 up from \$4,593,352. Our finances largely reflect the fact that our programming and funding were stable year over year. Retained earnings (Net Revenue) this year is \$87,372 down from \$157,229. The generosity of our sponsors, donors, and members, contributed over \$40,000 of this revenue. These donations are a testament to the good work that our staff and volunteers do every day.

The following tables will outline our sources of revenue in contrast with the previous year (table 1), and our expenditures for this fiscal year in contrast with the previous year (table 2)

Table 1: Revenue

| SOURCES OF REVENUE | APR.1,2020 – MAR.31,2021 AMOUNT (\$) | APR.1,2019 – MAR.31,2020 AMOUNT (\$) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA | 2,039,120 | 2,831,745 |
| FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: LASI WORLD SKILLS INC., ESDC CANADIAN HEALTH PROGRAM, SUMMER JOB, FEES | 817,914 | 1,038,323 |
| PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT: NAVIGATING THE CANADIAN IT WORKPLACE AND FEES, NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM, PAY EQUITY, SKILLS CATALYST FUND AND FEES, LIGHTHOUSE LABS | 1,055,495 | 470,258 |
| MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: COMMUNITY FUND, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND | 163,041 | 80,394 |
| COMMUNITY SECTOR: JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES, SOMERSET WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER | 92,063 | 118,375 |
| OTHER INCOME: TUITION FEES, DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING, INTEREST, MEMBERSHIP, USER FEES AND MISCELLANEOUS | 99,126 | 211,486 |
| TOTAL REVENUE | 4,266,759 | 4,750,581 |

Table 2: Expenditures

| NATURE OF EXPENDITURES | APR.1,2020- MAR.31,2021 AMOUNT (\$) | APR.1,2019 - MAR.31,2020 AMOUNT (\$) |
|---|---|--|
| ADVERTISING AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS | 55,447 | 33,516 |
| AGM EXPENSES, FUNDRAISING AND MEMBERSHIP | 12,491 | 28,299 |
| CONSULTING AND PROFESSIONAL FEES | 16,716 | 10,749 |
| OFFICE EQUIPMENT | 0 | 7,347 |
| OFFICE AND GENERAL EXPENSES | 144,216 | 172,121 |
| RENT AND UTILITIES | 350,943 | 433,091 |
| SALARIES AND BENEFITS INCLUDING PAY EQUITY | 3,314,820 | 3,642,432 |
| COMMUNICATION/TELEPHONE | 80,653 | 60,371 |
| TRAINING | 161,367 | 117,461 |
| TRAVEL | 22,046 | 60,333 |
| OTHER EXPENSES (E.G. INSURANCE, POSTAGE, MAINTENANCE, MISCELLANEOUS) | 20,688 | 27,632 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 4,179,387 | 4,593,352 |
| NET REVENUE | 87,372 | 157,229 |

Our ongoing fiscal agenda includes funding internal initiatives to serve the community and diversify our sources of income. The Finance Committee will continue to review and update the OCCSC finance policy in order to accommodate the development of the organization.

OCCSC would like to acknowledge the support of our funders, especially Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade for their contributions to our organization and the services we provide to those new to Canada.

We have appointed Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton LLP to audit our financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021. With the assistance of our Executive Director, Sharon Deng, and our Accounting Officer, Escolastica Unira, the audit was completed in September and the results of the audit are contained in Tables 1 and 2 above.

Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre

400 Cooper Street, Suite 200
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 2H8

 (613)235-4875

 @OttawaChinese

 @ChineseOttawa

 @occscottawa