



EMCN



2017

**COMMUNITY
REPORT**

Vision and Board

Vision

We see a future where many citizens walk with newcomers to bridge their transition into the 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 the community.

Core Purpose

To enhance the quality of life for Newcomers and all Canadians.



2017 Board Members

Wray Steedsman

Rick Enns

Cecilia Ran

Darrell Wiens

Herb Kuehne

Brian Ladd

Jennifer Braun

Kevin Guenther Trautwein

Brian Kwan

Mike Ediger

Anna Priemaza

Message From Erick & Wray

In a fast-paced environment like EMCN, it is easy to get caught up in the hustle and only think about what is next. Writing this message is an opportune time to pause and recall the tremendous moments that have occurred throughout the year that make us exceedingly proud.

During EMCN's last fiscal year our staff increased by 42 members. The additional staff have allowed us to:

- Increase capacity in our Health & Wellbeing department to better serve the mental health needs of our clients
- Create a program that supports LGBTQ newcomers, specifically refugee claimants who are vulnerable on many fronts
- Strengthen internal collaborations across the social work, youth liaisons, therapists and LGBTQ disciplines for team-based support for people dealing with crises
- Create an intentional process to work for clear outcomes, documented through strong evaluation tools, which includes exploring databases that can support our outcomes measurement goals

EMCN continues to nurture and expand opportunities through partnerships and collaboration. We have supported:

- A rewarding relationship-based collaboration with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society to offer an opportunity for newcomers and employees to engage with Aboriginal traditions and culture through Elder presentations, Aboriginal Day celebrations, Round Dances, and participating in the Enoch Reserve Pow-wow.
- The expansion of the C5 presence in Northeast Edmonton through participation in programs at the Northeast Hub. These include collaborating with Boyle Street Community Services to offer employment support, and a Senior's English program that has moved into this space.
- A new program-based partnership with Norwood Child and Family Resource centre to offer our Parenting and Literacy program through a collaborative model of activity support.
- The long-awaited completion of the North Glenora Housing project, which is a collaboration between multiple partners, including the Government of Alberta. In December, this unique project designed to address the ever-present issue of insufficient affordable housing welcomed 16 newcomer families.

As we evolve our collaborative relationships, we learn much about best practices for working together, reflecting together, and adapting together for the ultimate benefit of newcomers.

And, finally, it has been a year of hosting Provincial and Federal Government guests for town-hall style events.

- In January, EMCN helped organize the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the North Glenora Housing Project, attended by both municipal and provincial leaders.
- In October, we welcomed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who came to explore with us the issues surrounding strong integration of newcomer youth.
- In March, EMCN hosted the Minister of Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Ahmed Hussen, who came to Edmonton to interact with Edmontonians on issues facing our community.

None of this would have been possible without the myriad of stakeholders invested in the work we do. For this we are grateful. 2017 marks another year of positive engagement to support our vision of bridging newcomers transition into the community, and in helping the larger community value the diversity that newcomers bring.

As you see, it has been an incredibly active year for EMCN, and 2018 thus far has been following suit. At this rate, we will have a lot to highlight in next year's report.



Erick Ambtman
Executive Director



Wray Steedsman
Chairperson

Programs & Services

SETTLEMENT

- Orientation Services
- Complex Case Management
- Relentless Connectors
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
- Youth Multicultural Liaisons in Schools
- Community Outreach
- Rainbow Refuge

EMPLOYMENT

Employment Readiness

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

Bridging & Training

- Accountants Bridging Program
- Engineering Technologists Integration Program
- Payroll Certificate Program
- Constructing Futures
- Immigrant Youth Employment Program

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- SKY Club Program
- Immigrant Youth Replanting Roots
- Global Girls
- Pre-School Swim & Skate
- Global Choir
- Wintegration
- Community Garden
- Safe Families
- Immigrant Women's Integration Network
- Organizational Development for the Somali Canadian Women and Children Association

LANGUAGE SERVICES

- Language Instruction for Newcomers
- Community-based English as Another Language
- Seniors Community English
- Parenting & Literacy
- Care of Newcomer Children
- Community-based Care for Newcomer Children



Donor Story

For many years now, the children in EMCN's daycare have generously received Christmas presents from an anonymous donor. To find out more about what inspires this person to give so generously every year, we met under the promise that he remains unnamed and that we "give God the glory." Our donor passionately talked about the importance of giving not only at Christmas time but year round. For this person, giving is not a choice but a calling and a way of life. His generosity is more than a small act of kindness; it is an inspiration to create a meaningful life through giving.

There is nothing more precious than seeing a child's face light up when they receive a beautifully wrapped gifts and every year we are given this opportunity because of our donor's devotion to doing what he can to make the world a better place.

"I base my whole life around giving to others"



Client Story

Originally from Poland, Margaret spent some time in Greece and then decided to emigrate to Canada, "the land of opportunity", in 1990.

Margaret faced many challenges during her early years in Canada: a language barrier, a devastating car accident that caused chronic back pain, a distressing divorce and raising two young daughters alone created an immense amount of stress in her life.

Her load was heavy, but she did not carry it alone. With the support from EMCN's Health & Wellness Team, Margaret began to live the life she imagined for herself and her family in Canada.

Since receiving support from EMCN over the years, she has advanced from a travel agent to a thriving entrepreneur. Margaret's tenacity through hardships and positive outlook despite many challenges is an inspiration to us all.

Margaret's hope for the future is that her daughters can have a happy and fulfilling life. "Not everything goes as planned; I want them to be strong and make a difference in the world."

*"It's hard to imagine my life
without EMCN."*

Glenora Housing

When the Westmount Presbyterian Church began discussions around what to do about a combination of a shrinking congregation and an aging church facility, they decided together to put their large tract of land to good use. They reached out to the Right at Home Housing Society and explored options on how to collaborate on a housing project for low-income Edmontonians. Through North Glenora community consultations, the plan came into focus on creating affordable housing for newcomers to Canada. The natural partner from Right at Home's perspective was EMCN because the two agencies had been collaborating for many years with successful outcomes of providing stable housing for vulnerable newcomer families seeking affordable housing in safe communities.

The project broke ground in 2016, with an anticipated completion date of September 2017. Because the construction included state of the art sustainable features, namely geothermal heating, solar panels, and thickly insulated walls, the construction took a bit longer than anticipated. Move in date for the 16 families was December 1, 2017.

Meanwhile, EMCN, under the leadership of Ali Mahdi, was busy approaching newcomers that were identified as families who would benefit from this project – large families to fill the twelve 3-bedroom apartments and the four 5-bedroom apartments. The goal was to have a mix of cultures and English language ability, with children who would benefit from having a school right across the street. The cultural mix includes families from Syria, Somalia, Eritrea and Burma. The community building right next door provides space not only for the Westmount Church community to meet for worship and weekly meetings but also space for the families to receive settlement supports and space for small-scale gatherings. The North Glenora Community League has become a strong partner as well, welcoming the families and supporting their participation in the skating and hockey activities, Friday night movies, and, more recently, in the soccer activities.



Five months after move-in, the families have settled in well. They are getting to know each other, supporting each other with childcare, reading and understanding forms, language interpretation, and carpooling for shopping, etc. The school is thrilled to have been able to integrate upwards of 30 children into their elementary school, giving it a new lease as a thriving community school. And the church and community league continue to be connected with the project and the families in numerous ways.

In February, the Alberta Minister of Seniors and Housing, Lori Sigurdson, participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, joined by Mayor Don Iveson, and in March, Health Minister Sara Hoffman requested an informal meeting with the families over a pot-luck meal and informal discussion.

This project has garnered national interest, in large part because of its creative collaboration between church, community, commitment to net-zero building practices, and an agency to support the successful integration of the new tenants. EMCN is delighted and proud to be part of this creative and standard-setting endeavour to offer community-driven affordable housing to newcomers to Edmonton.

We may have transformed our image, changed our tagline and launched a brand new website, but one thing will always remain the same: our tireless dedication to supporting newcomers to thrive.



“Everyday I feel blessed to live here.”

Resident



This is my body & I'm proud to be gay
I'm here with
I'm here with

Nasim

Rainbow Refuge

With all the talk about immigration resulting from Canada bringing over Syrians in large numbers, sub-topics related to immigration demographics began to emerge, one of which has become a topic of interest for Canada: being a safe and welcoming country for LGBTQ refugees. Given EMCN's values of Social Justice, Diversity, Compassion and Responsibility, it was clear that we should be supporting efforts to welcome and support LGBTQ refugees as well. We explored funding options but kept bumping up against a stumbling block: the vast majority of LGBTQ refugees come to Canada as Refugee Claimants, not as refugees processed through an embassy abroad. Most LGBTQ refugees are afraid to approach an embassy for fear that their sexual identity will put them in yet another unsafe circumstance – the very thing they are trying to escape. They, therefore, find a way to come to Canada to make a claim once they arrive. Refugee Claimants are not a category of newcomers supported through the Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The question became: who in our government structure can support the settlement of LGBTQ refugee claimants? The answer is still not clear, but the urgency of the lack of support prompted EMCN to seek funding from the private sector.

We approached the Stollery Charitable Foundation to support the vision of offering a program in collaboration with the Pride Centre of Edmonton. The proposal focused on offering support with the immigration process, settlement support regarding finding housing and employment, and supporting opportunities for social community connections for this very vulnerable newcomer population. The Stollery agreed to fund our proposal for two years, giving us the opportunity to create a strong model of support for the LGBTQ newcomer community.

The model works as follows: EMCN staff supports a refugee claimant through the process of submitting their Basis of Claim. When this is accepted, a hearing date is set at which point EMCN connects the claimant to legal support. As well, the claimants are then eligible for both a work permit and income support. Once they have their work permit, they can look for work. Many find work on their own because they have strong English skills. Others seek help from EMCN's employment counsellors. EMCN and the Pride Centre work together to offer community connection opportunities. Every Friday night, LGBTQ newcomers and allies are invited to join the LGBTQ Newcomer Group, which offers peer support and networking, as well as activities that support their integration into Edmonton. Many of the claimants join the EMCN Global Choir and find this to be a safe place to connect with people, sing together, and even lead in sharing new music.

And finally, EMCN is the local organizer for the Immigration and Refugee Board's Ready Tour. This program gives claimants the opportunity to see where their hearing will take place, and to sit through a skyped presentation with opportunity for questions that explains in detail the process of the hearing. Participants benefit greatly from this opportunity for preparing for their own hearing.

EMCN is grateful for the opportunity the Stollery Foundation has given us to offer this valuable program to a very vulnerable refugee population. To date, all of the LGBTQ claimants we have supported so far have been granted a hearing based on their Basis of Claim, and, with one exception, all who have had a hearing have been granted UNHCR Convention Refugee status, which qualifies them to apply for permanent residency.



Parenting & Literacy

For over ten years, EMCN has offered Parenting & Literacy, which is a program for parents with young children who are not quite ready for full-time English classes or Employment but are ready to be engaged in a meaningful way. Parents join together to improve their English through topics such as understanding Canadian laws, traditions, healthy lifestyles, parenting strategies, early childhood development and more.

In 2017, EMCN teamed up with Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre to offer this program together. Norwood has expertise in early childhood education, and EMCN has expertise in supporting newcomers in their settlement journey. Over the year, the partnership has seen tremendous growth through mutual learning for the benefit of the participants.

We are grateful for partner agencies such as Norwood, who are willing to work together to create initiatives that benefit our whole community.

3/4 *of parents in Parenting and Literacy transition into language classes*



RISE

Recognizing Immigrant Success in Edmonton

October 4th, 2017 marked the 14th Annual RISE Awards Gala, which welcomed over 450 guests to celebrate the outstanding achievements and contributions of individuals, employers and organizations who create a welcoming and inclusive city for all.

EMCN would like to thank everyone who supported the 14th RISE Awards, whether you were a nominator, jury member, award recipient, presenter, sponsor, volunteer or guest, your presence and support makes it possible to Recognize Immigrant Success in Edmonton.

- **EISA:** Building Futures Industry
- **Yvonne Chiu:** Community Leadership
- **McNiel Keri:** RBC Rising Star Youth
- **Emmanuel Osahor:** Arts and Culture
- **All Weather Windows:** GOA Welcoming Workplace
- **Zedingle Ghembremusse:** Lifetime Achievement



COMMUNITY

In 2017/18, EMCN's Empowered Community Program supported **16 ETHNOCULTURAL** communities to build their capacity to help their members.

671

meals in 2017/18, from around the world were cooked and eaten in the Global Cooking Program.

95%

of women who completed the feedback survey at the end of the I-WIN Program in 2017/18 reported that they would recommend the program to a friend.

LANGUAGE

On any given day throughout 2017/18, **890 STUDENTS** were studying English in EMCN's LINC and ECALA English classes.

EMCN's Community-Based Care for Newcomer Children Program worked with **72 COMMUNITY DAYCARES** to help **177 PARENTS** and **260 CHILDREN** access childcare in 2017/18.

96%

of daycare parents who responded to our survey said that having child care is helpful with most reporting that it allows them to go to school.

EMPLOYMENT

In 2017/18 EMCN hosted **9 JOB FAIRS** with a total number of **1675 ATTENDEES**.

87%

of newcomers who participated in the Employment Program in 2017/18 found a job within three months and **82% MAINTAINED EMPLOYMENT AT 6 MONTHS**.

SETTLEMENT

The top five reasons newcomers visited a settlement worker at EMCN in 2017/18 were for support.

- Addressing **2495** immigration issues.
- Accessing **1279** government programs.
- Applying for **474** Leisure Access Pass.
- Meeting **390** material needs.
- Finding **361** affordable housing.

Financials

For the year ended March 31, 2018



- 67.24%** FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- 24.00%** PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- 5.28%** OTHER ORGANIZATIONS GRANTS
- 1.73%** MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS
- 0.69%** FUNDRAISING EVENTS
- 0.43%** DONATIONS
- 0.28%** COURSE FEES
- 0.23%** RENT
- 0.12%** INVESTMENT INCOME



- 66.98%** SALARIES, WAGES AND BENEFITS
- 15.84%** CONTRACT SERVICES
- 10.19%** RENT, UTILITIES AND MAINTENANCE
- 3.07%** ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES
- 0.90%** AMORTIZATION
- 0.37%** SUPPLIES, REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Funders



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Service
Canada

Alberta



United Way
Alberta Capital Region

EDMONTON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



wellness
NETWORK

ECALA
Edmonton Lifelong Learning

the
Stollery
charitable foundation

