

**CDCD**

Community Development  
Council Durham



# Annual Report 2022

*Standing Together, Creating Positive Change*



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## CDCD BELIEVES:

- ✓ In the enhancement and protection of social and economic rights and freedoms
- ✓ That innovative responses to community needs require collaborative thinking and practice
- ✓ That we must uphold and embody equity, inclusivity, and social justice
- ✓ That meaningful participation is defined by both the community and the individual, and that each person should be equipped and supported with the tools and resources to enable this participation, and
- ✓ In sustainable solutions to community issues and concerns

### Our Mission

Our mission is to identify regional community development needs and inform relevant policy and programming, while supporting and delivering effective services.



### Our Vision

Our vision is an equitable, inclusive and socially just community that is committed to meaningful participation for all.



# JOINT MESSAGE - FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## *Standing Together, Creating Positive Change*

In 2022, as we navigated a Canadian economy burdened by high inflation, a housing market in crisis, and a rising surge of mental health concerns, *Standing Together: Creating Positive Change* is particularly relevant in this post-pandemic era.

Moreover, CDCD's emphasis on advocacy, using a community development and engagement lens as a strategic response, yielded significant benefits for equity-seeking groups and the broader community. Advocacy is speaking out on behalf of communities and groups of people to promote their interests and needs. This involves collaborating with community partners and allies, raising awareness on issues affecting those we serve, advocating for policies and programs that benefit communities, and ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes.

With the Federal Government's announcement that more than 600,000 Ukrainian applications were approved to migrate to Canada as temporary residents, it was estimated that in 2022, approximately 2,000 Ukrainians would resettle locally. *While standing together to create positive change, our advocacy led to:*

### **Newcomers, Immigrants, Refugees, and Temporary Residents**

- CDCD's selection by Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC) as a **Focal Point Services Provider** to coordinate, administer and deliver settlement services for Ukrainians.
- Funding provided by the Region of Durham in partnership with Durham Local Immigration Partnership (DLIP) and other community organizations to implement the **Durham Ukrainian Humanitarian Response Project**.
- CDCD's selection by Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) to integrate Mental Health Promotion within Settlement Services.
- Introduced certified **Trauma-Informed Mental Health Settlement Services** to offer short-term counselling to immigrants.
- Funding provided by the New Horizons for Seniors Program to introduce **Connecting Experience with Skills Project**, whereby newcomer seniors received computer skills from youth and adult mentors, enabling youth to fulfill volunteer hours while bridging the generational gap and building positive relations with older adults.
- The Town of Ajax's, Ajax Advantage program through the Economic and Tourism Department sponsored our Newcomer Women's Business Networking Event. The **Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Program launched 16 businesses** which are thriving from moderate to great success.
- Expanded **Donations Coordination** for newcomers and people experiencing homelessness. **989 individuals have benefited** from a range of donations.
- Funding provided by Durham Community Health Centre to offer Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) workshops to newcomers.

CDCD reported a higher demand for our housing services in the past year than in 2021, with individuals and families seeking increased support for rental and utility arrears.

*To this end, CDCD's advocacy led to:*

### Homelessness Prevention and Housing Retention:

- Increased Housing Outreach Services at the Ajax and Pickering hubs, libraries and offered Housing First services in the Oshawa hub at Back Door Mission.
- Contributions to the Town of Ajax community drop-in, where community-based conversations on homelessness were facilitated.
- A new [Durham Landlord Database](#) that gives access to [42 landlords](#) who committed to housing people experiencing chronic homelessness. This, in turn, helped [74 clients on the By-Name List](#) to find and be matched to appropriate housing with help from Housing First Case Workers across the Region.
- [Capital investment by Ontario Trillium Foundation](#) increased the functionality of the current housing reception area to better support the increased number of clients.

### Community Development and Social Research:

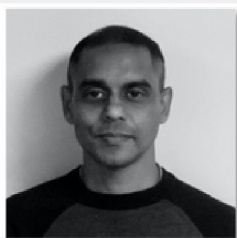
- A commitment as Agency Lead for the [GAP Committee](#), which leverages the expertise of people with lived experience, service providers, and other caring partners to build community.
- A partnership with Ontario Tech University and the Region of Durham to conduct [research on assessing wait times across the housing sector](#).
- 2022 Provincial Elections information sessions and Voter Pop Ups for newcomers.
- A partnership with Christian Faith Outreach Centre (CFOC), to engage people experiencing homelessness on the importance of voting and demonstrate [how to vote without a home address](#).
- Served as a panelist on Toronto Social Planning Council's event "[What Do Municipalities Need from Ontario to Build More Inclusive and Just Communities?](#)"
- A partnership with Durham Community Health Centre and the Town of Ajax to facilitate a [Meet and Greet Series](#) for community members to meet the candidates in the 2022 Municipal Elections.


As a result of the rise in Gender Based Violence (GBV) during the pandemic, *CDCD's advocacy led to:*

### An Anti-Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Project:


- [191 clients](#) (including men) and more than 25 staff, volunteers and community leaders participated in various sessions delivered through CDCD's GBV Project which was funded by the [Canadian Women's Foundation](#). Through this funding, METRAC conducted a [safety audit](#) and supported CDCD in implementing an [anti-GBV lens at a policy level](#).
- Staff enhanced their capacity and awareness through training led by [AIDS Committee of Durham](#), [The Centre for Victims of Torture](#), [Herizon House](#), [White Ribbon](#), [Victim Services Durham](#), [Barbara Schliker Commemorative Clinic](#) and [WomenattheCentre](#).

As we Stand Together: Creating Positive Change, we can expect that 2023 will bring additional opportunities to demonstrate our responsiveness and strength of service to vulnerable residents. We continually commit ourselves to advocating and introducing new programs and resources in Durham Region.



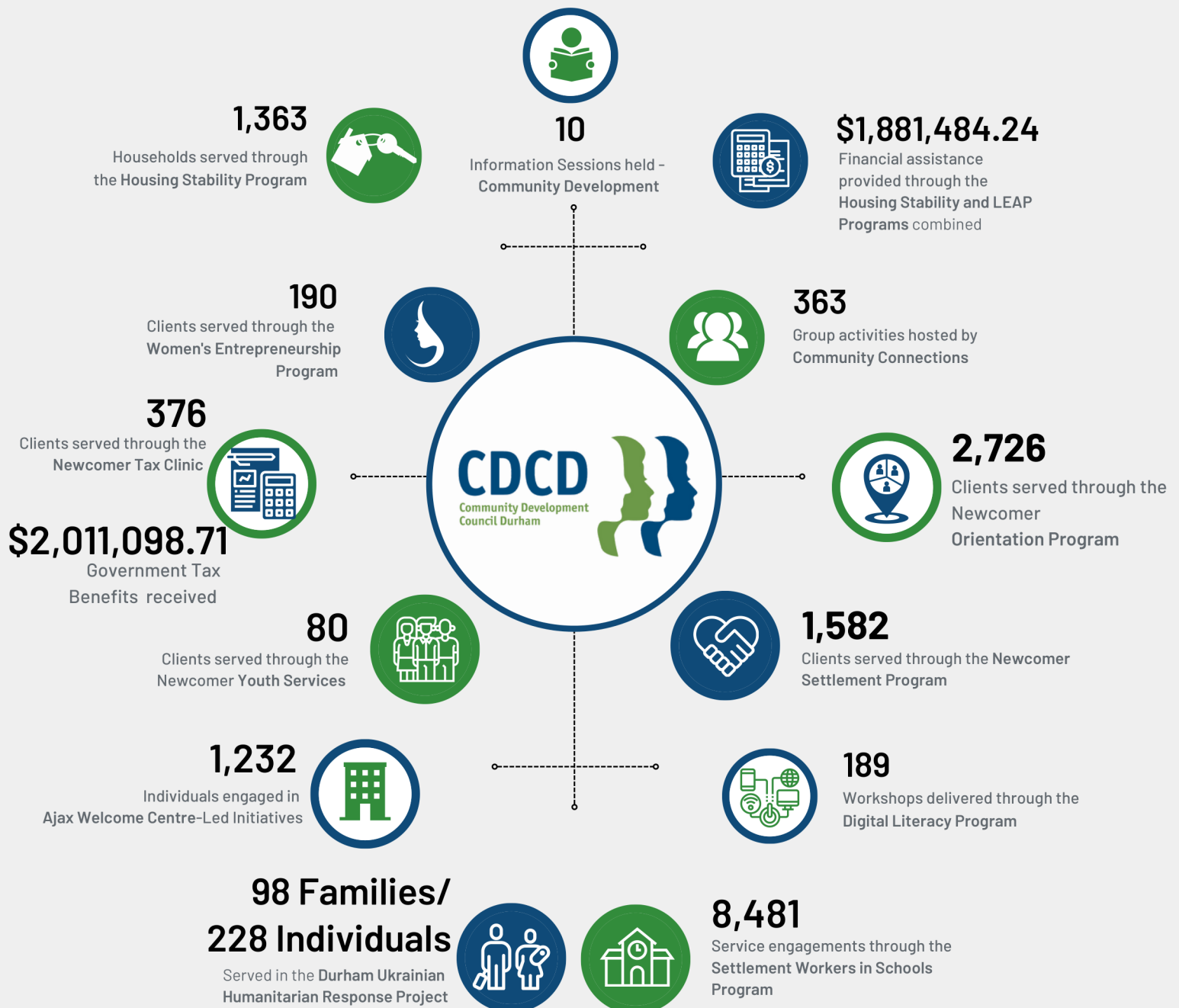
  
**Roger Ramkissoon**  
Board Chair



  
**Hermia Corbette**  
Executive Director



# CDCD SERVING DURHAM APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Community development work at Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) is aligned with our vision and mission. It brings residents, community agencies, local businesses and government representatives together to improve the quality of life of equity-deserving individuals living in Durham Region. Our social research initiatives seek to provide evidence on and document the social issues and changes in Durham Region, inform our programs and services and provide a rationale for the work of CDCD.

CDCD upholds Social Planning Network of Ontario principles of being iterative and open in all of our community development and research initiatives. To this end, CDCD prioritizes establishing equity in the community and seeking out the truth. Being iterative involves taking a participatory approach by engaging local partners and community members in our research and community development work. It also means that we continually review our work and ensure that any research findings are accurate and relevant. Being open involves committing to a process of discovery and determining the truth as well as adhering to timelines.

The 2022 – 2023 fiscal year was an exciting and productive one for the community development and social research program at CDCD. As we celebrated the end of Covid-19's public health physical distancing measures, we continued our work of strengthening communities. Some of CDCD's accomplishments from this year include:

### COMMUNITY LENS

CDCD's Community Lens program produces timely and relevant statistical reports that focus on equity-deserving groups in Durham Region. Through our social research program, CDCD worked closely with the City of Oshawa to create The Snapshot of Poverty in Oshawa 2022 report based on 2016 Census data. This report revealed that three quarters of Oshawa residents who live on a low income spend more than fifty per cent of their income on shelter costs, putting them at risk of homelessness.





## COVID-19 SERVICE UPDATES INITIATIVE SURVEY

CDCD's social research team conducted a feedback survey with community partners on the Community Service Updates initiative implemented by Lakeridge Health during the Covid-19 pandemic to inform the community of the status of service provision during the state of emergency. 89% of respondents found the Community Service Updates coordinated by the Regional Housing Coordinator, Lakeridge Health to be useful or very useful.

## POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY PROJECTS

CDCD was successful in securing a grant from the Canadian Red Cross's Community Service Recovery Fund to implement the Enhancing our Strength to Support Our Communities project. The goal of this project is to build CDCD's capacity to establish a psychologically healthy workplace and peer support among staff members.

Additionally, CDCD was selected by Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) to provide mental health services to newcomer clients and conduct mental health promotion activities within our workplace to support the well-being of CDCD staff members.

### **CDCD Staff Needs Assessment**

To gain more insight into the training and wellness needs of our staff, the Community Development department completed two needs assessments in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. We sought to understand staff training needs with regards to Indigenous Cultural Safety. We also surveyed staff members about their wellness needs in preparation for the implementation of our staff mental health promotion project funded by the Red Cross and OCASI. The information gathered through these needs assessments will inform staff professional development and wellness initiatives in the coming years.

CDCD remained proactive in working to address social issues arising from the Covid -19 pandemic. We submitted an application and secured funding from the Canadian Women's Foundation in 2022. In partnership with gender-based violence serving organizations, CDCD implemented an initiative that supported newcomer women experiencing domestic violence stemming from changes in the circumstances of families brought on by the pandemic.



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Recovery from the Covid Pandemic was an urgent priority for CDCD in the 2022–2023 fiscal year. Consequently, a joint grant application was submitted with member agencies of the Durham Non-Profit Recovery Network (DRNPN) to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for funding that would support the rebuilding and strengthening of Durham Region non-profits. This request included the hiring of consultants that would support members of the DRNPN with strategic planning, diversity, equity and inclusion, fundraising, grant writing and compliance with the Ontario Non-Profit Corporations Act.

### Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant

In 2022, CDCD submitted an application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation requesting capital funds for renovations so that our current office space will enhance health and safety standards and accommodate the increasing number of in-person client encounters in our Housing Department. More specifically, housing clients will have access to a private/confidential space to engage in housing searches, attend virtual appointments (including landlord-tenant board hearings, doctors' appointments, job interviews etc), and print sensitive documents.

### United Way of Durham Region

As a Durham United Way member, CDCD submitted a proposal to secure funding to support our Social Research and Planning activities. Our intended deliverables included building community, neighborhood and organizational capacity and strengthening collaboration across the non-profit sector in Durham Region, and conducting social research to better understand issues facing our community and develop appropriate solutions. Some specific examples of work that United Way funding supports are our Community Lens Reports which provide snapshots of population groups in Durham using census data and the initiation of a Community Social Planning and Research Advisory Table in Durham Region

## HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES

### Homeless Individual and Family Information System (HIFIS)

Community Development department staff members have been an integral part of the deployment and oversight of the National Homelessness Initiative's Homeless Individuals and Families Information System in Durham Region. CDCD works in partnership with the Region of Durham and community-based agencies to ensure data on the homeless population is collected according to federal directives. CDCD is proud to be able to contribute to the tracking of service use and changes in homelessness in Canada. While the pandemic required CDCD to pivot the project's implementation, [15 service providers were onboarded](#) into HIFIS and [6 trainings](#) on using the system and creating reports required by the Region were facilitated.



*"Thanks to you and all your speakers and behind the scenes organizers for coordinating one of the best events I've attended in a long time.*

*You certainly succeeded in your goal of putting a face and people first focus on the complex human issues facing our communities." ~ Community Partner*

### Gap Committee

Community Development department welcomed the Gap Committee and helps to facilitate the committee's work throughout the region. This innovative group of 60 people with lived experience of homelessness are strong advocates for and the voice of people who are experiencing homelessness in Durham. Members are committed to partnering with local service providers to co-design responsive services and supports for this group.

In 2022–2023, in addition to meeting weekly, the committee held two workshops for community members, local government and service providers. The Hope Is for Us workshop held in February 2023 brought community members together to share their concerns about homelessness in Durham and suggest solutions to problems arising from homelessness. A [Changing the Face of Homelessness](#) workshop is planned to engage city councillors, members of the police force, service providers and Ontario Works staff members to build bridges and promote understanding between people experiencing homelessness and professionals.

### Homeless in Durham – Hope in Our Community Website

The Homeless in Durham ([www.homelessnessindurham.ca](http://www.homelessnessindurham.ca)) website continues to be a rich source of information for both people experiencing homelessness and service providers in Durham Region. Created in partnership with local housing service providers who meet as an advisory committee oversees the website that contains listings of supports and services along with a portal for service providers and the most recent reported counts of individuals on the By-Name List. This website was developed by the community, for the community, and complements the work of the GAP Committee and Coordinated Access by providing a publicly available, online homelessness resource.

### National Conference on Ending Homelessness

CDCD was represented at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness virtually in November 2022. A great deal of knowledge was acquired from this homelessness and housing-focused conference that was hosted by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. National and international experts in homelessness, including experts with lived experience of homelessness convened in Toronto to share evidence-based and best practices within the homelessness services sector with over 160 conference delegates.



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

#### **Durham Non-Profit Network**

Durham Region is home to many not-for-profit organizations that contribute to community life. The goal of the Durham Non-Profit Network (DNN) is to build the capacity of local organizations to meet the needs of local residents and address the challenges facing our communities. CDCD coordinates the work of the DNN and brings stakeholders together to advocate for increased funding for the sector and set priorities for community development initiatives. To join the DNN visit [www.cdcd.org/durham-non-profit-covid-19-recovery](http://www.cdcd.org/durham-non-profit-covid-19-recovery).

#### **North Durham Social Development Council (NDSDC)**

CDCD's continues to initiate connections in the North Durham community to gain a deeper understanding of the community and engage local residents in CDCD's community development work. We have been learning about what issues are important to residents and will continue to forge relationships that lead to effective partnerships and initiatives that tackle local priorities. To join the NDSDC please visit [www.cdcd.org/social-planning-council](http://www.cdcd.org/social-planning-council).

#### **Social Research**

In 2022, CDCD partnered with Ontario Tech University to conduct a policy review and create processes for monitoring housing and service wait times and lists to prevent youth homelessness. An environmental scan of how other jurisdictions monitor wait time and lists for housing and services has been completed and the results will inform a framework and processes for monitoring in Durham Region.

#### **Universal Basic Income (UBI)**

In 2020, CDCD entered into a partnership with UBI Works. This organization is comprised of business leaders, economists, artists, public relations experts, and civic-minded Canadians that create evidence-based narratives that promote Basic Income as a good investment in Canadians and our economy. CDCD will continue to support their ongoing work and help make inroads for UBI discussions in Ontario communities.



### Health Initiative Partnership

CDCD has been an active member of the Health Initiatives Partnership which was established by the Region of Durham in 2022. This initiative was established to enhance the collaboration of the health, housing and homelessness sectors at the system and community level to improve access to supports and services for people who are experiencing mental health and addiction disorders concurrently with physical health concerns. CDCD community development staff members have been at the table contributing to the discussions around gaps in and shortcomings of service provision to people who are facing homelessness and/or mental health and addiction disorders and how to improve the quality of these services.

### Provincial Elections 2022

In preparation for the 2022 Provincial Election, CDCD and the Ajax Welcome Centre, and in collaboration with the Durham Catholic District School Board's Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) and English as a Second Language (ESL) higher level English-speaking classes delivered a module on the importance of voting during elections, political parties involved, candidates running for office and where community members can go to submit their vote. This awareness-raising initiative encouraged CDCD clients to consider how they could make their voices heard and influence government action in Ontario and the priorities that are addressed by the provinces' leaders.

### Municipal Elections 2022

The municipal elections in 2022 prompted CDCD and Durham Community Health Centre (formerly Carea CHC) to partner to hold Meet and Greet sessions in Ajax with councillor candidates. These sessions provided opportunities for candidates to hear the concerns of their constituents, most notably, vulnerable residents. This initiative facilitated the inclusion of typically unheard voices into the democratic process and shined a light on the issues most relevant to equity-deserving groups.



## HOUSING HELP DURHAM



Housing Help Durham is funded by the Regional Municipality of Durham. The goal of CDCD's Housing Programs is to provide direct personal support services to assist clients with securing safe and stable housing. These services include advocacy, general information on landlord and tenant matters, mediation, and providing referrals to other community services and programs.

*"Thank you for your help! You have been more than amazing during this stressful process."  
HSP Client, 2022*

### LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LEAP)

The LEAP program distributed approximately **\$74,652.44** in financial assistance to **98** Durham Region households in order to assist with hydro arrears.

### THE HOUSING STABILITY PROGRAM (HSP)

The Housing Stability Program assists qualified households throughout Durham Region to obtain and sustain housing by providing funds for rent arrears, utility arrears, and assistance with last month's rent and/or moving costs.

The HSP disbursed approximately **\$1,806,831.80** in financial assistance to over **968** households through Durham Region. This program assisted individuals and families with securing housing and prevention potential eviction.

**250 out of 968**

Were Single Dwelling Households

**718 out of 968**

Were Family Units

## HOUSING OUTREACH PROGRAMS

### Housing First Program:

The Housing First Program focuses on moving individuals experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing as well as providing them or linking them to other supports and services that are needed to sustain their housing. The team works with specific clients that are assigned to them from Durham Region's By-Name List.

The Housing First Team works closely with Community Partners such as Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Durham Mental Health Services, Durham Community Legal Clinic, Backdoor Mission and the Ajax Hub.

### Landlord Engagement Specialist (LES):

The Landlord Engagement Specialist creates a support system for landlords and housing providers throughout Durham Region. The goal of the program is to support landlords with their needs that will in turn create long-term successful tenancies. Over the past year the Landlord Engagement Specialist has assisted approximately **61 landlords** with the following services:

- ✓ Information on rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ Information on rental arrears and referrals to HSP.
- ✓ Landlord and Tenant Board support.
- ✓ Referrals to outreach services for housing and tenant retention.
- ✓ Tenant selection support.

### Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP):

OESP offers low-moderate income households, a reduction in their monthly hydro costs. The Housing Outreach Team assisted **60 individuals** with successfully applying for this program.

*"I don't know what I would do without my worker. He helps me with everything!" Housing First Client, 2022*



## HOUSING OUTREACH PROGRAMS

CDCD's Housing Outreach Program is designed to strategically align with the Region's goal to end homelessness in Durham. The Housing Outreach Team offers support to clients in the [Ajax](#) and [Pickering](#) area by helping them secure and/or retain their housing. The Housing Outreach Team is made up of two workers. One worker is a [Housing Outreach Worker](#) and the other is a [Housing Outreach Settlement Worker](#) specializing in supporting newcomers.

**The team supported 2,109 households by assisting them with the following:**

- ✓ Accessing emergency shelters.
- ✓ Applying for and replacing identification.
- ✓ Completing forms for income assistance (e.g., Ontario Disability Support Program [ODSP]) and social housing.
- ✓ Connecting to community resources that address their needs.
- ✓ Handling Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) issues.
- ✓ Obtaining essential items, such as bus tickets, food cards, and sleeping bags.
- ✓ Obtaining the start-up funds to transition out of homelessness.

Lastly, the team built strong partnerships with several other community agencies. The team attends the Ajax HUB twice per week and attends the Ajax and Pickering libraries on a regular basis.

Out of the **2,109** households supported by the Housing Outreach Team, **72** of them were newcomers to Canada.

## OPENING DOORS DURHAM:

The goal of the Opening Doors Program is to foster stronger relationships between local landlords, tenants and Housing First Case Workers. Opening Doors Durham focuses on housing individuals who are experiencing chronic homelessness and are on Durham Region's By-Name list.

Landlords who agree to be part of the program receive a signing bonus and have access to a risk mitigation fund.

Over the last year **Opening Doors Durham** has worked with an additional **16 landlords** and has been able to secure **48 units**.



## ORIENTATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAM



Funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Orientation Program provides newcomers and immigrants with the assistance, guidance, and support needed to integrate and settle into Ontario and the Durham Region.

From April 2022 to March 2023, Orientation Workers served:

1,385	1,341	2,726
Repeat Clients	New Clients	Total Clients

- ✓ Orientation Workers offer a confidential, safe, and welcoming space for newcomers to:
- ✓ Access community resources, programs, services, and social networks.
- ✓ Find information about life in Canada.
- ✓ Receive answers to common questions about Canadian systems, as well as their rights and responsibilities in Canada.
- ✓ Receive information to support wellness needs and mental health of newcomer clients, including newcomer youth (13–24 years) and provide short-term therapeutic and non-therapeutic counselling.
- ✓ Receive assistance with reviewing immigration documents and filling out government-related and other service provider forms.
- ✓ Receive supports such as childcare, employment, education, health services, housing,
- ✓ Child Tax Benefits, and other important social benefits.

*"I was hopeless. All my emotions and thoughts were consuming me and I knew I had to see someone to get relief and that's when I met the mental health settlement worker who was absolutely wonderful. She showed empathy and offered a listening ear that I was in desperate need of. What made it even better was I didn't know if this service was free or not. As someone with a low income and struggling to make ends meet I felt really good after my appointment. I will forever remember your kindness, professionalism, and friendliness." ~ Client 2022*

## NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM (NSP)

The Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) is funded by the Government of Ontario and provides settlement services tailored to clients' needs. The clients that seek our services include citizens, international students, internationally trained professionals, refugees, and visitors. As a result of the NSP, clients were well-informed about information, services, supports, and tools that will enable their successful settlement in the Region – particularly during one of the most difficult, vulnerable times: the start of their settlement journey.

The NSP Settlement Team are expert system navigators, helping clients meet their various needs. Some of the client services and supports that NSP provides include:

- ✓ Community services and supports
- ✓ Continuing education
- ✓ Credential assessment
- ✓ Employment supports
- ✓ Family supports
- ✓ Interpretation services
- ✓ Legal supports
- ✓ Immigration application support and information (e.g., Canadian citizenship, permanent residency and renewal, refugee claims)
- ✓ Income supports (e.g., clothing, food and furniture bank, Ontario Works, ODSP)
- ✓ Medical supports
- ✓ Passport applications
- ✓ School registration for children and youth
- ✓ Senior programs and services
- ✓ Housing supports (e.g., shelters)
- ✓ Government services (e.g., OHIP, SIN)
- ✓ Lost documents

973  
Repeat Clients

703  
New Clients

1,676  
Total Clients

**10 Settlement and NSP Workers communicate in 15 languages.** This vital support enables caregivers, convention refugees, and permanent residents whose first language is not English to express their needs in their own language. During the year, they organized workshops and webinars in partnership with other service providers for clients to learn about:

- ✓ Income Tax Preparation
- ✓ Service Canada and CRA services
- ✓ Canadian Citizenship
- ✓ Winter Driving
- ✓ Settlement Services and Newcomer Community Services
- ✓ World Education Services and Accreditation, Qualification Information Services
- ✓ Sponsorship
- ✓ Immigration Fraud Awareness
- ✓ Ontario Driver's License
- ✓ Mental Health Settlement Services



From April 2022 to March 2023, the Orientation and NSP settlement workers worked relentlessly to serve the influx of newcomers and refugees including individuals and families from Afghanistan and Ukraine. Information and referrals to local community services were provided to address their settlement needs as they settle in Durham Region. During this period, **662 Afghan** evacuees and **310 Ukrainian** clients were served by our settlement workers.

*"These information sessions need to be arranged for the newcomer as soon as they arrive in the community" ~ Client*

The settlement program continued to exceed and go beyond funding obligations to ensure all newcomer and refugee clients were receiving the help and information they needed. In partnership with the Regional Municipality of Durham, settlement workers delivered services at the Durham Ukrainian Humanitarian Response Project (DUHRP), at satellite sites in Oshawa and Pickering, assisting newcomers and refugees who were being temporarily housed at these locations.

Furthermore, community partnerships facilitated temporary settlement services to be delivered at the Whitby Public Library and a new permanent satellite location was established at the Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre in Oshawa.

In collaboration with many partner agencies that assist newcomers and vulnerable populations in the community, settlement workers led a number of newcomer information sessions. A hybrid Durham Ukrainian information session was held in July 2022 for recently immigrated Ukrainians, their families, friends, and other local agencies who were offering some type of support to them. These sessions provide information on employment, language supports and programs, financial supports, mental and physical health care, free family resources and programming in the community, school systems, and much more.

In October 2022, settlement workers facilitated an immigration information session for Ukrainian newcomers and their family's providing information on pathways for permanent residency, status extensions, alternate immigration pathways, and providing an opportunity to answer many settlement and immigration related questions.

Settlement staff who spoke Dari and Pashto led and offered live translation at an Afghan information session for recently arrived Afghans and their families in November 2022.





## NEWCOMER COMMUNITY SERVICES

The focus of Newcomer Community Services is to create welcoming communities for newcomers to Durham Region by offering programs to foster social and professional connections, develop skills and enhance a sense of belonging.

*"Thank you so much Kim for your assistance I appreciate you, that's so kind of you to prepare the job opportunities for newcomers. Thanks again" ~ NYP Client*

## NEWCOMER YOUTH PROGRAM

The Newcomer Youth program supports youth 14 to 29 years old to gain new skills and knowledge, make new friends and learn about their community to help them adapt, settle, and integrate into Canadian life.

This program works closely with other youth-serving agencies in Durham including Durham District School Board Youth hubs, Durham Community Health Centre (DCHC), YMCA; and Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre.

In 2022-2023, **80 newcomer youth** accessed these services.

- ✓ **12** Education and Employment sessions: Job search/interviewing skills; Youth Cashier/Customer Service Training
- ✓ **15** Recreation and Fitness: Weekly pick up soccer games; Yoga, Zumba
- ✓ **15** Life Skills and Self-care sessions: Wellness Chats and Stress management, Ajax Outspoken Speakers Toastmasters Club
- ✓ **8** Health and Wellness support: Cooking classes and Art sessions, Virtual Trip to the Toronto Zoo during March Break

## SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOL (SWIS) PROGRAM

The SWIS program is a long-established settlement and education partnership that provides school-based settlement services to **51** Durham Catholic District School Board and to **132** Durham District School Board's elementary, secondary, alternative education schools and learning centres across Durham Region.

The SWIS program works closely with school administrators to connect with all newcomer families in their schools, to register their children in their new schools, orient them to school and community resources and to refer them to specific services. SWIS provides leadership training through a youth advisory council and peer leader program. These youth support the school orientation programming as well as act as mentors for their peers who are coming into the Canadian school system for the first time.

In 2022-2023, the year started with a hybrid service delivery model but as of September, all programs and services were offered in person.

This year, to respond to the increase in Ukrainian and Afghan nationals settling in Durham Region, SWIS staff increased to a 9 member team. They organized and facilitated group sessions for youth, parents/guardians, Peer Leader training, Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW), and Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN).

## NEWCOMER ORIENTATION WEEK (NOW):

The NOW program was delivered using a hybrid delivery model with multiple sessions being held virtually on Zoom and one celebration event held in person at Donald A. Wilson Secondary School.

In total, one planning day and three days of programming were held for **61 participants**.

**37**  
Families

Participated in the Online Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN) session

**2,367**  
Unique clients  
served

**8,481**  
Service engagements  
delivered

**1,660**  
Youth and  
Parents  
participated in  
workshops

**37**  
Peer Leaders  
Recruited

**100**  
Youth and  
Parent  
workshops



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (CC) PROGRAM

The Community Connections (CC) program supports social connections and supportive peer relationships to help newcomers experience positive settlement and citizenship pathways.

Key components of this programming are to create welcoming spaces and communities by fostering engagement between newcomers and Canadians.

Programs include:

- ✓ Canada Connects, a community mentoring program.
- ✓ English Conversation Circles (ECC) in partnership with Durham Region Public Libraries we host ECC in Ajax, Pickering, Whitby, and Oshawa.
- ✓ Women and Seniors groups.
- ✓ Community Kitchen and Community Garden activities.
- ✓ Trips and recreational activities to enhance newcomers' connections to their new home.

**198**

Unique clients served

**1,888**

Service engagements delivered

**363**

Number of Activities

## DIGITAL LITERACY

The Digital Literacy Program supports newcomers' integration by building skills for the online world, enhancing digital literacy skills and online navigation skills, and raising awareness of the importance of cyber security.

Training topics include:

- ✓ Creating resumes and cover letters via Microsoft Word, safe online job searching techniques
- ✓ Microsoft Office training (Word/PowerPoint/Excel)
- ✓ Internet privacy and security (safe password creation, phishing)
- ✓ Video Conferencing (Microsoft Teams/Zoom/Skype)
- ✓ Social media and email use (two-factor authentication/safe password use/creating accounts)
- ✓ Online banking and shopping (safety tips for financial transactions online)
- ✓ One-on-one training as per client needs

**189**

Workshops held

**19**

Volunteers trained

**78\***

Clients

(\*most clients attend at least 4 workshops)

## Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurial Program (NWEP)

Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurial Program, funded by IRCC, is designed to support newcomer women's skills and passions to start new businesses.

In partnership with the Business Advisory Centre Durham (BACD), the NWEP launched 17 new newcomer women-led businesses in 2022-2023.

This year, a new partnership was formed with Ajax Advantage from the Economic and Tourism Department of the Town of Ajax, which sponsored our two new business launch events in September and March.

Other partners include: PARO, FedDev, Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre, Ajax and Pickering Welcome Centres, Durham Region Public Libraries.

*"The program helped me and other newcomer women to realize that we can create wonderful things with our talent. I cannot express how grateful I am." ~ Client*



16

Business-related workshops held



68

Participants attended Business related sessions



6

Networking-related sessions held



122

Participants attended Networking-related sessions

## Donations

In September, a Donations Coordinator was hired to support newcomer clients, and Ukrainian families in the Durham Ukrainian Humanitarian Response Project.

36 grassroots, ethnic and community groups were engaged and 989 clients received donations.

196

families received furniture, mattresses, small appliances, dishes

194

clients received food from 3 food drives Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter

130

clients received winter clothing from 2 Winter clothing drives

428 clients received toys from the Christmas Toy Drive





## BUILDING BRIDGES

On May 5, [National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA – Red Dress Day](#) was observed and a red dress was hung outside CDCD to show our support. For many newcomer clients, this was their first introduction to this issue.

To celebrate [National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21](#), staff and newcomer clients attended the event at Esplanade Park, hosted by our partners at Durham Community Health Centre and the City of Pickering. Newcomers experienced drumming circles, Regalia dancers, and Indigenous vendors, all of which supported cross-cultural awareness and acceptance.

On September 28, Building Bridges hosted an Indigenous-led event to commemorate [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Orange Shirt Day](#) facilitated by Angela Duckworth, Soaring Eagle Woman, of the Turtle Clan, Caldwell First Nation, Chippewa, Potawatomie, Lenape and British Decent, an Indigenous Health Promoter at Durham Community Health Centre. Angela led participants through the spiritual practice of smudging and performed a gratitude song. The event also included pre-colonial, traditional Indigenous food. Newcomer clients enjoyed a pre-colonial granola bar and hot tea with mint, spruce, cedar, and sage, which was a new experience for all.

In 2022, the Building Bridges program hosted a trip for newcomers to the [Big Drum event](#) hosted by Durham Community Health Centre's Indigenous Program on October 8 at the Purple Woods Conservation area.

*"The bus trip to Purple Woods was an incredible experience that allowed me to connect with Indigenous culture in a meaningful way. The programming was both educational and eye-opening, and it left a lasting impact on me as a newcomer to Canada."*  
~ Building Bridges Client





## NEWCOMER WELLNESS PROGRAM

CDCD and Ajax Welcome Centre held a Newcomer Wellness Activity Day on March 14, 2023. Newcomer families were able to explore the interconnection of our mind, body, and spirit as well as our overall health and well-being. Participants had the opportunity to stop by a number of community booths, including the Region of Durham Health Department, the Ajax Public Library, Durham Welcome Centres and Durham Community Health Centre.

Throughout the year, families had the opportunity to attend activities such as zumba, a petting zoo, and art and crafts. Workshops were delivered on social media wellness, creativity, mental health, gratitude and reflection.

Wellness is an individual pursuit. Our emotions, spirituality, experiences, social and cultural environments all have an important impact on mind-body harmony. This program seeks to help clients find a wellness strategy that suits their unique lifestyle.

*"We all experience wellness in different ways, and we wanted to ensure there is something for everyone." CDCD Staff*



## WELCOME CENTRE IMMIGRANT SERVICES - AJAX



Ajax Welcome Centre (AWC), is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Over the past 10+ years, the Centre has become well-known for its one-stop service model designed to guide and support immigrants in Durham Region.

The Centre is a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment that addresses the complex and changing needs of newcomers. The service delivery approach is integrated, flexible, and holistic.

Onsite, a broad range of cross-sector services and expertise are available to immigrants under one roof. The Ajax Welcome Centre's core services and partners include:

- ✓ Settlement and Integration services by Community Development Council Durham
- ✓ English Language Assessment by Achēv
- ✓ English-Language Training by Durham Catholic District School Board
- ✓ Accreditation and Qualifications Information by Achēv
- ✓ Employment Supports by Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre
- ✓ and the Resource Centre

Ajax Welcome Centre operates with over [40 associate partners](#) delivering customized, value-added supports such as mental and medical health services, housing, legal services, culturally-appropriate family counselling, and much more based on our local community needs.

The Ajax Welcome Centre underwent a significant renovation to allow for more programming and services at the Centre. This was done to maintain a high level of service delivery excellence with the Durham Region's ever-expanding newcomer community and their varied needs. It became evident that many clients preferred to receive services and learn through in-person delivery as the move from exclusively remote services to both remote and in-person services and programs occurred gradually following the epidemic.



Funded by IRCC, the renovation enabled the Centre to maximize the use of the public resource centre, accommodate more meeting rooms, create several new offices, and further improve on-site services like the digital sign-in thanks to the modifications.

## HIGHLIGHTS FOR APRIL 2022 - MARCH 2023

- ✓ Ajax Welcome Centre programs were accessed **28,354 times**, by **1,232** unique service users.
- ✓ The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) has been operating for more than ten years. 376 returns filed for the 2022 filing season and \$2,011,098.71 in government benefits returned to clients marked the program's most successful season. This free program's popularity year-after-year demonstrates how important it is to the most disadvantaged members of the community. With flexible appointment times available to fit client schedules, the clinic was accessible to clients via in-person, remote, and drop-off/pick-up methods. The clinic is run entirely by volunteers, so the Centre's capacity to find and retain volunteers is essential to the program's success.

The Ajax Welcome Centre partners with the [Durham United Way Operation Backpack](#) program to provide crucial back-to-school items for school-age children to at-risk families, including newcomer and refugee families. The possibility for associate partners to reach out to these families through their programs was expanded because of the tremendous response from families in Durham in the previous year. This year, the event was held outdoors to accommodate the large number of attendees and partners.

*"All topics were vital for the Afghan families and more information sessions for us would be very helpful." ~ Client 2022*

**271 families  
registered for  
Operation Backpack**

**545 backpacks  
were distributed**





- ✓ The Ajax Welcome Centre took part in the global initiative of **#WelcomingWeek 2022**. Staff members, clients, and partners displayed messages of welcome on the Welcome Week window display at the Centre and on social media using the hashtag **#WelcomingWeek2022**.

- ✓ An Open House was also held, and tours were offered to local organizations and groups. They learned about the various services and programs available to refugees, immigrants, and newcomers. Residents and partners in the community were given the opportunity to

meet the staff and learn more about the Centre's resources. Activities were organized for everyone with giveaways, games, and prizes.

The Ajax Welcome Centre is most successful when our network of community partners is supported both within the Centre and out in the community.

The Centre was represented by dedicated staff who supported our partners at many of their outreach events and initiatives to promote free programs and services to high risk and underserved priority neighborhoods. Some of the events and initiatives included: **DCHC's Community Connections West Durham** events and **Black Health and Wellness Symposium**; **The Regional Municipality of Durham's Emancipation Day** and **Mobile COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic**; **City of Pickering's Cultural Fusion** and **Canada Day**; **Town of Ajax's Canada Day** and **Volunteer Fair**; and **Ajax Public Library** partner outreach.





## CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN (CNC)

In May 2022, the CNC program opened its doors to clients. Our team of experienced Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) developed a collection of fun, inspiring play extension activities for the program.

The CNC program provides a daily plan, implements developmentally age-appropriate play-based activities, and ensures the children's health and safety in their care.

Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) Program is funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). This safe childminding space provides supervised, age-appropriate activities for newcomer children ages nineteen months to six years while their parents or guardians access Ajax Welcome Centre services.

CNC Staff offered 5 group sessions during Occasional Child Care (OCC) and held 6 group sessions daily for LINC client children for 3 - 4.5 hours.

These sessions were:

- ✓ Arts and Crafts
- ✓ Music and Circle Time
- ✓ Cognitive Activities
- ✓ Gross Motor Activities
- ✓ Sensory Activities
- ✓ Dramatic Play

**CNC provided occasional childminding to clients accessing services from IRCC-funded programs at the Ajax Welcome Centre. Between May 2022 - March 2023 the CNC program provided:**

**1,034**

Group Sessions

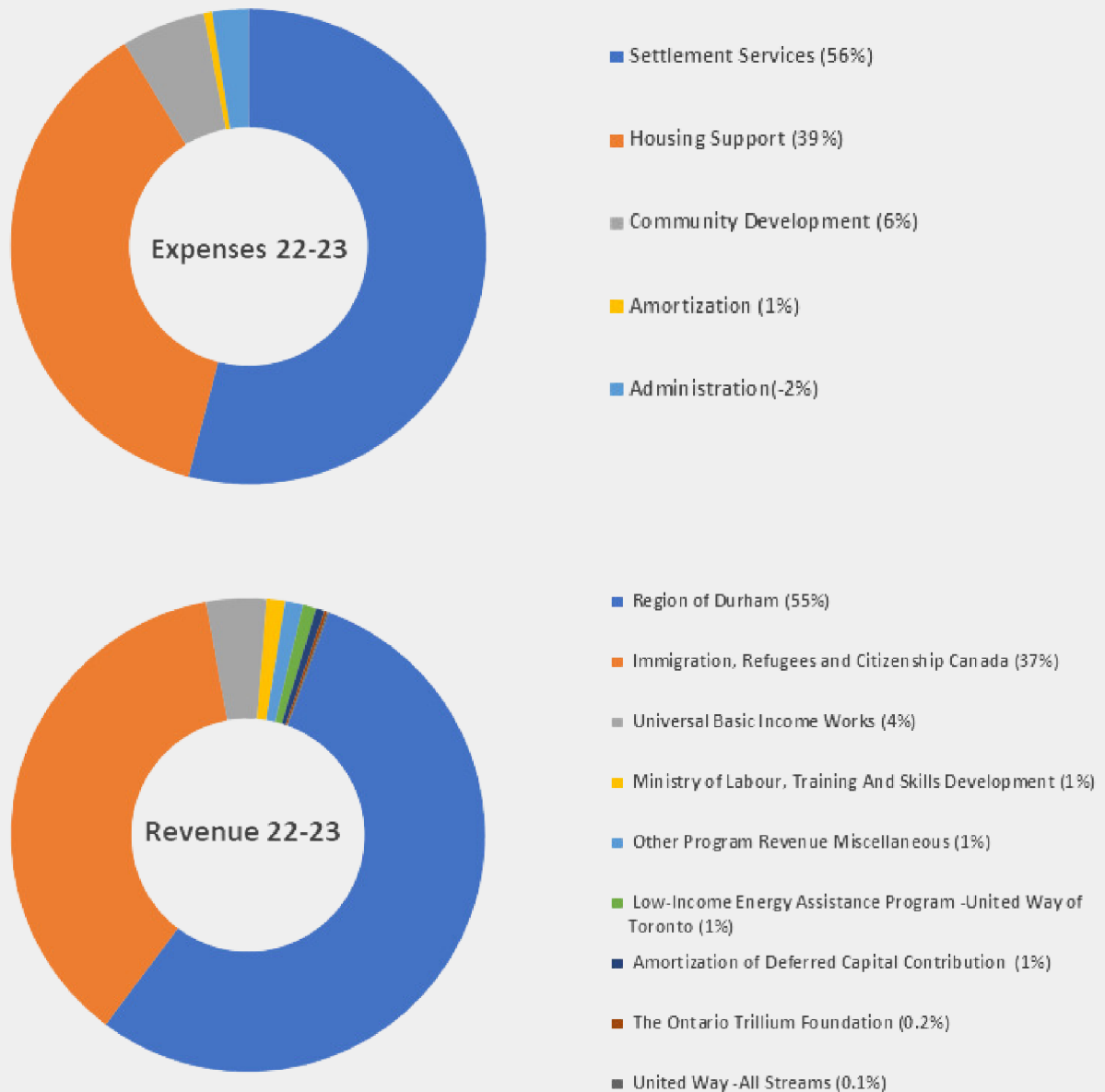
**769**

Children Attended  
Group Sessions

- ✓ CNC staff offered Virtual Learning Sessions for August every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 1 hour.
- ✓ CNC staff met with the Family and Community Connection Action Program (FCAP) team on September 6 to discuss monthly lunch and learn sessions with CNC families from October until May. This allowed families to get support around health, child development and parenting, and connect with other local services.
- ✓ On November 2, the program completed an IRCC activity monitor where staff were observed doing an art and crafts activities with the children.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023



Please note the charts presented are based on CDCD's Audited Financial Statements which were prepared by Inclusive Accounting .

To view the full version, please go to [www.cdcd.org](http://www.cdcd.org)



**STAFF TRIBUTE**  
SPECIAL THANK YOU!



*As we all stand together, demonstrating unity and resilience,  
we thank our staff for being the driving force behind the  
positive change we created in 2022!*





## CURRENT STAFF MEMBERS

### EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

**Hermia Corbette**, Executive Director  
**Adebambo Oluyombo**, HR Coordinator  
**Sana Sakurai**, HR Coordinator – on leave  
**Erick Sanchez**, IT Administrator  
**Sanjay Sarkar**, Finance Manager  
**Richelle Bornolla**, Staff Accountant  
**Bhaskara Pothuri**, Accounting Technician

### MANAGERS AND TEAM LEADS

**Alison Baxter**, Manager, Social Planning and Research  
**Ashley McDonald**, Acting Housing Manager  
**Catherine McNeely**, Newcomer Community Services Manager  
**Patricia Liang**, Manager, Durham Ukrainian Humanitarian Response Project  
**Wosen Beyene**, Welcome Centre & Immigrant Services – Ajax Manager  
**Anna Kobilaski**, Lead – Resettlement and Integration Worker  
**Dilenia Teaz**, Team Lead – Welcome Centre & Settlement Services  
**Geralda Bray**, Team Lead – Outreach & Landlord Engagement Services  
**Jennifer MacKay**, Team Lead – HSP, LEAP & Admin Services  
**Pachee Vang**, Lead – Early Childhood Educator, CNC Program  
**Sobia Ahmad**, Team Lead – Newcomer Wellness, Volunteer & Youth Services  
**Vicki Kerr**, Team Lead – SWIS & Community Connections

### HOUSING

**Anil Misir-Persaud**, Housing Stability Worker  
**David Marder**, Housing First Case Worker  
**Joanna St Croix**, Housing First Case Worker  
**Justina Jackson**, Housing Receptionist/Administrator  
**Lisa Sklar**, Housing Stability Worker  
**Melissa Scott**, Housing Intake Worker  
**Monica Tembo**, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
**Niki Goulden**, Housing Outreach Worker  
**Sayed Zubair Saeed**, Housing Outreach Settlement Worker

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Daniel Cullen**, GAP Committee Facilitator  
**Fariza Syed**, Mental Health Promotion Coordinator  
**Kazzrie Cormick**, Homelessness (HIFIS) Data Coordinator  
**Padmini Persaud Roberts**, Community Planner  
**Stephenie Bowie**, Coordinated Access Communications Coordinator

### UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME (UBI)

**Ken Yang**, Social Media & Content Specialist  
**Liam Wilkinson**, Comm./Public Relations Specialist

### DURHAM UKRAINIAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

*\*Project Launched August 2022*

**Amber Stewart**, Resettlement Housing Worker  
**Anum Khalid**, Resettlement Overnight Worker  
**Saghana Shurenthiran**, Resettlement Worker  
**Valeria Pekarski**, Resettlement & Housing Support Worker  
**Kelly Dinis-Reid**, Resettlement & Housing Support Worker  
**Kassaye Yimer**, Resettlement & Integration Worker

### WELCOME CENTRE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES – AJAX (AWC)

**Ami Scott**, AWC Receptionist  
**Guler Korkmaz**, AWC Receptionist  
**Edna Ucanda**, AWC Receptionist  
**Maliha Batool**, AWC Receptionist  
**Shohreh Kehtari** – AWC Receptionist & Administrative Assistant.

### SETTLEMENT/ORIENTATION PROGRAM

**Hanna Siekowski**, Senior Database Admin  
**Alaa Aldwik**, Orientation Worker  
**Mariia Pitolai**, Orientation Worker  
**Mohammad Sohail**, Orientation Worker  
**Palwasha Wajdi**, Orientation Worker  
**Sadaf Parweez**, Orientation Worker  
**Sofia Ahmed**, Mental Health Settlement Worker  
**Amil Syed**, Mental Health Settlement Worker  
**Teresita Perera**, Orientation Worker

### CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN (CNC) PROGRAM

**Uzma Khanum**, Early Childhood Assistant

### NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM (NSP)

**Nalayini Ravindranath**, Orientation/NSP Worker  
**Saadat Qadri**, NSP Worker

### NEWCOMER COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM

**Avalina Rodrigues**, Computer and Internet Coordinator  
**Donette A.**, Donations Coordinator  
**Kim Harris-Eccleston**, Newcomer Youth Services Worker  
**Victoria Guimaraes**, Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Coordinator

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

**Alana Andrews**, Community Connections Worker  
**Bozena Stobinska**, Community Connections Worker  
**Katelin Grant**, Community Connections Worker  
**Maria Abogado**, Community Connections Worker

### SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS (SWIS)

**Ahmad Mustafa Haares**, SWIS Worker  
**Aloma Selvarajha**, SWIS Worker  
**Carmen Subibi**, SWIS Worker  
**Ievgeniia Mangones**, SWIS Worker  
**Joy Zhang**, SWIS Worker  
**Maribel Cabral de Sousa**, SWIS Worker  
**May Toma**, SWIS Worker  
**Najeeb Nayab**, SWIS Worker  
**Sophie Tome**, Administrative Assistant

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CDCD's Board of Directors consists of **10 committed volunteer** Directors, which includes the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. They offer exceptional governance, high-quality leadership, and diligent oversight for the agency. We are grateful to all the board members for their steadfast commitment to guiding CDCD's strategic direction. The Board's invaluable contribution, exemplary leadership and insightful decision-making has been instrumental in shaping our agency's growth and fostering a culture of excellence. We are deeply appreciative of the time and expertise the members devote to steering our course.



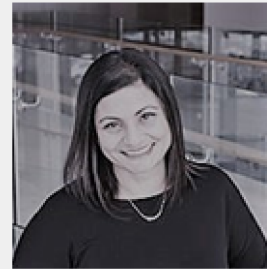
**Roger Ramkissoon**  
Chair



**Michelle Davis**  
Vice-Chair



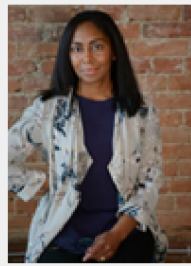
**Hilary Smith**  
Treasurer



**Pinder DaSilva**  
Secretary



**Portia Daisy**  
Director



**Melissa Malcolm**  
Director



**Ali Abbas Hijri**  
Director



**Omar Aimajdalawi**  
Director



**Tarak Ahmed**  
Director



**Rishab Madhar**  
Director

## CDCD VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential to creating welcoming communities for our newcomer clients as they contribute their time and expertise to support the delivery of our programs.

In addition, volunteering provides newcomers with the opportunity to gain invaluable Canadian workplace experience. Last year, the large influx of Afghan and Ukrainian clients has made leveraging volunteers crucial to our service delivery.

49 volunteers contributed over 1,200 hours to the Ajax Welcome Centre and CDCCD's programs where they performed general administration tasks, sorted donations for food, clothing, and toy drives, and provided onsite support for programming (e.g. program room set up).

Volunteers are crucial to Community Connections activities, which are designed to foster engagement between newcomers and Canadians to advance 'two-way integration' and build supportive peer relationships. Last year, 48 volunteers contributed 2,612 volunteer hours in the English Conversation Circles and the Canada Connects program.

Through the SWIS Durham program, 44 youth volunteers contributed 791 volunteer hours as Peer Leaders and Youth Advisory Committee members; initiatives that build leadership skills, supports peer mentoring, and enhances connections for these youth volunteers in their school and community.

The Ajax Welcome Centre's yearly Tax Clinic volunteers contributed 282 hours and completed 376 tax returns, which was the highest number of tax returns ever completed. Furthermore, CDCCD volunteers participate and support Canada Day celebrations in Ajax and Pickering annually.

Community Development's Consultant volunteer hours help to guide and inform the department's initiatives.

CDCCD's 10 Board Directors contributed 196 hours to guide, direct, and oversee the strategic direction of the agency.

*"One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone. Volunteering at CDCCD gives me the opportunity to do this."*  
~ Volunteer

*CDCCD's volunteers are the best of the best enabling CDCCD's programs and services to grow, expand and be sustained.*

**A BIG Thank You to CDCCD's Volunteers**





**CDCD**  
Community Development  
Council Durham



458 Fairall St., Unit 4, Ajax, ON, L1S 1R6



+1 905 686 2661



+1 905 686 4157



info@cdcd.org



[www.cdcd.org](http://www.cdcd.org)



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