Message From The Executive Director And President

We began the year at OCISO equipped with the ambitious mandate of continuing to deliver exceptional programming within our existing standard core programs, expand our funding base and establish strategic community partnerships in a manner consistent with our mission and vision.

While the number of immigrants and refugees arriving in Ottawa decreased last year, OCISO’s LINC, Counselling, Settlement, MLO, Youth and Community Economic Development programs served more clients than in the previous year for a total of 11,356 served across all programs. Clients were served with the same respect, cultural competency and expertise they have come to expect from OCISO workers as evidenced by the many glowing testimonials we have received over the year.

Due to the incredible efforts of the program teams, we established new projects addressing important service gaps with funding from The Status Of Women, The Trillium Foundation, The City Of Ottawa, The Ottawa Carleton District School Board and Actions Interculturelles.

New strategic partnerships have emerged over the year as we worked to expand delivery sites and engage new partners. Partners we engaged in new initiatives include Carleton University, Jewish Family Services, Somerset West Community Health Centre, Lowertown Community Resource Centre, Immigrant Women’s Services, City For All Women Initiative (CAWI) and The YMCA-YWCA Power of Trades.

The Board of Directors is thankful for the continued dedication of OCISO’s employees and numerous volunteers. We are pleased to see the growth and transformation of the culture of OCISO with the emphasis on greater client centeredness and empowerment. We are also thankful for the continued support of our board members and the amazing machines that make up our board of directors.

The current international refugee crisis provides almost daily reminders of the suffering of vulnerable populations fleeing war-ravaged zones overseas. OCISO was founded in response to another refugee crisis, that of the Vietnamese “boat people”, almost 40 years ago. At that time, OCISO played a crucial role in supporting these refugees to settle in Ottawa. Our employees and volunteers are again doing everything in their power to collaborate with local stakeholders in an effort to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive local response.

Leslie Emory
Executive Director

François Couillard
President

Message de la Directrice exécutive et du Président

Nous avons commencé l’année au sein d’OCISO avec le mandat ambitieux de continuer à offrir des programmes pertinents et efficaces, d’élargir notre base de financement et d’établir des partenariats communautaires en cohérence avec notre mission et notre vision.

Alors que le nombre d’immigrants et de réfugiés arrivant à Ottawa a diminué l’année dernière, les services d’OCISO tel que les cours de langue pour les nouveaux arrivants (LINC), le counseling, l’établissement, les agents de liaison multiculturelle (MLO), la volet jeunesse et les programmes liés au développement économique communautaire ont répondu aux besoins de 11 356 clients. Ces partenaires ont été reçus avec le respect, les compétences culturelles et l’expertise qu’ils apportaient de la part des employés d’OCISO. D’ailleurs, de nombreux témoignages reçus au tout l’année en font la preuve.

Grâce aux efforts soutenus déployés par les équipes des programmes, nous avons établi de nouveaux projets qui combinent des mécanismes locaux à la fois grâce au financement provenant du Statut de la femme, de la Fondation Trillium, de la Fondation Trillium, de la Commission scolaire d’Ottawa-Carleton et d’Actions interculturelles.

De nouveaux partenariats stratégiques ont émergé au cours de l’année, alors que nous sommes engagés à élargir les offres de services vers d’autres sites et à impliquer de nouveaux partenaires. Ces derniers incluent notamment l’Université Carleton, Jewish Family Services, le Centre de santé communautaire Somerset Ouest, le Centre de ressources communautaires de la Basse-ville, les Services aux femmes immigrantes, l’Initiative: Une ville pour toutes les femmes et les services à l’emploi du YMCA-YWCA. Le conseil d’administration tient à remercier les employés d’OCISO ainsi que les nombreux bénévoles impliqués. Nous sommes heureux de constater que le processus de transition du fonctionnement de l’organisation qui met l’accent sur le développement des ressources est en train de prendre racine. Bien que l’organisation se retrouve dans une situation difficile, le même engagement et la même générosité, de nouvelles initiatives visant à améliorer la résilience financière de l’organisation sont en développement. Par exemple, nous avons entrepris une campagne d’adhésion à plusieurs volets afin de permettre aux personnes qui montrent leur engagement envers OCISO d’être reconnus. Le conseil d’administration a également mis en place une vaste campagne de dons. De plus, l’un des membres et plusieurs bénévoles ont organisé avec succès une collecte de fonds lors du festival du film du centre-ville d’Ottawa.

La crise internationale actuelle des réfugiés nous rappelle chaque jour les souffrances que les populations vulnérables qui ont quitté des zones ravagées par la guerre doivent endurer. OCISO a été créé en réponse à une autre crise de réfugiés, celle des réfugiés vietnamiens, qui a eu lieu 40 ans plus tôt. À cette époque, OCISO a pu un rôle important pour aider ces réfugiés à s’installer à Ottawa. Nos employés et nos bénévoles sont à nouveau là pour leur aider à rétablir un lien avec la société et à s’impliquer pleinement dans la vie communautaire.

Leslie Emory
Directrice exécutive

François Couillard
Président
Settlement and Integration (SIP) Program

In the last year the Settlement and Integration Program was successful in supporting the settlement of immigrants and refugees by addressing the complex needs of 2355 individual clients. In addition, 102 group sessions on settlement related topics were delivered to 2260 participants. The Settlement staff assisted a total of 4615 clients. The SIP team continued to work in partnership with other community service providers including our new partners Somerset West Community Health Centre and Lowertown Resource Centre.

In addition, our clients and staff have been supported by the legal clinic operated by pro-bono lawyers.

Nepalese Seniors Settlement Group

This group was organized by SIP in partnership with Diverse Seniors Support Program. The main objective was to ease the integration process of newcomer seniors from Bhutan/Nepal. The program helps to reduce isolation and enable seniors to be actively engaged in various social activities. They also participated in the Travel Training Program where they learned how to use the bus alone.

Citizenship Test Preparation Course

SIP has successfully delivered two sessions of the Citizenship Test Preparation Course to a total of 40 participants. This course addressed the new test curriculum and prepared participants to successfully pass the Citizenship Test. The course curriculum was developed by a volunteer curriculum specialist and piloted using internal trainers and facilities.

Bridge to Integration Support Group for Immigrants

Bridge to Integration was offered in partnership with Centertown Community Health Center and was initiated in response to the needs of immigrants in general and immigrant women in particular. The program’s focus was on increasing understanding of unforeseen realities and challenges in a new country and providing support and information on ways to cope with these challenges as they arise in everyday life.

Coffee Circle

The Coffee Circle is part of the Women’s Program delivered in partnership with The Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre. The main goal of this circle is the social inclusion of women that have suffered violence. Key objectives are to empower these women and to support them to increase their self-esteem and wellness.
In Appreciation

Our programs are successful and our work has positive impact because of the support and collaboration of our partners, volunteers and colleagues - Thank you.

Gang Exit Initiative - Community Connections

In partnership with John Howard Society, OCISO is implementing a project that will provide culturally appropriate supportive services to individuals who are affected by a gang lifestyle. The project will specifically support individuals to re-establish community connections and participate in group and individual mentoring.

Recognition

The MLO program was awarded the Growing up Great - Safe and Supported award. This award recognizes outstanding programs in Ottawa striving to ensure that children and youth have positive, stable, nurturing friends and relationships.

The Multicultural Inmate Liaison Officer (MLO)

The MLO project which provides supportive counselling to multicultural inmates with an immigrant background in the Ottawa - Carleton Detention Centre (DCDC) continues with the success of previous years. The program supported multicultural inmates through weekly group sessions as well as providing one-on-one supportive counselling. The program also facilitated community connections for the inmates by supporting them rebuild their relationships with family and community.

Supporting Newcomer Youth

YOCISO provided workshops, weekly group leadership sessions and academic support (homework club and tutoring) to 1670 newcomer youth. We created spaces for newcomer youth to share their stories with the larger community. This year YOCISO held a “Photo Voice Workshop” for refugee youth to share their migration journeys.

Our Work in the Schools

The Multicultural Liaison Officer Program (MLO) has been providing support to newcomer families to integrate into our schools since 1993. The program provided direct service, orientation and information to 5988 individuals this year. The MLO and YOCISO program staff jointly delivered the annual summer programs, Step-Ahead Project (SAP), a program offered to newcomer high school students to improve their English language skills while participating in a variety of recreational skills development activities and the Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) Program, a peer to peer leadership program for newcomer youth newly arrived in Canada.

The Multicultural Liaison Officer (MLO) Program

The Multicultural Liaison Officer Program & YOCISO provide settlement services to newcomers in Ottawa schools as well as leadership and life skills development opportunities for newcomer youth. We also implement targeted projects that provide multicultural services to the diverse communities in Ottawa.

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LINC provided English language training in the context of settlement and community integration. Nine full-time classes from literacy to advanced English served 160 clients per day. We also provide childcare to 32 children per day. In the past year, that tallies to 449 individual adult clients served and 118 children. Of those adult students, 167 progressed at least one level.

Twelve settlement themes were covered over the past year: Banking, Canadian Law, Canadian Culture, Employment, Family, Education, Transportation, Health & Safety, Shopping, Community and Government Services, Canadian Geography and History.

Students were actively engaged in the community this year, including Spring Cleaning the Capital and volunteering at the Salvation Army Thrift Store. The LINC Program and Care for Newcomer Children teams put on Hallowe’en and Christmas parties, a Mother’s Day event, a fundraising rummage sale, and a community picnic for WOW week. The LINC Program assisted with the Open Mic Block Party and organized a community trip to Montreal on a Saturday in June. Our Literacy Foundations expanded their community garden and tended to it even through the summer months when the school was closed. September’s harvest filled the school with delicious smells as they cooked using English recipes and learned more about nutrition.

The LINC Program worked with many partners including: University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic and Nursing students, CAS, NCC, and the Memory Project. We hosted CTESL and ECE and Home Childcare Training Program interns from Carleton University, Algonquin College and Queen of Angels. As well, LINC benefited greatly from 35 volunteers who helped with conversation, reading practice and individual client needs. These volunteers were recognized at a volunteer appreciation event in May with guest David McGuinty who gave out plaques.
At this moment, I want to say a big Thank YOU to you for all your suggestions and kind consideration. Words cannot describe how much all that means to me. I cannot thank you enough for your valued suggestions and support she extended towards me. Under her guidance, in just 2 months time I appeared in 3 face-to-face job interviews and received 2 job offers, one in Ottawa and another one in Toronto. It was an utmost pleasure to have her as my mentor and most importantly in her I have found a true friend who was there for me in times of stress and struggle.

I have no words to express the thankfulness that I feel in my heart for the help I have received from OCISO. I have received supportive friendship, support in every aspect, they gave me courage for even the smallest challenges. Without OCISO my integration in Canada would have been difficult and different.

I arrived in Canada as a refugee in 2013. I went to literacy class at LINC OCISO. Two years later, I am now an intermediate English student. This summer I worked at my first English job cleaning a bookstore. I am learning English quickly. Sometimes it is difficult but I will not stop learning English. I hope I will finish English school at OCISO. The teachers are always helping me and I have made many friends here.

Thank you for giving us the chance to learn new things. This helped me to be prepared for my new school and become less nervous. I made new friends and had fun.
The Counselling Program offers counselling services under three streams of service to the multilingual clientele of the program:

• Core Counselling; for individuals, couples and families
• Group Counselling; offered in several local high schools
• Walk-In Counselling; for walk-in clients, English, French & Arabic speaking

We also offer Internships for post-secondary students seeking to enhance their counselling skills in a multicultural setting. These interns add value and capacity to our program, enhancing its presence in the community.

Under Core Counselling we served clients from over 40 countries for a total of 2,400 direct service hours. The majority of clients originate from countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and South America. Languages of service included English, French, Arabic, Creole, Farsi, Dari, Hindi, Nepali and Spanish. Trained volunteer interpreters also assisted counselors, as needed.

OCISO’s Counselling Program joined the network of Walk-In Counselling clinics funded by The Local Health Integration Network and administered by Jewish Family Services. Under this program English, French and Arabic speaking clients engaged in short term, culturally informed narrative therapy sessions.

The Immigrant and Refugee Youth Project facilitated nine youth groups at Rideau, Woodroffe Gloucester and Richmond high schools for a total of 250 hours of service.

We provided 550 indirect service hours in the form of case conferences, consultations, and report preparation. These services were delivered in collaboration with over 85 community partners.

We are very pleased that Carmen G. Urbina, Program Manager and Clinical Supervisor, received the 2015 Community Partnership Award presented by Ottawa Carleton District School Board in recognition of the program’s effort over 20 years of supporting immigrant and refugee youth.
Community Economic Development delivers Career Mentoring and networking programs to support Internationally Educated Professionals to obtain employment in their field. This includes supporting them to develop an understanding of the Canadian workplace culture and practices within their given profession. Participants are also supported to develop strategic career objectives, engage in labour market research, develop professional networks, understand employment maintenance and advancement within the Canadian workplace, and to increase their workplace and cultural competency.

This year, CED programs supported 176 new and 103 continuing clients for a total of 276 clients served. 65% of clients exiting the program did so to engage in commensurate employment within their field.

In addition to supports provided through the core Career Mentorship Program, CED delivered Mentorship supports for interns employed through the Federal Internship for Newcomers Program (FIN), launched the OCISO Ottawa Connector Program, and commenced a Status of Women Project – Advancing Immigrant Women in Banking through Mentorship.

Within the Career Mentorship Program there are currently over 250 active Mentors, representing over 80 organizations in the region. Mentors contributed over 4000 hours of volunteer service to the program during the period. We happily experienced a significant increase in alumni of the program (previous Mentees) volunteering as Mentors through a desire to “give back” and support OCISO’s work.

This program would not exist without the ongoing support of the many volunteer Mentors who have contributed their time and expertise over the past year. We wholeheartedly thank you for your ongoing efforts to support Internationally Educated Professionals.
# Summarized Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>4,478,112</td>
<td>4,665,361</td>
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<td>Fundraising and Donations</td>
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<td>Other Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Expenses:</strong></td>
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<td>Program expenses</td>
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<td>Occupancy</td>
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<td>Administrative and Related costs</td>
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<td>272,314</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>4,473,156</td>
<td>4,764,031</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Excess Revenue</strong></td>
<td>83,832</td>
<td>4,362</td>
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</tbody>
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| **Assets:**          |          |          |
| Cash and prepayments | 48,614   | 231,152  |
| Investments          | 236,922  | 307,956  |
| Grants and Trade Receivable | 144,591 | 291,059 |
| Long-Term Assets     | 293,123  | 343,963  |
| **Total Assets**     | 720,650  | 973,830  |

| **Liabilities:**     |          |          |
| Bank debt and other Payables | 728,211 | 999,360 |
| Long-Term debt and other obligations | 137,070 | 238,933 |
| **Total Liabilities**| 901,281  | 1,238,293|

| **Changes in Fund Balance:** |          |          |
| Fund Balance (Deficit) - Beginning | (264,463) | (268,825) |
| Excess (Deficit) for the year | 83,832 | 4,362 |
| Fund Balance (Deficit) - Ending | (180,631) | (264,463) |

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**Board of Directors**

- François Couillard - President
- Daljit Nirman - Vice President
- Michel Piché - Treasurer
- Susan Scotti - Secretary
- Rohit Samaroo - Director
- Simin Foster - Director
- Jack Uppal - Director
- Golsa Ghamari - Director
- Mélanie Drouin - Director
- Gorav Chaudhry - Director
- John Stewart - Past President Ex Officio
- Jessie Thompson - Director
- Jessi Uppal - Director
- Rohit Samaroo - Director
- Simin Foster - Director