

**CDCD**

Community Development  
Council Durham



# Annual Report 2023

*People Purpose Possibilities*



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## OUR VISION

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

## OUR MISSION

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

## 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.

**CDCD**

Community Development  
Council Durham



# JOINT MESSAGE FROM THEN BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## People Purpose Possibilities



**ROGER RAMKISSOON**

Board Chair

**P**eople - At the heart of CDCD's accomplishments are the dedicated staff, board, volunteers, placement students, community agencies, landlords, donors, businesses and funding partners who work with passion and align with our mandate. Through an extraordinary journey of growth and unwavering resilience, we continued to champion what matters most—delivering quality programs and services to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

In 2023, Durham's population reached 745,000, with approximately 28% (192,600 people) being immigrants.

Furthermore, with over 400 refugees seeking asylum in Durham, CDCD delivered services in three temporary accommodation sites in partnership with the Region and other agencies.

*At CDCD, we are proud to have played a remarkable role in welcoming, settling and integrating many of these individuals and families in the region.*



**HERMIA CORBETTE**

Executive Director

**Our Housing Help Department** also faced unprecedented demand, serving **1,906 households** as rent and utility costs soared, people at risk of homelessness increased, and unsheltered residents became more visible across our local municipalities. *Homelessness prevention and housing retention remained central to our programs and services.*

To support our commitment to building an equitable and inclusive community for all, our **Community Development and Research team**, along with the **GAP Committee** – a group of individuals with lived experience of homelessness, community members, and service providers – co-hosted Hope is Essential Workshops and an education series, "Changing the Face of Homelessness," to lead important conversations and community engagement focused on our assets and strengths, reducing the stigma around homelessness in Durham, and examining how we can build a healthy community that includes everyone.



**Purpose** - CDCD's core mission is to promote social change and meaningful participation for all. *We strive to uplift equity-seeking and equity-deserving populations, including newcomers and those in need of affordable housing, helping them lead more dignified and stable lives.* This past year was one of activity and momentum, and we are deeply grateful to our staff, partners, and funders who made these achievements possible.

- Funding from the Regional Municipality of Durham allowed our Housing Help Department and Durham Region Humanitarian Project (DRHP) to expand services, helping over **678 asylum-seekers** and securing affordable housing for **268 households**.
- The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development—Settlement Services Branch, Newcomer Settlement Program—Asylum Claimants Grant helped refugees from Haiti, Colombia, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, various countries in Africa, and temporary residents from Ukraine, and Sponsored or Government Assisted Refugees from Afghanistan — to be spared the harsh reality of living on the streets
- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) capital funding enabled CDCD to complete major renovations, expanding programming options and improving service accessibility.
- A Durham Community Health Centre grant provided newcomers with a five-week Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Indigenous Culture workshop series, preparing them for the workplace and deepening their understanding of Canada's history and commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.
- The Canadian Women's Foundation's grant enabled CDCD to enhance knowledge on gender-based violence, with **191 clients** (including men) and over **25 staff** attending sessions. Additional training on human trafficking is planned for next year.
- The Red Cross' COVID-19 Community Services Recovery Fund supported CDCD's launch of a Wellness Committee to help staff improve their

Newcomers, Immigrants and Refugees in Durham made full use of CDCD's services by accessing:

- Our [Ajax Welcome Centre \(AWC\)](#)
- Orientation to Canada and Durham Region information sessions and [Newcomer Settlement Program](#) (NSP) supports
- Referrals to other services through warm handoffs
- Short-term [Mental Health and Trauma-Informed Counselling](#) sessions
- [Settlement Appointments](#) at satellite locations in Ajax, Oshawa, Pickering, Whitby and Clarington
- Durham's Elementary and High Schools with assistance from [Settlement Workers in Schools \(SWIS\)](#) in 51 Catholic and 132 Public schools
- [Community Connections](#) social integration and networking activities and field trips for women, men and families
- [Building Bridges program](#) connecting newcomers and Indigenous Peoples in meaningful dialogue, forums and activities
- [Care for Newcomer Children](#) services
- Leadership, Goal Setting and Life Skills for [newcomer youth](#) through Recreational, Employment, Financial Literacy, and Public Speaking activities
- [Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Program](#)
- [Newcomer Wellness Checks](#)
- [Digital Literacy](#) and internet safety workshops at the basic, intermediate and advanced levels
- [Housing Settlement Workers](#)
- [Durham Humanitarian Response Project's](#) resettlement and housing programs and services

psychological health and well-being post-pandemic.

- A partnership with the City of Clarington created the KickStart Program, introducing newcomers to Canadian sports and the local recreation centre.
- Through partnerships with **86 landlords**, the [Opening Doors Program](#) secured **121 housing units** for chronically homeless individuals on Durham's By-Names List. Together, we work to strengthen relationships with tenants and Housing First Case Workers.
- **989 clients** received essential items donated such as furniture and appliances. They also benefitted from food and winter clothing drives, and newcomer children enjoyed toys from the Holiday Toy Drive.
- A partnership with Durham Region Children Services and the Durham Catholic District School Board, launched a nine-week Childcare Assistant training program, including theory and placement. **22 newcomers** participated and completed the program.
- Collaboration with the Robert McLaughlin Gallery and Art Hive allowed the GAP Committee to host the [Neighbours Project](#), a series of community events in Oshawa.
- Our community-led and co-designed [Homelessness in Durham: Hope in Our Community website](#) was further developed as an on-line resource for individuals experiencing homelessness and service providers who support them. This tool aims to foster dialogue, raise awareness, and encourage collaboration to help those in need across the Durham Region.

CDCD's community development efforts enhanced our ability to meet the growing needs of Durham. We brought together community members, service providers, government officials, and those with lived experience to address pressing social issues through initiatives led by:

- [Ajax Homelessness Task Force](#)
- [Durham Non-Profit Network](#)
- [Gap Committee](#)
- [North Durham Social Development Council](#)

**P**ossibilities - As Durham's Social Planning Council and a multi-service provider, we embrace innovation and collaboration, envisioning social change in every challenge and opportunity that lies ahead. CDCD remains optimistic that we can thrive as we navigate government austerity. Our services are more vital than ever, and we are committed to increasing our capacity to expand our offerings to meet the evolving needs of residents.

We have already seen growth in our Settlement and Humanitarian Resettlement services through new partnerships and satellite locations in Whitby and Bowmanville Libraries, and we are working to extend services in Oshawa Library and North Durham, as well as housing information sessions, facilitated at Ajax and Pickering libraries. *By fostering collaboration and breaking down silos, we are building a more comprehensive service network across the region.*

As we move forward, we will continue to invest in staff well-being, implementing wellness and self-care initiatives to ensure a resilient and energized team. We know that when our staff are supported, our clients receive the best care. In closing, CDCD is grateful for the ongoing support of the Durham community. Together, we will continue to find innovative ways to advance our mission, creating a more just and inclusive society for all.



**Roger Ramkissoon**  
Board Chair



**Hermia Corbette**  
Executive Director

# CDCD'S IMPACT IN 2023

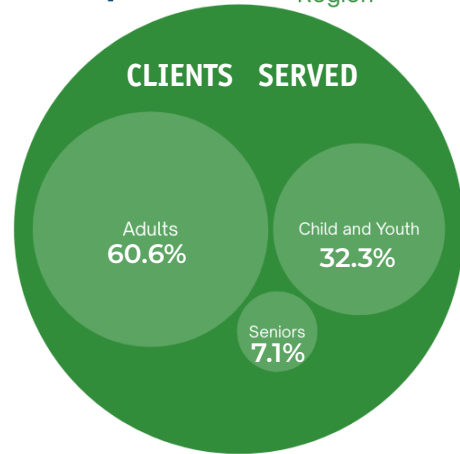


The Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)'s programs include **Housing, Community Development**, and the **Durham Humanitarian Response Project (DHRP)**. CDCD also leads the **Welcome Centre Immigrant Services in Ajax**, a hub offering various services for newcomers and immigrants in Canada. Collaborating with over 40 service providers, it also provides referrals as needed.

2023 saw mental health promotion integrated into settlement services, including certified trauma-informed counselling.

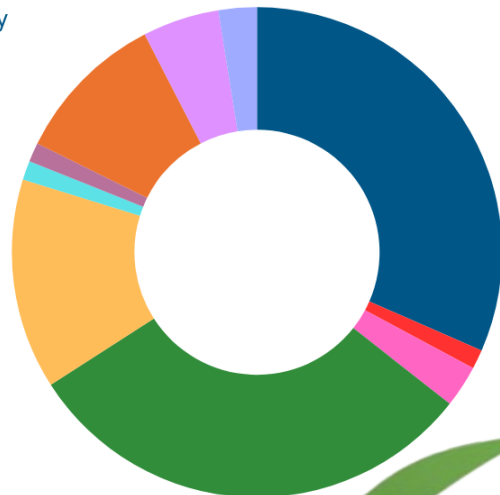
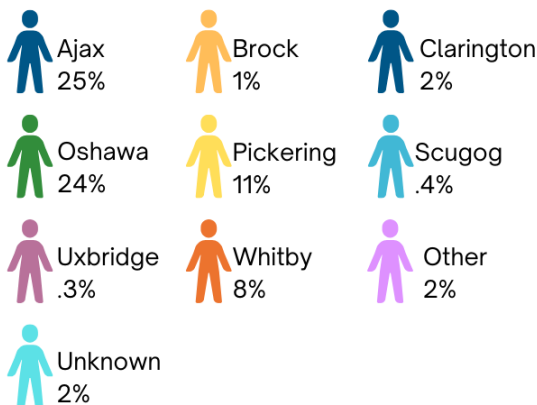
25,520

Clients served across Durham Region



*"I wish to express my joy about the work that I see you do at the CDCD. I have been privileged to attend certain of your programmes. I make bold to say that by these programmes you have redirected the failures of many into the corridor of positive hope and determination."*

Clients served by Municipality



# TAKING COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

## Community Development and Social Research

### Community Development Partners

Community collaborated with various partner agencies for the 2023-2024 year, including:

- Durham College
- Feed the Need Durham
- Back Door Mission
- Women's Multicultural Counselling and Referral Center
- Boys and Girls Club Durham
- Affiliation for Inspiring Youth Upliftment
- Durham Community Foundation
- Girls Inc.
- Nourish and Develop Foundation
- Brock Community Health Centre
- Community Living North Durham
- Blue Door
- Durham Community Legal Clinic
- Region of Durham Public Health, Income Support and Homelessness
- United Way of Durham
- AIDS Committee of Durham Region
- North House
- Durham Mental Health Services
- UBI Works
- 211 Central
- John Howard Society of Durham
- Town of Ajax
- Ajax Public Library
- Christian Faith Outreach Centre
- Robert McLaughlan Gallery
- Social Planning Council of Ontario
- Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre

The Community Development Department takes pride in continuing the legacy established by CDCD's founders through initiatives in social planning, research, and community development. The 2023-2024 year proved to be exceptionally successful for "Comm Dev," as new partnerships have been established both within and external to CDCD, thereby enhancing CDCD's reach and impact.

### COMMUNITY LENS

Community Development staff members took a deep dive into Statistics Canada data to provide the community with more insight into equity-seeking and equity-deserving groups in Durham Region. The **Ajax Poverty and Unaffordable Housing Info-graphic** provides an overview of these realities in the Town of Ajax. The **LGBTQ2S+ Data Snapshot** tells the story of LGBTQ2S+ individuals in Durham and Ontario.

We continue to produce Community Lens reports with the goal of providing a socio-demographic overview of vulnerable groups in Durham and drawing the attention of community members, decision makers and leaders to these groups to create social change.

### FUND DEVELOPMENT

While the work of the Community Development department in social planning, research, and community development is essential, CDCD does not receive multi-year funding for these initiatives. As a result, grant writing is essential for securing the necessary funding to fulfill our mission.

In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Community Development department submitted **five funding proposals** to organizations including the **United Way of Durham Region, the New Horizons Seniors Program, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Region of Durham, and the Provincial Seniors Community Grant**. In the upcoming year, relevant funding opportunities will be pursued that align with our departmental work.

### **SOCIAL PLANNING NETWORK OF ONTARIO (SPNO)**

CDCD remains actively involved in the Social Planning Network of Ontario (SPNO), which aims to enhance the effectiveness of social planning organizations throughout the province. Regular meetings are conducted year-round to exchange information and support one another's initiatives in the realm of social planning.

In collaboration with researchers from the University of Waterloo, as well as the Kingston and District, Oxford County, York Region, and Cornwall and Area Social Planning Councils, SPNO published a report in October 2023 addressing urban and rural tenant eviction and displacement in Ontario. CDCD looks forward to partnering with SPNO on upcoming research projects that focus on the challenges faced by vulnerable groups in Ontario.

### **SOCIAL RESEARCH**

The Community Development team is dedicated to conducting research that supports social planning and community development initiatives. Recently, a funding proposal was submitted to the City of Oshawa to investigate the experiences of youth classified as Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) in the Durham region.

Although the proposal was not successful, the Community Development team remains committed to collaborating with local academic institutions to pursue additional research funding and undertake social research.

A notable highlight of the 2023-2024 fiscal year has been the planning efforts with Dr. Erin Dancy at Durham College ([www.durhamcollege.ca](http://www.durhamcollege.ca)) to evaluate the Newcomer Community Kitchen. This evaluation is scheduled to take place during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

### **ONTARIO COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING IMMIGRANTS (OCASI) MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT**

A long-standing partnership with OCASI led CDCD to pilot a Mental Health Peer Support project for newcomers in the fall of 2023. With support and guidance from OCASI, staff members from the Community Development department recruited and trained newcomers to be mental health peer support facilitators for English, Dari, and Amharic speaking newcomer groups. The pilot was a success with over **60 individuals** participating in the groups over 6 sessions. Given the interest of newcomers in mental health peer support, CDCD will be implementing additional sessions in the coming year.

*The Community Development Team would like to thank local volunteers and partners who supported our work during the 2023-2024 fiscal year:*

- *Richard DeGaetano (Comm Dev Consultant)*
- *Blesson Varghese (Comm Dev Volunteer)*
- *Winnie Nandudu (newcomer mental health peer support)*
- *Shabnam Basharmal (newcomer mental health peer support)*
- *GAP Committee members*
- *Ajax Homelessness Task Force community members*
- *Durham Non-Profit Network (DNN) members*
- *North Durham Social Development Council (NDSDC) members*



### **AJAX HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE (AHTF)**

Community Development's Community Planner helped reconvene the Ajax Homelessness Task Force in 2023. This group was active pre-pandemic looking at solutions to homelessness-related circumstances in Durham Region, with an emphasis on the Town of Ajax.

The Task Force includes local service providers, Municipal Councilors, business owners, and community members, has been meeting regularly to set priorities. CDCD is eager to collaborate with this group to end homelessness in Ajax. If you are interested in becoming a member of the AHTF and getting involved in your community, please email [ahtf@cdcd.org](mailto:ahtf@cdcd.org).

### **BUILT FOR ZERO LEARNING FORUM**

The Community Development department's Homeless Individual and Family Information System Coordinator, along with the Communications and Engagement Coordinator attended the Built for Zero Learning Forum in March 2024 in London, Ontario. This event fostered information sharing and networking among homelessness sector professionals across Canada, focusing on solutions and strategies to address homelessness. The professional development opportunity enhanced their efforts, with thanks to the Regional Municipality of Durham for funding this opportunity.

### **THE GAP COMMITTEE**

The Gap Committee was formed in 2019 to provide a community-based and collaborative approach to issues of homelessness within Durham Region. Comprised of individuals who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness, service providers, and compassionate partners, the committee advocates for the voices of the people, facilitating communication, and establishing a strong collaboration between those in the community and local agencies.

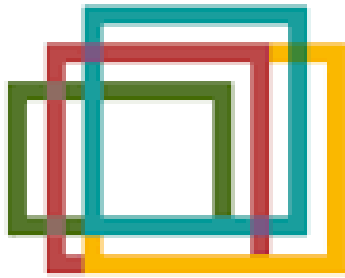
This past year, several impactful initiatives were launched, including a film screening of the documentary "Us and Them," which focuses on homeless individuals in Vancouver; Hope is Essential Workshops, a dialogue series "Changing the Face of Homelessness," the Neighbours Creative Arts Project in collaboration with the Robert McLaughlin Gallery; and an outreach recruitment event held at Memorial Park in Oshawa. Members of the GAP Committee with lived experience continue to be called upon to contribute to the Regional homelessness response.

### **HOMELESSNESS IN DURHAM HOPE IN OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE**

The Homelessness in Durham Hope in Our Community website ([www.homelessnessindurham.ca](http://www.homelessnessindurham.ca)) is a community-centered platform aimed at residents, service providers, business community and individuals with lived experiences of homelessness in the Durham area. It continues to grow and adapt to fulfill the information needs of the community. Alongside details about homelessness in Durham, the site offers insights into services available for the homeless population, updates on these services, an overview of municipal strategies addressing local homelessness, and recent news headlines that highlight the personal experiences of those affected, giving a human perspective to this social issue.

### **UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME (UBI)**

In 2020, CDCD partnered with UBI Works, a group of diverse professionals advocating for Basic Income as a valuable investment in Canadians and the economy. CDCD will continue to support their initiatives and promote discussions about UBI in Ontario communities.



### WELCOMING WEEK

The Community Development Department played a vital role in planning and executing CDCD's annual Multicultural Celebration, held each September during Welcoming Week. The 2023 event witnessed an impressive turnout, featuring clients, community organizations, regional leaders, staff members, and volunteers.

The event featured cultural performances from Tamil and Chinese dance groups, along with a variety of children's activities, games, agency display booths, and delicious cuisine representing many cultures. Overall, the gathering was a resounding success, allowing us to showcase our services and facilities to the community. We eagerly anticipate celebrating Welcoming Week 2024 with another culturally enriched event.

### DURHAM NON-PROFIT NETWORK (DNN)

The Durham Non-Network (DNN) has been active over the 2023-2024 fiscal year with members meeting monthly and planning for collaborative efforts. Members such as the Boys and Girls Club of Durham, Women's Multi-Cultural Resource and Counselling Centre, Feed the Need Durham, Back Door Mission, Affiliation for Inspiring Youth Upliftment, United Way Durham Region, Durham Community Foundation, and the AIDS Committee of Durham connect and share successes, challenges and solutions to common issues within their organizations.

New members are being recruited into the Network. If you would like more information about the DNN or are interested in becoming a member, please contact [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org) or 905-686-2661 Ext.135. You can also access DNN information on the CDCD website.

### NORTH DURHAM SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NDSDC)

With an aim of identifying needs and filling service gaps in North Durham, the NDSDC has been revitalized and meeting on a regular basis to discuss issues impacting vulnerable residents in the rural communities of Durham Region. CDCD is excited about the new possibilities for service improvements and attracting new resources to the North with these organizational partnerships.

NDSDC is committed to implementing four inter-agency meetings in North Durham a year to promote knowledge exchange among service providers. These meetings aim to enhance collaboration and raise awareness among community members and government representatives in rural, under-resourced areas. To become a member, please contact [proberts@cdcd.org](mailto:proberts@cdcd.org) or 905-686-2661 Ext.135.



### MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT

With funding from the Community Service Recovery Fund of the Canadian Red Cross, CDCD launched a Wellness Initiative to help staff improve their psychological health and well-being post-pandemic.

In 2023, a Mental Health Promotion Coordinator was hired, forming a Wellness Committee with staff from all CDCD departments. Initiatives for the 2023-2024 fiscal year included meditation sessions, a healthy eating challenge, whereby staff showed appreciation to their colleagues with a short message and a candy, staff peer support training, and a Wellness Information Board to promote employee wellness.

To align with Psychological Health and Safety standards, the Management Team, Team Leaders, and staff underwent training. Additionally, Psychological First Aid training was provided to all employees to better address mental health challenges among colleagues.



### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

The Community Development staff has explored social innovation over the past year. In the fall of 2023, Ryan Turnbull, Member of Parliament, Whitby, introduced CDCD to social innovation initiatives occurring in Durham, along with financing options for innovation, during an event held at Durham College. Shortly after, CDCD participated in an all-day workshop organized by Ontario Non-Profit Network, which focused on social enterprise. Staff valued the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the social enterprise landscape within Ontario's non-profit sector and to learn about successful initiatives. CDCD is actively exploring social enterprises that could benefit residents, such as a Furniture Bank and a soup-making franchise, and is enthusiastic about the potential for creating additional jobs and services within the Region.



### SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS IN DURHAM REGION

Successful service providers often begin their journey at the grassroots level, and the CDCD is committed to empowering these organizations not only survive but also to thrive in pursuit of their missions and visions. CDCD's Community Planner has established vital connections with grassroots organizations dedicated to serving diverse resident groups in Durham, including youth, the Black community, Black and Indigenous women with low incomes, and seniors. Partnerships are also being developed with groups that promote arts and culture.

CDCD offers a range of support services to these organizations, including financial oversight through trusteeship, mentorship from our staff, administrative and technical professional assistance, and guidance in grant writing and fund development.



# HELPING PEOPLE FIND A HOME

## Housing Help Programs

The goal of CDCD’s Housing Programs is to provide direct personal support services to assist individuals and families secure and retain safe and stable housing. Funded by the Regional Municipality of Durham, our services include advocacy, general information on landlord and tenant matters, mediation, support with landlord tenant issues, and providing referrals to other community services and programs.



### HOUSING STABILITY PROGRAM

The Housing Stability program assists qualified households throughout Durham Region to secure and retain housing by providing funds for rent arrears, utility arrears, and assistance with last month's rent and/or moving expenses.

In 2023, the Housing Stability Program disbursed approximately

**\$1,671,115.99**  
in financial assistance to

**582**  
family units

**349**  
single dwellings

### LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LEAP)

The LEAP program distributed approximately **\$72,837.68 in financial assistance** to over **197 households** in order to assist with hydro arrears.

### HOUSING FIRST PROGRAM

The Housing First program works with individuals from Durham Region's By-Names list who encounter significant challenges in securing stable housing. Its primary goal is to help those experiencing homelessness find stable accommodation first, and then connect them to additional services that address their other needs. This strategy aims to stabilize their housing situation and enhance their overall quality of life. The program is founded on the belief that individuals require essential resources, such as food and shelter, before they can focus on less urgent matters like employment, budgeting, or addressing substance use issues.

The Housing First team works closely with Community Partners such as the Region of Durham, Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Durham Mental Health Services, Back Door Mission, and Christian Faith Outreach Centre.



### ONTARIO ELECTRICITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (OESP)

OESP provides affordable options for low to moderate-income individuals by offering a reduction in their monthly electricity expenses. The Housing Outreach team helped **82 individuals** successfully apply for this program.

### HOUSING OUTREACH PROGRAM

CDCD's Housing Outreach Program is strategically aligned with the Region's objective to eliminate homelessness in Durham. The Housing Outreach team provides assistance to clients in the [Ajax](#) and [Pickering](#) areas, helping them secure and maintain their housing.

This team consists of two dedicated workers: a [Housing Outreach Worker](#), and a [Housing Outreach Settlement Worker](#) who specializes in supporting newcomers.

The Team offers clients assistance with:

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

In 2023, the team provided support to **1,687 households**, including **329 newcomers** to Canada. The Housing Outreach Team has built strong partnerships with a variety of community agencies and actively engages at the Ajax Hub, Ajax and Pickering Libraries, and the Ajax and Pickering Welcome Centres on a weekly basis.



### LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT

Landlord Engagement Specialists develop a support network for landlords and housing providers across Durham Region. The goal of this program is to support landlords' needs, ultimately fostering long-term successful tenancies. The Landlord Engagement Team provides assistance to landlords with the following information:

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

### OPENING DOORS DURHAM

The Opening Doors Program aims to strengthen relationships among local landlords, tenants, and Housing First Case Workers. The program focuses on individuals facing chronic homelessness and are on Durham Region's By-Name list.

Landlords participating in this program receive a signing bonus and gain access to a risk mitigation fund.

In 2023, the program expanded significantly, now supporting **86 landlords** and **121 available units**.

# PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

## Orientation and Information Program

Supported by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Orientation Program offers newcomers and immigrants the essential assistance, guidance, and support necessary for successful integration and settlement in Ontario and the Durham Region. Between April 2023 and March 2024, Orientation Workers provided services to:

**1,321**  
new clients

**1,331**  
returning clients

**2,652**  
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





12 Settlement and Newcomer Settlement Program 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:

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

### Newcomer Settlement Program

The Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) is supported by the Government of Ontario and offers personalized settlement services to meet clients' specific needs. Our clientele encompasses citizens, international students, internationally trained professionals, refugees, and visitors. Thanks to the NSP, clients receive valuable information, services, supports, and resources that aid in their successful integration into the region, especially during one of the most challenging and vulnerable periods - the beginning of their settlement journey. The NSP Settlement Team are expert system navigators, helping clients meet their various needs.

Last year the Newcomer Settlement Program provided services to **1,408 new clients**, **564 repeat clients** for a total of **1,972 clients**.

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
- 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
- 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)

The NSP - Settlement and Labour Market Integration Services for Asylum Claimants, (SLMISAC) program served

**110**

new clients

**54**

repeat clients

**164**

total clients

From April 2023 to March 2024, the Orientation and NSP settlement workers dedicated themselves to assist the increasing number of newcomers and refugees/asylum seekers, including individuals and families from [Ukraine](#) and [Afghanistan](#).

During this reporting period, of the **4,088 clients** served by both the Orientation and NSP settlement workers, **273 were Ukrainian** and **936 were Afghan** clients.

The Orientation workers remain exceptionally busy providing support to those who have fled their home countries due to war and perilous living conditions. Additionally, many of the Ukrainian and Afghan clients immigrating to the Durham Region traveled as part of larger family groups. In most instances, services were extended to all family members.

In the same vein, Durham has experienced a significant influx of asylum-seekers from African countries ([Sudan](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Eritrea](#), [Kenya](#), [Uganda](#), [Nigeria](#), and [Congo](#)) as well as [Honduras](#) who have accessed the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) which is an Associate partner within the Ajax Welcome Centre hub model.

In our continued response to the overwhelming demand for settlement services in the Durham Region, an additional itinerant location was established in October 2023, at the Whitby Public Library. This location continues to service clients at capacity with settlement workers offering services two days a week, including evenings. This location also bridges the area gap of settlement service locations between Oshawa and Ajax and for clients who face transportation challenges.

*“Nine months back when we came to Canada, we were completely blind and didn’t know what to do and how to proceed with our education, health care, child support and so on. So we asked for the guidance from the Settlement Worker, and gracefully now I am in college studying architecture in George-Brown college. Thanks a lot for nice service.”*



# FOSTERING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES FOR NEWCOMERS

## 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.

### 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. These programs and initiatives are aimed at enhancing the life skills, self-care practices and communication skills. Some of our youth programming include Youth English Conversation Circles, Employment/Job Search and Interviewing workshops, Customer service and cashier training. Recreation activities like soccer, basketball and cricket. Self-care sessions like Cooking Classes, Art Sessions, Wellness Chats, Stress Management, Yoga, Zuba and Public Speaking sessions in partnership with Aajx Outspoken Speakers Toastmasters' Club.



In 2023-2024, 195 newcomer youth accessed these services:

**65**

education and employment sessions

**15**

life skills and self-care sessions

**39**

health and wellness support activities

**11**

recreation and fitness

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.



**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.

The SWIS program collaborates effectively with school administrators to ensure seamless integration for newcomer families within the educational system. This involves facilitating the registration of students, guiding students and parents/guardians through school and community resources, and connecting them with appropriate services. Additionally, SWIS fosters leadership development through its youth advisory council and peer leader program. These initiatives empower students to support school orientation activities and serve as mentors to their peers who are new to the Canadian educational system, thereby enhancing the overall acclimatization process.

In 2023-2024 SWIS staff increased to a team of 10. Youth requested more opportunities to meet outside of school and SWIS met this request by delivering **131 group sessions** to youth this past year. Other programming SWIS offered included **42 group sessions** for parents/guardians, Peer Leader Training, Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW), and Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN).

**2,921** unique clients served

**8,696** service engagements delivered

**35** Peer Leaders Recruited

**10** Peer Demonstrators Recruited

**173** Youth and Parent Workshops

**2,430** Youth and Parents participated in workshops

**NEWCOMER ORIENTATION WEEK (NOW)**

The NOW program took place at J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate, engaging **43 newcomer secondary students**. This three-day, peer-led initiative supports newcomer youth in getting ready for their first day of high school. This year's program featured field trips to the local community library.

**WELCOME AND INFORMATION FOR NEWCOMERS (WIN)**

The WIN program proudly welcomed **28 families** to St. Francis de Sales Catholic School. These newcomer families were provided with valuable information about the elementary school system in Ontario, aiding them in their preparations for the first day of school.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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
- French Conversation Circles (FCC) in Ajax
- Women and Seniors groups
- Community Kitchen and Community Garden activities
- Trips and recreational activities to enhance newcomers' connections to their new home
- This year we introduced a men’s newcomer community kitchen activity to the program



2,628

service engagements delivered

303

number of activities

12

mentorship matches



BUILDING BRIDGES

Building Bridges hosted an Indigenous-led event in observance of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation—Orange Shirt Day—featuring Angela Duckworth, also known as Soaring Eagle Woman, from the Turtle Clan of Caldwell First Nation. Angela, an Indigenous Health Promoter at Durham Community Health Centre, guided participants through the spiritual practice of smudging and performed a gratitude song with a hand drum, elucidating the cultural significance of these traditions. This year, Angela emphasized the drum's importance in Indigenous culture, bringing several drums for participants to engage with and experience firsthand.

On November 16th, Building Bridges collaborated with the Women’s Group for a beading session with Angela, who guided participants through the beading craft while sharing its cultural significance within the Indigenous community. She recounted her generational journey in learning the art of beading and discussed the impact of residential schools on cultural preservation. The session facilitated

a meaningful exchange of cultural insights between the newcomer women and Angela, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of Indigenous traditions among all participants.



### DIGITAL LITERACY

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

Training topics include:

- Creating resumes and cover letters via Microsoft Word, safe on-line 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 on-line)
- One-on-one training as per client needs



# 112

workshops held

# 24

volunteers trained

# 192

unique clients

# 796

clients attended workshops



### DONATIONS

Our Donations Coordinator was brought on board to assist newcomer clients and Ukrainian families as part of the Durham Ukrainian Humanitarian Response Project.

A total of **36 grassroots, ethnic, and community groups** were involved, resulting in donations being provided to **989 clients**. A total of **196 families** received essential items, including furniture, mattresses, small appliances, and dishes. **194 clients** benefited from distributed food drives and winter clothing drives provided **130 clients** with necessary winter apparel. The Holiday Toy Drive enabled **428 newcomer children** to enjoy new toys.

**NEWCOMER WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM (NWEP)**

Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship 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 2023-2024.

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, and Durham Region Public Libraries.

*"The program helped me and other newcomer women to realize that we can create wonderful things with our talent."*



**16**

**business related workshops**

**6**

**network related sessions**

**68**

**participants attended business related sessions**

**122**

**participants attended networking related sessions**

**NEWCOMER WELLNESS PROGRAM**

The journey of settling in a new country is complex, and wellness is key for newcomer families. Focusing on physical, mental, and emotional health helps them build a strong foundation. Communities prioritizing wellness invest in the success and integration of these families, fostering health, resilience, and connection. Newcomer wellness programs offer sessions on brain health, exercise, falls prevention, healthy eating, and regular wellness checks throughout the year.

Among the many activities we coordinated this year, we hosted an inspiring Newcomer Family Wellness Day focused on the connection between mind, body, and spirit for newcomer families. The event featured engaging activities like Zumba, a Reptilia Zoo, arts and crafts, and a Mental Health and Wellness Workshop, providing valuable insights on stress management. It was a wonderful opportunity for families to connect, learn, and prioritize their health while having fun.



## A SAFE, WELCOMING, AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

### Welcome Centre Immigrant Services - Ajax

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

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.

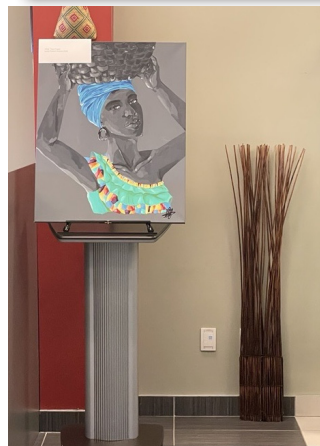
The Centre is a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment that addresses the complex and changing needs of newcomers. The service delivery approach is integrated, flexible, and holistic.

On-site, a broad range of cross-sectoral 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 Achev
- English-Language Training by Durham Catholic District School Board
- Accreditation and Qualifications Information by Social Enterprise Canada
- Employment Supports by Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre and
- The Resource Centre



The Ajax Welcome Centre took part in the global initiative of **#WelcomingWeek 2023**. 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 #WelcomingWeek2023.



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 has undergone a major renovation to expand its programming and services. This upgrade aims to uphold a high standard of service delivery excellence for the growing newcomer community in Durham Region, and their diverse needs.

It became clear that many clients preferred in-person services and learning. This shift from exclusively remote offerings to a combination of remote and in-person programs occurred gradually after the pandemic.

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 such as the Digital Sign-in.

The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) has been in operation for over eleven years. During the 2023 filing season, **263 returns** were filed, resulting in **\$1,577,185.57** in government benefits returned to clients, marking this program’s most successful season to date. The consistent popularity of this free program highlights its significance to the most vulnerable members of the community. With flexible appointment options to accommodate client schedules,



**45,041**

**Ajax Welcome Centre programs were accessed**

the clinic was accessible through in-person, remote, and drop-off/pick-up methods. The clinic is entirely volunteer-run, making the Centre’s ability to recruit and retain volunteers crucial 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

**1,742**

**unique service users**

was expanded because of the tremendous response from families in Durham in the previous year. In 2023, **949 backpacks** were distributed to **428 families**.

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

*“I thank you very much for everything you have done for me.”*

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 **City of Pickering's Cultural Fusion** and **Canada Day**; **Town of Ajax's Canada Day** and **Volunteer Fair**; and **Ajax Public Library** partner outreach.

## AJAX WELCOME CENTRE IMPACT



*“Thanks for all the great service and support. I have had an amazing result after our first meeting. Thanks to your help and recommendation, I got connected to Mr. S that gave me a job opportunity. I have started an amazing journey of studying and practicing Accounting and English as well.”*



**CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN (CNC)**

Our CNC program consists of experienced Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE), who develop a collection of fun and 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.

- The CNC program partnered with Family and Community Action Program (FCAP) to bring their Play to Learn program to newcomer children. It ran once a week for the month of July and August 2023.
- Family and Community Action Program (FCAP) and Durham Region Health Department connected with the CNC Program and AWC to restart the Lunch & Learn program from October 2023 to June 2024.
- The CNC offers an inclusive environment for newcomer children, accommodating various mobility, speech, and language abilities with the CMAS Resource Consultant.
- CMAS annually conducts site monitoring and assessments to confirm we are operating according to the Care for Newcomer Children requirements.

CNC provided occasional child-minding to clients accessing services from IRCC-funded programs at the Ajax Welcome Centre.



The CNC classroom is organized into designated play areas, fostering children’s physical, cognitive, social, emotional and language development. The curriculum and activities are tailored to the children’s interests, age group and skill level.

**1,237**

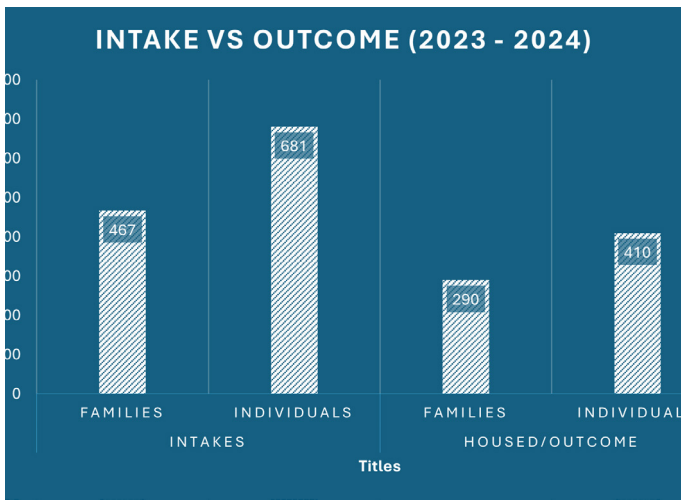
**group sessions were delivered**

# PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE IN CRISIS

## DURHAM HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROJECT (DHRP)

The Region of Durham funded the Durham Humanitarian Response Project. Its aim was to aid newly arrived Ukrainian's fleeing the war.

The program expanded in 2023 to provide support to all asylum-seeking individuals and families arriving in Durham Region. The DHRP assists them by providing comprehensive resettlement services and locating affordable housing within the Durham Region and nearby communities.



Wrap-around services were provided, with dedicated Resettlement and Housing Workers offering specialized guidance to facilitate seamless integration into Canadian life.

Some of the immediate needs identified included:

- Assistance with the refugee application process, including legal aid and medical examinations
- Support for children's education and school enrollment
- Facilitation of Ontario Works file transfer or enrollment
- Assistance in locating and securing suitable housing, including engagement with landlords
- Language assessments for adults, along with English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Access to local medical clinics and family doctors, as well as information about the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) coverage
- Mental health support services
- Guidance in employment searches and addressing job market challenges

The DHRP successfully accepted **678 individuals**, representing **466 households**, into two hotel sites.

Orientation sessions, both initial and ongoing, were held to help newly arrived families adjust to the shelter environment and the wider Durham Region.

Comprehensive intake and needs assessments were performed for each individual and household to identify immediate needs, foster client relationships, and prioritize referrals to community support services.

# 375

**individuals secured long-term affordable housing**

# 268

**households secured long-term affordable housing**

In order to effectively support families in meeting their needs, DHRP collaborated with other CDCD departments and various community partner organizations.

A wide range of activities have been introduced and implemented, including:

- Children's activities and social events designed for families and children
- Connections to mental health and medical support agencies
- A Toy Drive with Santa, a Holiday Dinner, and a New Year's Eve celebration

Additionally, monthly events and workshops have been organized that encompass:

- Monthly orientation sessions for individuals and families
- Educational sessions featuring on-site SWIS Workers to support parents and children
- Financial support workshops addressing topics such as the Canadian banking system, financial literacy, and available financial aid programs
- Immigration information sessions tailored for CUAET visa holders and asylum claimants
- Mental health and wellness workshops
- Celebrations of multicultural holidays, children's birthdays, and the arrival of new babies



DHRP continues to support clients as they graduate from the program and transition to affordable housing by:

- Providing exit packages to families moving from DHRP to permanent housing, which include relevant social and community resources available near their new residences
- Making warm referrals to local community partners
- Conducting follow-ups with families through an exit survey

*“I have written this letter to say thanks to all CDCD program working staff and management. Thank you for being their always since I joined the program. Finally, I found my own house in Oshawa and life is moving well.”*



## STAFF TRIBUTE

The Board of Directors and Leadership Team at CDCD, including Managers and Team Leads, would like to express their heartfelt appreciation for our employees. They are the driving force behind our operations, growth, and success. We extend our gratitude and recognition to both our current and former staff members. Thanks to the unwavering commitment of our team, CDCD has been able to foster the positive change we aim to create for the most vulnerable residents of the Durham Region.

### CURRENT CDCD STAFF MEMBERS

#### EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Hermia Corbette, Executive Director  
 Chantelle de Freitas, Executive Assistant  
 Stephanie Innocent, HR Coordinator  
 Sana Sakurai, HR Coordinator - on leave  
 Sanjay Sarkar, Finance Manager  
 Richelle Bornolla, Staff Accountant -on leave  
 Bhaskara Pothuri, Accounting Technician  
 Erick Sanchez, IT Administrator

#### HOUSING

Maliha Sobani, Housing Receptionist/Administrator  
 Josephine Afuwape, LEAP and Housing Data Integrity Worker  
 Anil Misir-Persaud, Housing Case Manager  
 Niki Goulden, Housing Case Manager  
 David Marder, Housing First Worker  
 Joanna St Croix, Housing First Worker  
 Lisa Sklar, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
 Kelly Jackson, Landlord Engagement Specialist  
 Jeff Roulston, Landlord and Engagement Specialist  
 Melissa Scott, Housing Intake Worker  
 Esther Tunde Kasumu, Housing Retention Worker  
 Tolulope Akande, Housing Retention Worker  
 Ashraf Omeri, Housing Retention Worker  
 Liju Nair, Housing Settlement Case Manager  
 Sharuga Selvakularajah, Housing Settlement Case Manager

#### UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME (UBI)

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

#### MANAGERS AND TEAM LEADS

Alison Baxter, Manager, Social Planning and Research  
 Ashley McDonald, Housing Manager  
 Catherine McNeely, Newcomer Community Services Manager - on leave  
 Patricia Liang, Manager, Durham Humanitarian Response Project (DHRP)  
 Wosen Beyene, Welcome Centre & Immigrant Services-Ajax Manager  
 Dilenia Teaz, Team Lead - Welcome Centre & Settlement Services  
 Pachee Vang, Team Lead - Care for Newcomer Children  
 Monica Tembo, Team Lead - Landlord Engagement, Opening Doors and Housing Retention  
 Edna Ucanda, Team Lead - LEAP and Admin Services  
 Sobia Ahmad, Team Lead - Newcomer Wellness, Volunteer & Youth Services  
 Vicki Kerr, Team Lead - SWIS & Community Connections  
 Kelly Dinis-Reid, Team Lead - Resettlement and Integration Support (DHRP)  
 Sayed Saeed, Team Lead - Resettlement and Housing Support (DHRP)  
 Valeria Pekarski, Team Lead - Information and Program Engagement Support (DHRP)

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Cullen, GAP Committee Facilitator  
 Padmini Persaud Roberts, Community Planner  
 Stephenie Bowie, Communications and Engagement Coordinator



**WELCOME CENTRE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES - AJAX (AWC)**

Nashrur Rudaba, AWC Receptionist & Administrative Assistant  
Shohreh Kehtari, AWC Receptionist & Administrative Assistant  
Sumintra Rampersad, AWC Receptionist & Administrative Assistant  
Rafiah Shaikh, AWC Receptionist & Administrative Assistant

**SETTLEMENT/ORIENTATION PROGRAM**

Hanna Siekowski, Senior Database Admin  
Ami Scott, Database Admin, Welcome Centre and Immigrant Services  
Alaa Aldwik, Orientation Worker – on leave  
Maria Abogado, Orientation Worker  
Sawsan Mohamed, Orientation Worker  
Mohammad Sohail, Orientation Worker  
Palwasha Wajdi, Orientation Worker  
Teresita Perera, Orientation Worker  
Maliha Batool, Orientation Worker  
Sofia Ahmed, Mental Health Settlement Worker - on leave  
Broniya Scaria, Mental Health Settlement Worker  
Vithieyah Atputharajah, Mental Health Settlement Worker

**NEWCOMER SETTLEMENT PROGRAM (NSP)**

Nalayini Ravindranath, Orientation/NSP Worker  
Saadat Qadri, NSP Worker  
Abdulkader Yassin, NSP Worker  
Suada Al Busaidi, NSP Worker

**IMMIGRANT AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

Donette Ambris, Donations Coordinator  
Sadaf Parweez, Outreach and Event Planner

**CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN (CNC) PROGRAM**

Uzma Khanum, Early Childhood Assistant

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM**

Katelin Grant, Community Connections Worker  
Mishal Abdulla, Community Connections Worker  
Tasnuba Rahman, Community Connections Worker

**SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS (SWIS)**

Ahmad Mustafa Haares, SWIS Worker  
Aloma Selvarajha, SWIS Worker  
Carmen Subibi, SWIS Worker  
levgeniia 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

**NEWCOMER COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM**

Avalina Rodrigues, Computer and Internet Coordinator  
Kim Harris-Eccleston, Newcomer Youth Services Worker  
Duvante Hull, Newcomer Youth Services Worker  
Victoria Guimaraes, Newcomer Women's Entrepreneurship Coordinator

**DURHAM HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROJECT**

Amber Stewart, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Abisha Jeevanantham, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Agyeiwaa Sarfo, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Rushana Vijayaratnam, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Nazita Zamani, Resettlement & Housing Worker  
Jimmy Oryema, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Mesfin Admassu, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Rolando Doria, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Winnie Nandudu, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Yemman Sahle, Resettlement & Integration Worker  
Mariia Pitolai, Resettlement & Integration Worker

**This year, CDCD staff members have exemplified unity and collaboration across various programs and departments. The collective ability of our team to adapt, learn, and grow has been truly inspiring, reminding us that together we can overcome any challenge.**

## CDCD'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CDCD's Board of Directors consists of 9 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. Learn about our outstanding governance team at [CDCD.org/Board](https://www.cdc.org/Board)



**ROGER RAMKISSOON**  
Chair



**PORTIA DAISY**  
Vice Chair



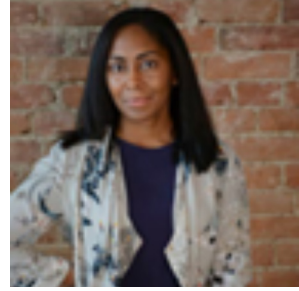
**HILLARY SMITH**  
Treasurer



**PINDER DASILVA**  
Secretary



**ALI ABBAS HIJRI**  
Director



**MELISSA MALCOLM**  
Director



**OMAR AIMAJDALAWI**  
Director



**TARAK AHMED**  
Director



**RISHAB MADHAR**  
Director



## THANK YOU TO OUR INCREDIBLE CDCD VOLUNTEERS

We deeply appreciate all our volunteers, as they play a vital role in fostering welcoming communities by dedicating their time and expertise to support our programs.

# 161

**CDCD volunteers**

Volunteering also provides the opportunity to gain invaluable workplace experience allowing individuals to develop new skills, build professional networks, and enhance their resumes, all while making a meaningful impact.

Moreover, volunteers often find a sense of fulfillment and purpose in their efforts, knowing that their contributions are helping to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone. By engaging in volunteer activities, people not only strengthen their own personal growth but also help to weave a stronger, more connected community fabric.

Last year, the large influx of Afghan and Ukrainian clients made leveraging volunteers crucial to our service delivery. **49 volunteers** contributed over **1,200 hours** to the Ajax Welcome Centre and CDCD'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, **45 volunteers** contributed **2,720 volunteer hours** in the English Conversation Circles and the Canada Connects program.

Through the SWIS Durham program, **51 youth**

# 5,618

**hours to CDCD programs and services.**

**volunteers** contributed **1,165 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 **5 volunteers** contributed **282 hours** and completed **376 tax returns**, which was the highest number of tax returns ever completed. Furthermore, other volunteers participated and supported Canada Day celebrations in Ajax and Pickering annually.

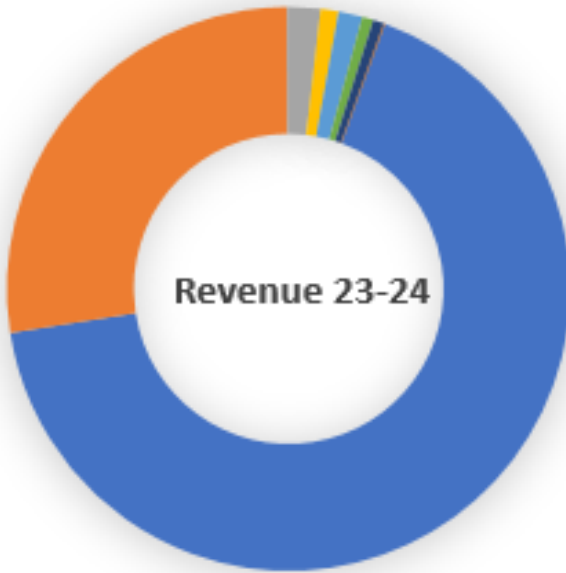
Community Development's **2 Volunteers** offered **55 hours**, to guide and inform the department's initiatives.

CDCD's **9 Board Directors** contributed **196 hours** to guide, direct, and oversee the strategic direction of the agency.

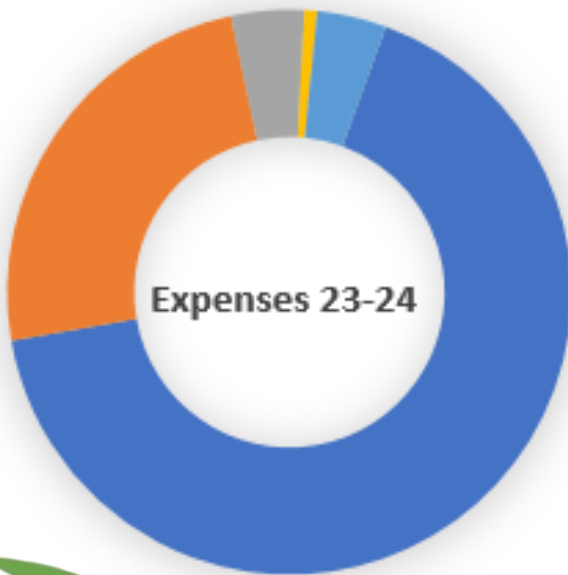


# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 1 APRIL 2023 - 31 MARCH 2024



- Region of Durham (67%)
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (27%)
- Universal Basic Income Works (2%)
- Ministry of Labour, Training And Skills Development (1%)
- Other Program Revenue Miscellaneous (1%)
- United Way Greater Toronto - Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) (1%)
- Amortization of Deferred Capital Contribution (1%)
- United Way Durham Region (0.1%)



- Settlement Services (72%)
- Housing Support (27%)
- Community Development (5%)
- Amortization (1%)
- Administration(-4%)

Please note the charts presented are based on CDCD's Audited Financial Statements which were prepared by Murphy & Chung Professional Corporation. To view the full version, please visit [www.cdcd.org](http://www.cdcd.org)









# PEOPLE PURPOSE POSSIBILITIES



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1 905 686 4157



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



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