

2011-2012  
Annual Report  
Summary



The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council  
[www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca)



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Hamilton Immigration  
Partnership Council

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The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council  
Vision

Hamilton is an inclusive community where the talents and experience that immigrants and refugees bring are valued because they are integral to making Hamilton the best place to raise a child.

<b>Lil Acevedo</b>	Housing Worker, Housing Help Centre
<b>David Adames</b>	President & CEO, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
<b>Elizabeth Bader</b>	Executive Director, North Hamilton Community Health Centre
<b>Gail Belisario</b>	Principal of Equity, Hamilton Wentworth District School Board
<b>Mary Cipolla</b>	Superintendent, Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board
<b>Jim Commerford</b>	<i>Chair</i> , President & CEO, YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford
<b>Huyen Dam</b>	Doctoral Student and Research Assistant, McMaster University
<b>Alain Dobi</b>	Coordonnateur du Reseau de soutiena l'immigration francophone (Coordinator of the francophone immigration network System)
<b>Howard Elliott</b>	Managing Editor, The Hamilton Spectator
<b>Neil Everson</b>	Director, Economic Development & Real Estate Division, Planning & Economic Development Department, City of Hamilton
<b>Gillian Hendry</b>	Director, Housing Services Division, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
<b>Don Jaffray</b>	Executive Director, Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
<b>Raja Jain</b>	Racism Prevention Officer, Labour Program - Ontario Region, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Workplace Equity Services
<b>Richard Koroscil</b>	President & CEO, Hamilton International Airport
<b>Ann Lamanes</b>	Communications Officer, Strategic Services Division, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
<b>Lily Lumsden</b>	General Manager, Career Development and Learning, YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford
<b>Brian McHattie</b>	Councillor, City Councillor, Ward 1, City of Hamilton
<b>Evelyn Myrie</b>	Executive Director, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
<b>Frank Passaro</b>	<i>Vice Chair</i> , Manager, Hamilton Main Branch, Scotiabank
<b>Joe-Anne Priel</b>	General Manager, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
<b>Steven Isaak</b>	Director, Health System Transformation, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN)
<b>Judy Travis</b>	Executive Director, Hamilton Training Advisory Board
<b>Jim Vanderveken</b>	Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies, Mohawk College
<b>Dr. Gary Warner</b>	McMaster University

I am proud to present this Annual Report of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC). In the following pages you will see just a few examples of how the HIPC is beginning to make a difference in our community. I always feel that an Annual Report is not just an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the past year but, in looking back to also find the inspiration in moving forward. For a more detailed and comprehensive description of the year's activities please visit the HIPC website at [www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca).

The year 2011-12 marked a number of significant changes for settlement in Hamilton. For the HIPC, in implementing the first year of the Hamilton Immigration Strategy – the first ever in the city's history – it has involved strengthening our governance arrangements, expanding our membership, and establishing a number of working groups. This ensures that we continue to further develop, and be apprised of, the growing level of activity being undertaken in Hamilton across a number of sectors that are making the city a more welcoming place for newcomers.

Our journey has not been without its challenges, but we are proud of our progress and excited about the future. Our journey is just beginning. The ever-changing immigration and settlement landscape makes this a challenging time for the HIPC. As Chair, I am aware of the growing number of issues that need to be addressed in the coming months and years and am confident that we are well-positioned to consider these upcoming issues as opportunities to be successfully pursued.

The overarching theme for me, in reflecting on the work of the last year, is the amount of sharing, participating and collaborating that is going on in Hamilton. If the HIPC is about nothing else, it is about providing the space and the place for Hamiltonians to come together in creating a more welcoming community for newcomers in the city we all call home. In that regard I must acknowledge our many partners – the government of Canada, the City of Hamilton, and the many individuals, organizations and institutions of the Hamilton community – and thank them for their commitment and support in pursuing the goals contained in the Hamilton Immigration Strategy.



Jim Commerford

Chair, Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council  
President & CEO YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) was convened in January 2009 as a planning and advisory body dedicated to forging community partnerships to improve the access, coordination and effectiveness of local settlement and integration programs and services. In this role of catalyst, convenor and collaborator the HIPC supports the development of local partnerships and community based planning around the needs of immigrants.

The HIPC is a multi sector stakeholder body comprised of community leaders representing organizations that provide services to, or have an interest in the integration of newcomers to the city. Members of the HIPC reflect many sectors of Hamilton's community including local government, community organizations, immigrant-serving agencies, language training bodies, business networks, educational institutions, media, employers, and the francophone community.

The first tasks of the HIPC included establishing a vision and terms of reference, undertaking local needs assessments and research, and establishing a three year Immigration Strategy and Action Plan. This developmental phase of the required the HIPC to navigate through a series of transitions from convening to partnership, from partnership to planning, and from planning to implementation. This Annual Report provides a summary review of the fiscal year 2011-2012 as the first year of implementation of Hamilton's first ever Immigration Strategy.

Based on an extensive process of community consultations and research the Immigration Strategy identified four strategic priorities:

► ***Building Collective and Collaborative Leadership***

The HIPC recognized that the achievement of its vision must have community ownership and buy-in. Operating on the principle that the issue of immigration is in everybody's interest in Hamilton and is everybody's responsibility, the Immigration Strategy calls on all residents, and as members of voluntary, private or public organizations, to support, endorse and commit to its Action Plan.

*Community Partner: Workforce Planning Hamilton*

**Workforce Planning Hamilton** has adopted immigration as a key priority as reflected in their annual work plan, and have significantly increased their immigrant focused activities to include:

- *Immigrant employment resources* to increase awareness of employment services available to recent immigrants supporting their job search, credential recognition and gaining employment
- *Employer outreach resources* to support employers in hiring and integrating newcomers into their workforce
- *Immigrant entrepreneurship* recommendations for communities to support immigrant businesses

### ► *Strengthening Settlement Services*

The HIPC identified as a priority the need for strengthening the coordination of the settlement services sector - which has recently be restructured - at the community level, improved immigrant access to mainstream service institutions, as well as increasing the awareness of these services by newcomers.

### ► *Creating A Welcoming Community*

A welcoming community is not only a community where everybody feels at home but it is also a community in which public fears and exclusionary practices towards newcomers is uncommon. The Immigration Strategy therefore identified public awareness and education activities as a priority to not only reduce public anxieties towards immigrants and support for the notion of a more inclusive community.

### ► *Creating and Disseminating Knowledge of Immigration*

The ongoing building and dissemination of foundational knowledge and local data on immigration and the newcomer experience in Hamilton is identified as being critical in sharpening the local narrative around immigration and as an essential precondition in the planning and delivery of relevant, high quality immigrant integration services.

In summary, the Immigration Strategy provides a coherent framework with long term goals and strategic actions for each of the four priority areas identified above. As a long term Strategy it enables community partners to use it as a guide in developing their own specific actions relevant to their interests. In articulating a collective underlying vision, the Immigration Strategy sets out the city's overall stance towards immigration and the manner in which all sectors in the city can approach the issue. The HIPC, through enjoining community partners to participate in this process, is the champion and facilitator in overseeing the successful implementation of the made-in-Hamilton Immigration Strategy. Some examples of just a few of the activities being undertaken by community partners toward implementing the Immigration Strategy are highlighted throughout this summary.

#### *Community Partner: The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board*

The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) has undertaken a number of activities to create a welcoming community that:

- Promotes to and encourages newcomer groups to access community use of space at HWDSB schools to hold events that strengthen community bonds and relationships such as after school programs that support student well-being in diverse school communities with high ESL populations.
- Provides a specialized and personalized learning program for Mandarin Transition Language
- Celebrates Black History Month, Asian and South Asian Heritage Month
- Offers a website with multi-language translation feature
- Offers translated versions of documents
- Ensures students' first languages are valued through the implementation of an Equity Policy

### **Governance**

In embarking on the implementation phase of its work the HIPC needed to recognize the extent of activity and the evident level of interest in newcomer issues in Hamilton across a wide range of sectors. It also needed to enlarge the participatory mechanisms by which a much larger number of community stakeholders could contribute in a collaborative framework. And the HIPC also needed to create an enabling mechanism to coordinate, support and keep abreast of the growth of activity being undertaken to implement the Immigration Strategy.

As a consequence, over the last year the HIPC has strengthened its governance arrangements, revised its terms of reference and expanded its membership from 16 to 24 members. In building two-way communication channels between provider agencies, practitioners, and immigrant communities in the city a major structural mechanism employed by the HIPC has been the establishment of a number of Working Groups. Comprised of senior staff from key service provider agencies across the city, these Working Groups (who meet on a monthly basis), include health, settlement service providers, language training, housing, employment/labour market, and a strengthening newcomer services group. A Steering Committee has also been established comprised of the working group Chairs to ensure coordination of the work and report back to the HIPC.

### **Public Awareness**

The HIPC website ([www.hamiltonimmigration.ca](http://www.hamiltonimmigration.ca)) continues to grow as the depository for all the research, reports, studies and activities undertaken by the HIPC.

Monthly Fact Sheets were produced in 2011-2012 covering a range of topics on settlement and immigration issues in Hamilton. In addition the HIPC quarterly newsletter reported on various activities and initiatives. An online user survey found that 97% of respondents found these materials useful for monitoring community trends, informing their decision-making, in helping serve clients, in program planning and creating reports and presentations.

In addition to distribution to the over 300 community members and agencies on the HIPC database, HIPC materials have been requested from an increasing number of researchers, students, provincial bodies, community organization Board members, hospitals, shelters, public health and many others.

### **Settlement Services**

A Settlement Service Providers Working Group has been formalised that comprises the YMCA, St Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre, Centre Francais, the school boards, Mohawk College, College Boreal, Hamilton Public Library, Circle of Friends and Wesley Urban Ministries among others. The service providers are sharing information on new and changing programs and services, developing communication materials, and sharing best practices and professional development opportunities.

In addition, a Strengthening Newcomer Services (SNS) Group has been established by the Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council with Workforce Planning Hamilton, the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, Inform Hamilton as well as the HIPC. In response to the closure of Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) it has been undertaking a community engagement and communications

process to increase awareness of the changing framework of newcomer services in Hamilton. With financial support from the Trillium Foundation a number of events were held over the last year including a marketplace event that attracted over 200 frontline workers. The SNS Group also conducted a series of focus group interviews with newcomers to assess their needs since the service system has been restructured following the closure of SISO.

In responding to the ongoing challenge that newcomers to Hamilton need to know what services are available and how to access them, the SNS group has produced a Quick Guide of newcomer services in multiple languages and enhanced and updated a database of newcomer services [www.welcometohamilton.ca](http://www.welcometohamilton.ca). The HIPC has also produced a comprehensive inventory of local settlement provision for local service providers. In addition, the HIPC actively supported the City of Hamilton Immigration Portal in obtaining provincial funding to update and generate more accessible and comprehensive local information on the Portal site that is of importance to both prospective and existing newcomers to Hamilton.

A Language Training Working Group, led by the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board and comprised of language training providers in Hamilton has also been established. It has developed a tool for settlement service providers profiling a variety of types of newcomer clients with different language needs and goals together with a list of the appropriate local language programs. This tool will help service providers better serve their clients in increasing awareness of the range of language training programs available in Hamilton.

## Health

Under the leadership of the North Hamilton Community Health Centre this Working Group is concerned with integrating health equity into the policy and planning of the LHIN, the City of Hamilton Public Health, and primary health care service organizations in the city. Newcomer health issues have already been made more salient within the LHIN, including for example a commitment to enhance the cultural competency of health care professionals in Hamilton.

Further, in creating a local health care services system that can be easily navigated by newcomers, the Working Group is developing a strategy to ensure newcomers have access to a wider and more coordinated continuum of health services.

## Housing

Led by the Housing Services Division of the City of Hamilton, a Working Group has been established that has expanded and updated information on affordable housing options for newcomers in Hamilton.

A Housing Kit is being developed which is directed at newcomer tenants, landlords and settlement service providers that also details how to access housing as well as explaining the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

In addition, the housing needs of newcomer families have been incorporated into the 10 year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan of the City of Hamilton.

## Employment/Labour Market

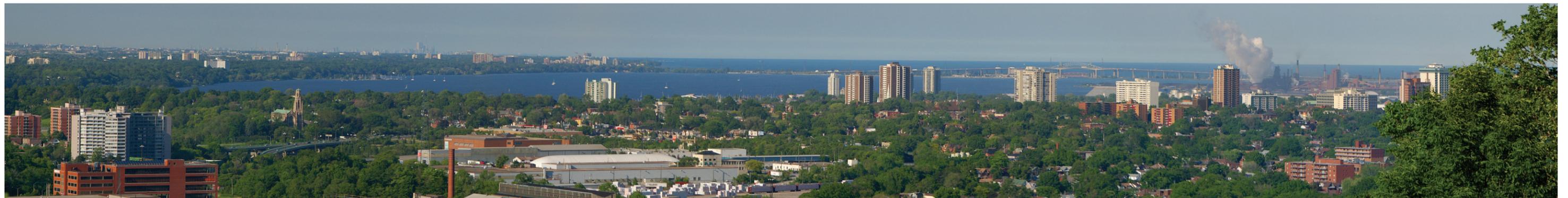
Led by Workforce Planning Hamilton, a Working Group has been established to address the difficulties newcomers face in gaining access into the Hamilton labour market. It has developed a comprehensive resource guide to help newcomers become successfully employed in Hamilton and that includes a listing of all employment and employment related services in the city. This group also has developed a resource guide for immigrants who are planning to start a business in Hamilton.

## Sustainability

The notion of sustainability in the work of the HIPC is founded on the premise that the settlement and integration of newcomers to Hamilton involves all members and sectors of the community. Over the last year, in addition to establishing the Working Groups, the HIPC has developed working partnerships with many other key collaborative groups and organizations in the city, and will continue to support the implementation of the Immigration Strategy and Action Plan through these community partners.

In addition to the Mayor and every single member of Hamilton City Council, the HIPC has obtained the formal commitment – through signing a Declaration of Intent – of twelve other key community organizations in the city to incorporate immigration and settlement issues into their everyday business. These formal endorsements are not only an important indicator of institutional leadership and commitment but the actions they are already taking as a result is an indication of the considerable increase of local resources being dedicated to the settlement of newcomers to Hamilton. It is also an indicator of the long term actions that are being taken to sustain Hamilton as a welcoming community for newcomers.

The progress of the work of the HIPC over the last year could not have been achieved without the contributions of these community partners nor the contributions – in terms of time, expertise and resources – provided by the over 80 member organizations who are directly involved in the HIPC Working Groups. The breadth and extent of commitment by so many in Hamilton in implementing the Immigration Strategy is not only an indication of the importance of immigration to Hamilton but is a positive indicator of sustaining a level of community involvement and ownership necessary to address the challenges of the settlement experience over the long term.



## Challenges and Next Steps

### Evaluation

The above brief summary of the work of the HIPC over the last year has highlighted how collaborative partnerships are beginning to address settlement and integration efforts in the city. This multi-sector collaboration, which has brought together diverse communities of interest in the city, is addressing local immigrant integration issues in a more comprehensive fashion than has ever before been attempted.

As a newly established planning, advisory and collaborative body in Hamilton it is perhaps too early to draw any definitive conclusions about the local impact of the HIPC. However, the work of the last year suggests that it has begun to play an important role in:

- Assessing local newcomer needs and community settlement service assets and gaps.
- Creating a single community focal point around immigration as an important new initiative in the city and an important missing piece in the local civic context and infrastructure.
- Developing local partnerships around immigrant integration issues for information mapping, sharing, planning, coordination and priority setting.
- Recognising the strengths of Hamilton's civil society and tapping into the social capital of the community as exemplified by the number of Hamiltonians who are actively involved in addressing the challenges in so many key areas impacting on the settlement process.
- Expanding the number and diversity of local stakeholders addressing settlement issues.
- Increasing mainstream provider and newcomer awareness of settlement services.
- Increasing the number of local agencies adapting programs and services to immigrant needs.

In summary the HIPC has established a strong foundation by which it can continue to build and contribute to the successful realization of Hamilton as an inclusive and welcoming community to which newcomers will want to come and stay.

#### Community Partner: Catholic Children's Aid Society

**Catholic Children's Aid Society (CCAS)** works closely with settlement service providing agencies to:

- Provide free information sessions to organizations who serve newcomer families and in return, these organizations provide CCAS with consultations for immigrant families.
- Provide information sessions to newcomer parents about the functions and role of CCAS in their community to raise awareness about where to go for support when receiving child welfare services
- Provide translations and interpretation services for clients

In order to sustain the momentum of the last year, the HIPC will continue to focus on building, expanding and sustaining partnerships throughout the community to not only facilitate increased coordination among service providers but also to ensure the involvement of local stakeholders who are equipped to address newcomer issues.

The HIPC will continue to enlarge the mechanisms for distilling and communicating out its work.

The HIPC will work to not only strengthen the immigrant retaining strategies that keep immigrants in Hamilton with a strong local infrastructure of well-coordinated integration services, but will also consider a set of immigrant attraction strategies. The challenge of Hamilton's future growth and competitive advantage will be increasingly dependent on immigration. The latest 2011 figures show a significant decline in the number of landed immigrants settling in Hamilton in proportion to those coming to Canada. In response to the changing nature of immigration to the city the HIPC will consider how a proactive local immigrant attraction strategy can be supported that focuses on economic and business newcomers.

The HIPC will consider how it can increase its capacity in taking a proactive role in more directly participating in and contributing to a broad range of local decision making processes that address both integration and retaining strategies as well as attraction strategies.

Further, the HIPC may consider a wider lens to its work that identifies and accesses the appropriate levers of change and additional resources on a broader stage beyond the boundaries of the city that will strengthen its work within Hamilton.

Finally the HIPC will continue to support and champion the more deliberate and conscious efforts that still need to be incorporated into the policies, plans and work of many organizations and institutions within the city in pursuit of a more inclusive and welcoming community.

#### Community Partner: The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce (HCC)** has developed the *Diversity Works!* program matching mentors from the local business community with newcomers wishing to start a business in Hamilton. HCC also offers the Bridging to Business Program to assist International Trained Professionals transition into self-employment and the *Micro Lending Program* to provide entrepreneurs financial support.



Photo Credit Tourism Hamilton 2011

## Contributing Partners

Acevedo,	Lil Housing	<i>Help Centre</i>
Adames,	David	<i>Hamilton Chamber of Commerce</i>
Ali,	Hodan	<i>Hamilton Centre for Newcomer Health</i>
Aliu,	Arsim	<i>YMCA</i>
Allan-Fleet,	Kathy	<i>North Hamilton Community Health Centre</i>
Antelo,	Maria	<i>Hamilton Community Legal</i>
Bastos,	Manuel	<i>Labourers Union</i>
Barnes,	Brett	<i>Corporation Canada Mortgage and Housing</i>
Baxter,	Tracey	<i>Goodwill</i>
Beader,	Elizabeth	<i>North Hamilton Community Health Centre</i>
Belisario,	Gail	<i>Hamilton Wentworth District School Board</i>
Biro,	Lidija	<i>Hamilton Wentworth District School Board</i>
Bishop,	Judith	<i>Hamilton Wentworth District School Board</i>
Bratina,	Bob	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Brodati,	Dave	<i>Housing Services Division, City of Hamilton</i>
Brooks,	Denise	<i>Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre</i>
Cade,	Carolyn	<i>Wesley Urban Ministries</i>
CheaiB,	Ali	<i>Mohawk College</i>
Cipolla,	Mary	<i>Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board</i>
Clark,	Brad	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Collins,	Chad	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Commerford,	Jim	<i>YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford</i>
Corby,	Lorie	<i>Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</i>
Corewyn,	Donna	<i>YWCA</i>
Crapsi,	Maria	<i>YMCA</i>
Dam,	Huyen	<i>McMaster University</i>
Dandato,	Mbuso	<i>Goodwill</i>
Des Jardins,	Mike	<i>Youth Engagement &amp; Action in Hamilton (YEAH)</i>
DiGregprio,	Nancy	<i>Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board</i>
DiNardo,	Ersilia	<i>Catholic Children's Aid Society</i>
Dobi,	Alain	<i>Francophone Immigration Network System</i>
Dolbec,	John	<i>Hamilton Chamber of Commerce</i>

## Contributing Partners

Doyle,	Denise	<i>YWCA</i>
Duprus,	Gisèle	<i>Collège Boréal</i>
Duval,	Elizabeth	<i>Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration</i>
Duvall,	Scott	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Eckart,	Angela	<i>Employment Hamilton</i>
Eisenberger,	Fred	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Elliott,	Howard	<i>The Hamilton Spectator</i>
Everson,	Neil	<i>Economic Development, City of Hamilton</i>
Ferguson,	Lloyd	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Figueredo,	Liliana	<i>Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion</i>
Fortino,	Mara	<i>Service Canada</i>
Frketich,	Rosemary	<i>Local Health Integration Network</i>
Garry,	Daljit	<i>Wesley Urban Ministries</i>
Hamade,	Mahar	<i>Hamilton Chamber of Commerce</i>
Hamilton,	Lorraine	<i>Collège Boréal</i>
Harkness,	Glenn	<i>Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton</i>
Heffernan,	Irene	<i>Community Services, City of Hamilton</i>
Hendry,	Gillian	<i>Community Services, City of Hamilton</i>
Huibers,	Larry	<i>Housing Help Centre</i>
Huigenbos,	Kristin	<i>Economic Development, City of Hamilton</i>
Hunter,	Dr. Andera	<i>McMaster Children's Hospital</i>
Ingle,	Cyndi	<i>Workforce Planning Hamilton</i>
Isaac,	Anita	<i>retired health professional</i>
Isaak,	Steven	<i>Local Health Integration Network</i>
Jackson,	Tom	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Jaffray,	Don	<i>Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton</i>
Jain,	Raja	<i>Workplace Equity Services</i>
Jones,	Jim	<i>Circle of Friends</i>
Josipovic,	Jenney	<i>Wesley Urban Ministries</i>
Kajiura,	Pauline	<i>Community Information Hamilton</i>
Khattab,	Yasmeen	<i>McMaster University</i>
Kikulwe,	Daniel	<i>Catholic Children's Aid Society</i>

## Contributing Partners

Klassen, Carla	<i>Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton</i>
Koroscil, Richard	<i>Hamilton International Airport</i>
Kowalski, Maciej	<i>Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre</i>
Lamanes, Ann	<i>Community Services, City of Hamilton</i>
Langham, Lorraine	<i>Hamilton Public Library</i>
Lescesen, Radenka	<i>St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre</i>
Lovegrove, Shawn	<i>YMCA</i>
Lukasik, Laura	<i>Hamilton Public Library</i>
Lumsden, Lily	<i>YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford</i>
MacIsaac, Rob	<i>Mohawk College</i>
Mallik, Anisha	<i>Circle of Friends</i>
Malloy, John	<i>Hamilton Wentworth District School Board</i>
McCarthy, Margaret	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
McHattie, Brian	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Melnick, Donna	<i>Community Services, City of Hamilton</i>
Merulla, Sam	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Mikelsons, Claudette	<i>Collège Boréal</i>
Mitchell, David	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Morelli, Bernie	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Morris, Leah	<i>Adult Basic Education Association</i>
Myrie, Evelyn	<i>Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion</i>
Otshudi, Bonaventure	<i>Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton</i>
Palmer, Patrice	<i>Mohawk College</i>
Passaro, Frank	<i>Scotiabank</i>
Pasuta, Robert	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Pearson, Maria	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Powers, Russ	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Priel, Joe-Anne	<i>Community Services Department, City of Hamilton</i>
Pyke, Justin	<i>Hamilton Emergency Services</i>
Rice, Chandra	<i>Local Health Integration Network</i>
Rios, Ines	<i>St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre</i>
Rogers, Linda	<i>Mohawk College</i>

## Contributing Partners

Routery, Charmaine	<i>Hamilton Wentworth District School Board</i>
Sadler, Elizabeth	<i>Mohawk College</i>
Schleehan, Norm	<i>Economic Development, City of Hamilton</i>
Skrobos, Sebastien	<i>Centre Francais Hamilton Inc.</i>
Stadnicki, Wally	<i>Employment Hamilton</i>
Sturgess, Jennifer	<i>vpi Inc.</i>
Taylor, Stephanie	<i>Wesley Urban Ministries</i>
Tokaci, Aurelia	<i>YWCA</i>
Travis, Judy	<i>Workforce Planning Hamilton</i>
Tudoran, Tatiana	<i>vpi Inc.</i>
Van der Leden, Monique	<i>Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board</i>
Vanderveken, Jim	<i>Mohawk College</i>
Warner, Gary	<i>McMaster University</i>
Wasuge, Madina	<i>Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion</i>
Wetselaar, Renée	<i>Affordable Housing Flagship</i>
Whitehead, Terry	<i>City of Hamilton</i>
Winterle, Melanie	<i>Volunteer Hamilton</i>

