



Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

BUILDING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Refugee Resettlement in Victoria: Looking Back and Moving Forward

www.icavictoria.org

Overview of presentation:



Looking back:

- Overview of region
- Snapshot of refugee resettlement in Victoria
- Challenges
- Successes

Moving Forward:

- Present status
- Strategies

ICA has served the Capital Region of BC since 1971



Who has been coming into the CRD?

- 2000 new immigrants
- 2500 international students in the Capital Region
- 1000 Temporary Foreign Workers
- 550 Refugees (includes GARs, PSRs, and BVORs)

ICA Services



- Clients served: 2500 annually
- Programs include Settlement, LINC, CNC, Employment, Resettlement, SAH
- Arts, Community Development & Education, CPN, LIPs
- Offices: Two offices
- Staff: 95
- Itinerant services – 13 municipalities

Snapshot of Resettlement in Victoria

- Meetings with key community partners: Island Health Authority, Victoria, Sooke and Saanich School Districts, Municipal Mayors, Vancity Credit Union, and CPN members
- Mid-February 2017 – ICA informed Victoria approved as a new RAP Centre
- Mid to end February CA negotiated, IRCC contracts hotel and the Canadian Red Cross, RAP staff hired, ISS of BC provides training to new RAP and Settlement staff

Snapshot of Resettlement



- February 29, 2017 – 20 Syrians (4 families)
- By March 6, 2017 – 154 Syrians have arrived (40 families)

Challenges



- Short timeline
- Partnerships
- Expectations
- Housing

Successes

Partnerships

- Island Health
- School Districts
- Hotels
- Transit Authority

Community volunteers

- Furniture
- Community Connections
- Donations

Moving Forward...

- Continuing as a RAP Centre and welcoming refugees
- Building and Maintaining partnerships
- Communication
- Connecting community to newcomers

Welcoming Refugees

- 285 government-assisted refugees / 82 families
- 243 privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and 14 blended visa office referred cases (BVORs) (ICA & Anglican Diocese SAHs)
- Other arrivals through national SAHs and Groups of Five

Strategies

Building and Maintaining Relationships:

- Have regular meetings
- Honor, recognize, and promote champions in specific partnerships
- Connect partners with each other



Strategies

Communication:

- Establish clear communication lines
- Showcase success stories
- Create high profile projects
- Use of technology – social media tools



Strategies

Create Opportunities for Connection:

- Community Connections - volunteers
- Arts Programming – The Heart of Belonging





Thank You

wlee@icavictoria.org

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