



Welland Heritage Council  
and Multicultural Centre

News

NEWS

## 'I am here to work': Asylum seekers pour into job fair in Niagara Falls

Boniface, from Nigeria, comes away with job leads he hopes will help him to provide for his family



By Paul Forsyth Niagara This Week - Niagara Falls

Thursday, May 4, 2023 2 min to read

## Dragon boats to race again for Welland Heritage Council

Fundraiser returns to Flatwater Centre after 3-year hiatus

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Monday, May 27, 2023 2 min to read

## Welland non-profit employment service relocates to help Niagara Falls asylum seekers

## Ukrainians and friends wear an embroidered shirt Thursday

Vyshyvanka represents Ukraine's resilience in the face of war

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 2 min to read

## Program certifies Niagara's newcomers for success

Foreign credential recognition helps immigrants play role in filling the labour gap

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 2 min to read

## Welland agency shows jobseekers the Power of Possible

There are around 1,400 asylum seekers with work permits in Niagara Falls

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Monday, April 21, 2023 2 min to read

## Agency connecting refugee claimants with job opportunities

Welland Heritage Council's Employment Solutions opens Niagara Falls location

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Niagara Falls

Monday, July 17, 2023 2 min to read

## Newcomers can help fill Niagara's employment gap: Advocates

Streamlining certification process can help alleviate health-care pressures, others say

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Monday, April 24, 2023 2 min to read

## 'February Forever': Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre celebrates Black History Month

Celebrations included singing, spoken word, poetry to start the month

By Nick Fearnis Niagara This Week - Welland

# DOING GREAT THINGS

## Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre

## Employment Solutions

## Multicultural Network of Niagara Falls

## Annual General Meeting

'...to work': Asylum seekers pour into job fair in Niagara Falls

...e, from Nigeria, comes away with job leads he hopes will help him to provide for his family

By Paul Forsyth Niagara This Week - Niagara Falls

The Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre (WHCMC) integrates newcomers and Canadians by delivering diverse and accessible programs and services that empower them to reach their full potential and provide resources and supports so they may contribute to the success of a growing and inclusive community.

al recognition helps immigrants play a role in filling the local job gap

NEWS

Newsletters Today

ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS OBITU

July 15, 2023

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Niagara Falls location  
Niagara Falls

NEWS

Newcomers can help fill Niagara's employment gap: Advocates

Streamlining certification process can help alleviate health-care pressures, other advocates celebrate

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland

Monday, April 24, 2023 2 min to read

CELEBRATE

CELEBRATE

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Ann  
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As president of the Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre, I would like to thank the executive and the board of directors for their dedication. I wish to acknowledge the strong leadership of our Executive Director and the very talented staff who work tirelessly to provide encouragement and support to our clients; including newcomers, job seekers and employers.

In this our 47th year of serving the community, through many challenges of the volume of newcomers arriving and the lack of affordable housing, we are proud to say we continue to serve our clients and engage with the community to expand services and achieve success.

The greatest contribution to our community is to help immigrants gain the necessary skills to live and work in Canada so they can become successful participating members of our society. We watch with pride as immigrants build new lives for themselves here in Canada.

To all our volunteers thank you for your assistance, without your generous efforts WHCMC would not be able to execute what we do.

We do great things.



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK



*Janet*

*Madume*

At WHCMC, our theme this year is "Do Great Things," which deeply resonates with our journey. In the midst of unprecedented challenges, we remain firmly committed to our mission of serving the community.

The arrival of a significant number of refugee claimants in Niagara Falls has presented a formidable challenge. In response, we have taken proactive steps, working closely with our community partners to provide essential on-site services. Our primary goal is to ensure immediate access to necessary support for those in need. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, we have expanded both our team and services, bridging gaps and addressing the unique needs of refugees. Our dedication goes beyond a mere response; it is a profound demonstration of our commitment to creating a tangible impact during times of crisis.

Engagement remains at the core of our efforts. We prioritize nurturing strong relationships with our funders, community partners, stakeholders, and dedicated volunteers. These connections fortify our settlement and integration services, which are thoughtfully designed to address crucial aspects affecting newcomers, immigrants, and Canadian citizens alike. A robust support network is indispensable for individuals to not only survive but also thrive in unfamiliar circumstances.

Our focus on empowering individuals through employment remains strong. We continue to actively connect our clients with meaningful employment opportunities while providing them with accurate information and relevant guidance. This approach aids foreign-trained individuals in their journey towards professional growth and self-sufficiency.

Our dedication extends to the Ukrainian community as they embark on their integration journey into Canada. We warmly welcome them, offering support to facilitate a seamless transition. Our commitment to their success reflects our deeply held belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to flourish in their new home. These remarkable achievements are made possible through the collective efforts of our exceptional Board of Directors, dedicated staff, and tireless volunteers spread across the Niagara Region. We are profoundly grateful for the continuous support of our esteemed funders, whose commitment illuminates WHCMC's path. As we look ahead to the future, we carry with us the spirit of "Do Great Things." Our journey thus far exemplifies our potential for greatness, even in the face of adversity. We remain resolute in our commitment to transforming challenges into stepping stones toward resounding success.

# HISTORY AND CONTINUED PARTNERSHIPS

Over the past 47 years, the **Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre** has stood as a steadfast pillar in helping thousands of immigrants overcome barriers to integration and has witnessed their successful journey to building new lives here in Canada. Our organization's most significant contribution to our community is empowering immigrants with the essential skills to live and work in Canada, enabling them to become thriving and contributing members of our society.

It brings us immense pride to note that many of our former clients have become valued volunteers, staff members, and board members, actively contributing to building a stronger and more culturally aware community. The Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre serves as a vital link to the economic growth of Niagara by assisting newcomers in settling within our communities and offering continued support as they embark on their new Canadian endeavors. In recent years, our services have expanded to include employment and entrepreneurial support for both Canadians and newcomers.

The **Multicultural Network Services of Niagara Falls**, established in 1995 as a satellite office, extends our reach by providing settlement services in Niagara Falls.

Our fundraising activities, though impacted by external factors, continue to support critical programs and foster stronger partnerships within the business communities. Developing a more robust network with other organizations in the Niagara Region has proven to be our best strategy for consistently delivering quality services to the community.

In alignment with our philosophy of diversity and inclusion, our network of community partners spans across the public, private, and non-profit sectors. We collaborate closely with ethnic halls and cultural associations within the community, as well as actively participate in Niagara Region inter-agency groups, sharing information, resources, and exploring opportunities for closer collaboration.

Effective communication with our organizational members occurs through formal channels such as regular meetings, joint ventures, and partnerships, as well as informally through the myriad of working relationships we have cultivated over time. Our commitment to fostering a thriving, diverse, and inclusive community remains unwavering.

# Program certifies Niagara's newcomers for success

Foreign credential recognition helps immigrants play role in filling the labour gap  
By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 ⌚ 2 min to read



**NIAGARA FOREIGN CREDENTIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM**  
Are you an internationally trained professional seeking to re-enter your profession in Canada?

**WE CAN HELP!**

- ✓ Assistance with foreign credential assessment for internationally trained professionals
- ✓ Learn the necessary steps to be able to re-enter your career or a close alternative in Canada
- ✓ Financial planning for taking the necessary steps
- ✓ You could qualify for a loan!

Open to all Niagara residents who are Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents, or Persons granted Refugee Status and legally permitted to work in Canada.

Contact Us for more information  
905-732-8377 x128  
hwester@wellandheritagecommell.com

In partnership with:  
**Meridian Canada**

**Employment Solutions**

**WE CONNECT GREAT COMPANIES TO GREAT PEOPLE.**

Downtown Office:  
8 East Main Street  
Welland, ON L3B 3W4  
P. 905-732-8377

Seaway Mall Office:  
800 Niagara Street  
Welland, ON L3B 5Z4  
P. 289-489-1800  
P. 289-489-3199

Hamilton

## Welland non-profit employment service relocates to help Niagara Falls asylum seekers

There are around 1,400 asylum seekers with work permits in Niagara Falls

Cara Nickerson · CBC News · Posted: Apr 21, 2023 7:56 AM EDT | Last Updated: April 21



# PROGRAMS



# SETTLEMENT COUNSELLING AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Our dedication to comprehensive settlement services remains strong, with a firm commitment to ensuring the seamless and successful integration of newcomers into our community. The cornerstone of our efforts is the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP), generously funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development, which encompasses a diverse range of vital support services.

Our NSP embraces a holistic approach, offering an array of essential services that include information and referral, advocacy, needs-based workshops, engaging group sessions, one-on-one counseling, and various forms of support. These services are thoughtfully designed to empower our clients in their journey towards citizenship, enhance their ability to not only enter but also thrive in the Niagara Region, and forge meaningful connections within our diverse community.

Our settlement team in collaboration with community partners began to provide services onsite in Niagara Falls at hotels, as well as at MacBain Community Centre and Drummond Hill Presbyterian Church two days a week to facilitate the provision of workshops and one-on-one sessions for asylum seekers.

Furthermore, our dedication extends to assisting Ukrainian newcomers with their settlement and integration needs, including housing. We welcome them with open arms, providing the necessary support to ensure a smooth transition into their new home in Canada. Our commitment to their success reflects our unwavering belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to flourish in their new environment.

## 2022/2023 SNAPSHOT

Settlement Unique Clients 1011

Settlement Client Interactions 6114

Settlement Referrals to Other Services: 642

Workshops and Info Sessions: 104

ANNUAL REPORT 22/23





# NIAGARA FOREIGN CREDENTIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM/ LABOUR MARKET ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

Niagara Region welcomes many highly skilled internationally trained professionals every year. Our programs exist to help them be able to return to using their valued skills here in Canada. This past fiscal year as the loan part of our federally funded Niagara Foreign Credential Recognition Program wound down, we were grateful to launch the new provincially funded Labour Market Orientation Program, a part of our Newcomer Settlement Program that continues the work we have been doing of assisting internationally trained individuals to know about international credential assessment and the process of how to return to their profession, or to select an alternative. We are often needed to advocate with the regulatory and licensing processes so that newcomers understand the requirements and do not give up mid-process. 271 clients were served this fiscal year, more than doubling our expected outcome.

With so many needing to leave their countries of origin due to wars, natural disasters, and oppression, they arrive to Canada not knowing where to find the information needed to return to their careers. We are grateful to our funders for the opportunity to be there to provide this information and referrals to needed services, while continuing to give support until professional goals are achieved.

It takes an entire community of partnerships to help newcomers succeed, thank you to every one!

ANNUAL REPORT 22/23



# ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are offered to adults aged 18 and older who are Refugee Claimants, Convention Refugees, Government Sponsored Refugees, Landed Immigrants, Permanent Residents, or Canadian Citizens. These classes are funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development through the District School Board of Niagara and were offered in Welland, Niagara Falls, and Grimsby during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Classes run from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. We offer a range of levels, from pre-Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) to level eight CLB. Our program consists of two terms per year, from September to December and January to June. At the end of each term, students receive a report card to assess their performance in class. We also administer a summer school program for students who wish to study in July, with classes running from Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Our ESL lesson plans are thoughtfully designed to cover the four essential language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. We emphasize practical conversation skills and integrate classroom learning into real-world scenarios, exploring various themes throughout the year, such as health and safety, employment, adapting to Canadian culture, housing, and recreational activities, including Canadian holidays. Furthermore, we provide insights into Canadian workplace culture and impart language skills necessary for success in the workplace.

We understand that adaptability is key to effective service delivery. In the 2022-2023 academic year, we navigated changing circumstances as needed, which included serving asylum seekers in hotels with online classes. We are proud to offer both in-person and hybrid models to cater to our students' preferences. In locations such as Niagara Falls and Grimsby, we resumed in-person classes in September of 2022, providing a valuable opportunity for students to interact with instructors and peers face-to-face, fostering a sense of excitement and gratitude within our community.





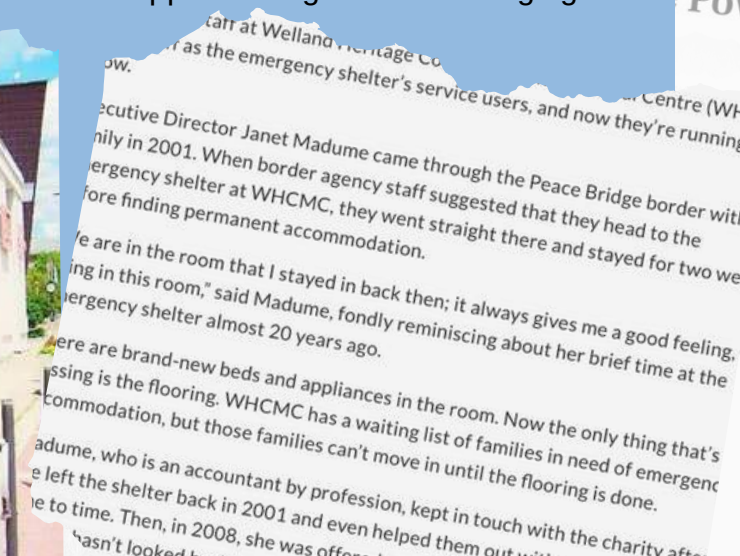
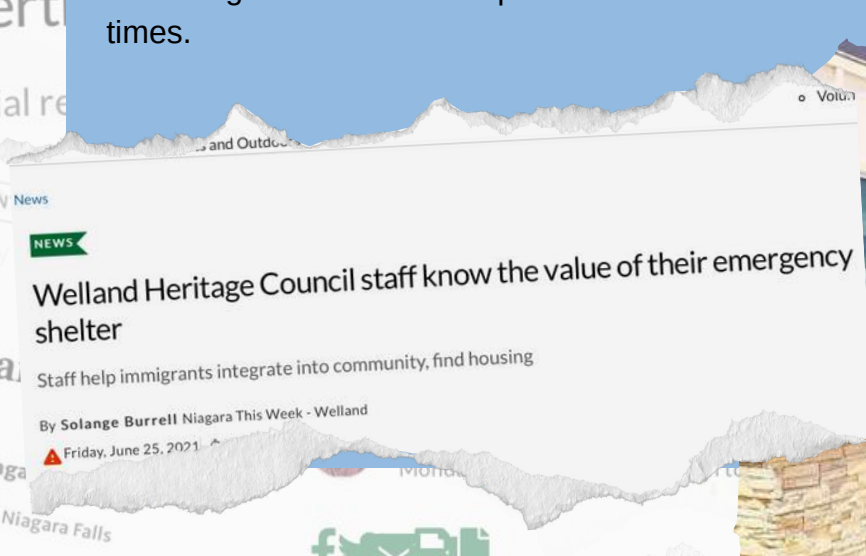
# EMERGENCY SHELTER

Throughout the year, our focus remains on promoting self-reliance and improving housing stability for our clients, especially considering the ongoing housing crisis. Our Emergency Shelter plays a crucial role in providing a safe haven for those facing housing instability. The shelter remains consistently full due to the challenging housing situation, highlighting the urgency of our mission. We actively facilitate city tours, connecting our clients with housing specialists and available rental properties. For many newcomers, these connections and insights are invaluable, as they may lack the local knowledge required to secure suitable and permanent housing. Our goal is to create a secure learning environment, where every interaction serves as an opportunity for clients to progress towards self-reliance and long-term housing solutions.

The success of our efforts relies heavily on the hard work of both our coordinator and our clients. Leveraging available resources and community connections, we empower our clients to achieve self-sufficiency and independence. Throughout the year, we also respond to emergency situations, providing temporary housing and essential support to those facing immediate challenges. Equipping them with the knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, as well as fostering connections within the community, is essential in helping them navigate their journey towards independence and success.

**We are proud to report that we secured housing for 16 families and 63 individuals during the year, with a total of 88 clients benefiting from our services.** Through follow-ups and continued communication, we are pleased to note that all of these individuals and families maintain their housing stability.

In a housing market marked by crisis, our Emergency Shelter remains a vital lifeline, offering refuge and assistance to those in need. We recognize the critical importance of this service in our community, providing a safe space and support during these challenging times.





# TNO MIGRANT WORKER PROGRAM


In collaboration with Employment and Social Development Canada, The Neighbourhood Organization and Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre are working together to provide Conversational English classes to migrant workers in the Niagara Region. This initiative aims to eliminate barriers and improve the economic and social determinants of migrant workers by enhancing their English language skills with the following objectives:

**Empowering Migrant Workers:** The program seeks to empower migrant workers by improving their English language skills, which will enable them to better understand and exercise their rights.

**Enhancing Literacy:** By providing the ability to read contracts, documents, and other resources, the program aims to enhance the literacy of migrant workers, enabling them to make informed decisions.


**Promoting Safety:** The program will help migrant workers understand and operate in a healthier and safer environment by facilitating effective communication and comprehension of safety protocols.

**Improving Communication:** Improved English language proficiency will lead to better communication between employers and employees, fostering a more productive and harmonious work environment



Welland Heritage Council  
and Multicultural Centre


## Migrant Worker's English Class



**Our goal:**


- Assist Migrant Workers with community integration
- Learn language skills applicable to their workplace

**Computers provided in-class if needed**




January 9 2023 - August 31 2023  
Monday-Friday 6:30-8:30pm  
1 day in person, 4 days virtual per week


To register please contact: [jlsmith@wellandheritagecouncil.com](mailto:jlsmith@wellandheritagecouncil.com)  
or call 905-732-5337 and ask for "Jesycka Smith"



THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ORGANIZATION



Employment and Social Development Canada



Emploi et Développement social Canada

# CANADA SUMMER JOBS

The Canada Summer Jobs program is sponsored through Service Canada and enabled us to hire two students in the summer of 2022 to assist the work of the Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre. One student supported the Employment Solutions services and worked at our Ontario Road location; the other student worked at our 26 East Main St. location.

The Youth Program Coordinator supported the Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre by creating and offering activities for newcomer youth, as well as assisting our settlement team with preparing the many information flyers for the sessions offered to newcomers to Canada at hotels in Niagara Falls. She grew up in an immigrant family and was able to relate to the experiences of newcomer youth.

The Client Service Clerk supported our Employment Solutions team with client services, attending meetings, and administrative tasks. Being a newcomer to Canada himself, he was grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow professionally.

We are always grateful to be able to provide youth with employment experience in a non-profit setting. Here are excerpts from their final reports: "I know this experience will help me in my studies within the field of social and community services because of the way diversity and inclusion are the key values of this organization as well as my own"

"With all the skills, the relationships I made here, I believe whatever job I land into in the future, I will be able to easily adapt and also provide my expertise anywhere."

Drop-in

## YOUTH GROUP HANGOUT

Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre

- All of August -  
Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays  
@ 1pm - 4pm



## YOUTH Volunteers

Any youth looking for volunteer hours, please contact  
student@wellandheritagecouncil.com

# EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS

Employment Solutions, funded by Employment Ontario in partnership with Fedcap Canada (Service System Manager for the Hamilton-Niagara region) through the Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre, is dedicated to empowering job seekers and employers in the Niagara region. We offered services through our two accessible locations in Welland, located at the Seaway Mall and the Rose City Plaza.

## Client-Centric Approach:

- **Reducing Stress:** Job searching can be challenging, and we understand the complexities involved. At Employment Solutions, we prioritize our "Client First Approach," aimed at alleviating stress, setting clear goals, and guiding clients through their job search journey.
- **Customized Solutions:** Our highly trained staff work closely with clients to conduct comprehensive assessments, identifying their unique goals and needs. We then tailor our approach to create personalized strategies for success.
- **Referral Services:** Recognizing that securing employment isn't always the ideal solution for every client, we provide assessments to determine if a referral to other community agencies, such as Better Jobs Ontario (formerly Second Career), or alternative forms of skill development are better suited to their needs.

## Employer Engagement:

- **Comprehensive Support:** Employment Solutions actively supports Niagara's employers by assisting with job postings, applicant screening, interview coordination, and organizing job fairs.
- **Serving Small Businesses:** Many of the employers we collaborate with are small businesses that benefit greatly from our free services. Our strong relationships with employers enhance our clients' job prospects, giving them a competitive edge.
- **Training Incentive Placement Agreement (TIPA):** Funds used toward workforce development and skill enhancement.

## Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG):

- **Skills Development:** Employment Solutions administers COJG, a program funded by the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada. This grant empowers Niagara employers to invest in training for their staff, leading to skill development, promotions, and increased compensation. In the 2022-23 fiscal year, we allocated over \$93,300 to six employers, supporting Ontario's journey toward having the most highly skilled workforce in Canada.



# EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS CONTINUED

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- We served over **400** clients throughout the year to achieve their employment goals.
- Conducted Job Fairs for over **300** jobseekers
- Customer Satisfaction is very high for both offices.

EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS REMAINS DEDICATED TO SERVING THE NIAGARA REGION. OUR COMMITMENT TO CLIENTS AND EMPLOYERS, OUR CUSTOMIZED APPROACH, AND OUR VALUABLE PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUE TO DRIVE OUR SUCCESS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER YEAR OF EMPOWERING CLIENTS, SUPPORTING EMPLOYERS, AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE REGION'S ECONOMIC GROWTH. CONTACT US IF YOU'RE SEEKING TO UPGRADE YOUR TEAM'S SKILLSET OR IF YOU'RE A JOB SEEKER IN NEED OF SUPPORT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING TRUST AND COLLABORATION.

### NEWS

## 'I am here to work': Asylum seekers pour into job fair in Niagara Falls

Boniface, from Nigeria, comes away with job leads he hopes will help him to provide for his family

By Patricia ... Niagara This Week - Niagara Falls



Boniface used to work as a truck driver in his native Nigeria, but he quickly realized when he came to Canada in the hope of forging a new life for his family that getting behind the wheel of a big rig here was going to cost thousands of dollars he can't afford right now.

So he joined a huge crowd of asylum seekers currently being housed at Niagara Falls hotels by the federal government at a job fair at the Niagara Falls Innovation Hub in the city's downtown on Thursday, seeking opportunities.

Among the employers were Bayshore Home Health, Niagara Casinos, Radisson Hotel and Suites Fallsview, the Hilton Niagara Falls Fallsview and Canadian Niagara Hotels seeking employees for attractions such as the Hard Rock Café, the Rainforest Café, Fallsview Indoor Waterpark, and Great Wolf Lodge. Job openings ranged from sous chefs and information technology administration to lifeguards and cleaners.

Boniface (organizers asked that his last name not be used to protect his privacy) said he came away with two job leads, but in the meantime he was starting training as a forklift operator the next day in the hope he'll eventually be able to obtain his D licence.

"I thought I would work driving a truck, but I see it's too difficult and the cost is too much," he said. "(But) I am here to work. I need to get established and I need to provide for my children and my family."

# MULTICULTURAL NETWORK OF NIAGARA FALLS

We have adapted our services in Niagara Falls to better cater to newcomers. With support from the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development through the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP), we offer a range of services aimed at helping newcomers integrate into the community and pursue citizenship pathways.

Our services include information and referral, advocacy, needs-based workshops, group sessions, one-on-one counseling, and other forms of support. We strive to empower newcomers to not only establish themselves successfully in the Niagara Region but also to foster meaningful connections within the community.

To ensure the safety and privacy of our clients, we have made necessary modifications to our service delivery. We have also embraced technology, utilizing platforms like Zoom to regularly provide information and orientation sessions to our ESL students in Niagara Falls.

Our goal is to support newcomers as they embark on their journey in the Niagara Region, facilitating their integration and helping them build a strong foundation in their new home.

Hamilton

## Welland non-profit employment service relocates to help Niagara Falls asylum seekers

There are around 1,400 asylum seekers with work permits in Niagara Falls

Apr 21, 2023 7:56 AM EDT | Last Updated: April

around Niagara

Madume said the newcomers will also play a big part in filling vacancies many local employers are begging to have filled.

"All these people are here with their wonderful skills, and they're transferable skills; people are coming with a wealth of knowledge," she said. "This is addressing the labour gap we have."

Abdullah Rophael, program manager with Employment Solutions, said local employers are eager to land many of the newcomers as employees.

"We had one hotel hire 30 people on the spot yesterday and they're here today to hire more," he said.

Inside the job fair, Niagara Casinos human resources planning and staffing consultant Jenna Barnes spoke to prospective employees about opportunities such as cleaning, grounds maintenance, cooks and jobs as the new OLG Stage theatre at Fallsview Casino Resort.

She told one man new to Canada there are also a lot of usher and security positions available at the theatre.

"We're hiring in a lot of different positions, depending on what you want to do," she told him.

Madume





# JOY IN THE FORM OF RESISTANCE

WITH THE PIGMENTED PODCAST

## FEATURING NIKKI CLARKE

FEBRUARY 27, 8:00 - 9:00 AM

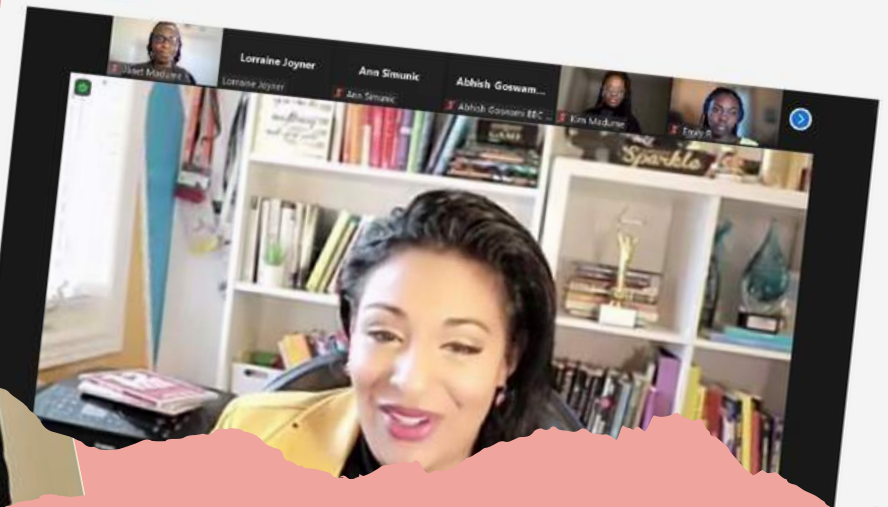
### 19th Annual International Women's Day

EMBRACE EQUITY

### 'February Forever': Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre celebrates Black History Month

Celebrations included singing, spoken word, poetry to start the month

By Nick Fearnis Niagara This Week - Welland  
Sunday, February 6, 2022 · 2 min to read



Arrival of Guests  
8:00 - 8:05 AM

Video by Ethan Radcliffe  
8:05 - 8:10 AM

Welcome & Land Acknowledgement  
8:10 - 8:15 AM

Introduction to Panel  
& Kim Podcast Host Nikki Clarke of 'Clarke Show'

# EVENTS

Niagara Falls location  
Monday, April 24, 2023 · 2 min to read

By Nick Fearnis Niagara This Week - Welland



# EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

The Welland Heritage Council was not yet able to hold these events in 2022 due to the continued presence of Covid-19 variants and people maintaining a high level of caution around large social gatherings. Our events raise funds to support our agency and the needs of the Emergency Shelter and its occupants, and the Multicultural Festival brings our community together in celebration of the cultures represented in our community.

**Ladies Night Out FUNraiser – May:** Includes vendors, dinner, silent auction, raffles, and door prizes at The Croatian National Home. Ladies gather for an elegant and fun night out with family and friends for a great cause!

**Dragon Boat Festival – June:** The Welland Dragon Boat Festival takes place at the world class Welland International Flatwater Centre. Teams sign up to participate in a day of races culminating in the awards ceremony. Food vendors as well as other vendors sell products and services. Volunteers are appreciated! The festival is an excellent way for us to reach out to the community, with free admission and no experience required to enter a team.

**Welland Multicultural Festival - June:** The Welland Multicultural Festival has partnered with the Rose Festival Days in the Park to offer a vibrant afternoon of cultural entertainment amidst the scenic backdrop of Merritt Park. This dynamic collaboration not only brings together a diverse array of cultural groups but also tantalizes taste buds with an enticing array of ethnic cuisines. Moreover, in conjunction with the Welland Museum, the festival enriches the experience by offering engaging activities, including enlightening Indigenous cultural demonstrations. The festival's participation in the CEED of Hope parade further underscores its commitment to fostering unity and celebrating the rich tapestry of cultures that make up our community.



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On March 8 we celebrated our 19th Annual International Women's Day event at the Welland Civic Square. Every year the newcomer men and women who attend honour the achievements of a woman who came to Canada, whose story then inspires the other newcomers in attendance that they can succeed as well. Through our event's newspaper publicity, the community learns about these success stories as well.

Our event began with an explanation of the origin of International Women's Day, followed by our inspirational speaker Lidiia Bulaivska, who started over in Canada from Ukraine and has already launched her successful theatre group here in Niagara while also being available to support other arrivals from Ukraine at all hours of the day and night. Lidiia proposed a fast-track English instruction class to help Ukrainians get into the work force which became funded through our successful application and she will be sharing the results of this project in next year's AGM report.

Our International Woman of the Year for 2023, Zainab Sarwari, came to Canada from Afghanistan in 2017. She graduated from Welland Centennial Secondary School in 2020 in her second language, receiving a gold medal for involvement in school and a good average in all her courses, and served as the international representative on the student council. Now in her third year as a medical science student at Brock University and named to the Dean's Honour List in Year 1, she is actively pursuing her goal to become a doctor. She was instrumental in assisting with the recent sponsorship of her extended family to be able to come to Canada after escaping the Taliban rule. They are now safe and were in attendance to see her receive this honour.

Our Executive Director Janet Madume presented the trophy to Zainab. The trophy is inscribed with our winners' names and remains at our centre throughout the year.

## 'No one is talking about it': Afghan women's fate worries Woman of the Year winner

Zainab Sarwari named 19th Welland Heritage Council's International Woman of the Year

By Richard Hutton Niagara This Week - Welland  
Thursday, March 9, 2023 · 2 min to read



Zainab Sarwari has worked hard to establish a life in Canada since coming to Canada from Afghanistan with her family six years ago.

But she can't help but think about friends and family she left behind since the Taliban returned to power in May of last year.

"Before the Taliban took over, girls were able to work, and they had the opportunity to go and get an education," Sarwari said. "They took everything from them."

Sarwari, who came to Canada not knowing any English, is now a third-year student at Brock University studying medical science with the goal of eventually becoming a doctor.

Her hard work and persistence since arriving in Canada back in 2017 was recognized by the Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre (WHCMC). She was named the group's International Woman of the Year. It is the 19th time the award has been handed out.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This year's Black History Month celebration, aptly themed "Joy in the Form of Resistance," was a profound and enlightening experience, thoughtfully curated by Emily and Kim of the Pigmented Podcast. The event, hosted by the esteemed Nikki Clarke of "The Nikki Clarke Show," unfolded in a virtual realm on the morning of February 27, 2023. It was a platform not just for celebrating the remarkable contributions of Black individuals throughout history but also for acknowledging the enduring spirit of resilience and joy in the face of adversity that characterizes the Black community's journey.

In a powerful moment of unity and reflection, our local Member of Parliament, Vance Badawey, joined us to share his thoughts and insights on the significance of Black history in our society. His presence added depth to the event, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and honoring the struggles and triumphs of Black Canadians.

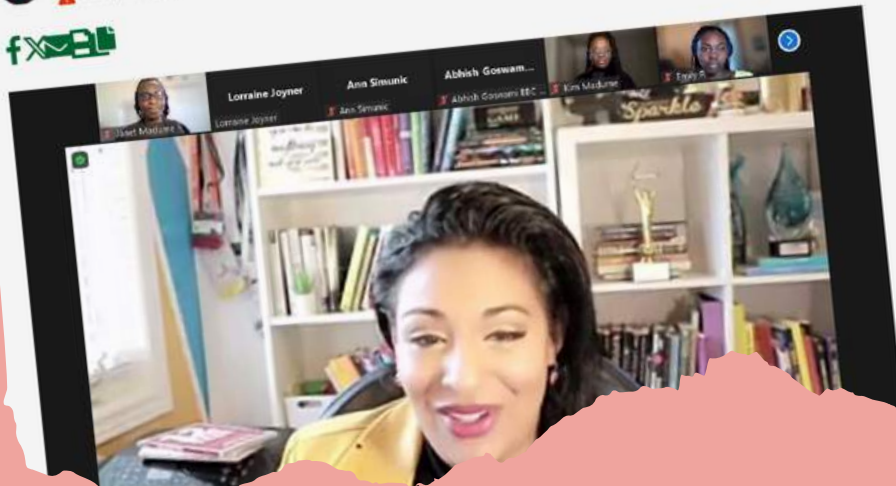
Moreover, the impact of this celebration extends far beyond the event itself. All funds raised during this event are dedicated to providing scholarships for the post-secondary education of promising marginalized youth in Welland. These scholarships, awarded at their secondary school graduation ceremony in June, represent a tangible investment in the future of our community. They serve as a testament to our commitment to nurturing talent, promoting education, and ensuring that the legacy of Black history continues to inspire and empower generations to come.

## NEWS 'February Forever': Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre celebrates Black History Month

Celebrations included singing, spoken word, poetry to start the month

By Nick Fearnis Niagara This Week - Welland

Sunday, February 6, 2022 2 min to read



"February is indeed History Month. It is an opportunity to understand history going beyond of racism and slavery, to spotlight achievement and excitement," said Madume.

"How many stories of the greats like Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Viola Davis, and our very own Harriet Tubman, as we observe and celebrate that history, culture and experiences," she said.

She then introduced Emily Radcliffe, a fourth-year student in arts and business at the University of Waterloo. Radcliffe wrote the song "The Boulder and I," in response to the play "Madness with Rocks" and sang it live to the crowd, for which she was applauded.

George Mora, who recited a poem by Kenny Gwena later in the celebration, called Radcliffe's performance "mesmerizing."

Fellow Waterloo student, Kim Madume, who collaborates with Radcliffe on a podcast, recited an insightful spoken word piece.

"Black history is the story of our grandparents tell us of their journey. It's the countless letters and reflections we write in journal entries. It's the memories that we hold on to and the ones passed down through centuries," she said.

Mora then read part of his poetry while Gwena responded. He spoke about...



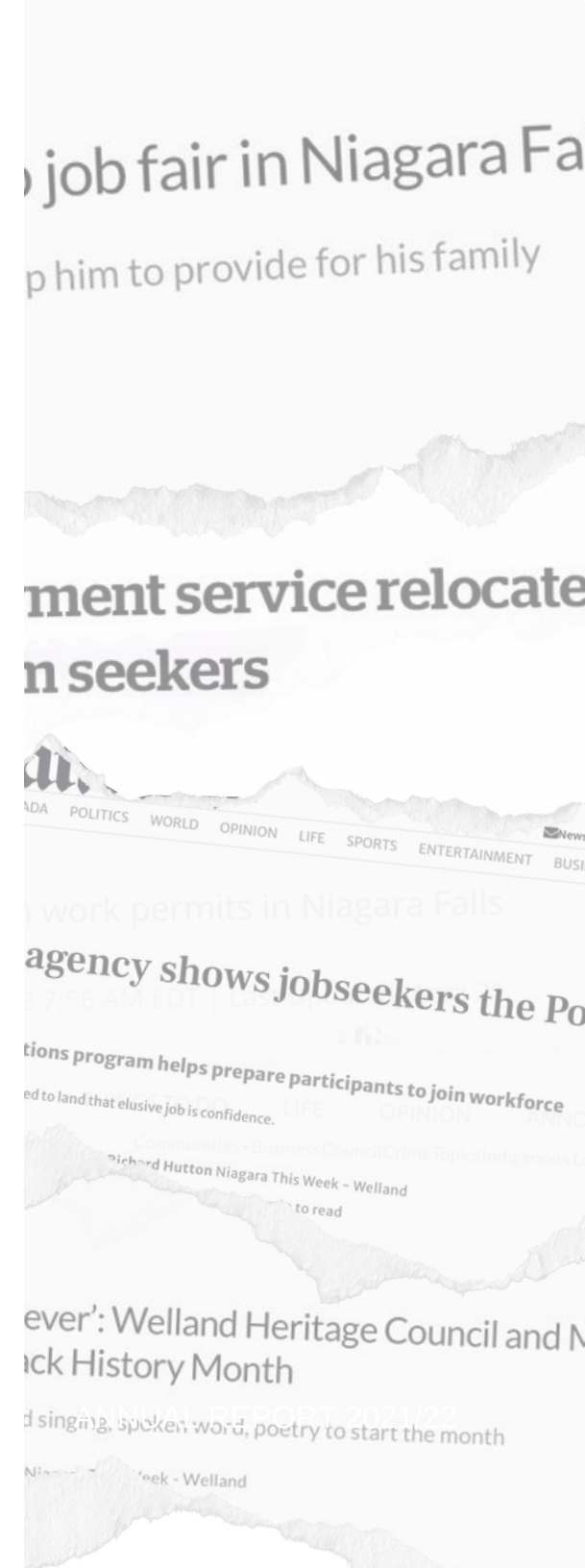
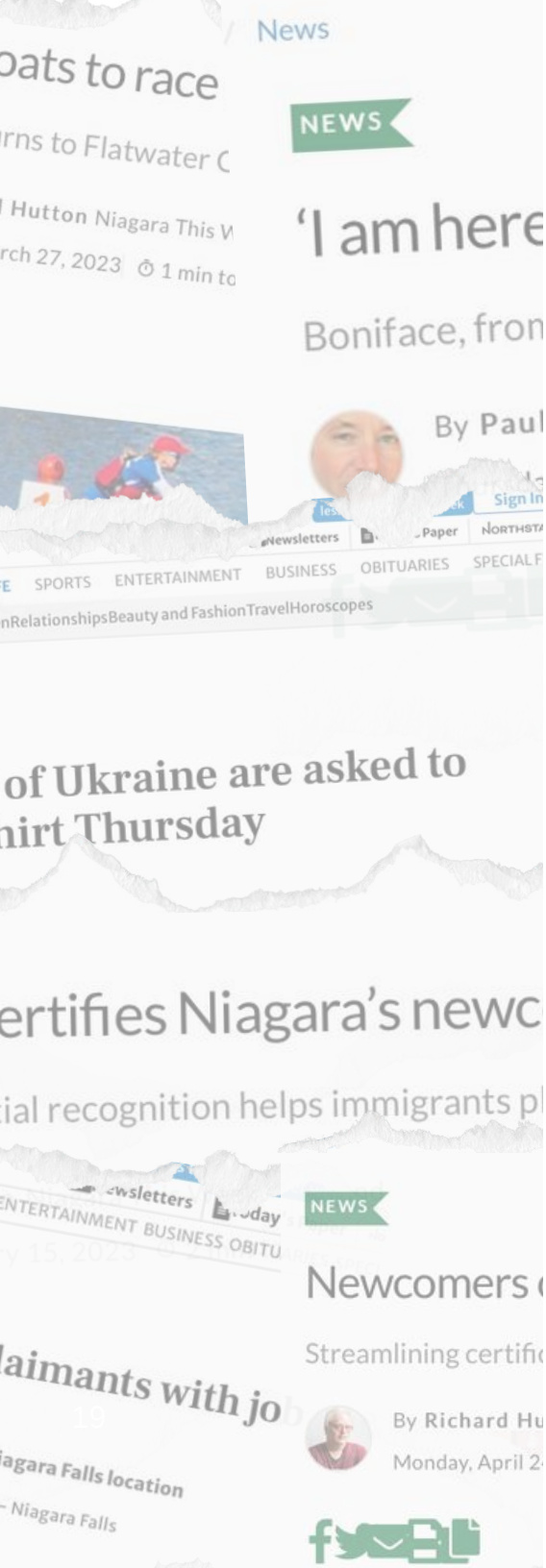
# HIGHLIGHTS

## 2022 - 2023 REFLECTIONS

Our team will never forget this time of providing services onsite at hotels to do our best to meet the overwhelming need of so many refugee claimants arriving to Niagara Falls. We were grateful to receive funds to assist with the resources that were so needed this past year.

## 2023-2024 LOOKING FORWARD

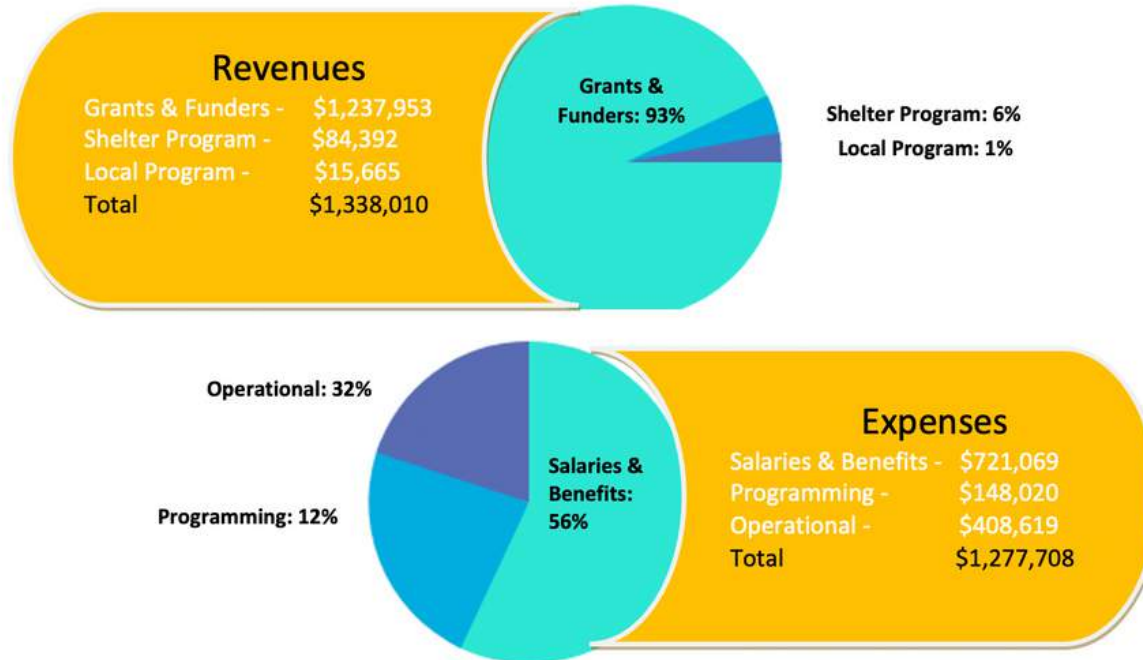
We will continue to do our best to ensure the success of recent arrivals to Niagara Falls to find housing, English classes, and employment that matches their skills.



# FINANCIALS

THE WHCMC SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 IS AS FOLLOWS

TOTAL ASSETS: \$524, 284





**THANK YOU**

# TO OUR FUNDING PARTNERS:

Government of Canada

City of Welland

District School Board of Niagara

Economic Social Development of Canada

Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills

Development

Service Canada

Niagara Community Foundation

The Neighbourhood Organization - TNO

Niagara Region - Niagara Prosperity Initiative





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to our Board of Directors who volunteered extensive hours to govern this organization and make decisions to assist with all our extensive programs in Welland and Niagara Falls.

## Executive

President: Ann Simunic

Vice President: Toni Tosti

Treasurer: Margita Galat

Secretary: Paula Esposito

## Directors

Michael Charles

Debi Anderson

Christine Clarke Davis

April Jeffs

# THE TEAM

Thank you to our staff for going above and beyond the call of duty, for your dedication and loyalty to the organization, its programs and the clients who gain knowledge through sharing your expertise.

**Executive Director:** Janet Madume

**ESL Teachers:** Elham Meleka, Sherry Main, Alysia Felker-Penner,  
Kate Agar

**ESL Coordinator:** Jesyka Smith

**Migrant Worker Program Instructor:** Kate Agar

**Lead Settlement:** Kenny Gwena/Marsha Whittaker

**Settlement Counsellors:** Marsha Whittaker, Juan Pablo Vicentes Perez,  
Karina Kufta

**Housing Coordinator:** Andriy Lotsman/Karina Kufta

**Niagara Foreign Credential Recognition/Labour Market:** Lori Webster

**Social Media Strategist:** Kelsie Chasse

**Canada Summer Jobs Students 2022:** Ala Cho/Moayed Mahmoud

**Employment Solutions Program Manager:** Abdullah Rophael

**Team Lead Employment Services:** Katana Bossetti

**Employment Advisors:** Katana Bosetti, Paula Gongora, Kristin Jongman,  
Madeleine Mackenzie, Tasha Rodriques, Atia Ather, Andreana Maxwell,  
Adesegun Adedoyin Martins Imotsikeme

**Job Developers:** Brian Fletcher, Emelia Keay, Andreana Maxwell

**Retention Specialist:** Kristin Jongman, Liudmyla Babina, Olha  
Yevtushenko, Charlene Fargan-England, Adeola Awogbemi, Tasha  
Rodriques



#### **TO OUR MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL**

Canadian Slovak League • Casa Dante Lodge 19 • Club Rheingold • Francophone Group • Croatian National Home • Hungarian Self Culture Society of Welland • Romanian Group

#### **TO OUR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are an integral part of our services and have been generous with their time. They have been very committed to our programs and events.

#### **TO OUR SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS**

Bowes IT Solutions • Brock University • Canada Revenue Agency • Canadian Mental Health Association • Canadian Tire Store • Centre de Santé Communautaire • CERF Niagara • CEVAW Member Agencies • City of Welland • Community Living • District School Board of Niagara • École Secondaire Confédération • Employment Help Centre Beamsville, Grimsby, Smithville • Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce • Fort Erie Multicultural Centre • Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre • Good Shepherd • Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce • Habitat for Humanity • Job Gym • John Howard Society • Literacy Link • Meridian Credit Union • Metis Nation of Ontario • Niagara Catholic District School Board • Niagara Chapter-Native Women • Niagara College • Niagara Community Legal Clinic • Niagara Employment Help Centre • Niagara Falls Chamber of Commerce • Niagara Falls Public Library • Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre • Niagara Peninsula Homes • Niagara Region • Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre • Niagara Workforce Planning Board • OnDemand Staffing • Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants • Open Arms Mission • Port Cares • ProKids Program • Port Colborne/Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce • Red Cross • Rose City Kids • Salvation Army • Scotiabank • Seaway Mall • Sofifran • St. Vincent de Paul • The Hope Centre • The Residence and Conference Centre • Thorold Public Library • Tony Gallaccio • Venture Niagara • Welland Downtown BIA • Welland International Flatwater Centre • Welland Museum • Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce • Welland Public Library • Niagara This Week • Welland Rose Festival • Welland Rotary Club • Welland Tribune • Wesley-Robins Retirement Village • Workplace Safety Group • YMCA Niagara • Youngs Insurance Brokers...and the many, many businesses and social agencies who contribute their time to our workshops, and who donate prizes or monetary gifts for our events.

#### **TO THE CITIZENS OF WELLAND**

Who continue to participate in our fundraising events and who share in the experience of meeting, welcoming and appreciating the talents and skills that our country's newest citizens and Canadians bring to our community.

**Thank you for contributing to the success of our organization and helping us make dreams a reality for both newcomers and Canadian Citizens.**



# Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre

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