

AMSSA®

 Strengthening Diversity In BC



The Role of Non-Profit and Community Organizations in Addressing Public Anxiety about Immigration

Farah Kotadia
Acting Executive Director



About AMSSA

- Province-wide association founded in 1977
- Over 70 member agencies working towards newcomer settlement and cultural inclusion
- Support for all IRCC-funded providers in BC
- National and regional networks



AMSSA's Resources

- Settlement Net
- Migration Matters
- Quick links & resources
- Videos, Webinars, and E-symposia
- *Cultures West* Magazine



Support for Settlement Service Providers

- Training
- Information management
- Convening and capacity building



settlement
NET

Connecting BC's Settlement Services



'We still have more volunteers than we can manage: ' Offers of help for refugees overwhelm support groups

TARA CARMAN

Published on: January 15, 2017 | Last Updated: January 16, 2017
10:56 AM PST

**Calgary donations to Syrian refugees overwhelm organizers
About 180 volunteers have been sorting and distributing donations to Syrian refugees from a Calgary warehouse**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Dec 23, 2015 10:20 PM MT
Last Updated: Dec 24, 2015 11:02 AM MT

Montreal refugee groups overwhelmed by clothing donations, ask for other goods

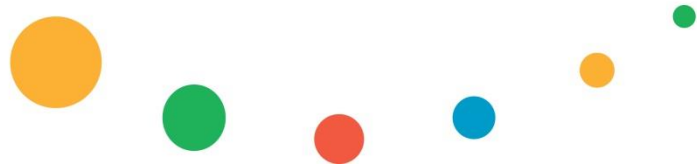
Volunteers still needed, as well as toys, toiletries and school supplies

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 27, 2015 1:41 PM ET
Last Updated: Nov 28, 2015 9:54 AM ET



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Member Agencies' Success Stories



S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Community Forum: Safeguarding Our communities, Upholding Our Shared Values

- Discussions on anti-immigrant sentiment and racially discriminatory incidents in Canada
- Over 200 partners, leaders and communities participated in a reaffirmation of our shared values and acknowledged the historic contribution of immigrants to the prosperity of B.C.

All Our Neighbours Roundtables:

- <https://www.allourneighbours.com>
- Series of roundtable conversations that explore the intersection of neighbourliness and diversity
- Provide on-going opportunity for local communities to share concerns in a public forum, engage in informed conversations and open dialogue about immigration and racial discrimination.



Immigrant Welcome Centre

Serving Campbell River, Comox Valley and the North Island

“Philosopher’s Café”

Jim Brennan, Executive Director, was invited to speak on the topic of **“Immigration: Should we build walls or bridges?”**

<https://www.immigrantwelcome.ca/>

<http://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/community/philosophers-discuss-immigration-at-next-cafe/>



Myth Busters Campaign

This program debunked myths about immigrants using a variety of vehicles:

- Regular newspaper articles
- Signs on buses
- Social Media
- Provided training to a "myth busters action team of "Ambassadors" for debunking myths when they show up in everyday life




Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)

- Well positioned to tackle public anxiety about immigration (partnerships with RCMP, etc.)
- Focus is on community/neighbourhoods
- Look at intersectionality approach (housing, employment, education, etc.)
- Where does this anxiety stem from?
 - “They are taking away our jobs”
 - “My child is a minority in school”
 - “Our neighbourhoods are changing”



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What has AMSSA done as an umbrella agency?

- Held a forum on **Anti-Racism & Anti-Hate Initiatives - Supporting the Integration of Refugees in Our Communities**
 - Webinars and E-Symposia
 - Info Sheets
 - Participated in research initiatives
 - Constantly looking for ways to support our members
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Thank You

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