



Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

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BUILDING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

# Refugee Resettlement in Victoria: Looking Back and Moving Forward

[www.icavictoria.org](http://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**

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