



Harmony in Diversity



RMCS ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Stacey Lee Reyes
President



Parm Grewal
Executive Director

Dear Members, Community Partners, Supporters, and Friends,

Welcome to Richmond Multicultural Community Services! It is a privilege to extend a warm welcome to all of you who are a part of this incredible community. Your presence and commitment are vital to advancing our mission and creating a meaningful impact for the individuals we serve.

At RMCS, we are united by a vision of a thriving, harmonious, and inclusive society that champions equality and diversity. Through the collective efforts of our dedicated team, supporters, and community members, we continue to make significant strides toward this goal. Each year brings renewed energy, new achievements, and ambitious opportunities for growth.

RMCS has supported newcomers and the community of Richmond for 40 years and continues to adapt, realign, and carry on. This work would not be at all possible without our amazing staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, and community partners. As you join us, whether as a new partner, supporter, or member, please know that you are an essential part of our community. Your support and enthusiasm are what fuel our efforts and make our impact possible. We are committed to transparency, collaboration, and continual growth—and we are honored to have you on this journey with us.

In this year's annual report, we have redesigned our format and combined statistics, stories, testimonials, and visuals to demonstrate what a fantastic year we have had. We have had an incredible year and were able to wrap up our Mosaic Firefly Project, set the wheels in motion for a Thrift Store, receive a record-breaking amount of support from volunteers, and lay the foundation for our Multicultural Bazaar to name a few successes.

Thank you for your dedication to our mission and making a positive difference. Together, we will accomplish incredible things.



WHO WE ARE

Our MISSION is to foster intercultural harmony through leadership, education, collaboration, and superior service delivery.

Our VISION is for a harmonious and inclusive society that values equality and diversity. At RMCS, our goal is to foster intercultural harmony through leadership, collaboration and quality service delivery.

Richmond Multicultural Community Services (RMCS) is a Richmond-based, Richmond-focused, immigrants serving agency committed to responding to needs in the community as they arise. Established in 1985, RMCS continues to be a leader in providing settlement services, diversity programming, and promoting anti-racism.

The RMCS is a team of 22 staff and 274 volunteers! Together, we can provide meaningful and responsive services to address the needs of our clients and community while ensuring that all of the organization's operations run smoothly.

Through workshops and consultations, RMCS is dedicated to making all newcomers feel at home and part of the community. We provide support in accessing resources and services available to newcomers, immigrants, or refugees in this city, province, and country.



OUR PROGRAMS

RMCS's Settlement Services & Labour Market Counsellors provide free services to newcomers, immigrants, and refugees. Our staff can communicate in many languages including English, Greek, Arabic, Punjabi, Japanese, Urdu, Vietnamese, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Spanish, and Ukrainian.

Settlement Services

Our settlement workers continued to deliver exceptional support to Richmond's newcomers in 2023-2024, assisting over 1,800 in Richmond this year.

RMCS offered over **50 different settlement workshops this year** designed to help immigrants and refugees adapt to and thrive in Richmond and Canada. Information and assistance with permanent residence applications, networking and support groups, and housing advice are just some of the many services that our dedicated settlement workers provide.

RMCS has many different workshops available for different needs—seniors, youth, and individuals with different cultural backgrounds can all find a supportive community for them here at the RMCS.

Some of our most popular workshops include:

- English Conversation Classes (ECC) in Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced Levels:
 - This year, we offered **164 sessions of English classes** and had **266 registrations**.
- Annual Income Tax Clinic
 - This year, we assisted **over 1,500 clients to file their income taxes**.



OUR PROGRAMS

Labour Market Counselling

RMCS' Labour Market department had an impactful 2023-2024, as our counsellors provided assistance to many newcomers wanting to join or re-enter the Canadian job market. Our team assisted **over 310 clients for one-on-one services this past year**, and offered **20 different employment-related workshops** this year. Over 430 clients attended these workshops.

By aiding with resumes and cover letters, and running workshops aimed at developing job skills and understanding industry trends, the labour market counsellors sought to give our clients the skillset they require to be successful in their labour market journey.

Some of our most popular workshops include:

- Professionals Networking Circle:
 - **12 sessions total, 92 clients attended.**
- English Language Training (ELT) for Customer Service and Hospitality in Beginner & Advanced Levels:
 - Over the course of **144 sessions and 360 hours of instruction**, the program engaged **approximately 120 clients**, providing them with meaningful learning experiences and valuable support.
 - **109 clients have proudly graduated** from the program this year, earning a certificate of completion by attending at least 80% of the sessions.

In the last year, our Labour Market workers organized **3 Hiring Fairs in which employers connected with over 420 clients**. The Hiring Fairs were held in June 2023, November 2023, and February 2024. **25 employers participated** in our Hiring Fairs this year.

WELCOME TO RICHMOND



As a part of the Canadian government's Welcome Week for newcomers, RMCS hosted its third Welcome to Richmond event on September 16th, 2023. This event sought to introduce newcomers to Richmond, help them learn more about the community, connect with long term residents, gain a better understanding of RMCS' services, and become better acquainted with other organizations in Richmond!

RMCS' Welcome to Richmond event has a large focus on celebrating multiculturalism, with many cultural performances from different parts of the world. Our performers included:

Happy Performer Dancers, Minoru Senior Society Dancers, Sangre Morena, Southern Wave Okinawan Performers, Chibi Taiko Drummers and PhilCas of BC.

This year, there were **over 200 people at the event**. We also had more than **20 community partners participate in** this event.

"Your generosity and support have not only provided practical assistance but also offered a sense of belonging and hope to those who have recently arrived in our community." - Irina





EXPLORING RICHMOND

This year, RMCS has offered many tours of the city and its sights to help newcomers or other interested sight-seers to become better familiarized with the Richmond landscape.

Terra Nova Guided Tour | Sep 12, 2023

Nature, agriculture, historical buildings and the famous playground, tour-goers had a chance to explore various aspects of Richmond's heritage at the Terra Nova Rural Park.

Highway to Heaven Tour | Apr 12, 2024

No. 5 Rd is often called the Highway to Heaven because of the multitude of religious temples located on the road. This tour provided a fascinating introduction to the diverse religions found in the Richmond community.

Science World Tour | Jul 23, 2024

This dome-shaped building contains an abundance of interactive scientific displays and shows to promote knowledge surrounding Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics.

Pumpkin Patch Tour | Oct 16, 2023

With music, farm animals, and, of course, pumpkins... Tour-goers could get into the Halloween spirit by visiting the the Richmond Pumpkin patch

Richmond City Tour | Jul 15, 2024

Newcomers were introduced to Richmond and its popular sights, including Water Mania and Britannia Ship Yard Museum in this tour.



CELEBRATING MULTICULTURALISM

RMCS Canada Multiculturalism Day | Jun 22, 2024

On Canada Multiculturalism Day, we celebrated the many diverse cultures that make up the community. Held at the Richmond Caring Place, the event featured booths from local organizations providing information, as well as an array of cultural performances. In addition, two dialogues were hosted where individuals got to share their experiences as newcomers in Richmond.



Multicultural Bazaar | Jul 27, Aug 9, Aug 24, 2024

Organized by our summer students, RMCS was excited to host our very first multicultural bazaar at the Richmond Caring Place. Running three times this summer, the bazaar sought to promote multiculturalism and local businesses in Richmond. With a market-like setting, vendors sold items ranging from cultural artwork to perfumes and knit-wear.

We had approximately 350 attendees, along with a total of over 12 volunteers and an average of 8 to 10 vendors.

“The RMCS staff treat everyone with care and attention, making the adaptation process smoother and more comfortable. Often, it is the only place where an immigrant can come with their problem. I am very grateful to them for all the help and support they have given me.” - Natalia





RICHMOND'S INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

THE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM (ICP)

In 2023 - 2024, the Inclusive Communities Program continued to offer opportunities for newcomers, Richmond residents, businesses, service organizations, and local government to dialogue, interact and learn about the value of diversity and inclusion. We worked to make Richmond an inclusive, racism-free city, where the needs of all are understood, valued, and met through coordinated settlement services, welcoming spaces, and intercultural harmony. By providing safe and supported ways for the community to come together, identify the issues that matter to them, and in ways that the community itself identified as most appropriate, we continued to work together to create a stronger community for all.



In 2023-2024, we provided Anti-Racism Training, Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution, and Power & Privilege Training for various organizations, ensuring our services and those of partners are inclusive. We facilitated public dialogues to promote community inclusion, celebrated significant events like Black History Month, and hosted forums on racism and policing. We coordinated community responses to racism through the Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network and launched the updated Richmond Community Protocol to address racism. Additionally, we strategized to build inclusive communities via the Richmond Community Collaboration Table. Funding was received to develop an Anti-Racism Plan for Richmond, with community forums planned for diverse groups in 2024 and 2025.



MOSAIC FIREFLY: RICHMOND EDITION



This intergenerational storytelling project brought together seniors (55+) and youth (13-18) to explore and share personal stories through theatre, literary, and visual arts. Guided by artists, participants captured their lived experiences and migration stories, creating a safe and inclusive space for vulnerability, creativity, and cultural exchange.

Part of the ABC: Aspire | Build | Celebrate initiative, this project addressed racism and discrimination by fostering intercultural understanding and celebrating diversity. Funded by the Government of Canada through the Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives (CSMARI) Program, it promoted dialogue on multiculturalism and strengthened community bonds.



Running from October 2022 to October 2023, the program culminated in blog posts written by participants, showcasing their stories and perspectives. Special thanks to Kalia He and Elena Sun for their contributions to the project's success.

To learn more and follow the progress of the project, please see the blog:
<https://abcrichmond.wixsite.com/abcrichmond>

Watch the Mosaic Firefly videos:
[Performance Highlights](#)
[Full Performance](#)

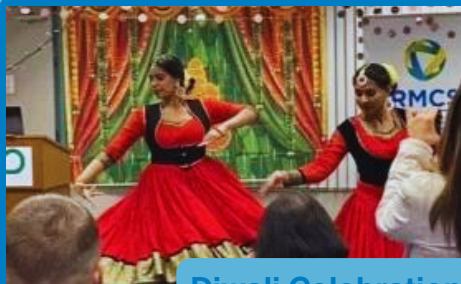
A YEAR OF CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

RMCS loved organizing events celebrating the many cultural holidays throughout the year. With food and dance included, our cultural celebrations were a great opportunity to have fun with friends and family while immersing oneself in different cultural traditions and cuisines.

Christmas Potluck Party
(Dec 7, 2023)



Lunar New Year
Celebration
(Feb 15, 2024)



Diwali Celebration
(Nov 14, 2023)

Ukrainian Christmas
Party (Jan 6, 2024)



Vaisakhi Celebration (Apr 19, 2024)



Nowruz Celebration
(Mar 7, 2024)

POP-UP SALES THRIFT STORE

Organized and administered by our summer students and our volunteers, this year we launched the brand new RMCS Thrift Store!

This year, the RMCS received a variety of donations from clients, volunteers, and others. Our thrift store sells these second-hand clothing, accessories, and household items in pop-up sales at the Richmond Caring Place. Our online thrift marketplace on Facebook gives our clients a different option for obtaining thrifted items for great prices as well.

We have had great success so far hosting pop-up sales at the Richmond Caring Place, with a total of **8 thrift store pop-up sales**. The traffic at the thrift store pop-up sales averaged around 33 individuals per event, with the highest traffic of 60 individuals during the June Vintage Sale. The thrift store raised **\$1,234.55** total in revenue this year, with the highest revenue in a day made from the June RMCS Bottle Drive.

In the upcoming year, we aspire to have a store front for our thrift store, providing more visibility and consistent hours as well as more opportunities for our clients and customers to find great thrifted items.





VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION



“It has been a pleasure volunteering in such a dynamic, inspiring, inclusive and supportive organization . I am grateful for the trust and confidence that has been placed in me!” - Lydia

Volunteers are an integral part of many aspects of the RMCS. We have...

- **155 volunteers assisting in thrift store and events**, such as set-up & take-down, ensuring the event runs smoothly, and photography
- **115 volunteer receptionists** at the RMCS front desk
- **123 volunteers helping with workshop activities**
- **17 volunteers assisting the food distributions**
- **61 specialized income tax volunteers** assisting with client taxes and inquiries during tax season

This year, we are grateful to our volunteers who provided **7,467.75 hours** of service to RMCS. This year, **267 volunteers supported RMCS**.

We love supporting our volunteers too! We held our annual Volunteer Appreciation event in May celebrating our fantastic volunteers this year. Furthermore, every month, we run a Volunteer Networking Group that gives our volunteers the opportunity to learn new skills, make connections and build relationships. In the next year, RMCS hopes to implement more volunteer opportunities at workshops/events such as Thrift Store, Surfing Seniors, Afghan Homework Club and Online Connections for Seniors.



STAFF APPRECIATION

Without our staff, the RMCS would not be where we are today.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our staff, whose dedication, hard work and passion make our organization's vision a reality. Your commitment to supporting and empowering our community shines through every day, and we couldn't do this without you.

Our events specialist summer students planned a staff appreciation event on August 14th to celebrate our amazing team in an afternoon filled with fun and games.

Thank you to...

Alan, Alfreda, Annie, Ashley, Ashok, Bhavana, Desiree, Irene, Grace, Joanna, Maki, Martin, Michelle, Nikhat, Satnam, Sediqullah, Thuy, Xiaowei, and Yoshimi.



**“It was really well-organized
event by our summer
students.
I think we should make this
our new staff tradition!”
- Yoshimi**

YOUR KINDNESS

Donations from our clients and others help the RMCS thrive. This year, **244 donors** showed their support for RMCS. We raised **\$34,932.30** from our community and **over \$50,000** in the form of in-kind donations from businesses. Thank you for your constant support for RMCS!

To our valued donors, thank you for your unwavering support and generosity. Your contributions allow us to expand our programs and touch more lives within our community. Together, we're building a stronger, more inclusive future—thank you for being an essential part of our mission.

The RMCS Bottle Drive fundraiser event was a great way for the Richmond community to gather for environmental awareness and support the RMCS by donating empty bottles and cans. This year we raised \$361.85 through this initiative.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Our Funders



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Your support is greatly appreciated!



RMCS

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