LE CENTRE DE RÉFUGIÉS | THE REFUGEE CENTRE
INTEGRATION, SUSTAINABILITY, AND AID

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

therefugeecentre.org

THANK YOU!

We would like to express our gratitude to all our supporters for giving us an opportunity to provide these services and being part of our community.

From

ABDULLA DAOUD
Executive Director

KINAN SWAID
Director of Operations

NATASHA GUERRIERO
Communications Coordinator

ANISSA J.KHAN
Operations Coordinator

JUDE IBRAHIM
Mental Health Coordinator

PIERRE-LUC BOUCHARD
Legal Aid Clinic Director

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OUR STORY

We are a group of students and professionals who have worked together to build an organization imploring youth to work with the community to help strengthen the refugee & immigrant population through unity and integration. Founded in December 2015, we embarked on a journey to re-establish the way non-profits work and strengthen the communities they are involved with. We believe that modern day obstacles and problems need modern day solutions, thus the creation of The Refugee Centre and its sister NPO DEVBLOC.

2015

We made The Refugee Centre official by registering it in Quebec as a Non-Profit Organization.

2016

We secured a location in the heart of downtown Montreal on Concordia University campus to provide our services.

2017

Our services were running at full capacity and we were noticed by the UNHCR, the largest refugee organization in the world. We then received a visit from the High Commissioner Fillipo Grandi himself.

2018

Our work became nationally recognized and we were invited to the House of Commons of Canada to speak about our accomplishments.

2019

We were given an award by the national body of best resettlement practices, Pathways to Prosperity, an entity funded by the government of Canada to recognize best practices in the field.

2020

We expanded our services and added a mental health and wellness sector, made possible due to a collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross.

TESTIMONIAL

"Without The Refugee Centre, I would not have been able to enter the Masters in Building Engineering program without their help with my transcripts and their help with the IELTS exam."

- Yaser S.

WE THINK CREATIVELY

We are composed of engineers, political scientists, human relation experts, sociologists statisticians, and entrepreneurs. We believe this makes us one of the most unique and creative groups in this field.

WE AIM FOR HARD WORK

Along with our creativity we believe in hard work and innovation in our actions moving forward to help integrate the refugee/newcomer community.

WE DO AMAZING PROJECTS

Aside from the typical language integration services offered by the majority of NGOs, we created a one-of-a-kind economic integration and development incubator.

TRANSPARENCY

Our budgets and events are made public for all to see in order to keep up with our transparency policy.

We are a young group of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, who when put together can achieve our organization's mandate as efficiently as possible.

ABDULLA DAOUD
Executive Director

With an academic background in mathematics, statistics, and political science, Abdulla Daoud leads The Refugee Centre in its various roles to help strengthen the refugee and immigrant population in Canada. Abdulla Daoud oversees the staff and the Centre's programs to maintain its efficiency and success. Coming from a refugee and migrant upbringing himself and several years of experience in social/political advocacy for the community will ensure that The Refugee Centre's operations and goals are met.

ANISSA JEEROBURKHAN
Community Health Coordinator

Anissa is a newly registered nurse and has been with The Refugee Centre for over four years acquiring experience in general operations, human resources and project management. This paired with her education in Anthropology provides her with the skills to develop our health and wellness sector at TRC.

JUDE IBRAHIM
Wellness Support Coordinator

Over the course of her Bachelor's degree in Art Education and Psychology at Concordia University and her ongoing Master's Degree in Art Therapy, Jude continues to gain deep and valued training in art therapy. New to our team, she works to create meaningful and supportive workshops for newcomers. She strives to create and maintain a wellbeing approach to our services as well as provides one-on-one support to individuals.

KINAN SWAID
Director of Operations

A current Mechanical Engineering student who has a lot of passion and a long history in helping the refugee community in Montreal. With a strong background in aiding the refugee population through education and job training, Kinan helps maintain The Refugee Centre's strong foundation in preparing the immigrant and refugee population in Canada for the current workplace. He works with both The Refugee Centre and DevBloc to build and create a stronger refugee/immigrant workforce.

NATASHA GUERRIERO
Communications Director

Natasha has worked at The Refugee Centre for over 2 years and has been involved in multiple initiatives and organizations that help to serve the Montreal community. As our communications director, Natasha and the rest of the communications team use creativity and a transparent means of communication to publicize our services, events and projects as well as advocate with and on behalf of our broader community. Natasha also coordinates the language classes and contributes to the overall operations of the centre.

PIERRE-LUC BOUCHARD
Head of Legal Clinic

Me. Pierre-Luc Bouchard is a proud member of the Quebec Bar Association. He has vast experience with refugees and immigration matters. He also works with our team to provide the important legal information needed to help develop our applications more accurately. Pierre also offers legal advice and training on business matters, and training on starting a business here in Montreal.

TESTIMONIAL

"I wanted to send a thank you email to you guys for all the help you have afforded me this year. I am very appreciative of all that you do. I'm looking forward to the french courses beginning in August."

- Ahmed H.
(Student at the Refugee Centre after gaining acceptance to Concordia University)

AIMS

- To provide a sustainable structure of integration for refugees and newcomers in Canada.
- To offer support for students and their families as well as the Montreal community as a whole.
- To support the community, particularly students, through various mediums, not limited to any one particular sector of aid.

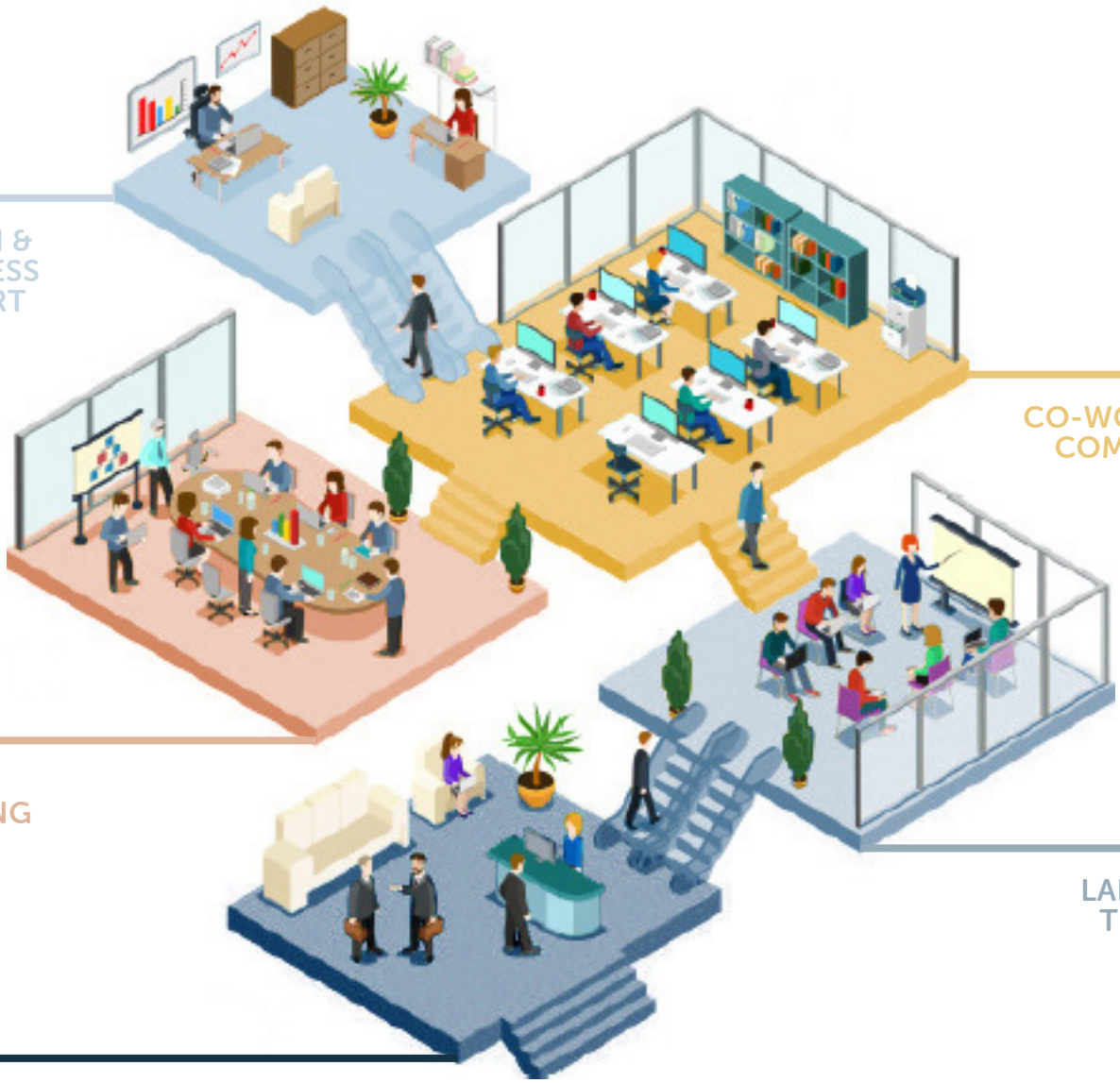
OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To create long-lasting, self-sustainable, and creative solutions to refugee integration.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide refugees with resources that help them find housing, access education and learn their rights in relation to Canadian immigration law.
- Work hand-in-hand with local and international organizations to promote and enhance the lives of incoming refugees in Canada.
- Create and enhance the economic situation of refugees in Canada by promoting economic integration through grants and refugee-run initiatives.
- Build business development programs to help strengthen the student population as well as the community including, and not limited to, business accelerators and incubators.
- Create housing alternatives and initiatives to aid in housing the refugee/newcomer population. Organize meetings, training courses and events.
- Recognize the unique mental health challenges of the refugee population and prioritize mental health in all of the centre's services and activities.
- Raise funds and receive contributions where appropriate to finance the work of the centre.
- Publicize and promote the work of the centre.
- Assist refugees with banking, taxes and insurance procedures.
- Improve accessibility to healthcare systems through the creation of safe spaces for health promotion and illness prevention, specifically regarding mental health and general wellness.

OUR DEPARTMENTS



HEALTH & WELLNESS SUPPORT

CO-WORKING/ COMMUNITY SPACE

JOB TRAINING

LANGUAGE TRAINING

LEGAL AID CLINIC

COVID-19 IMPACT

Towards the end of March 2020, Canada enforced a nationwide lock-down due to the spread of COVID-19. This forced The Refugee Centre to re-stratigize and reposition its services to an online platform in a very short period of time. In a matter of three days we were able to move all of our services to an online format to serve our users. Moreover, we witnessed an uptake in demand for our services. An overwhelming demand for laptops and technological tools were also requested, thus our immediate collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross and other organizations to purchase 15-30 laptops and have them signed out on a regular basis by all our students and clients.

The services we have moved online:

- French Classes
- English Classes
- Conversation Circles
- Skills Workshops
- Employability Workshops
- One-on-One Academic Advising
- One-on-One Orientations
- Wellness Support
- Sponsorship Program
- Asylum Claims from International Students
- Legal Aid Appointments

WHAT IS DEVBLOC?

DevBloc is the first social enterprise community incubator meant to both educate and aid refugees and immigrants to be relevant in today's workforce. With training and certification in technologies related to today's emerging technology sector, DevBloc will ensure the integration of the immigrant and refugee population into the tech economy. Lastly, it will also aid individuals as well as groups to build/develop new technology to solve the existing refugee and migrant crisis, domestically and internationally.

This is essential for refugees and immigrants, as more and more skilled workers are needed in a very fast-paced market. Incubators accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial ideas through an array of business support resources and services. Our main goal is to produce successful refugees/immigrants that leave the program financially viable and freestanding. Incubator graduates commercialize technologies, create jobs, and strengthen local economies.

The proposed mission of our Social Innovation Catalyst is to stimulate the establishment and growth of technology-based start-up companies and other compatible businesses in relation to social enterprise and community building. By fulfilling this mission, the incubator would contribute to job creation, enhance quality of life, and attempt to merge the tech world with the non-profit sector.

DevBloc will provide the Montreal refugee and immigrant community with the ability to engage in and learn about new and emerging technologies and businesses. We hope to foster an environment that will aid students and community members in developing businesses or technologies that will not only better the local community we reside in but also the world. Focusing mainly on the idea of social and community enterprise, DevBloc will be one of the few incubators in the world where the main focus of its business and technologies is geared towards life/social enhancement, rather than pure monetary gain. The proposed incubator includes facility space, flexible leases, shared use of common office equipment, direct business assistance and guidance, mentoring, networking to capital, and other technical resources. A network of existing resources in the community would be developed to support incubator/client needs.

1 — ACADEMIC AID

A large number of refugees & newcomers require academic aid in many forms. Students arrive in Canada without the ability to provide documentation of their previous educational history. Academic equalization is required in conjunction with counseling to ensure a smooth transition. We offer IELTS training, English, and French classes, one-on-one tutoring, as well as academic equalization services. This is offered to students of all ages, with the majority of work carried out by our interns and long-term academic counselors.

2 — ORIENTATION

Once newcomers have arrived in Montreal, navigating the city and creating a plan to get sorted can be overwhelming. We offer one on one orientation to help create a guide specific to their needs. Once we are able to establish their priorities, we can then direct them to services we provide, or organizations within the Montreal community.

Our Structure is based on a six-branched approach that we believe encompasses the obstacles refugees and newcomers face today. Our branches are Academic Aid, Orientation, Mental Health, Legal Aid, Employability and Advocacy.

3 — HEALTH & WELLNESS SUPPORT

Newcomers to Canada, whether they be immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers, are extremely vulnerable to experiencing both mental and physical health challenges. We seek to acknowledge, address, and destigmatize mental health by providing open and accessible services. We also seek to improve accessibility to healthcare systems through the creation of safe spaces for health promotion and illness prevention. Individual and group therapy, ongoing workshops, and a comprehensive list of resources will be delivered by trained and caring individuals.

From our experience and communications with various other organizations in the field, we found that these branches have to be implemented together in order to fully and successfully integrate individuals into Canadian society.

4 — LEGAL AID

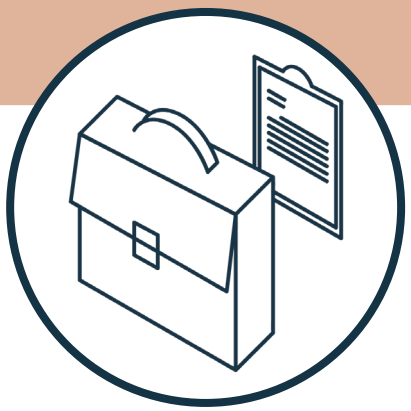
Immigrants, refugees, and undocumented refugees are in constant need of counsel to overcome their legal hurdles. This type of help is not readily available and requires a high level of discretion that we offer to all individuals. This initiative is currently lead by Me. Pierre-Luc Bouchard, a proud member of the Quebec Bar Association. He has vast experience with refugees and immigration matters. Our services range from refugee sponsorship, asylum claims, work/study permits, immigration, HNC, and much more. We currently average 50 legal consultations per month.

5 — EMPLOYABILITY

An integral part of adapting to a new community is finding work that can be self-sustaining as well as create a new meaningful career path. At The Refugee Centre, we assist newcomers with finding new employment opportunities and help with the development of their careers. We do this by offering workshops to enhance employability skills and navigate the Canadian job market as well as connect employers with qualified individuals.

6 — ADVOCACY

The Refugee Centre is committed to pushing for refugee and newcomer rights in Canada through any mediums available to do so. We regularly meet with members of Parliament both provincially and federally along with many other organizations in Montreal to to advocate for refugee rights and ensure Canada maintains its commitments to welcoming newcomers.



IELTS & DUOLINGO PREP CLASSES

In our efforts to help and empower newcomer students, we have created IELTS classes to help students better prepare for their English proficiency test. We offer six to eight sessions per year, each session lasts approximately one and a half months.

ENGLISH CLASSES

We offer English classes, both beginner & intermediate levels, for those who have basic knowledge of English and wish to eventually attend our IELTS classes to begin their academic journey. We offer six beginner and six intermediate classes every year.

FRENCH CLASSES

We offer French classes in our efforts to help newcomer students better integrate into Quebec society. We offer three levels of classes (beginner, intermediate, advanced) and each class is offered four times a year.

ENGLISH & FRENCH CONVERSATION CIRCLES

Conversation Circles are meant to help individuals practice English or French in a small, informal setting. The circles take place once a week and last for one hour. All classes are now all online. These circles help individuals make connections in the community while simultaneously practicing their English or French conversation skills.

INCOMING REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP BURSARY

We are committed to supporting and empowering newly arrived refugees in their quest for a better education and stable life here in Montreal. The "Incoming Refugee Sponsorship Bursary" is available to five to ten refugees per year studying at Concordia University, in Montreal.

EMPLOYABILITY

We have partnered up with the international consulting firm, Oliver Wyman to provide one-on-one employment mentorship to newcomers. These sessions are held every two weeks, throughout the year. The workshops are held via Zoom and are facilitated by expert consultants who provide CV help and other employment tips.

WELLNESS SUPPORT

It can easily get overwhelming when navigating immigration, settlement & integration. We offer one on one support where individuals can discuss their fears, worries and difficulties. During these appointments, we offer possible self-care and coping strategies as well as potential referrals to other organizations and services. We consistently work together with the broader community to make sure individuals' needs are met as much as possible.

SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Throughout the year we offer different training workshops to help newcomers develop skills to aid with employment and entrepreneurship. Some past workshops we have offered include Python, Javascript, C#, and more.

LUNA AI

LUNA AI is an artificial intelligence application that will leverage its conversational abilities through an interactive platform with incoming refugee claimants. The claimants will talk to LUNA, and LUNA will control the conversation in order to extract all of the information needed from the claimant. It then automatically fills out all of the applications and documentation needed to successfully claim refuge in Canada, ensuring the claimants are doing everything correctly based on rules of the Canadian Immigration System. This saves the government days' worth in processing times, and a vast amount of resources in management.

HIJRAH CRÍTICA

Hijrah Crítica is a new online venue that will provide space for critical commentary, research, art, and testimonials on the experience of migration in the Canadian context. As a multimedia curator, Hijrah Crítica will accept submissions employing diverse forms of communication – from written text, podcast episodes, films, and photographs. Most importantly, it will cast a wide net for contributors, driven by inclusion and will actively encourage submissions by refugees, practitioners, and scholars.

ALLOCANADA.ORG

AlloCanada is a web application that has mapped out the landscape of services available to all migrants in all the major cities in Canada. Setting it apart from any other resource tool, AlloCanada can filter all the organizations that can help its users based on migration status and types of services offered.

BLOCHACKS 2019

ABOUT THE EVENT

Blochacks is an annual hackathon in the city of Montreal that is focused on hacking social causes. We are strong believers that technology can help fix and improve the majority of disasters and social problems the world is currently facing today. We see an ever increasing gap between the non-profit (as well as non-governmental) world and emerging technology. Supported by the social innovation catalyst known as DevBloc we believe we can help motivate and inspire the Montreal community to build, create, structure, design, and innovate solutions to global issues.

THE HACK

We are teamed up with UNHCR Canada to put all our attendees & refugees to the test to solve one of the most prominent problems they are facing in the field. This hackathon will be assessing the ideas, design, concept, and innovation of the solutions put forward by its participants.

SOME OF THE SPONSORS

Google

JET BRAINS

GitHub

IBM Watson™

WOLFRAM

OFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS WE HAVE WORKED OR PARTNERED WITH THIS YEAR

"Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there."

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Also known as the UN Refugee Agency, the UNHCR is the world's leading organization aiding and protecting people forced to flee their homes due to violence, conflict and persecution. The UNHCR provides shelter, food, water, medical care and other life-saving assistance to refugees around the world.

Canadian Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross' mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world. The Canadian Red Cross, has helped us with our Mental Health Program, our laptop assistance program, and our new Covid-19 and essential resources website AlloCanada.

Tarjimly

Tarjimly is a FREE app that helps refugees and aid workers communicate by connecting them with a volunteer translator in just 60 seconds. Refugees or aid workers message the app, select their language, and the app pairs them with a suitable match. They can then send text, documents, or even get on a phone or video call.

Say Ça!

Say Ça! is a non-profit organization that seeks to support young refugees and immigrants, ages 12 to 18, during their transition into their new lives in Montreal. They offer free ESL and FSL tutoring sessions, mentorship and monthly cultural outings.

Actions Refugiés Montréal

Actions Réfugiés Montréal works towards justice for asylum seekers and refugees. They have multiple programs including a sponsorship program and a twinning program that matches newly arrived refugee women with women already living in Montreal. They also provide support for people detained for immigration reasons at the Laval Immigration Holding Centre.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

The IRCC facilitates the arrival of immigrants, provides protection to refugees, and offers programming to help newcomers settle in Canada. It also grants citizenship and issues travel documents to Canadians.

YES Montreal

YES Montreal is a non-profit, community-driven English-language service provider that has been helping Quebecers province-wide find employment and start and grow businesses for 25 years.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

MSF, also known as Doctors Without Borders, is an international medical humanitarian association. They work in conflict zones, during epidemics and natural disasters and whenever urgent medical aid is needed in over 70 countries. Their Canadian teams help to recruit personnel and funds for their field missions and raise public awareness about the plight that the populations they aid are facing.

Agir Montreal

AGIR or Action LGBTQ avec les Immigrant(e)s et Réfugié(e)s is an autonomous non-profit organization, by and for the LGBTQ migrant community living in Montreal.

McGill's Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID)

"ISID strives to create and communicate knowledge that contributes to understanding and solving real world development challenges." They do so through their support of multidisciplinary research, by building bridges between academic research, policy-makers, practitioners and affected communities and by training a new generation of future leaders in the skills needed to help solve these enormous challenges.

Oliver Wyman

Oliver Wyman is a global management consulting firm. They offer their services to organizations who work to improve communities and lives around the world. They do so through volunteering, philanthropy and mentoring non-profit organizations, among other things.

Alternatives

Alternatives is a Quebec-based international solidarity organization, founded in 1994 in Montreal. Their main goals are international solidarity, human dignity and environmental and democratic rights and they work towards them through the implementation of sustainable development projects. These projects are in collaboration with local partners in over 30 countries including Canada.

Cinema Politica Concordia

Cinema Politica is a media arts, non-profit network of community and campus locals that screen independent political films and videos. Themes are often related to social justice, environmental and cultural identity issues. They aim to bridge political independent film-making, local activism and civic education and engagement.

Praida

The PRAIDA asylum seekers' program was founded in 1956. It was formerly known as SARIMM and SAVI. The goal of PRAIDA is to improve the well-being of asylum seekers and their families, and respect their rights and dignity. PRAIDA has a mandate from the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux [provincial department of health and social services of Quebec] to meet the needs of asylum seekers throughout Quebec under section 80 of the Act Respecting Health Services and Social.

CEED

CEED Concordia is also a fee-levy association of Concordia University. They are a non-profit organisation dedicated to social justice, community empowerment and positive change based in Montreal, Quebec and Gulu, Uganda. They offer students from both these areas opportunities to contribute to sustainable community projects during 3-month internships.

TESTIMONIALS OF OUR WORK OVER THE YEARS

"The Refugee Centre provides services & supports for vulnerable immigrant groups by developing strategic partnerships & collaborations to provide supports for immigrant Settlement and Integration."
- Pathways to Prosperity

TRC was awarded for Settlement and Integration Practices that Work.
Read more about it **here**.

"Filippo Grandi was in awe as he visited the offices of the Refugee Centre in Montreal on Friday morning. 'It's a testament to what humanity can do positively,' he enthused a few hours later in an interview with Le Devoir, about what he saw there."
- Filippo Grandi (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

Read the full article **here**!

TESTIMONIALS OF OUR WORK OVER THE YEARS

In a letter for support for The Refugee Centre.

"On multiple occasions, we have witnessed the professionalism and commitment of the Refugee Centre/Devbloc [...] and we are glad to partner with them on various projects."

- Jean-Nicolas Beuze
(Canadian High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR))

"The Refugee Center has very good services to learn French. The professor teaches intelligently."

- Saeideh K. (Student at The Refugee Centre)

"The french classes had to be held online due to COVID. Despite the online challenges, the french teacher was able to conduct the class well. We cover a lot of grammar and we are given many opportunities to improve our french speaking as well."

- Nilu K. (Student at The Refugee Centre)

"Great organization. They help refugees and newcomers in a humane and professional way."

- Jiana (Client at The Refugee Centre)

TESTIMONIALS OF OUR WORK OVER THE YEARS

"Through the Refugee Centre I was able to attend University in Montreal, and gain my status as a Protected Person."

- Ali D. (Student at The Refugee Centre)

"Organized, very well maintained process and guidance."

- Thea Palmer (Client at The Refugee Centre)

"The Refugee Centre is place where I learned new skills and interacted with new people."

- Anonymous (Participant in the Wellness and Mental Health program at The Refugee Centre)

"The help extended to me by The Refugee Centre has had an incredibly positive effect on my ability to continue my degree and the mental well-being of my family."

- F. H. (Client at The Refugee Centre)

STATISTICS PER DEPARTMENT

ACADEMIC AID & ORIENTATION

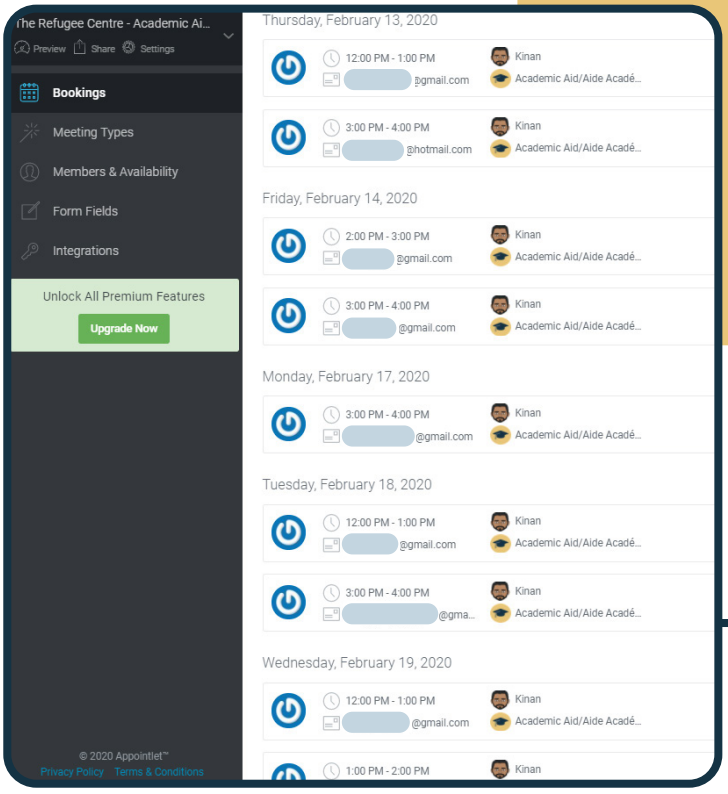
Due to COVID-19, we have moved all our academic aid sessions and one-on-one orientation appointments online through our online booking system. We average approximately 18 academic aid appointments per month, and 10 orientation consultations per month.

18.8 per month

avg ACADEMIC AID consultations

10.2 per month

avg ORIENTATION consultations



SAMPLE BOOKING DATA FROM THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

We use Appointlet for our online booking system which takes appointments with our users based on the department they need help in.

STATISTICS PER DEPARTMENT

LEGAL AID & EMPLOYABILITY

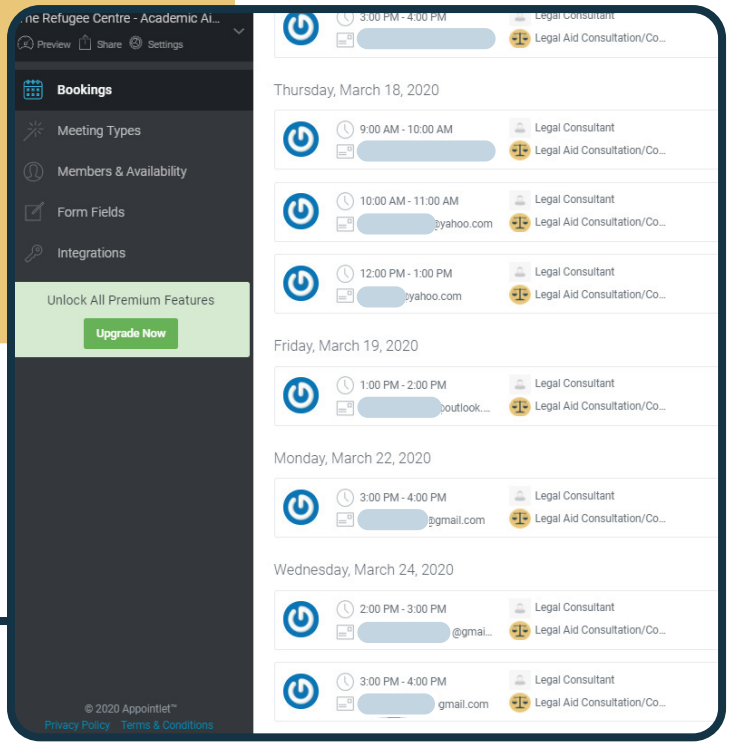
Again, due to COVID-19 we have moved all our legal aid consultations and our employability sessions online through our online booking system. We average about 16 employability consultations and 25 legal aid consultations per month.

25.3 per month

avg LEGAL AID consultations

16 per month

EMPLOYABILITY consultations



SAMPLE BOOKING DATA FROM THE MONTH OF MARCH

THE REFUGEE CENTRE SPONSORS REFUGEES FROM ABROAD EACH YEAR

PRIVATE REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Each year, The Refugee Centre participates in the private sponsorship program where students and humanitarian organizations refer families and individuals for resettlement in Canada. Due to the administrative nature of the program and the limited spots available, we can never guarantee the acceptance of a submission to the government.

20 files

submitted for SPONSORSHIP

8 files

accepted and 2 pending

Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion
Québec
Direction de l'immigration familiale et humanitaire

FICHE DE TRANSMISSION

N° dossier [redacted]

À : Centre des opérations de réinstallation d'Ottawa (COR-O)

Objet : Présentation d'une demande de résident permanent de personnes réfugiées parrainées au Québec
Demande à titre de réfugié au sens de la Convention ou de personne protégée à titre humanitaire outre-frontières

Le ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion a approuvé un engagement de parrainage collectif en faveur du requérant principal suivant et, le cas échéant, des membres de sa famille qui l'accompagnent.

[redacted]

Porte-Parole :
L'initiative Canadienne pour les réfugiées
1610, Sainte-Catherine Ouest, app. 402
Montréal (QC) H3H 2S2
Courriel : [redacted]@therefugeecentre.org

Requérant principal : [redacted]
Date de naissance : [redacted]
Sexe : [redacted]
ID : [redacted]

SAMPLE APPROVAL LETTER OF OUR SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM
*Identifying information of the individual is removed for safety and legal reasons

THE REFUGEE CENTRE HELPS ASYLUM SEEKERS

ASYLUM SEEKING IN CANADA

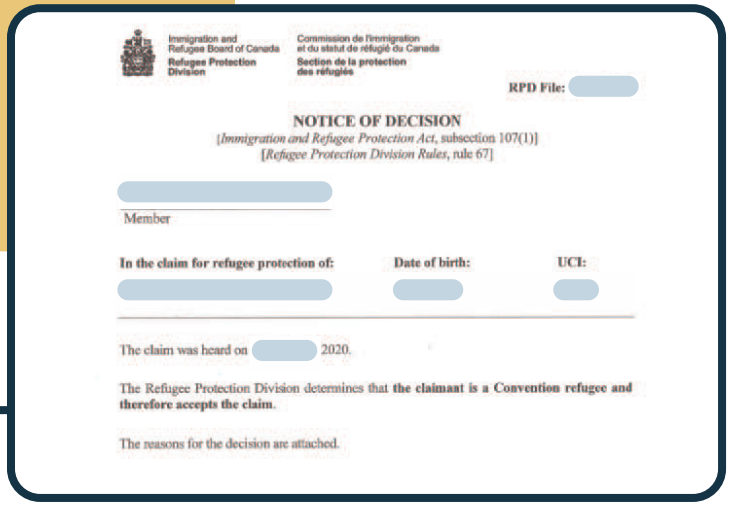
Asylum seekers are individuals who have yet to receive full protected person status in Canada as they are still in the process of proving their case to the Immigration Refugee Board of Canada. The Refugee Centre's legal aid clinic provides them with legal representation and resources.

200+

legal consultations done to aid individuals in ASYLUM SEEKING

35+

CASES currently ongoing



Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Refugee Protection Division

Commission de l'immigration et du statut de réfugié du Canada
Section de la protection des réfugiés

RPD File:

NOTICE OF DECISION
[*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, subsection 107(1)]
[*Refugee Protection Division Rules*, rule 67]

Member

In the claim for refugee protection of: Date of birth: UCI:

The claim was heard on 2020.

The Refugee Protection Division determines that **the claimant is a Convention refugee and therefore accepts the claim.**

The reasons for the decision are attached.

SAMPLE APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE IMMIGRATION REFUGEE BOARD IN ONE CASE

*Identifying information of our refugees is removed for safety and legal reasons.

OUR SPENDINGS & SAVINGS

Below is a representation of our financial position at the end of August 31st 2020. Our statements and spending are independently reviewed each year by a third party Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) who provides a passing opinion on finances (provided on page 34) called a Financial Review Engagement.

What does an Independent Financial Review Engagement from a CPA check?

The individual performing a review engagement must be a licensed practitioner. The practitioner is required to obtain evidence directly rather than rely on evidence provided by third parties. They perform procedures to reach a conclusion on whether anything came to their attention that causes them to believe that the financial statements are not prepared in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

The review procedures that the practitioner is required to perform include:

- Inquiries on the accounting practices used by the company
- Representations from management on the accuracy of the financial statements
- Management responsibility for internal control systems
- Management responsibility to detect and prevent fraud
- Information on subsequent events
- Knowledge of fraud
- Ratios and relationships of recorded amounts
- Analytical procedures on comparisons
- Receipts of appropriate financial information
- Procedures for recording financial information

EVENTS/SERVICES & SCHOLARSHIPS 40%

Part of The Refugee Centre's mission is to provide quality education and opportunities for refugees & newcomers so that they may attain success here in Montreal.

Here is a snapshot of the list of services & events we hosted in 2020.

- IELTS Classes
- English Classes (Beginner, Intermediate)
- French Classes (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)
- Employability Workshops
- Academic Aid Consultations
- Academic Bursary Program
- Concordia Admissions Aid
- Service-based salaries (teachers, social worker, advisors, tutors)
- Orientation Workshops/Consultations
- Data Science Workshops (2 months long)
- Web Development Workshops (2 months long)
- Mobile Development Workshops (2 months long)

GENERAL & OFFICE 7.5%

In order to maintain The Refugee Centre's innovative image and approach in providing services, we work hard to ensure that all our IT tools are user friendly and accessible to everyone. During COVID-19 we had to increase this budget due to moving all our services and classes online. Additionally, we adhere to more traditional methods of providing information or filing legal documents through paper and high volume printing as we regularly deal with sensitive information in our legal clinic that cannot be stored digitally.

Some sample costs include

- Printers & Paper
- Computers Web design
- Web Domains & Hosting App
- Development Administrative Salaries

TAXES/INSURANCE/ ADVERTISING/BANK CHARGES 1.2%

Just like all registered NGOs, The Refugee Centre must pay taxes, rent and bank fees, among other things. We also set aside a small amount of funds to advertise our services online and in person where it can be the most effective.

ADMINISTRATIVE SALARIES 16.5%

In order to keep The Refugee Centre running, administrative duties are needed to ensure long term stability both financially and structurally.

Some examples include:

- Maintaining Financial Statements
- Office Management
- Maintaining Payroll
- Reporting to third party accountant
- Website Content
- Human Resources

PROFESSIONAL FEES 3.6%

Professional fees are needed to keep The Refugee Centre up to date with all its reporting requirements to Revenu Quebec & the Canadian Revenue Agency.

Some examples include:

- Remittances to Revenu Quebec
- Remittances to the Canadian Revenu Agency
- Cost of Independent Financial Review
- Tax Review

LEGAL AID CLINIC 3.1%

Immigrants, refugees, and undocumented refugees are in constant need of counsel to overcome their legal hurdles. This type of help is not readily available and requires a high level of discretion. Our Legal Clinic is available by appointment to all newcomers and students regardless of status.

Some services include:

- Work Permits
- Study Permits
- Asylum Claims
- Permanent Residence Applications
- Refugee Sponsorhip Appeals

RENT & SPACE 19.8%

The Refugee Centre hosts thousands of newcomers each year for multiple events, classes, workshops, and counseling appointments. Thus having our own space is an integral part of our ability to operate both privately and efficiently. We are located in the heart of downtown Montreal, on the Concordia University campus, in a 3000 sq. ft. space to hold classes, meetings, private legal consultations, workshops and much more.

COMMUNITY FUND 8.3%

At the end of each fiscal year, The Refugee Centre contributes a minimum of 5% of its annual budget to its Community Fund. This is done in order to meet the legal obligations set by the provincial and federal government so that we may qualify to sponsor refugees each year.

For example:
The Refugee Centre must have $12,000 in savings to sponsor one refugee per year. At any given year depending on government quotas, The Refugee Centre sponsors 5-10 refugees per year.

Our operating budget was **$292,633** of which **$259,189** were levied fees and **$33,444** fund-raised grants.

BUDGET LINE	PROJECTED ($339,000)	ACTUAL ($292,633)
Events/Services & Scholarships	41%	40%
General & Office	7%	7.5%
Administrative Salaries	17%	16.5%
Professional Fees	4%	3.6%
Legal Aid Clinic	4%	3.1%
Taxes/Insurance/Advertising/Bank Charges	1%	1.2%
Rent & Space	22%	19.8%
Community Fund	4%	8.3%

INDEPENDENT REVIEW ENGAGEMENT

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Mizgala & Cie Inc.

Société de comptables professionnels agréés - Chartered professional accountants corporation

INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER'S REVIEW ENGAGEMENT REPORT

To the Members of
CANADIAN REFUGEE INITIATIVE

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of **CANADIAN REFUGEE INITIATIVE**, which comprise the statement of financial position as at August 31, 2020, and the statements of revenue and expenditures and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Practitioner's responsibility
Our responsibility is to express a conclusion on the accompanying financial statements based on our review. We conducted our review in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements, which require us to comply with relevant ethical requirements.

A review of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements is a limited assurance engagement. The practitioner performs procedures, primarily consisting of making inquiries of management and others within the Association, as appropriate, and applying analytical procedures, and evaluates the evidence obtained.

The procedures performed in a review are substantially less in extent than, and vary in nature from, those performed in an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion on these financial statements.

Conclusion
Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Canadian Refugee Initiative as at August 31, 2020 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Mizgala & Cie Inc.[1]

Montréal, Québec
March 1, 2021

[1] CPA auditor, CA, public accountancy permit No. A129020

FROM THE WHOLE TRC TEAM,

THANK YOU

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone for taking the time and effort to review and support our work. We hope to continue to serve our community with your support, and from all of us at The Refugee Centre, we thank you for making it all possible!