

Annual Report 2022 | 2023

ASSIST

Community Services Centre



*growing
forward*

Our Vision

Bridging People and Communities

Our Mission

To enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality programs and services

Our Core Values

Accountability

We are responsible for our actions and our words towards persons served, stakeholders, communities, and each other.

Growth

We commit to ongoing learning and adapting to improve our service, practice and for personal growth.

Respect

We treat everyone with dignity, and build relationships based on trust by being transparent, empathetic and non-judgemental.

Inclusion

We actively embrace diversity by acknowledging everyone's identity, ability and experience. Everyone's voice and story are valued, and we create opportunities for them to be heard.

Integrity

We act honestly and are guided by professional ethics.

Service

We strive to provide high quality support and assistance to meet the needs of persons served and the community.

Growing forward in pursuit of our goals

Message from Kevin Dons President, Board of Directors



In the past year ASSIST has undergone significant changes to adapt to our evolving environment, while still maintaining our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We have adopted a hybrid work model that provides equitable access to our services and positions us for future growth.

The Board has been prioritizing accreditation and taking a strategic approach to strengthening a culture of inclusion, which includes an enhanced role for committees to ensure decision-making processes are inclusive and equitable.

We are grateful for our staff and volunteers, and recognize that our success is the result of their hard work and dedication. We are focused on maintaining a positive and supportive work environment that fosters community and belonging. We have invested in staff programs including: employee recognition, training and development, as well as work-life balance and wellbeing.

As an organization, we are focused on reaching strategic goals including: diversifying revenue streams, enhancing the capacity of our diverse community, promoting inclusion, and elevating the organization's profile. We remain committed to becoming an accredited agency, and believe that maintaining our high standards is essential in growing and evolving to better serve our community.

We are well on our way to seeing the impact of our vision and changes. The support ASSIST has received from the community has been truly remarkable. We remain devoted to our mission of serving as the bridge between people and communities, and to growing forward in pursuit of our goals.



ASSIST Board of Directors 2022-2023

Executive

Kevin Dons President
Games Choy Vice President
John Yee Treasurer
Angelica Loo Secretary

Directors

William Lau	Samuel Tam	Nancy Tran
Peter Wong	Shantanu Tonu Mitra	Raymond Luu
Wing Choy	Gloria Gao	Allan Mah

Statement of Operations

For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
Revenue		
Grants and funding (schedule 1)	\$3,723,974	\$3,169,315
Book sales and other	\$78,192	\$126,336
Casino	\$55,493	\$47,986
Donations and others	\$15,285	\$22,689
Tuition and activity fees	\$32,209	\$19,463
Fundraising	\$24,877	\$16,194
Interest	\$5,676	\$7,692
Memberships	\$480	\$1,065
Total revenue	\$3,936,186	\$3,410,740
Operating expenses		
Payroll expenses	\$3,041,360	\$2,627,578
Space rent	\$389,276	\$379,207
Office expenses	\$116,816	\$76,291
Telephone, utilities and wastage	\$133,770	\$116,133
Program activities and expenses	\$109,656	\$101,232
Amortization of tangible assets	\$38,213	\$38,235
Insurance	\$25,057	\$21,867
Renovation-operation	\$2,921	\$10,057
Accounting, audit and professional fee	\$11,225	\$14,727
Repairs and maintenance	\$20,313	\$5,180
Advertising and promotion	\$3,401	\$4,743
Fundraising and donation expenses	\$3,355	\$2,046
Property taxes	\$100	\$72
Reserve expenses	\$25,000	\$0
Total operating expenses	\$3,920,463	\$3,397,368
Excess (shortfall) of revenue over expenses	\$15,723	\$13,372

Planting and nurturing the seeds of caring, respect, inclusion and equity

Message from Fion Lee, Executive Director



As with everything, there are things I enjoy about spring and things I do not. I love planting perennials, and seeing the flowers that blossom. I do not enjoy spring clean-up and the allergies it brings; but I take a no-pain-no-gain attitude. Hard work brings rewards, and this year we look back at the successes that grew out of difficult circumstances.

As we entered the endemic stage of COVID-19, we carried important lessons with us— especially around well-being and accessibility to services and programs. While the pandemic jolted us into some permanent changes, including adopting a hybrid working model, benefits came along with changes. Now employees have greater flexibility in working locations, which provides staff with better work-life balance and in-turn has increased productivity.

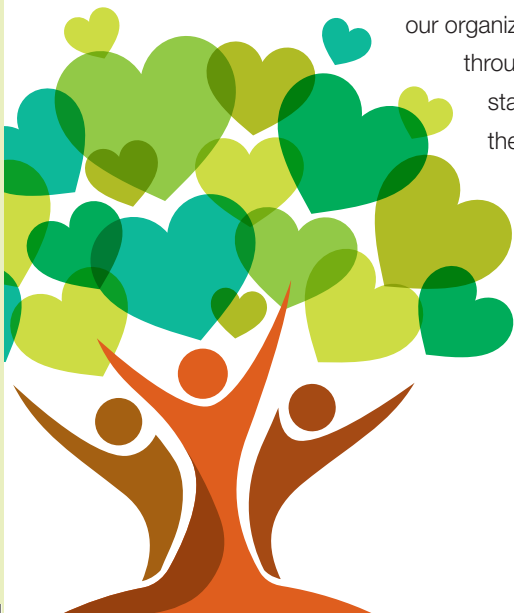
Our hybrid model has also increased accessibility for clients, who can now choose to come in-person or attend services online. The LINC program now offers four delivery formats to accommodate various learning needs and capacity: in-person, online only, blended (in-person and online consecutively), and hyflex (in-person and online concurrently). Together, we learned and grew through technology, delivered programs using different platforms and OneDrive and helped clients navigate and increase their digital literacy.

A proud highlight of our year was the launch of our first ASSIST Taste of Heritage Festival which showcased the variety of amazing coffee, teas and traditional clothing from 17 different countries. This exciting event was possible through the concerted efforts of LINC students and their families, staff and volunteers.

While each year brings a season for planting and nurturing the seeds of caring, respect, inclusion and equity. We expect September 2023 will bear the fruits of the immeasurably hard work we have done over the last 15 months, with ASSIST being awarded accreditation. This work will provide healthy ground to support our organization in growing and thriving in the future. It was made possible through the persistence of the Board and the work and dedication of our staff, who are the pride of the organization. We are also indebted to the heartfelt and continuous support of funders, donors, families and friends of ASSIST who are essential in our growing forward.

*Success is not final. Failure is not fatal.
It is the courage to continue that counts*

Winston Churchill



Growing

Recognizing and valuing our dedicated staff

We have amazing team members with diverse skills giving their best in providing services to the newcomers. They go over and beyond to meet the needs of the clients making themselves available after hours and weekends. Our online teachers record supplementary videos guiding students through complex tasks. The childcare team brings in books in various languages to promote culture. Staff has been planning programs and small project activities that capture the needs of our clients. Not only does it demonstrate their compassion to help, it also shows their focus on client-centred practice. Our staff recognizes their limitations and is eager to learn at every opportunity,

whether through professional development workshops/seminars/conferences or by collaborating with teams from different departments.



Strengthening our culture of Inclusion

We are intentional in creating a culture that doesn't rely on hierarchy and focuses on relationships with each other to build an inclusive working environment. This manifests in various ways for both staff and clients. We make space for our staff to feel safe, openly share their thoughts and ideas, encourage work-life balance and their professional growth. We promote staff health and wellness through a hybrid work model, flexible work hours, facilitate wellness days with fun activities and celebrate our staff presence at our annual Christmas party. We also practice these beliefs with our clients by making them feel welcomed, valuing their background, life experiences and prioritizing their unique needs when receiving quality services. We offer private prayer spaces at our schools; celebrate all the children's holidays at our daycare and celebrate our Taste of Heritage festival showcasing multicultural cuisine with staff, students and community members. We are determined in creating a space where everyone feels included and thrives in their journey.



HIGHLIGHTS 2022 | 2023

Forward

Bridging gaps by understanding changing needs

We are familiar with the needs of our clients and tailor our service delivery model to address those needs. We engage in a thorough needs assessment and make a service plan with clients based on their existing strengths and gaps in services or community resources. This has led to the creation of new programs in our agency. To support students continue learning while waiting to get into a formal LINC class (that may take a few months to a year), we have started a new initiative offering short term pre-LINC classes to students on the waitlist. This is a bridging program to introduce PBLA framework to students, support them to learn the required digital literacy skill, basic grammar, and some soft skills such as etiquette and netiquette. Our assessment and commitment to our clients help us advocate for our clients and implement new projects like Ukrainian employment readiness program, Rural employers' awareness on Diversity and Inclusion. We also keep expanding our parenting education to other ethnic communities. Every year we ride on appropriate funding opportunity to submit new funding proposals or grant applications to serve those in need.

Laying the foundation to future excellence

Future is unpredictable; therefore, often out of our control. However, when we prepare for the future, facing the unpredictable doesn't feel as overwhelming. We are laying the foundation to build a stronger future to be formally recognized by the Canadian Accreditation Council in September. Our focus has been to identify our strengths and gaps leading to improvising existing policy, developing new procedures and implementing them in all levels of the agency to increase congruence in leadership style, practices and service delivery methods. While we trust that we have always done things the right way, accreditation will provide us the national recognition and validation to reach a higher level of excellence. As we strongly believe; "Excellence is never an accident; it is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities." - Aristotle

Settlement Program

2114 newcomers | 4117 services
Complex Cases 113 | 446 services

The Settlement Program has been serving diverse newcomer population through in-person and virtual on-on-one support sessions and conducted over 20 group information sessions. The team has primarily supported with major needs; such as, income support, housing, employment, physical and mental health challenges, and community connections. Over the years, newcomers' needs have become more complex due to the nature of multiple barriers requiring on-going long-term support though case management and help client achieve attainable goals. Despite of their complex challenges, our settlement team members have worked diligently to support newcomers in their successful integration in Canadian.

Smart Choices Program

Recognizing Problem Gambling

223 children | 102 adults
16 presentations

This program helps children in grades one to twelve better understand the impacts of problem gambling, and teaches them how to avoid becoming a problem gambler. Content is provided through a variety of media including drama presentations and games, workshops, videos, and display boards. The workshop session also helps adults to understand best practices for children to save them from gambling practices.

LINC Program

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

1054 students
 including returning & promoted students
11 online & 3 in-person classes
6 blended classes
250 CLB certificates (promoted students)
365 CLB certificates (all learners)

The LINC Program teaches adult newcomers the English skills they need for settlement in Canada. Students developed their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills while learning about practical topics like housing, shopping, health care, education and community services. We offer full time, part time (mornings & evenings) classes and in 3 different formats - online, in-person, and blended. Free childcare for students attending in-person classes.

READI

(Rural employers' awareness on Diversity and Inclusion)

31 participants
1 in-person session | 4 online sessions

In partnership with Rural Development Network (RDN), and Lethbridge Family Services (LFS), the three organizations are spearheading a capacity-building project that supports employers in rural communities in the attraction, retention and integration of immigrants and refugees into rural workforces by implementing more diverse hiring practices to increase awareness of diversity and Inclusion in the rural communities.

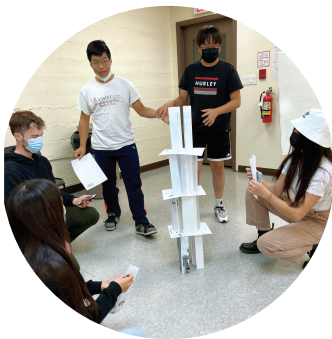
Initially an onboarding session was conducted followed by 4 online webinar sessions and one in-person session. A total of 31 participants attended the webinar sessions. Three more webinars will be hosted by the end of June 2023.

TANG Youth Program

Towards A New Generation

183 youth | 7 unique programs.

The TANG youth program supports the social, physical, and mental well-being of immigrant youth by promoting positive attitudes, interpersonal skills, and supportive relationships. The program aims to meet the many unique needs and challenges of youth face today. Youths between eleven and fifteen years of age are encouraged, supported, and mentored to help foster resiliency skills. Programs include Personal Growth Sessions, Homework Help, Afterschool Drop-Ins, Spring Break camps, Winter Break camp, Summer camp and school partnership



Multicultural Parent Education Program

400 parents & caregivers

1150 children impacted

24 programs delivered

2100+ service hours

This program provides a full spectrum of ongoing Parenting Education to newcomers and refugee families with children 18 years old and younger. The program consists of five core components including Nobody's Perfect, Fatherhood Initiative, Preteen Parenting, Youth Parenting and Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). It aims to promote protective factors in early childhood development, strengthen social network connections, foster caregiver resilience building, and reduce risk factors of child maltreatment and children intervention. The program is delivered to eight ethnic groups including: Korean, Chinese, Arabic, Pakistani, Eritrean, Oromo, Amharic, Tigrinya Communities with ongoing support to assist these families across Canada.



Children’s Summer Camp

116 children participated

The 2022 Children’s Summer Camps delivered eight weeks of affordable and high quality programming to children from all around Edmonton. Safety measures were still in place to ensure the health of children and staff and everyone walked away with many wonderful memories. Campers between the ages of six and eleven years old participated in many diverse activities ranging from science experiments to outdoor sports. Camps continued to provide opportunities for children to try new things, improve their leadership skills, learn age-appropriate social skills and work towards being independent. .

Responding to Family Violence Program

79 clients | 36 Service providers

This program provides free services to individuals of all genders who are experiencing family violence to access confidential, emotional and practical support. This program began in 1999 and continues to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate support offered in English, Mandarin and Cantonese through two outreach workers. In the last fiscal year, we have served 79 individuals impacted by family violence in providing court support, safety planning, risk assessment and information about healthy relationships. We have also provided support to 36 service providers through case consultation, collaboration meetings and referral of clients.

Informal English Program for Adults

Daily English for Beginners

71 Learners Total

3 sessions Level 1 | 1 session Level 2

The program offers practical weekly English classes that aim to help newcomers develop their language and social surviving skills. It is specifically designed for English learners with little or no prior knowledge of English and want to enhance their listening and conversation abilities. The program provides flexible and friendly learning environment and encourage students to practice what they’ve learned in small group settings. The goal is to help students build confidence and motivation to learn and apply English in their daily life. By the end of the program, learners will have a solid understanding of basic English grammar, everyday vocabulary and the ability to engage in simple daily conversation.

Digital Literacy

72 Learners Total

3 sessions Basic Digital Literacy

3 sessions Intermediate Digital Literacy

The Digital Literacy class is designed as an instruction to aid English language learners to overcome digital literacy barriers. The course will help learners to understand and use digital systems, tools, applications and online platforms more proficiently, learning netiquette, and to protect themselves from cybercrime.

Supporting Naturalized Citizens & Chinese Seniors

762 clients | 1508 services
one-on-one support

167 seniors attended
weekly aged-friendly activities

This program offers comprehensive one-on-one support to naturalized citizens with significant language and cultural barriers to access resources such as government benefits, income support, health care, seniors benefits applications, and more. We helped clients understand and complete forms, and provided interpretation, translation and referral services.

All the weekly seniors' activities were led, planned and delivered by volunteer seniors. A variety of free activities run on every Tuesday and Thursday delivered in-person at the downtown centre and through Zoom.



Ukrainian Employment Readiness Program

128 individuals supported
2 rounds of workshops | 11 participants

This short-term project is designated to support Ukrainian Nationals over a seven-and-a-half-month period from November 21, 2022, to June 30, 2023. The project included services like; resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation, mock interviews, job search, increase knowledge on Canadian work culture and professionalism.

In last 6 months, the program has completed 2 rounds of employment related workshops for 11 participants and provided one-to-one employment support to 28 clients.

Volunteer Program

161 volunteers | 5808.26 hours

Volunteers are a vital part of making ASSIST a friendly and supportive place for newcomers and immigrants. The volunteer program went back to full swing after all COVID 19 safety restrictions were lifted. We had 161 volunteers contributed close to 6000 volunteer hours that set a new record for the most volunteer hours we have never had.





ASSIST

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LINC Office

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assistcsc.org follow us on Facebook

2022-2023 FUNDERS

Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada

Employment & Social Development Canada

New Horizons for Seniors
Program and Canada
Summer Jobs Program

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies

Alberta
Children's Services
(Edmonton Region)

Alberta Justice & Solicitor General

Alberta Health
Services

The City of Edmonton

Family & Community
Support Services

ECALA

Thank you to the generous and continued support from the Chinese community organizations and Friends of ASSIST – we have received \$40,162 fundraising and donations in 2022.