



# IMWAH

Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **2020**

# A Special Note

Dear women, youth and girls and Supporters,

The year 2019 and 2020 has been a significant journey for IMWAH. It began with a welcoming bang when IMWAH, among 250 organizations across Canada, received a multi-year grant from the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) under the Capacity-Building Fund of the Women's Program. This funding gave us the opportunity to open an office and have a physical presence in our community. It gave us the opportunity to hire our first part-time coordinator, the amazing Jenny Yujia Shi, to coordinate and administer our first year of Board Development and Intercultural communication training.

Just as it began, this year ended with a bang as the infectious disease Coronavirus (COVID-19) spread around the world forcing us to close our office in accordance with the emergency response in our province. We recognize that it is particularly at times like these that the wellbeing of immigrant and migrant women and girls is at a greater risk. Migration is a difficult and exciting journey. A sense of belonging cannot be achieved until all levels of needs are met, especially social connections. We look forward to connecting with more of you in the new fiscal year and to committing ourselves in strategic planning and further capacity-building to support im/migrant women and girls.

In the meantime, please keep us in mind and reach out when you need us!

IMWAH Board of Directors and Staff



From left to right: Nadira (Co-Chair), Jenny (Coordinator), Valentina (Board Member), Nenyó (Secretary), Madhurima (Board Member), Ayat (Board Member), Maria Jose (Chair), Joanna (Treasurer).

# Mission

**Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax (IMWAH)** is a non-profit, non-partisan and culturally diverse organization established in 2012 and registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Company in 2013. It serves im/migrant women, female youth and girls in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Its goal and mission is to address the challenges, celebrate the contributions, and respond to the unique needs and concerns of im/migrant women and girls. Our gender related mandate is to provide support tailored to female focused initiatives.

## **We have four objectives:**

1. To bring the voices of im/migrant women into larger movements aiming to improve the wellbeing and progress of Haligonian women.
2. To bring awareness into the larger community of im/migrant women and girls concerns and to do advocacy work.
3. To research and assess situations affecting immigrant/migrant women and girls.
4. To showcase women's projects, initiatives and contributions to the community.



# Funders

IMWAH would like to acknowledge the following funders for supporting IMWAH's programs and initiatives in the past year:

- Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)
- Nova Scotia Office of Immigration
- Nova Scotia Department of Community, Culture and Heritage
- 4Cs Foundation
- Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

# Community Partners & Supporters

IMWAH would like to acknowledge the following partners for supporting IMWAH's programs and initiatives in the past year:

- Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier 21
- African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes
- Student Services Division - Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- HRCE Parent Navigators
- NS Early Childhood Development Intervention Services
- YMCA School Support Workers
- Halifax Association for Community Living
- Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)

# Individuals

A heartfelt Thank-you for those who took part in our 2019/20 programs and initiatives:

- Nina Zhang
- Salma Shamo
- Nimra Fatima
- Enas Jawad
- Nasima Habibullah

- Ann Divine
- Stephanie Coldwell
- Shakira Weatherdon
- Carmen Celina Moncayo

- Catherine Rahey
- Anna McQuarrie
- Monica Romero
- Asmaa Jawy
- Adriana Lilley
- Robin Muller

# Board of Directors 2019-2020

In the past year, IMWAH benefited from the leadership of 11 immigrant women. All together, they represent a diverse range of roles as community leaders, dedicated professionals, strong advocates and resilient women. There are a total of 12\* languages spoken on the Board!

**Officers:**

- Chair: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser
- Co-chair: Nadira Al Nasleh
- Treasurer: Joanna Strzelec - Stewart
- Secretary: Nenyo Kwasitsu

**Directors:**

- Felicia Eghan (honorary member)
- Valentina Kenny
- Madhurima Asthana
- Rana Zaman
- Ayat Derar
- Darshini Shah
- Nancy Spina



From left to right: Ayat Derar (Board of Director), Darshinia Shah (Board of Director), Nenyo Kwasitsu (Secretary), Nadira Al-Nesleh (Co-Chair), Nancy Spina (Board of Director), Maria Jose Yax-Fraser (Chair), Joanna Strzelec-Stewart (Treasurer), Rana Zaman (Board of Director), Valentina Kenny (Board of Director), and Madhurima Asthana (Board of Director), Jenny Yujia Shi (Board Development Coordinator)

# Committees

## **IMWAH's initiatives were driven by the following Project Committees:**

**The Board Development Committee** oversees the planning, development and evaluation of the Capacity Building Project funded by the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE). The project runs from 2019-2022. A part time Board Development Coordinator assists the committee with the day-to-day operations of the project.

Committee Members: Valentina Kenny, Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Joanna Strezelec-Stewart, Madhurima Asthana, Nadira Al Nasleh

**Inclusive Education Forum Committee** oversees the planning, delivery and evaluation of the IMWAH Inclusive Education forum. The Committee develops networking opportunities, raises awareness and advocates for resources for im/migrant mothers and their children with learning exceptionalities.

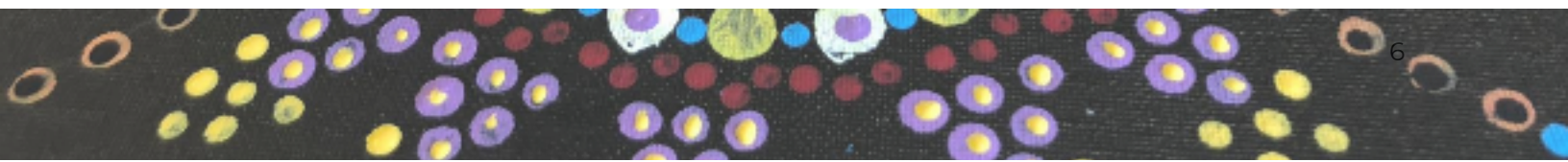
Committee Members: Madhurima Asthana, Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Ayat Derar and Monica Romero (2019-2020), Paroo MacKinnon, Hosn Hasan (2020-2021)

**Art & Storytelling Committee** oversees the planning, development and evaluation of an Art Hive project since January 2020 - a 12-week project where immigrant, migrant women, mothers and children explore guided art activities and storytelling circles.

Committee Members: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser and Neny Kwastisu.

**The Oral History Committee** managed the planning and coordination of a series of Oral History interviews with 3 pairs of immigrant mothers and daughters. The project was a collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier 21. The interviews culminated in a public screening and panel discussion on March 8th 2020 in celebration of International Mother's Day.

Committee Members: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Nadira Al Nesleh, Rana Zaman



# Strategic Highlights

In March 2019, IMWAH was among 250 organizations across Canada to receive a multi-year funding (48 months duration) from the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) under the Capacity-Building Fund of the Women's Program.

The objective of this funding is to increase the capacity of women's organizations and Indigenous organizations serving women, and whose initiatives contribute to gender equality and advance women's movement in Canada. IMWAH has been working towards this goal since 2012.

**This funding has allowed IMWAH to strengthen capacity in the following areas:**

## **Organizational Capacity**

The employment of the Board Development Coordinator since June 2019 marked the initial transition from a working to governance Board. Over the last year, renting an office at the African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes provided valuable insights on the location and facilities needed to best tailor IMWAH's programming and administration to our membership. COVID-19 has presented an opportunity for us to envision ways to support women and girls on virtual/mobile platforms to expand and diversify the reach of our future programs and services. Once public health restrictions are lifted, we will be looking for a new office location to resume our physical presence and re-connect with members of the community in person!

## **Board Governance Capacity**

IMWAH engaged Consultant and mentor Stephanie Coldwell to deliver a two-day introductory workshop on Board Governance in the Fall of 2019. A working draft of a Board Governance is being developed by the coordinator and Chair in consultation with Coldwell and the Board Development Committee.

The Governance Manual is a milestone activity that marks the following steps in solidifying IMWAH's governance framework:

- Creating job descriptions for Board, Officers and Directors
- Establishing committee terms of references
- Creating Board Policies and established communication protocols
- Establishing Board Annual Calendar and Annual Agenda
- Creating and implementing Board Evaluation, Directors self and peer assessments.
- Revising of Bylaws
- Increasing insights on Board/staff relation and respective responsibilities
- Increasing project management experience from offering multiple projects

## **Board Leadership and intercultural communication Capacity**

The Board attended a series of intercultural communication workshops between October 2019-February 2020. The workshop series was designed for Directors to explore and reflect on diverse communication and leadership styles that contribute to healthy Board dynamics. The workshops include:

- Responding to Death and Tragic events in Newcomers Lives with Carmen Celina Moncayo (August 2019)
- Intercultural Communication with Ann Divine (October 2019)
- Feedback & Conflict Effectiveness with Annahid Dashtgard, co-hosted with Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier 21 (November 2019)
- *Intercultural leadership & Healthy Board Relations*, Shakira Weatherdon (February 2020)

### **Membership Engagement Capacity**

IMWAH held its first Open House on January 31st, 2020 to deliver a progress update to our stakeholders. We welcomed 30+ representatives from a wide range of sectors including the Nova Scotia Government, immigration settlement agencies, community organizations and members. We have also increased our membership engagement and promotional capacity through the creation of our website [imwah.org](http://imwah.org). The website is a crucial platform to promote and archive IMWAH's programs and initiatives. The website will be launched at our 2020 AGM.

### **Advocacy Capacity**

IMWAH's Directors and staff engaged in external group training and networking opportunities organized by government agencies, community organizations and partners. As one of the only immigrant/migrant women-led organizations in the province, these opportunities allowed IMWAH to engage in cross-sector conversations, to learn from and with other women in leaderships and organizations serving women across and beyond Nova Scotia.

- *Evaluating Refugee Programs*, Centre for Community Based Research
- Recreation Access for Newcomers (RAN) Engagement Session, NS Department of Community, Culture and Heritage
- *NS Women in 2020 Summit*, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- *Mapping Our Pathways to Justice (final event)*, Be the Peace Institute
- *Chart the Way: Community Consultation with NS Non-profit organizations*, CSCNS
- *Canadian Domestic Violence Conference 6 2020*, Bridges Institute and New Start

### **Capacity Building Year II: Strategic Planning**

As this AGM takes place, we are excited to launch the second phase of our Capacity building project: **Strategic Planning**. The learning and team-building from last year have enabled our board to establish long-term priorities as we enter into the next phase of the project.

**Thank-you to WAGE for their recognition and continued support!**



Intercultural Communication Workshop, October 2019

# Programming Highlights

As IMWAH's capacity grows, we continue to work alongside organizations across sectors to collectively address the gender equality concerns of immigrant and migrant women.

## **Oral History Project “My Mother and I: Our Journey”**

In the fall of 2019, IMWAH launched *My Mother and I: Our Journey*, in partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier 21. We worked with 3 pairs of mothers and daughters to document their experiences on immigrating to Nova Scotia. The conversations took place from an intergenerational perspective and captured the learning, challenges and tender moments that each mother/daughter experienced during their migration process. On International Women's Day, March 8, 2020, the project concluded with a public screening of a short video: *My Mother and I, Our Journey*. A panel discussion was led by oral historian Dr. Emily Burton from CMI and IMWAH board of Directors following the screening. During this panel, the mothers and daughters shared their insights and experiences with the audience. IMWAH is grateful for this continued collaboration with CMI. IMWAH also thanks Charisma Grace and Jo-elle Buchanan, Olena Stepanova, Omaira Ospino and Yuminary Bryson for sharing their stories.



Oral History 19.09.28CGJB with Charisma Grace and Jo-Elle Buchanan, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

### **Community Art Hive “Art and Storytelling”**

Being an immigrant/migrant woman and a mother is a challenging and exciting journey. IMWAH began a 12-week Art Hive initiative where immigrant, migrant women, mothers and children are invited to explore guided artmaking and storytelling. Between January - March 2020, this program welcomed twenty eight immigrant women and more than forty-five children to come together and create art and tell stories. The Art and Storytelling Project provided not only a space for art, but, more importantly, a safe and relaxing social environment for participating women to self-care and engage with one another. In conjunction with the art activities, a guided storytelling circle held space for self reflective discussions on identity, cultural recognition, and personalized expressions.

*Art and Storytelling* is IMWAH's third community art program creating space for im/migrant women and their children to feel recognized, connected and inspired through creativity. We would like to acknowledge the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration and 4Cs Foundation for their generous support. This program began on January 17th and is currently on pause due to COVID-10. The remainder of the program will resume following instructions from Public Health.



Session 3, Acrylic Painting session facilitated by Enas Jawad. Photo Credit: Nina Zhang

## Advocacy Initiative “Inclusive Education Forum”

On February 8th, 2020, IMWAH held its first Inclusive Education Forum for immigrant, migrant mothers and female guardians. It was led by Board of Directors Madhurima Asthana, Maria Jose Yax Fraser, Ayat Derar and member and advocate Monica Romero.

The forum was designed to provide immigrant and migrant mothers with resources that assure inclusion and secure family, social and economic well-being. The forum engaged Guest speakers from the Division of Student Services at the NS Department of Education and Early Childhood, HRCE Parent Navigators, NS Early Childhood Intervention Services, Halifax Association for Community Living and advocate Anna MacQuarrie

The Forum strengthened another area of IMWAH’s advocacy to support im/migrant women and guardians to be active partners in the inclusion of their children with exceptionalities and special needs in the public-school system. In response to participant feedback, IMWAH’s Mothering Support Group on Facebook was created after the forum. Since the Forum, the IMWAH Inclusive Education Committee has been joined by two additional members and has begun its planning work in preparation of 2020-2021 programming.

The forum would not have been possible without the support of Catharine Rahey (Board member of Autism Nova Scotia and South Shore Chapter) and the vision of former IMWAH Board of Director Nancy Spina. Our sincere gratitude goes towards Nova Scotia Communities, Culture and Heritage for funding this initiative.



Graphic Facilitation 1 of 2 at IEF produced by See Meaning, February 8th, 2020.

# Membership

In the past year, IMWAH has seen an increase in the number of immigrant and migrant women residing in Nova Scotia who have come to us for support and connections. We have had the privilege of meeting women in various stages of their immigration journey and learning about the diverse range of their needs.

These encounters have shown us that the needs of immigrant migrant women extend beyond the coverage of existing settlement support and processes. Re-location, (re)starting a career, coming of age, venturing into mothering, aging and the (re)construction of identity are some of the defining experiences from which immigrant and migrant women seek for connections and support. IMWAH strives to support immigrant and migrant women whose experiences fall through the gaps or find themselves outside of conventional systems of support.

We welcome any women, youth and girls who are first and second generation immigrants and migrants residing in HRM and in Nova Scotia to keep in touch with us. In our upcoming strategic planning, we aim to refine our membership definition and create a membership structure to better connect and meet your needs.



Panel Discussion, Oral History Project “My Mother and I: Our Journey”, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

# Financial Highlights

| <b>Fiscal year</b>         | <b>2019-2020</b> | <b>2018-2019</b> |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>             | <b>\$73,700</b>  | <b>\$65,038</b>  |
| Payroll expenses           | \$21,976         | \$0              |
| General and admin expenses | \$37,590         | \$4,352          |
| <b>Expenses total</b>      | <b>\$59,566</b>  | <b>\$4,352</b>   |
| <b>Net income</b>          | <b>\$14,134</b>  | <b>\$60,685</b>  |



## Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax Income Statement 2019-04-01 to 2020-03-31

### REVENUE

|                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Sales Revenue</b> |                  |
| Funding Revenue      | 73,700.00        |
| <b>Net Sales</b>     | <u>73,700.00</u> |

**TOTAL REVENUE** 73,700.00

### EXPENSE

**Total Payroll Expense** 21,976.41

#### **General & Administrative Expenses**

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Accounting Fees                 | 2,612.50  |
| Advertising & Promotions        | 562.03    |
| Business Fees & Licenses        | 51.15     |
| Courier & Postage               | 19.89     |
| Consulting Fee                  | 11,753.22 |
| Amortization Expense            | 1,590.88  |
| Conference Expenses             | 504.60    |
| Honoraria and Facilitation Fees | 7,771.67  |
| Interest & Bank Charges         | 197.30    |
| Admin and Office Expenses       | 57.59     |
| Supplies                        | 5,448.40  |
| Rent                            | 5,391.37  |
| Internet and Website Expenses   | 664.13    |
| Transportation cost             | 373.44    |
| Telephone                       | 591.20    |

**Total General & Admin. Expenses** 37,589.37

**TOTAL EXPENSE** 59,565.78

**NET INCOME** 14,134.22



## Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax Balance Sheet As at 2020-03-31

### ASSET

#### Current Assets

|                       |           |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Cash Clearing Account | 317.81    |           |
| Petty Cash            | 67.18     |           |
| Chequing Bank Account | 79,871.42 |           |
| Total Cash            |           | 80,256.41 |

#### Total Current Assets

80,256.41

#### Capital Assets

|                                 |           |        |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------|
| Small Equipment                 | 1,526.56  |        |
| Accum. Amort. - Small Equipment | -1,526.56 |        |
| Net - Small Equipment           |           | 0.00   |
| Computer                        | 1,103.96  |        |
| Accum. Amort. - Computer        | -303.59   |        |
| Net - Computer                  |           | 800.37 |

#### Total Capital Assets

800.37

### TOTAL ASSET

81,056.78

### LIABILITY

#### Current Liabilities

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Accounts Payable    | 4,035.26 |
| Accrued Liabilities | 3,250.00 |

#### Total Current Liabilities

7,285.26

### TOTAL LIABILITY

7,285.26

### EQUITY

#### Net Assets

|                                  |           |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Net Assets - Previous Year       | 59,637.30 |
| Current Excess of Rev. over Exp. | 14,134.22 |

#### Total Net Assets

73,771.52

### TOTAL EQUITY

73,771.52

### LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

81,056.78