



Operation Compassion
Society of British Columbia



UMOJA ANNUAL REPORT 2018

About Umoja Operation Compassion Society

Umoja Operation Compassion Society of British Columbia is a nonprofit society (88642 5909 RR 0001) formed in 2002 to work with low income immigrants living in the greater Vancouver region, predominately Surrey, BC.

Our society seeks and strives to help promote unity, respect, and dignity among minority immigrants and refugees. New immigrants and refugees can find it difficult to integrate due to obstacles such as poverty, extremely low levels of literacy, unemployment, language barrier, isolation, feelings of hopelessness, mental health issues and depression.

Through Umoja Family Services Center, we provide a variety of culturally sensitive programs to help families, children, and youth integrate successfully into their new social environment. Umoja uniquely exists to serve those that are in need and transitions them into main stream community services while fulfilling its Vision and Mission.

Our overseas projects focus on Africa, especially the great lakes region of East and Central Africa through Christian education, health and micro financing for deprived women.



Chairperson Board of Director's Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank everyone who supported Umoja in 2018 as our Umoja team continued to empower immigrants and refugees to successfully integrate into an inclusive Canadian society.

It was gratifying to see Umoja's programs continue to evolve and expand. An exciting addition to our programs was our first program specifically for men – helping them integrate and adjust to life in Canada. Umoja was also able to create and publish several short videos and testimonials about our services, documenting the impact our programs have. We hope to continue to leverage these to promote our services and gain further funding support.

In October of 2018 we held our largest Gala event to date at the Surrey Civic Hotel, with 135 attendees, and raised over \$10,000. We look forward to continuing to build on this success and plan to raise an even larger sum at our 2019 Gala. We look forward to having you join us at this event on October 26 th , 2019.

In closing, for each of our staff, volunteers, funders and donors, please accept the sincere gratitude of the Board of Directors for ensuring the continued success of Umoja. It is each of you who make the work of Umoja possible and thus positively impact the lives of immigrants and refugees here in Surrey.

- **Annette Simbabure, Board Chairperson**

Executive Director's Report

Umoja Operation Compassion society of BC, having moved from the Whalley area has settled in very well in the Guildford area and seeing more newcomer families. This location has been excellent for clients who take transit and those who walk into our office for support. Umoja has internally expanded by adding on extra program called "The Umoja Dad's Outreach" program.

So far in 2018 we reached over 30 men who accessed this program through workshops delivering information about citizenship, banking, health, the school system, as well as law and order in the Canadian context.

Additionally, in partnership with First West Foundation, Umoja has been able to increase capacity to ensure a trauma informed approach throughout the agency and programs when working with vulnerable newcomers who often come with experiences of trauma from war and migration.

Umoja has continued to engage with relevant stakeholders in serving our wider community. We do appreciate our partnerships with main stream organizations. Our dedicated staff and volunteers continue to serve with excellence in spite of the challenges facing the non-profit world. We extend our thanks to our esteemed funders and donors without whom our work and service to the newcomer community would be unsuccessful.

Our international program continues to grow in the community of Rwentutu, western Uganda with an addition of an outreach program focused on teaching literacy, nutrition, health and sanitation as well as food safe. Classrooms for Africa has been instrumental in ensuring that children in Rwentutu village have classrooms to help them study.

This annual support is greatly appreciated by our membership. Umoja not only supports Rwentutu, but we support the Entebbe womens' association who provide education to orphaned children. We thank St. Mark Church and Broadway churches who provide this funding.

- **Amos Kambere, Executive Director**

2018 / 2019 Annual Statistics



of Children/Youth

263

of Parents/Caregivers

153

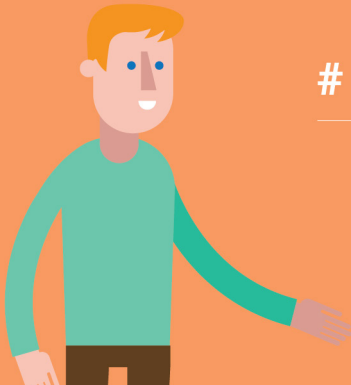


of Families

152

of Attendees

4,517



of Volunteers

14

of Program Sessions

347



of Times
Clients Received
Transportation

2,588



OUR MISSION

“To empower immigrants and refugees to successfully integrate into an inclusive Canadian society.

Internationally, we support initiatives to improve the quality of life in global communities.”



Program Report

FIRST STEPS: HAND IN HAND

First Steps: Hand in Hand program continues to remain a strong and present program within the Surrey community for refugee families with children 0-6 years. The program provided two weekly drop-in sessions at Umoja, with one evening drop in consistently having to turn families away as capacity was reached. A highlight of the year was taking families to Camp Alex at Crescent beach for 2 nights, everyone loved the beach and swimming!

The First Steps: Hand in Hand program is truly an invaluable resource in the community for newcomer families with refugee experiences. Families continue to feel welcomed, informed and better positioned to support their children during their integration into the community.

UNITED WAY'S OUT OF SCHOOL UMOJA PROGRAM

The *United Way Out of School Umoja Program* supported 67 children from various countries across the globe. A large focus this year was working with children on building confidence and supporting children in working through conflict resolution. The United Way Out of School Umoja Program remains a safe space for newcomer children to develop their English literacy skills, while also finding a place of support and encouragement to express themselves and build confidence.

SUCCESS BY 6 – UMOJA OUTREACH

Families who have come to Canada as refugee claimants can face various challenges in accessing services due to ineligibility. Through outreach support Umoja worked with refugee claimant families and vulnerable immigrant families to provide integration support and community connection.

Navigating the system in Canada is very overwhelming and it is necessary for families to receive guidance and support while navigating these systems, especially when English language competency is not strong.

LITERACY AND LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

The Literacy and Life Skills program provided weekly classes for level 1 and level 2 English learners to focus on reading, writing and comprehension of the English Language. A highlight from the year was several field trips to A Rocha farm in South Surrey. Students had the opportunity to spend time outdoors, work in gardens and enjoy meals together which made for fun and enjoyable experiences for the students!

YOUTH

Newcomer youth participated in the digital media program that provided opportunity to learn and develop skills in photography, videography and editing. Umoja partnered with the Surrey School District to offer the program in partnership at Guildford Park Secondary School. This has created increased accessibility to the program and opportunity for students to engage in digital media skills learning while also expressing their story and sharing more about their experiences in Canada.

DAD'S OUTREACH PROGRAM

In the summer of 2018 Umoja received funding from the United Way of the Lower Mainland to pilot a Newcomer Dad's outreach program. Newcomer dads face various challenges and obstacles in settling in Canada, however often focus on employment and learning English soon after arriving in Canada.

The newcomer dad's outreach worker met with dads and facilitated sessions to support dads with their integration and settlement, as well as went on field trips, the highlight being Grouse Mountain! This innovative project is a great opportunity for newcomer dads to build community and develop connections as they work to support their families while better understanding Canadian culture.



PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:

Options Community Services
Diversecity Community
Resources Society
Surrey Food Bank

Surrey Libraries

City of Surrey

School District 36

A Rocha

British Columbia Institute
of Technology

Surrey Fire Services

Simon Fraser University

Fraser Region Aboriginal
Friendship Centre

Surrey RCMP

Mosaic

Pacific Immigrant
Resources Society

Costco – Newton Location

Fraser Health

Quest Food Exchange

Progressive Intercultural
Community Services

Surrey-White Rock
Children's Partnership

St. Matthews Church

Broadway Church

African Canadian Soccer
and Cultural Association

Benefic

Surrey Board of Trade

Individual Donors
and Supporters

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FUNDERS:

