



The Centre for
Spanish-Speaking
Peoples

El Centro para
Gente de Habla
Hispana

ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021

48 YEARS OF SERVING THE SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY

WHO

WE

SERVE



“

The women's program assisted me in obtaining the help and services needed to overcome my domestic issues, they provided me with translators, lawyers and helped me gain financial independence that would eventually help me in moving my family to a safer environment. The support groups the counselors facilitated have taught me positive coping methods for depression and anxiety, and educated me on issues surrounding mental health, sexual health and holistic wellness. I am happy to say that I am in a much better place in my life due to the constant work that the women's program continues to do, it has helped my family become a stronger unit and has also introduced us to community groups and programs that we can be a part of and form bonds with others that have shared experiences like my own.

”

CSSP Client, participant of WOMEN'S PROGRAM





VOLUNTEERS

“

I have been volunteering at the food bank for about 6 years. The experience has been very rewarding because I realize how much need there is in our community. The food bank has been able to help many families have some food at home. Thanks to the organizations that supply these food items and to CSSP, I hope that we can continue helping our community for an unlimited time.

”

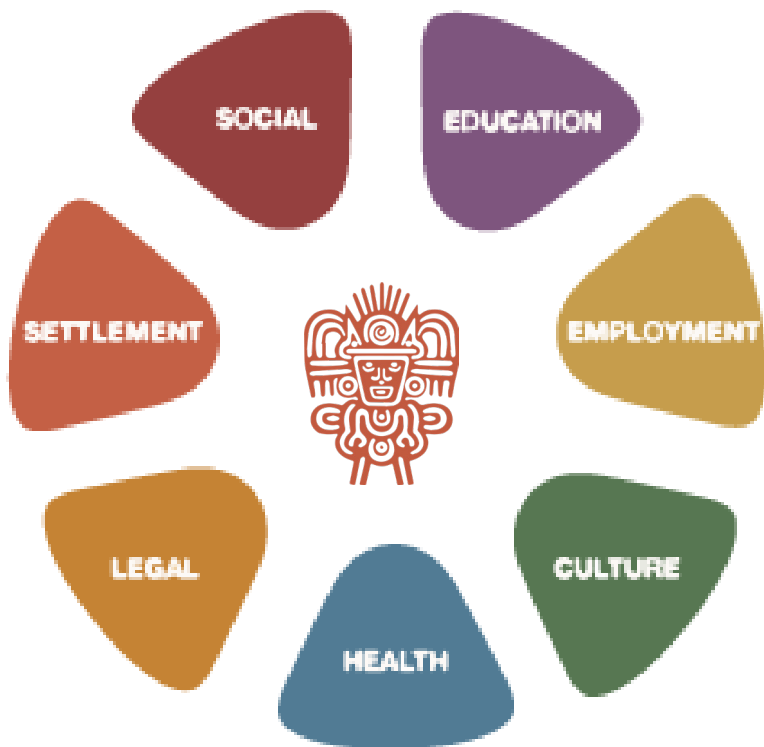
Julia CSSP Volunteer, FOOD BANK PROGRAM



*Hilma CSSP Volunteer,
FOOD BANK PROGRAM*

OUR MISSION

To enhance the quality of life for our community, and deliver purposeful services to advance the social and economic integration of our community into the broader Canadian society.



OUR VISION

To grow a united, engaged and prosperous community.



OUR

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



FABIANA MONTOYA

Board President

Dear CSSP members,

We will remember the pandemic for all the challenges it brought and the people we lost. We will also remember these years for the resiliency we demonstrated as a community. The Latinx/Hispanic community was among the most vulnerable communities in the city of Toronto, facing some of the highest infection rates (7 times most likely to get infected by COVID-19) and having 70% of our community members reporting income loss. Our community came together to help the most vulnerable, showing enormous resilience through a time of adversity.

During these challenging times, CSSP staff worked remotely, delivering services via phone, videoconference and in some cases in person for vulnerable clients who needed emergency support. CSSP, with the support of our partners, quickly adapted to address the pressing needs in the community and was able to:

- Increased food bank usage by 85% (increasing our biweekly support from ~70 families to ~130 families).
- Provided settlement and legal services to over 1,700 clients.
- Organized COVID-19 vaccine information sessions and a Vaccine Pop-Up Clinic with Humber River Hospital, TCDSB and San Lorenzo.
- Ran computer literacy courses for 200+ seniors and women to help them stay connected with family, friends and health services.
- Engaged our youth by publishing 7 editions of Avenida Magazine, showcasing talent in graphic design and writing.
- Provided HIV/AIDS counselling and outreach to over 500 clients and partnered with GetaKit Initiative, in which gay, bisexual, men who have sex with men (MSM) and trans individuals can safely order HIV testing kits to their homes.

As we visualize the future, we see two aspects of CSSP that will require our attention. First, we will assess how to become an organization that embraces further technology and delivers services efficiently in hybrid models (in person and virtually). This shift will provide our clients with more flexibility and allow us to have a wider geographical reach. Second, we will be reflecting and identifying the root causes that left the Latinx community in Toronto more at risk and will work with our partners to explore new programs that will continue to address these root causes. We are sure that by working with our partners, funders and community, we will be able to be better prepared for the future.

As we head into 2021-2022, we feel hope and excitement. We have a new Executive Director, new members in our Board of Directors with various expertise, we are redesigning the website and are in the process of publishing our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. These efforts will help bring greater benefits to our growing community.

We see how our resilient Spanish-speaking community will thrive in 2021-2022 and we feel honoured as an organization to be able to be part of this journey.

Fabiana Montoya



WITH

YOUR

SUPPORT



+
2500

FAMILLIES
received
FOOD BANK
support



\$35-\$40
HAMPERS
VALUE

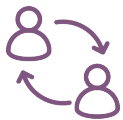
↑
85%

BANK
USAGE
INCREASE



500 LEGAL
CASES

were attended at our
LEGAL CLINIC with
issues related to employ-
ment and immigration



1367
ONE-ONE
SETTLEMENT
COUNSELLING
clients were assisted



337
WOMEN
received **CRISIS**
COUNSELLING



40
WOMEN
received
TRANSITIONAL
HOUSING SUPPORT



+150
PEOPLE
attending
SETTLEMENT
INFORMATION
WORKSHOPS



+600
CLIENTS
HIV/AIDS
COUNSELLING
AND OUTREACH
SERVICES
were assisted



284 VOLUNTEERS
208 SENIORS
were engaged in computer literacy
programs, ESL classes, online
exercise and dance classes



+150
CHRISTMAS
DONATIONS
were given to children from
low-income families

OUR

PROGRAMS



LEGAL

CLINIC

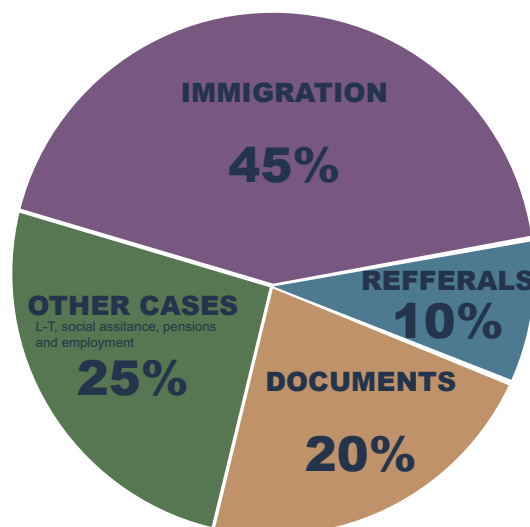
The Legal Clinic with the support of Legal Aid Ontario provides advice and representation to the Spanish-speaking population of Ontario to those who meet our financial guidelines and our criteria for case selection regardless of immigration status in Canada.

We provide legal services in the areas of workers' rights, social assistance (OW and ODSP) immigration/refugee law, landlord-tenant, EI, CPP, OAS/GIS and human rights. In addition we have a document service for statutory declarations, affidavits, Powers of Attorney, travel authorizations, invitation letters and notarizing documents.

This year has been difficult for the justice system in Ontario and for the Legal Clinic and our staff. The year of Covid-19 will be remembered by all as the year of trying to overcome the many lockdowns, loss and slowdown of many Tribunals our clients rely on and the Digitalization of Ontario. It is the year when the vulnerability of our clients in the digital world became a paramount issue we had to deal with.

The Legal Clinic continued to provide support during the whole year. Following all the COVID-19 protocols, clients were met at the door if they had to drop off documents. This was facilitated by the fact that the other programs at CSSP were not at the Centre. Most interviews were done on the phone. We set up a separate room for clients who did not have access to computers or internet so they could attend their zoom hearings at the Centre. Except for emergencies we did not hold our Document Clinic until after the lockdowns.

**WE RECEIVE ON AVERAGE 60 CALLS
PER WEEK ASKING FOR ASSISTANCE**



OUR

PROGRAMS



SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

The settlement program helps newcomers to settle into their lives in the Greater Toronto Area and vicinity by providing a range of free services aimed at supporting clients to live independently. Through the funding from the Newcomer Settlement Program and United Way, the program is able to provide Latinx/Hispanic newcomers with the resources so that they can participate and contribute to various aspects of Canadian life.

COVID-19 impacted our physical delivery of programs and services, making it more challenging for our clients to adjust to the new realities. However, our Settlement program counsellors were able to respond effectively during the pandemic, assisting to clients essential needs: CERB application submissions, Employment Insurance, Ontario Works, Tax Clinic for seniors, and Canada Child Benefit forms. Our team was able to assist many families, including newcomers and seniors who struggled with low computer literacy levels and language barriers.

SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS IN THEIR JOURNEY TO CANADA

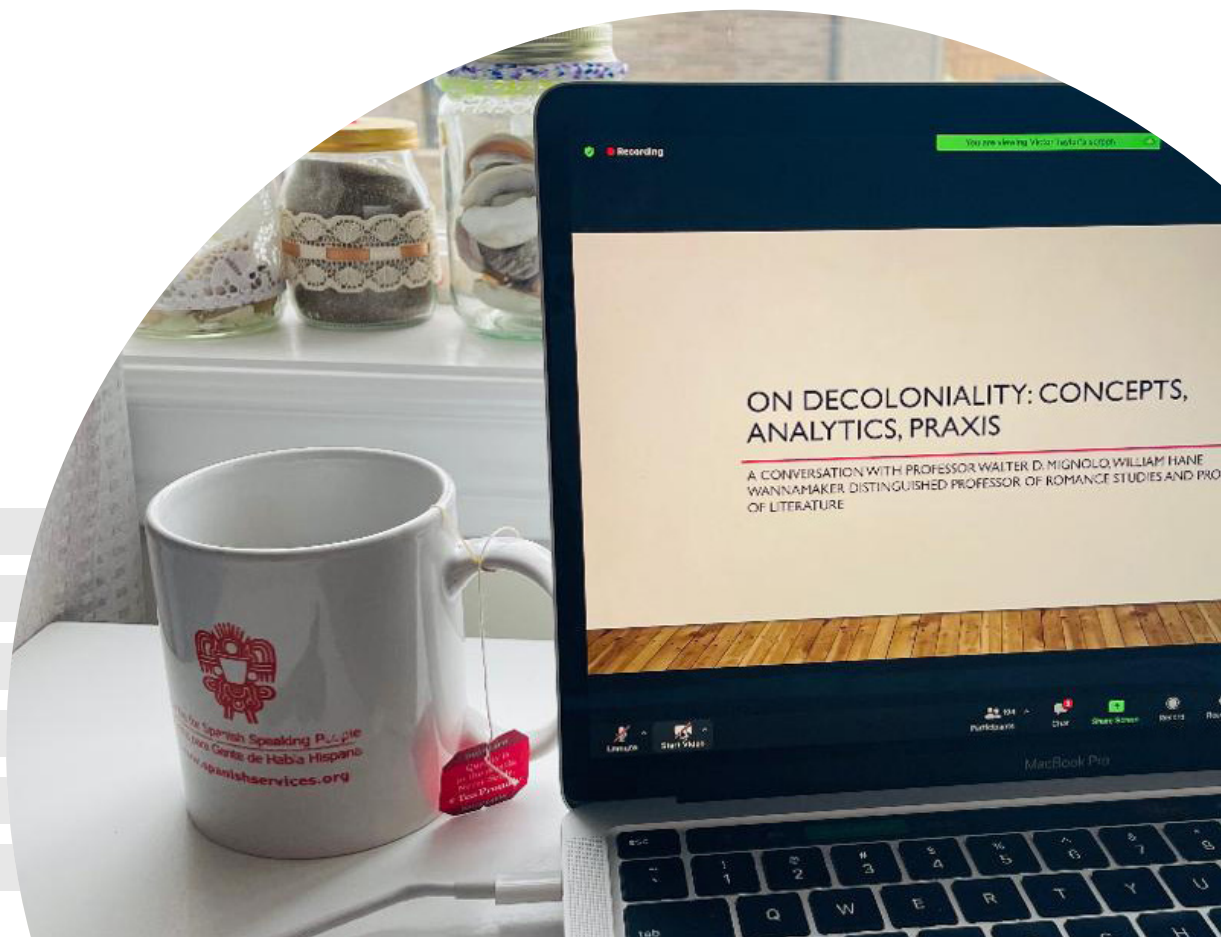
“

I approached the Settlement program to help me with a legal aid certificate OW, school for my son, family case with the women's program. I was successfully accepted as a convention refugee in February 2020. In September 2021 I got my permanent residency and I am currently finishing an online course certificate of support community worker. ”



ADAPTING OUR SERVICES TO COVID-19

Eliana CSSP Staff, guiding Zumba lessons in the park



OUR

PROGRAMS



**~500 SENIORS & VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED
IN OUR FOOD BANK, TRANSLATION
SERVICES AND WORKSHOPS**

VOLUNTEER

In 2020-2021, our Volunteer Program has been busier than ever. Through the continued support from Community Service Partnerships (CSP) from City of Toronto and United Way, we continued to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for seniors and women at our main office. These services continue to prove beneficial to community members who have recently arrived or have lived in Canada and are trying to integrate into society. Our volunteers also assisted clients with the translation of documents.

FOOD BANK

Our foodbank services increased due to the hardships faced among our members (unemployment rates at the height of the pandemic, especially for undocumented families). We would like to thank North York Harvest Food Bank and Second Harvest for their continued food supply and America United FC for the generous toy donations to our families during the holiday season.

SENIORS

Thank you to New Horizons for assisting us with a program to help teach seniors about nutrition and computer literacy during the pandemic.

Christel & Natalia CSSP Staff, Food Bank Program





Youth Picnic

OUR

PROGRAMS



YOUTH

PROGRAM

In the spring of 2020, through the collaboration of youth designers, Avenida Magazine launched its quarterly edition and distributed it across the city. The magazine has published seven editions to date and themes focused on being a point of resource for Latinx/Hispanic youth living in the city. Among the issue themes included: mental and social services for Latinx/Hispanic youth, tourist attractions, book recommendations and foods of origin. The magazine staff would like to thank the Laidlaw Foundation for its continued support.

**45 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN GRAPHIC
DESIGN, WRITING AND PHOTOGRAPHY
FOR OUR QUARTERLY MAGAZINE**



“Thanks to the Avenida team and the Spanish Speaking Center, I have been able to better adapt to my new life in Canada, connecting with new opportunities and living experiences.”

OUR

PROGRAMS



WOMEN'S

PROGRAM

The Women's Program continued offering services to women who had experienced or are suffering from domestic abuse. Our services focused on two main areas: counselling/advice; and support during the transition to an independent and safe life. Women's Program Counsellors assisted 337 clients, and the Transitional and Support Worker helped 40 women with applications for Priority Subsidized Housing or to access other resources. We partnered with Unison Community Services for workshops on managing anxiety and stress during the pandemic, coping with family dynamics and stress stemming from debt and finances. The program is able to create an impact due to the support from Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, United Way and CSP.

PROVIDING HEALING FOR SURVIVORS AND CHILDREN

“Thank you for guiding me on the right path to make better decisions and to grow as a person in an environment free of violence.”





HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

PROGRAM

The HIV/AIDS Prevention Program promotes healthy sexual practices through community education, one-on-one counselling and support groups. Our “Nuestro Espacio” support group reached out to other Aids Servicing Organizations (ASOs) and community partners, serving a group of 14 men on a weekly basis.

Through the support of AIDS Bureau, our mental health counsellors delivered over 600 sessions. Our HIV/AIDS counsellor also participated in a Fellowship with Mount Sinai Hospital, making us the first agency to engage in a knowledge and practice exchange between community organizations with HIV/AIDS programs and Mount Sinai's Psychiatry Clinic.

During this period, we also entered the final year of the CHAMP in Action Program, funded by Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC): an intervention program proven to be effective in reducing HIV related stigma and that promotes action against discrimination and social justice for those affected by HIV and AIDS.

**PROMOTING HEALTHY
SEXUAL PRACTICES THROUGH
COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

“I've been able to manage my emotions and my living actions, focus on what I need, be in the present and feel comfortable to be who I am in the community.”



Celeste CSSP Staff participating as a panelist in a conference



SUMMARY

2020-2021

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Year Ended March 31

Year 2021

Year 2020

Revenues		
Legal Aid	709,319	678,054
Ontario Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services	378,396	436,758
United Way of Greater Toronto	316,021	253,273
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care	170,059	170,059
Foundations	116,966	11,747
City of Toronto	105,635	206,025
Public Health Agency of Canada	104,398	103,912
Rental income	83,694	127,674
Miscellaneous income	65,227	13,993
Grants	52,499	50,528
Other sources (Interest, Fundraising, Memberships, HRDC)	9,382	49,072
	2,111,596	2,101,095

Expenses		
Salaries and related benefits	1,642,571	1,639,451
Purchased services	47,326	13,854
Occupancy costs	177,100	236,195
Program	76,574	86,208
Office and promotion and travel	130,256	106,367
Grant expenses	71	2,761
	2,073,898	2,084,836

Excess of revenue over expenses	37,698	16,259
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THANKS

TO OUR

SUPPORTERS



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Fabiana Montoya
VICE PRESIDENT Ericka Aguilera
TREASURER Mauricio Cordova
SECRETARY Marcela Aranda

María Cordero
Valentina Latorre
John Navarrete
Julio Vergara

OUR STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Elvis Lázaro
Gia Pflucker
Myriam Motta
Eliana Fonseca
Milena Escobar

LEGAL CLINIC

Mary Ellen McIntyre
Silvana Venegas
Daniel Rippes
Mayra Salas
Gloria Carrasquerro

SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

María A. Enríquez
Walter Grajeda

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

Iván Bello
Rene López
Celeste Joseph
Edda Amar
Ower Oberto

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Natalia Calderon
Alicia Torres
Giselle Vazquez
Erika Flores Urias

VOLUNTEER & SENIOR'S PROGRAM

Christel Pérez
María Caridad González

OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care - AIDS Bureau
Public Health Agency of Canada
City of Toronto – Community Service Partnership &
Toronto Urban Health Fund
Laidlaw Foundation
Legal Aid Ontario
Employment Services Toronto - Investing in Neighborhoods
United Way of Toronto and York Region
Toronto Public Health
New Horizons for Seniors Program
Ministry of Children, Community and Social services
Newcomer Settlement Program
Canadian Women's Foundation
Toronto Foundation

OUR ALLIES

North York Harvest Food Bank
Worker's Health and Safety Legal Clinic
Black Creek Community Health Centre
Family Service Toronto
La Guía Magazine
Sur Gallery
Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre
City of Toronto, Parks and Recreation
University of Ottawa/Ontario HIV Treatment Network
CONOSER/Teach2Learn
Story Centre Canada
Hispanic Canadian Heritage Council (HCHC)
Hispanic Development Council (HDC)
University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health
-Silvia Mendez AHORA!
COSTI
San Lorenzo
CHAMP Alliance (ACAS, CAAT, APAA & ASAAP)
Unison Health and Community Services
Radio Voces Latinas
America United FC (Children's Christmas Toy donation)
Maria Armani, Real Estate (Children's Christmas Toy donation)