

Annual Report

2016-2017



LUSO Community Services



COMMUNITY SERVICES



With thanks

What we have achieved this year could not have been possible without our generous partners and supporters:

Staff (2016-2017)

Elisabete Rodrigues	Brooke Hutton
Leroy Hibbert	Kristine Duong
Alejandra Pegg	Nesma Hashem
Questyn Rodriguez	Dina El-Henawy
Hind Omer	Dunia Hamou
Mary Yanful	Katerina Hertman
Kathy Milczarek	Eman Arnout
Mai Ashour	Gabriele Schotter
Dalma Merino	Hussein Ghoneim
Meagan Warwick	Jacob Winter
Fanny Rosas	Calvin Thomson
Katie McKeown	Kiefer Davies
Milagros Jimenez	Kavita Ramkissoon
Mariam Hamou	

Board

Christine Wilde, Chair
Kasha McEwen-Doan
Jennifer Hryniw
Joel Amos Obermueller
Janneth Mayorga
Janet Porchak
Fatima Haq
Ryan Parsons
Tyler Gillespie
Intern: Serena Ismail

Until September 2016:

Jay Zhang
Tiffany Foris
Gina La Force



Key Funders

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
United Way London & Middlesex
City of London
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership
London Community Foundation
The Maycourt Club of London
Service Canada



Annual Report

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Basic Needs & Community Support

Volunteers at LUSO's community portable during our Books & Breakfast summer program



Literacy

Families answer questions during a game at Family Math, one of our school based literacy programs.



Youth

LUSO's Youth Organizing Leadership Opportunities (Y.O.L.O.) going on a trip to The Boys and Girls Club



Multicultural Outreach

Our Multicultural Outreach Coordinator delivers a presentation to members of the London Police Service.



Settlement

One of our School Settlement Workers assisting a Syrian a family during an introductory field trip to the Y.M.C.A.



Community Development

Executive director Elisabete Rodrigues and Board Chair Christine Wilde pose at our annual fundraising event.

LUSO Community Services

We are a multicultural, non-profit charitable organization dedicated to promoting inclusiveness, well-being and prosperity in the London community. We provide social services with a holistic approach to community development. Our programs and services reach children, youth, families and seniors of culturally diverse backgrounds.



2016-2017



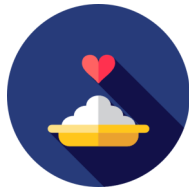
1,953 kilograms
Food delivered through our
community programming.



68 Nationalities
Accessed services from our
settlement team.



702 Individuals
Received support through our
community portable.



5,325 Meals
Served to clients through various
programs.



602 Participants
In classes and workshops on life
skills and Canadian Culture.



196 Volunteers
Helped us achieve our mission of
inclusive well-being in London.

at a glance



May 2016: Tenth Annual Laughs for Literacy fundraiser raises over \$12,000 for community literacy programs.



June 2016: LUSO secures funding to begin a Syrian Integration Project, training housing managers in cultural sensitivity.



September 2016: LUSO's Community Awards given to United Way's GenNext and Serve London for excellence in supporting LUSO programs.



September 2016: LUSO receives a donation of toys, games, and a TV from Project Play valued at over \$5,000.



October 2017: Over 400 people attend a "Spooktacular Family Fun Day" organized by our youth program and Y.O.L.O members



February 2017: Multicultural Outreach Coordinator Leroy Hibbert recognized for valuable contributions to community at the Lewis Coray Trailblazer Award Ceremony.



Building Healthy Families

Our Basic Needs program is not just about offering handouts. Though we distributed thousands of diapers, meals, and cans of food this year, we saw each interaction as a chance to build community. Our Basic Needs Coordinator meets with each family to learn their names and discover what extra support they might need. As we work with each resident— providing for their immediate needs and connecting them with community resources— we start to see individuals and families thrive.



At the Community Portable, our program coordinator sits with individuals to see how she can best support them. Sometimes this means offering emergency food, clothing, or hygiene items. Other times, she connects families with the people, programs, and resources that will help them. This year, we distributed **2292 diapers**, **340 pieces of clothing**, and served over **2,500 breakfasts** to children through our portable.



In partnership with the London Food Bank, we operate a monthly food depot for residents of Northeast London. We set up the depot in the Salvation Army Hillcrest Church and welcome approximately **50 families each month**. This year, our depot reached **418 unique individuals** with thousands of kilograms of food.



We want to see our clients flourish in every area, so we offer life skills training. This year we offered classes in financial literacy, positive parenting, and sewing. Class participants had the opportunity to learn new skills and connect with their community.



This year,
our team served
2,585
Breakfasts to children in
Northeast London



**My whole
world
opened up!**
-Life skills program
attendee

Preparing Strong Students

Investing in our community's future means equipping children with the skills they need to succeed in school. Our literacy programs support entire families, giving them resources to sustain their own children's learning. Here are some of this year's highlights:

Shared Beginnings

A Syrian father brought his children to learn English at our program for early years and their parents. He sang, read, and danced right alongside his children. This year, we welcomed **734 participants** to Shared Beginnings.

Family Math

Youth who first came to LUSO for programs now volunteer as mentors at Family Math. This year we brought together **28 unique families** for three five-week sessions of math games, activities, and dinner that provided whole family learning!

Booster Club

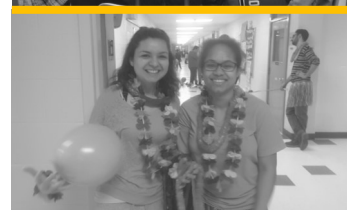
Literacy boosters support grade 1-3 students who struggle with reading. This year, one of the kids that loved attending had to move schools, but both he and our staff were happily surprised to find that we ran Booster Club at his new school! We supported **33 unique children** this year.

Books and Breakfast

During our summer breakfast program, we make sure that bodies and brains are growing by providing books and literacy activities for **over 200 children**. In 2016, we had therapy dogs, the fire department, and *Let's Talk Science* come as guests to the program.

Literacy Events

In January, our Literacy Luau at Northbrae Public School brought a dozen community organizations and over a hundred people from the Northeast for a day of engaging families in literacy building activities.





Growing Young Leaders

Our youth take an active role as leaders in their schools, families, and communities. We worked closely with over **160 youth** this year to provide mentorship and develop their leadership skills. As youth serve meals, raise funds, and teach others, our programs develop their skills in four key areas:

1. Inclusive Diversity

“At LUSO... I never felt alone or unwelcome. I felt like I was part of a big family. I still attend LUSO programs because it is a place where I can be myself and have fun, it is a place of love, respect, and friendship.”



-Michael, Youth Program Participant

2. Positive Relationships

Our programs aim to build mentoring relationships and strengthen bonds between peers. **Nine out of ten youth** have developed a healthy relationship with someone at a LUSO program.



3. Whole Health & Lifelong Learning

Along with slicing, dicing, and frying, our cooking program participants learn teamwork, and healthy life skills. Almost every participant in our cooking program reported feeling equipped to bring healthy cooking back to their own homes.

“I know how to prepare a healthy meal”

63% - National Average*

92% - Cooking Program Participants

4. Engaged Leadership

Monday nights at LUSO are among our busiest as Y.O.L.O. (Youth Organizing Leadership Opportunities) come to have dinner, connect with a mentor, and talk about how to bring positive change in their community. With events ranging from Open Mic nights to Community Pancake Breakfasts, **Y.O.L.O. reached over 1,500 people** this year!



Training Diverse Populations

We work to build a community where everyone feels welcome, and this starts with changing attitudes. Our Multicultural Outreach Coordinator works with groups across the city to identify and challenge racism. His advocacy, education, and wisdom change attitudes and policies everywhere from third grade classrooms to police force boardrooms. One grade seven student reflected that the Coordinator *“had really good meaning and...made not only myself but everyone think: ‘What can I do to be nicer?’ ‘How can I stand up for people and not be a bystander?’”*



Changing Social Norms

The Multicultural Outreach Program Coordinator presents in various schools on topics of race relations, discrimination, and multiculturalism. In 2016-2017, we delivered **348 presentations in 49 schools** reaching **15,403 individuals**, including teachers, police officers and students.



“I am the Answer” Video Competition

Every year, the Multicultural Outreach Program challenges students to make a video that challenges racial discrimination. Over **275 people** attended the awards ceremony at Museum London, which featured \$5,000 in prizes from Unifor Local 27.



Shaping the Future

Much of the Coordinator’s work is behind the scenes, offering wisdom and perspective to various bodies. LUSO holds a seat on the Safe Schools Committee of both school boards, as well as the Black History Coordinating Committee, the Pledge to End Bullying Committee, and the Coaching Boys into Men Committee.



Welcoming New Canadians

“When I was in high school my mom and I struggled with a lot and you guys helped us...My mom couldn't work and the government gave us just enough to cover rent and other bills. Through the settlement worker at my school we got gift cards we could use at [a grocery store]. Leroy came to speak at my school a few times, hearing him speak about what was possible reminded me that I left a bad place and was working to have a better life...We made it through a lot with your help. I've graduated from college and have a great job. Thank you, for everything” - Diego, LUSO Client

Diego's experience is one of many from our community based settlement services. Our staff in schools and libraries help newcomer families adjust to Canada and access resources across the city. This year, our community based settlement team served **1,667 clients**.



In Libraries

Libraries are often a first stop for newcomers seeking information. At the Beacock Branch Library, our settlement staff welcome hundreds of clients, connecting them to community resources and teaching them how to use everything from credit cards to fire extinguishers.



In August 2016, we were able to hire a second Library Settlement Worker, which allowed us to expand our hours at the library. As a result, we were able to increase service and the number of group sessions offered throughout the year.



This year, **25 clients** became Canadian citizens after attending our preparatory course. One client reflected: *“I passed my citizenship test... I got 19/20, [and] they will let me know soon about the ceremony. Thank you very much again, it wouldn't have been possible without you.”*



In Schools: Ensuring that our clients thrive in Canada often requires that our staff do a little bit of everything. Our **Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)** use a variety of strategies to help families adjust.



Welcoming

During the Newcomer Orientation Week in August, our settlement staff trained a team of students to welcome **120 of their peers** into Canadian high school. One participant reflected: “I felt so nervous coming to a new high school in a brand new country. I feel less nervous now after being here!”



Connecting

At Northbrae Public School, we run “Coffee Connections”, where parents dropping off their children can meet and talk about Canadian Culture. This year, we connected with clients in **33 schools**.



Teaching

At Stoney Creek Public School, we host workshops on topics like report cards or immunizations to help new families adjust to the school system. Across all our staff and sites we hosted **87 workshops** for **377 clients**.



Guiding

At John Paul II Secondary School, we work one on one with newcomer students who may be struggling with academics, language, or future plans. With our staff’s support, many students win awards and scholarships, such as the Lewis Coray Trailblazer Award.



Reaching

At Montcalm Secondary School, we support a multicultural club with students from **18 different countries**. The club hosts events like potlucks and fashion shows that spread cultural understanding to the entire school.



In Focus: Settlement Counseling

When newcomers arrive in London, their needs are numerous and often complicated. Starting over, becoming acclimatized, and integrating into Canadian culture is challenging.

Our settlement counsellor works intensively with individuals and families to allow them to achieve their goals and thrive in Canada. The support provided is different in every context, but may include assistance in finding employment, applying for citizenship, accessing social support, or sponsoring family members.

Any newcomer or immigrant can access the Newcomer Settlement Program and one on one support is available in person or over the phone.

In 2016-2017



213 Clients

Accessed case-managed support through our settlement counselor



130 Newcomers

Attended workshop sessions on Fraud, Fire Safety, Disability Support, and more.



217 Conversations

Over phone and email augmented our support for new Canadians.



“I lost my permanent resident card, and my application to get another one was twice returned. I was desperate, and afraid to make a mistake again. Fortunately a friend recommended LUSO’s Newcomer Settlement Program. The worker was diligent, called immigration office to find out what was needed. She helped me to fill the correct form and to write letter explaining my situation. After a year of failed attempts I finally I got my permanent resident card.”

-Newcomer from Iraq



“I am a senior with limited English and literacy skills, and filling those forms out is overwhelming and impossible. I made an appointment with LUSO’s Newcomer Settlement Program, where the worker kindly and patiently helped me out to fill the application form out.”

-Newcomer from Colombia

In the Community

The best part of our settlement work happens outside of the walls of schools, libraries, and offices. In our community programs, we help newcomers build connections and get a better understanding of Canadian culture. Here are some of the highlights from this year.



August: Community Barbeque

Our staff organized a barbeque aimed at newcomers in the Huron housing complexes. Despite some rain, the event was a success!



August-February: Hello Neighbor

This year, we partnered with other neighbourhood resource centres to host a series of events to welcome Syrians. In our neighborhood, this meant dinners, giveaways, kids' programs, and other activities.



January-February: Coffee & Cake

This winter we ran drop-in groups for Arabic-speaking men and women. The groups gave newcomers the chance to build relationships with each other and discover their community.



March: Trip to the Sugar Bush

To celebrate Spring in Canada, we brought a group of Syrian newcomers to take part in a truly Canadian experience: making maple syrup!



Connecting Across Communities

Along with our frontline work, LUSO provides support to the community as a whole. We partner with community organizations, faith based groups, and private corporations because we believe that building an inclusive and prosperous community is everybody's business. Here are some of the projects we have been involved in this year:

Northeast London Basic Needs Working Group

In January 2016, a group of faith-based and social service organizations came together to discuss how to coordinate their services. Over the last year, the group grew to include more than 15 organisations. The group created a resource bag and guide for Northeast London and began planning for a summer breakfast program at four summer day camps in the area. The group continues to be a great example of community collaboration.

Cultural Training for Housing Staff with Syrian Tenants

As a response to the large influx of Syrian newcomers seeking housing in London, we received a grant to develop training for landlords and housing staff to support Syrian families with stable housing.

After consultations with 14 different housing companies and two private sponsorship groups, we began developing a series of tools for the housing sector. They include a brochure, a set of "Useful Phrases" cards, and a video mini-series on Syrian culture.

The project will continue into next fiscal year, when we will begin training housing staff to use these tools in their everyday work.



Syrian Newcomers
A Guide for the Housing Sector





Financial

Auditor: Lunick & Company, CA

Revenue

2015 - 2016

Federal Grants



2016 - 2017



Expenses

2015 - 2016

Wages & Benefits



2016- 2017



Financial Position

2015 - 2016



2016 - 2017



Full audited statements available upon request.



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