

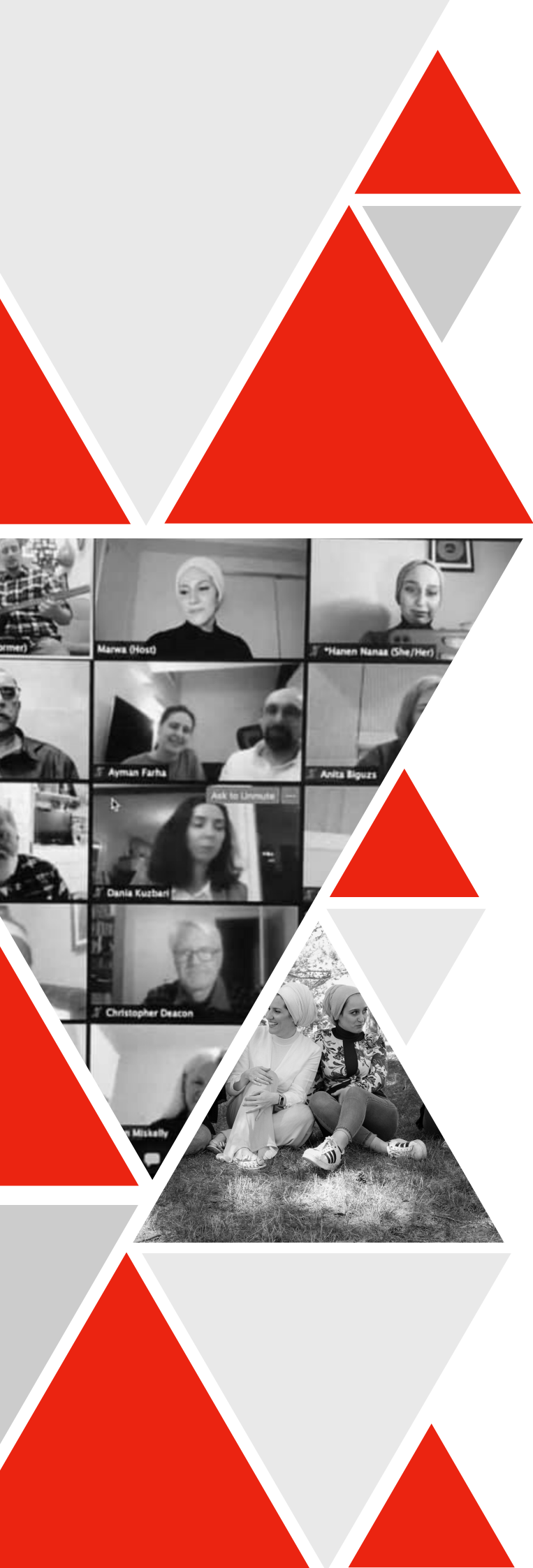


# ANNUAL REPORT

2020

INSPIRE   EMPOWER   CONNECT





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# OUR JOURNEY

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This year we embarked on an exciting mission to build welcoming communities.

We successfully delivered powerful programming, in person and virtually, as well as introduced new initiatives that address the needs of the communities we serve.

We organized several events, facilitated crowdfunding campaigns, and were recognized for our positive impact in the community through awards and grant opportunities.

We also continued to prosperously strengthen our relationship with community partners as well as foster new connections with organizations and funders that share our commitment to **empowering newcomers of diverse backgrounds while promoting cross-cultural exchanges within Canadian society.**

This year was particularly different as the pandemic posed many challenges for our programs. However, our organization innovatively adapted to the virtual world! Many of our programs were successfully facilitated virtually to protect the safety and well-being of our community members.

We developed and launched Phase 1 of HER Startup, **a first-of-its-kind** entrepreneurship program with our partner, Jumpstart Refugee Talent. We witnessed the resilience and dedication of refugee women with entrepreneurial drive in our pursuit of creating an accessible program that not only offers training but guarantees seed funding and supports women through one year of incubation.

We have had an exciting year filled with significant impact and look forward to **pushing the boundaries** of our legacy into 2021!

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# OUR MISSION

At SCF, our mission statement goes beyond a declaration of intent and translates into everyday action. Our story began with a deep desire to create a strong sense of community and belonging for newcomers and refugees, and this sentiment continues to ring true as our programming and initiatives evolve over the years.

Many members of our organization, from our employees to our volunteers and summer interns, have shared lived experiences of migration, displacement, and integration.

This connection, along with rigorous engagement with research and experts, has allowed us to earn the trust of the communities we service and develop programs that make a positive impact.

Our programs are designed to be culturally aware, adaptive, and responsive to the evolving needs of our clients.

Most importantly, we engage newcomers in our program development and facilitation, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, skill-building, and civic engagement.

Whether it is a group volunteering session in a community fundraising, a session with an English tutor, a day of creating a film exploring life narratives with peers, or an entrepreneurship workshop teaching the fundamentals of starting a business, the main outcome is empowerment and fostering meaningful connections.

“

**REFUGEES DIDN'T JUST ESCAPE A PLACE. THEY HAD TO ESCAPE A THOUSAND MEMORIES UNTIL THEY'D PUT ENOUGH TIME AND DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR MISERY TO WAKE TO A BETTER DAY**

**—NADIA HASHIMI**

**AUTHOR OF BEYOND THE BRIGHT SEA**





## WHERE WE WORK & WHO WE SERVICE






SCF predominately serves clients living in the Greater Toronto Area but have delivered program in cities all across Southern Ontario.

Our client demographics are diverse, however, we have a particular focus on recent newcomer youth and families, as well as refugee women. The majority of our clients are Arabic speakers and English is often not their first language.

Our program designs and outreach efforts specifically ensure we are fostering the inclusion of the most vulnerable newcomers. Many of our clients have not had the opportunity to obtain higher education and face the challenges of illiteracy, disability, trauma, and poverty.

### SOUTHERN ONTARIO

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-  MISSISSAUGA & PEEL REGION
-  TORONTO
-  SCARBOROUGH
-  HAMILTON
-  HALTON REGION

# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS



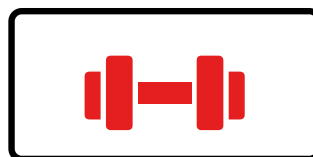
## ENGLISH TUTORING PROGRAM

Language acquisition program that successfully facilitated integration for newcomers.



## HER STARTUP PROGRAM

Business training, communication skill-building, and mentorship that supported refugee women in the Canadian workplace and entrepreneurship environment.



## FITNESS TRAINING

Weekly virtual fitness classes for Arabic speaking newcomers with physical disabilities.

# 2020 PROGRAMS





# ENGLISH TUTORING



## ENGLISH TUTORING PROGRAM

For newcomers, learning the language of their new home is one of the first steps to successful integration. It is essential to seeking employment, participating in civic life, and fostering a sense of belonging. This program is designed to ensure that conversational language training is both accessible and addresses the varying needs of newcomers through group, one on one at-home sessions, and e-learning curriculums.

In 2020, we held periodic tutor wellness meetings. These meetings allowed us to connect with them, know their strength and address challenges. They also allowed tutors to develop a sense of community, and provide advice to each other based on experience. This allowed for effective delivery of language sessions for participants.

Sessions were organized to help participants learn and develop key skills outside of language. Key highlights included guest speakers from the Toronto Police Service who spoke about wellness and how the police can help our communities, Jumpstart Refugee Talent which focused on employment and mentorship opportunities, and CIBC which provided insight on credit cards, personal banking, and other financial questions.

“

It's a lot helpful for people who is older in age or they're really behind in English because it's really giving them more offered and 1 to 1 groups is really what they want to have because they would be feeling a lot comfortable to learn and encourage and most focus will be on them.

-Qasem Alkafre

”

“

A learning experience, giving a small something back to society and helping wonderful people to become comfortable and confident with their new lives in Canada.

- Tutor Helen Miskelly

”



# WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING



## PHASE 1 HER STARTUP

Over the past two years, we have been planning a unique entrepreneurship program with our partner organization, Jumpstart Refugee Talent. We were on a mission to carve pathways and remove barriers for refugee women who have an entrepreneurial drive.

HER Startup (HomERun Refugee Startup) is the first-of-its kind initiative. No other entrepreneurship program serves only refugee women, guarantees seed funding, supports women through one year of incubation, and provides a dedicated business consultant. Thanks to generous funding from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), we were able to provide our participants with much-needed childcare services and cover transportation to ensure accessibility.



## FRIENDS AND COFFEE

A virtual safe space for Arabic-speaking newcomer women to develop new skills, share stories and make friends while engaging in activities and discussions!

We envisioned this program to foster an online community where newcomer women can forge connections with others who share similar experiences, as well as learn and grow together during this time of change.

Three sessions focused on how to create a healthy routine during Covid-19, and how to cope with stress and new family pressures. The women were engaged and shared their personal experiences, ideas, and support for one another.

# YOUTH PROGRAMS



## FLASH FORWARD PHOTOVOICE

The Flash Forward PhotoVoice youth program is a safe space for newcomer youth in Scarborough to document their integration experiences and learn how to express themselves through photography, art, and fitness. The program also focuses on personal development and social skills building.

Participants gained experience in the photo editing process using multiple creative software to more effectively communicate the story of their images. Participants became more thoughtful in the photo-taking process by utilizing composition, angles, and lighting to capture moments in their lives.

By engaging participants with workout routines, the program promoted an active and healthy lifestyle. In a safe space, participants learned to communicate, relate to, and connect with other people during the pandemic.

Their work culminated in our annual Photovoice Exhibition where participants documented their new home during the COVID-19 pandemic. We created a virtual space for story sharing through pictures and memories representative of the unique experiences during the pandemic.





# OUR 2020 IMPACT

## EDUCATION

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### ENGLISH TUTORING PROGRAM

**94**

REGISTERED STUDENTS

**103**

1 ON 1 TUTOR SESSIONS

## WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING

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### HER START UP

**1**

INCUBATOR  
LEAD BY 5 FEMALE FOUNDERS

**25**

WORKSHOPS

### FRIENDS AND COFFEE

**25**

PARTICIPANTS

**4**

VOLUNTEERS

## YOUTH PROGRAMMING

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### FLASH FORWARD PHOTOVOICE

**21**

PARTICIPANTS

**4**

IN-PERSON SESSIONS

**17**

VIRTUAL EVENTS

# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



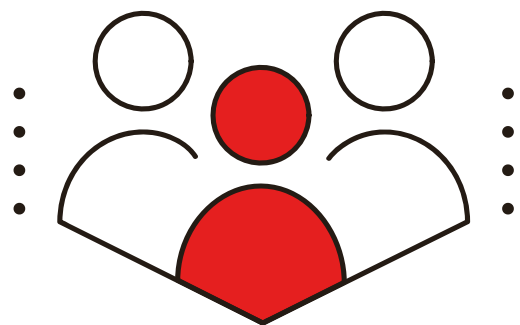
**McMaster Chapter:** After having a positive and meaningful experience volunteering with the English Tutoring Program, Sam Ali approached us with an idea of starting the very first student club dedicated to supporting SCF's mission and programming **(2020)**

**Catalyst Canada:** We have collaborated with Catalysts Canada on 6 online interactive educational workshops for post-secondary newcomers students to provide professional development skills, networking opportunities, and a variety of topics in and outside of academia **(2020)**

**A tribute to Syrian refugees in Canada:** A Tribute to Syrian Refugees in Canada was organized on Thursday, December 10th. Speakers include Talar Chitjian, Mathew Vitale, Roula Kikhia, Hanen Nanaa, Saeed Alzoubi, The Honourable John McCallum P.C., The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, C.M., O.Ont, Dr. Wendy Cukier & Dr. Leah Hamilton **(2020)**

**RCIS Digital Series: Refugee Resettlement and Integration in Canada:** SCF participated in a virtual event on Refugee Resettlement and Integration in Canada hosted by Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement (RCIS) **(2020)**

**Youth Video Contest:** SCF initiated a contest encouraging youth between the ages of 12-22 to be productive while staying safe at home during the COVID-19 pandemic **(2020)**





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**BAYAN KHATIB**



**MUSTAFA ALIO**



**HUDA ALSARRAJ**



**MALAZ SEBAI**



**RUBY LATIF**



**FATEMA DADA**



**FATHI ABU FARAH**

# OUR TEAM

## EMPLOYEES



**MARWA KHOBIEH**  
Interim Executive Director



**NEELOFER TARIQ**  
Project Manager



**RAMI CHAMSEDDINE**  
Project Manager



**HANEN NANAA**  
Outreach Coordinator



**RAYAN BATLOUNI**  
Project Coordinator



**HAZAR NAJJAR**  
Project Coordinator

# OUR TEAM

## EMPLOYEES



**DIANA COLANGELO**  
Administrative Assistant



**YARA TAWIL**  
Project Coordinator



**SARAH SILK**  
Graphic Designer



**JUSTINE ALMIRA**  
Social Media Coordinator



**ELY BAHHADI**  
Community Engagement



**ZAINAB ABU ALROB PHD (C)**  
Researcher & Project Coordinator





**SCF**

SYRIAN CANADIAN  
FOUNDATION