



For Immediate Release

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Filmed conversations with newcomers highlight cultural diversity in the Comox Valley

The Immigrant Welcome Centre and CV/Arts share local settlement stories through #TheresMoreToMe

COMOX VALLEY – “It’s just a matter of finding where you feel good. And I feel good here so – yeah, as soon as you find that I think you just start putting your roots down.”

Three newcomers to the Comox Valley – Selen (quoted above), Ajinkya, and Chanya – generously agreed to share their settlement stories and how they maintain a connection to their culture living in the North Island. Now Canadian citizens or in the process of becoming citizens, they looked back on some of the challenges they experienced settling in Canada and what helped make the Valley feel like home.

The result is a three-part video series called #TheresMoreToMe, created through a partnership between the Immigrant Welcome Centre’s Welcoming Communities Coalition (WCC) and CV/Arts. The project was made possible with funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the BC Arts Council, and the Province of B.C.

“These stories help highlight that the Valley is more culturally diverse than one might think,” Immigrant Welcome Centre Executive Director Jim Brennan said. “We also hope that anyone who has more recently immigrated to our community will see these stories and know that they are not alone in their experiences settling in a new country.”

Immigration is important to Vancouver Island’s economy and enriches and expands our community culture. The health and strength of our region is entwined with making the Comox Valley a safe and welcoming place for newcomers. In 2016, according to Statistics Canada, nearly 13 per cent of the Comox Valley population identified as immigrants.



The WCC and CV/Arts encourage everyone to watch and share these stories, and to share their own immigration experiences to the North Island with us online by email at julie.keumbehdjian@immigrantwelcome.ca with the subject line #TheresMoreToMe. The videos are available to view on the [Immigrant Welcome Centre](#) and CV/Arts YouTube channels (see the trailer [here](#)).

About the Welcoming Communities Coalition

The Immigrant Welcome Centre's Welcoming Communities Coalition is an initiative supporting service coordination, local partnerships, and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers in the North Island. Through community-level research and strategic planning, the WCC identifies barriers facing newcomers, raises awareness around newcomers' ideas, and collaborates with local stakeholders to reduce these barriers. Learn more at immigrantwelcome.ca/community-leadership/welcoming-communities-coalition

About CV/Arts

Comox Valley Arts proudly supports, promotes and celebrates our local artists in all genres. We do this through fostering a mindset of arts and culture first, as the driver of quality of life in our community. Our involvement with and creation of a wide variety of cultural activities, workshops, events, festivals, exhibition spaces, seasonal programs, and support of members groups actively highlights the Comox Valley as a creative, diverse, and dynamic arts producing center. Learn more at comoxvalleyarts.com.

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