

Donna's Story

What do you do in the community with newcomers?

I am a Settlement Worker with the YMCA of Three Rivers, Immigrant Services department. I dedicate my knowledge and settlement expertise to make new newcomer families feel welcomed in our community, Stratford Perth County, by helping them to navigate and learn about various community programs, to provide up-to-date settlement information and resources as it relates to their settlement needs. I also assist with communicating with employers, landlords, social and government services, legal services and more when needed. As a Settlement Worker I provide support and referrals to specialized services to help with all settlement needs – healthcare, daycare, education, review of government forms and much more!

What motivates the work you do?

What motivates me to do the work I do is my passion to help newcomer families, to support and contribute to their wellbeing, and to make them feel welcomed and a part of their community. I feel rewarded when I have helped a newcomer family and when I can see that they have met their dreams of settling in Canada, in our communities, and have met their goals in their settlement journey.

What are some positive experiences you have had in your role working with newcomers?

Positive experiences I have had in my role include the opportunity to meet newcomer families who now live in Stratford and Perth County. To learn about their families, their culture and why they have chosen Canada, Stratford and Perth County as their home. Also, to work alongside various community organizations who also are working towards making this community a welcoming community for newcomer families. These partnerships have paved the way for collaborative programming to support meaningful connections and foster belonging.

What does being welcoming to newcomers mean to you?

“Being welcoming to newcomers.” For me, this means that we become a better place for everyone to live and grow together.