

CIF FEATURE STORY:

Resettlement Initiatives for Support & Empowerment (RISE)



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Feature Story: *Resettlement Initiatives for Support & Empowerment (RISE), International Women of Saskatoon*

The Resettlement Initiatives for Support and Empowerment (RISE) is a pilot program designed to help newcomer, immigrant, and refugee families become full participating members of Canadian society through the provision of free and uniquely designed settlement and integration programs and services. The program provides supports to participants and creates opportunities for empowerment. It is divided into two programming streams: Beyond 55 for seniors and the Bridging Program for women.

The RISE project has increased the quality of life of newcomer, immigrant, and refugee seniors and women by enabling them to build social connections among themselves and various community services. Through weekly sessions the participants are provided the opportunity to come together, learn new skills and knowledge, and share their own experiences. Facilitating workshops on topics such as financial literacy, health and nutrition, family law, and more has ensured that newcomers are connected to resources and supports within the community. Incorporating practical exercises and activities, such as cooking class, fitness sessions, and community volunteering has also ensured that concepts and ideas are brought to life.

“I enjoy the fitness sessions, but I also feel energized when I come out & meet with friends here. Monday is my best day because I get a chance to leave the house & come here.”

- Javaid, Beyond 55 participant

Personal Story: Women's Bridging Program

“The Women's Bridging Program has provided a space for women to learn new skills, build upon existing ones, and connect with other women. The [International Women of Saskatoon](#) has created a safe and welcoming environment where the women feel comfortable to open up about the challenges and hardships they face. Through the support, guidance, and encouragement the women receive, they are empowered to find solutions and make informed decisions.

One client expressed how grateful she is to be a part of this program because she believes the program not only provided emotional support at a time when she needed it most, but has also inspired her take steps to develop herself and recognize her strength and resilience. Prior to the program, the client was struggling with settling in Canada and was dealing with marital issues. She has recently started a home-based cooking business and continues to better her cooking skills by attending the program's cooking classes. After joining the Women's Bridging Program and reaching out for support, her perspective on life in Canada has changed and she has become more confident and eager to take on new challenges.



Women's Bridging Program: Sewing Class



Beyond 55: Fitness Class