

# BELONGING IN MY COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
2020-2021



LEADERSHIP  
VICTORIA

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen speaking peoples, also known as the Esquimalt and Songhees, and the WSÁNEĆ Peoples, the Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tsartlip, Tseycum First Nations on whose ancestral territories we live, work, and share leadership and whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

## 2020 - 21 PROGRAM SPONSORS



Andrew Beckerman

The Friends and  
Family of Jack Shore

Leadership Victoria,  
Staff, Friends and Family

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# ABOUT LEADERSHIP VICTORIA



Leadership Victoria is a community-based organization committed to developing, supporting, and celebrating community leaders who help make our city great.

Since 2001, we have become the go-to organization for community leadership development in Greater Victoria. Our volunteer board members, coaches, mentors, facilitators, and program partners put their collective skills and expertise to work in developing Victoria's emerging generation of leaders.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Founded in 2001, the Community Leadership Development Program **is the flagship program of Leadership Victoria** and has developed 388 leaders since its **formation in 2001**.

The Community Leadership Development Program is a **challenging program for emerging leaders in Greater Victoria**. Participants experience powerful learning opportunities delivered by local leaders and through important peer-to-peer learning. The community action project is where they put their learning into action. Students work closely with a group of leaders to strengthen their resolve. They gain the tools and the confidence to lead their organization.

The program provides a powerful learning opportunity for aspiring leaders in support of socially responsible organizations that make up a strong and resilient community. **It takes emerging leaders from public, private, and not-for-profit sectors and sets them up for success as leaders in our community.**

### Community Leadership Development Program Fast Facts:

- **69% of alumni** have taken on more for significantly more responsibility or leading others since graduating.
- The **combined annual budget** of teams and organizations **led by graduates is approximately \$1.5 billion**.
- Our graduates **volunteer over 2,770 hours per month** and over 33,000 hours per year.

The program is a **six-month learning experience** that runs from October to March. We combine customized content, including live workshops and online classrooms, with open public events so participants can deepen their connections to the leaders of Greater Victoria.

Find more about the Program at [leadershipvictoria.ca](http://leadershipvictoria.ca) or use your camera with this QR-CODE:





## COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECTS INTRODUCTION:

Community Action Projects give participants an opportunity to work collaboratively, practice group development, and engage in participatory decision-making.

Our projects engage with the community as a collaborative laboratory. Participants exercise and apply skills in a tangible context to bring concrete outcomes.

Community agencies and their stakeholders benefit as participants develop their leadership capacity. In the course of their projects, participants gain practical insight into the collaborative connections of Greater Victoria. Community Action Project teams showcase their projects at the graduation ceremony.

In 2020-2021, The Community Action Project teams worked with local organizations under the theme "Belonging in my Community."



# TEAM OMADA



## ABOUT US:

Our name: "Omada" (Team in Greek).

Our slogan: "Ad Astra per Astera" (through adversity to the stars).

We are Darya, Maria, Jen, Dallas, Taz and Kim; six individuals, but only one group of players coming together to achieve a common goal.

Like Canada, we are a multicultural and diverse group who have found our strength in our diverse backgrounds. Challenging and encouraging each other is how we worked together as a unity to complete our Community Action Project. Together we learned, worked, and supported each other looking to grow in our own leadership role.

## ABOUT OUR PARTNER:

The Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (VICCIR) provides invaluable mental health supports to immigrants and refugees living in Canada.

Founded in 2015 by Adrienne Carter, the organization has grown immeasurably in a short time, with now over 40 professional counsellors and interpreters.

VICCIR uses a person-centered, trauma-informed and culturally sensitive

approach that centers on the pinnacle idea that services should be tailored to meet everyone's unique individual and cultural needs. Offering sliding scales, interpreters in different languages, different counselling styles and numerous services and supports, they aim to cultivate holistic mental wellness and make it accessible to all who need it.



**VICCIR**  
VANCOUVER ISLAND COUNSELLING CENTRE  
FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

# ABOUT THE PROJECT:

Team Omada was fortunate to partner with VICCIR, a well-established and respected organization that had a clear concept in mind, ready for our contributions. The Health and Cultural Ambassador project aimed to support VICCIR in attaining their goal to create a diverse team of volunteers to work within their local cultural communities sharing about VICCIR services and working to reduce the stigma of seeking support.

**Team Omada focused on creating a pilot project for Ambassador recruitment within the Spanish speaking community** that VICCIR could expand to other cultural communities in future as they build their team.

Team Omada's task was to develop the initial recruitment materials and framework and to conduct outreach to Spanish-speaking community members. As a team, we collaborated with VICCIR to build engaging on-brand marketing materials, created a database to capture connections across different cultural communities, set up a new online application tool to streamline processes and fostered new connections in the Spanish-speaking community as we began the recruitment process.


As a result of our efforts, VICCIR has received approximately 12 applications to start building their Health and Cultural Ambassador team, and we delivered a package of resources and tools that VICCIR can use going forward as they expand to recruit within other communities. Furthermore, our student team gained valuable leadership, communication and project management skills that we will contribute to our future endeavours.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

Some of the outcomes we are already seeing is that in connecting with the Spanish-speaking community and sharing about the Health and Cultural Ambassador position, we've been helping to raise VICCIR's profile and there has been a lot of excitement about their services and this new initiative. The name VICCIR itself is becoming increasingly known in the Spanish-speaking community, and this has started to manifest in some interest in joining the VICCIR team as a Health and Cultural Ambassador.


As VICCIR takes this recruitment framework and applies it to other cultural communities, the increased awareness will create a ripple effect, whereby more members of the community learn about VICCIR services and those who need it most are connected with support they may not otherwise have been aware of.



**CONTACTS**

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Scan QR code below with  
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out the application form or  
click here




Alternatively email us for  
more information

Make an impact in  
your community by  
mobilizing  
knowledge and  
dispelling  
stereotypes

Health & Cultural  
Ambassador

SIGN UP



**ABOUT US**

**VICCIR**  
VICCIR's principal reality is to give  
mental health support to new  
and refugees living in Victoria B.C.

**VICCIR's Objectives**  
VICCIR's objectives for all of us are:  
• Reduce the pain that my support  
brings

• Increase the personal reality of  
a self-help request to improve  
quality of life  
• Help them to keep with a healthy  
and engaged to part to be in the  
community that they welcome and  
live

**WHO IS AN  
AMBASSADOR?**

A Health and Cultural Ambassador is a  
person that is living and spending  
a majority of their time in the  
community. VICCIR's services  
are aimed at providing mental health  
support to new and refugees living  
in Victoria B.C.

**AMBASSADOR  
ACTIVITIES**

- Represents VICCIR in their  
community
- Acts as a safe, non-judgmental  
space for community members to  
express their feelings
- Offers information about benefits of  
seeking mental health support
- Offers information about services  
provided by VICCIR
- Provides education with role plays  
and information within VICCIR to  
support programs and aid to  
community health and well-being

As an Ambassador  
you are committed  
making every person  
aware, safe, and  
empowered.

**WHY BE A HEALTH  
AND CULTURAL  
AMBASSADOR?**

Are you an influence in your community? Are you active and  
engaged, and can share people and the wellbeing of your  
cultural community? Then, this might be the right opportunity  
for you to help those who need it?

Health and Cultural Ambassadors play a key role in helping  
immigrants and refugees in their communities learn of and  
access important mental health supports.

Here are a few reasons to become an ambassador  
and make a meaningful impact:

- 1. FULL PERSONAL POTENTIAL**  
Help your community members who are struggling  
to find their way in a new country and sharing their  
own experiences with them. This is a chance to be  
a role model for others.
- 2. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**  
Support mental health challenges in the community  
and help them to find their way in a new country.  
This is a chance to be a role model for others.
- 3. BUILD RESILIENCE**  
In today's world, mental health is a growing concern.  
By being a Health and Cultural Ambassador, you can  
help others to build resilience and cope with their  
challenges.
- 4. BREAK BARRIERS**  
Break down the barriers that prevent people from  
seeking mental health support. This is a chance to  
be a role model for others.
- 5. BUILD LEADERSHIP SKILLS**  
Develop your leadership skills by being a Health and  
Cultural Ambassador. This is a chance to be a role  
model for others.

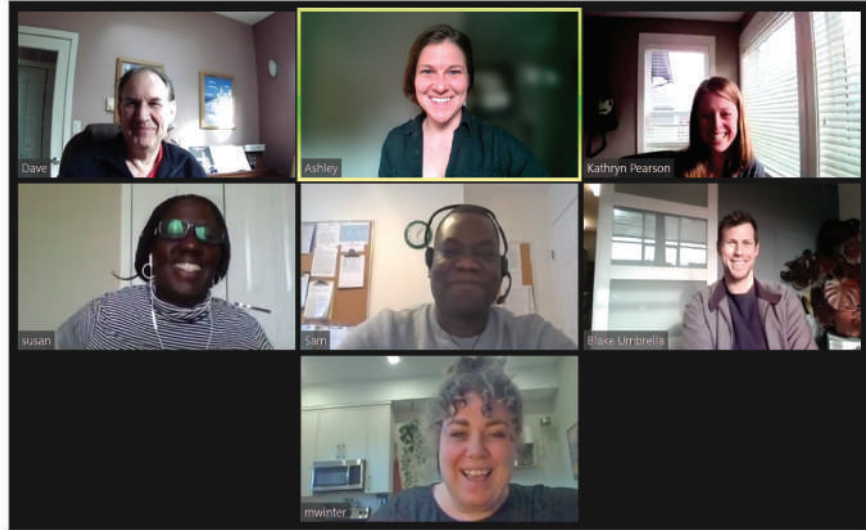
# TEAM FRESHPECT

## ABOUT US:

Team Freshpect is a diverse and talented team consisting of six members and one coach:

Sam Ariyo – Project Manager  
Melanie Winter – Solution Architect  
Ashley Gulevich – Solution Architect  
Kathryn Pearson – Change Manager  
Susan Ngara – Change Manager  
Blake Anderson – Client Manager  
Dave Marecek – Team Coach

We are six individuals at different stages of our leadership careers, and share a passion for serving and supporting our community. As a team we have come together to support the BIPOC community, while growing as individuals. Our commitment to our goals, and ability to support each other, helped create a strong cohesive team.



## ABOUT OUR PARTNER:

The Inclusion Project (TIP) is a social innovation network and resource hub for organizations, communities and institutions engaged in knowledge development and practice to further racial equity, diversity and inclusion (REDI).



**The Inclusion Project**  
...in our hands



## ABOUT THE PROJECT:

In speaking with The Inclusion Project, we learned of their vision to create a HUB and saw that we could add value to their vision. After collaborating more with our client, our project became to facilitate primary research. **Our goal was to reach individuals who self identified within the BIPOC community to gain insight on their experience, and gain insight on how to better support Racial equity, diversity, and inclusion within the workplace.** With the restrictions of Covid-19 that we faced, our team decided the best approach to collecting data for our client was through a web based anonymous survey. We were able to collect a range of data and provide this to The Inclusion Project.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

After collecting and delivering our data, we trust that The Inclusion Project will use our findings as the framework for the HUB. We believe that by providing primary research TIP will analyze and create support structures for the gaps they identify. Our hope is that the research conducted will be used to achieve

greater awareness to Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion. This may be in the form of education, resources, or interactions on the HUB

# 2020 - 2021 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP



**Blake Andison**  
Umbrella Society



**Samuel Ariyo**  
Community Living Victoria



**Maria Campos**  
Self Employed



**Taz Lacroix**  
Work BC



**Darya Lyubymova**  
Self Employed



**Susan Ngara**  
Shekinah Homes Society



**Jen Thorndale**  
The Garth Homer Society



**Melanie Winter**  
Foundry Victoria



**LEADERSHIP  
VICTORIA**

# DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRADUATES



**Ashely Gulevich**  
Coastal Heat Pumps



**Crystelle Jensen**  
Community Living Victoria



**Kim Knudsen**  
Camosun College



**Kathryn Pearson**  
Self Employed



**Dallas Posavad**  
Victoria Immigrant and Refugee  
Centre Society



**Neha Sharma**  
Royal Roads University

*Congratulations to  
our Graduates!*



# PROJECT CONCLUSIONS



The Inclusion Project  
...in our hands

## From Omada Team:

The Health and Cultural Ambassador project will create additional ways for VICCIR to reach out and connect with different cultural communities to continue actively working to reduce the stigma of seeking mental health support and fostering positive holistic mental wellness. The Ambassador will serve as a connection bridge between the communities and VICCIR to further open means of communication.

VICCIR is an incredible resource to the greater community, and we believe this project will benefit the community by supporting VICCIR to expand their reach in delivering their culturally and linguistically valued approach to the issue of mental health.

## From Freshspect

It is apparent that Victoria would greatly benefit from a resource such as the HUB to engage individuals in the conversation of racial diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our findings show that there is a lack of safe spaces in Victoria for individuals to openly have a safe conversation engaging the BIPOC community.



# EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ROUND TABLE REFLECTIONS

Our Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) session was the final session of the year and the discussion felt like a culmination of what is currently happening throughout the world.

Our roundtables were lead by local leaders from the Indigenous Black and People of Colour (IBPOC) community where we discussed what diversity means for Victoria. The Canadian population is becoming increasingly diverse, however, diversity without inclusion is not enough. As our community becomes more diverse, we need leaders who come from different backgrounds to truly understand what it means to be inclusive.

As emergent leaders we realized that each and every person has a responsibility and holds power to make the change. We owe it to ourselves to remain curious to know about different cultures, religions, genders, financial backgrounds and use that information to guide us. We recognize that the journey of becoming more inclusive is also a personal one. We are each responsible to consolidate the information that is being shared, decide what it means personally, and use that learning to move forward on your journey. This requires genuine efforts and authenticity to ensure EDI does not turn into a mere lip-service. It is important to learn, unlearn, understand and share our knowledge and become bridges between privilege and lack of it. Each person is an ambassador who has the power to shape the world.

People within the group shared their experiences with racism. It was described as closed doors, closed hands, closed minds, closed faces.



Racism happens when your valid opinions aren't even considered, and you are not being included. Inclusion and exclusion are frequently experienced as a feeling. Simply stating that we are "including someone" is not enough. In order to achieve equity, you have to create a feeling of inclusion for everyone at the table. Communities where inclusion is best modelled tend to have a fundamental unspoken sense of appreciation for diversity. Inclusion was described as keeping an open perspective, having an open mind, and smiles from strangers.

As individuals we also recognise our shared collective responsibility. We must seek out employers who clearly state their EDI policies and how they work into their hiring, internal promotions. We need the courage to question those decisions. Governments and settlement companies need to take on the task of ensuring people are not discriminated and there need to be law and policies in place to keep in check any inequity practiced. We have a responsibility to holding the people and

organizations in power to account in creating action-oriented measure.

People expressed the underlying need to feel safe. We have to be able to be open and honest in discussions about diversity which places us in vulnerable situations. When the group can establish a feeling of safety, we are able to go to deeper places where we can safely talk about our thoughts and struggles and work together instead of against one another.

The reoccurring theme to our discussion was curiosity. You need to be curious to learn about others and have a curiosity to experience new things. Inclusion starts with us, right here, right now.



## KEY LEARNINGS

**Two things** that I learned a lot about were, the first thing is that in order to be a good leader you have to be willing to learn from others. It can be a pretty dangerous situation to hold when you think that you don't have anything to learn anymore, and the second thing for me is having confidence in my judgments and standing up for what I believe in, even though it might be unpopular.

*Crystell Jensen*

**I learned** that leadership is about service, and service starts in our own community. That was my biggest lesson from this course. We have to learn about leadership, it's a process of learning to become more effective, more reliable, and to achieve better goals in the best possible way.

*Maria Campos*

**I'm learning** more about where my passions are within leadership, where I see myself going, and where I want to develop more of a versatile muscle. I came into Leadership Victoria with expectations of learning about leadership in one area, and I've actually learned about leadership in a polar opposite and different area. It's given me the opportunity to see and learn and get clear on the type of leadership I'm looking for, what excites me, and the areas that I feel confronted with. [And] to experience it here in a safe environment where everyone wants to see you succeed.

*Ashley Gulevich*

**I think** the most important lesson that I've learned is to be kind to ourselves and to be kind to everyone around us. Kindness would ensure that not only do we find the right goals, but we also find the right way of going about our goals, so to just live, breathe, and lead with kindness.

*Neha Sharma*



**What I've** learned in this course is that leadership is a journey and there's no such thing as a born leader. All leaders build themselves. They don't build you up, you build yourself as a leader. I've experienced and I've seen a lot of things that I have to change myself, things that I wasn't aware of or things that I was aware of to a certain extent, but I think that this is how we really build ourselves as leaders. Being part of the community, I think it's an amazing journey and it never stops, it's continuous learning.

*Kim Knudsen*

**Taking the** course is almost a rediscovery of a confidence in myself. [after] having been out of the workplace for a number of years. If there's anybody out there that's job hunting or wanting to make a change, you will definitely be able to take everything you've learned into a new industry or a new agency. We are on this leadership journey and I really can understand that in myself now, that everything that I did before isn't just forgotten and packed up, it's part of who I am, and I can bring it with me as I go forward.

*Kathryn Pearson*

**One big** thing I learned here, knowing how not to do something in a particular context. It's a big leap for me. ... this program gave me a perfect opportunity to begin the journey of unlearning and relearning. I thank Leadership Victoria for giving people this opportunity to be baptized in a new community, in a new culture. It gives definition to everything I see at work, to the reactions I see in people and how people react to me, how people react to what I say at work, how people react to what I do. It's a great opportunity.

*Sam Ariyo*

**Values-based** decision making was one of my favourite learnings that I try to implement consistently.

*Darya Lyubymova*



**One of** the things that I've learned is self-awareness. When I joined Leadership Victoria, I wasn't sure who I was, but now I know who I am and where I am as a leader. The other thing that I learned is that being a leader is not about myself, it's about others, and that being in a position does not make you a leader but gives you authority. I look forward to being a leader and using the skills that I've obtained from Leadership Victoria.

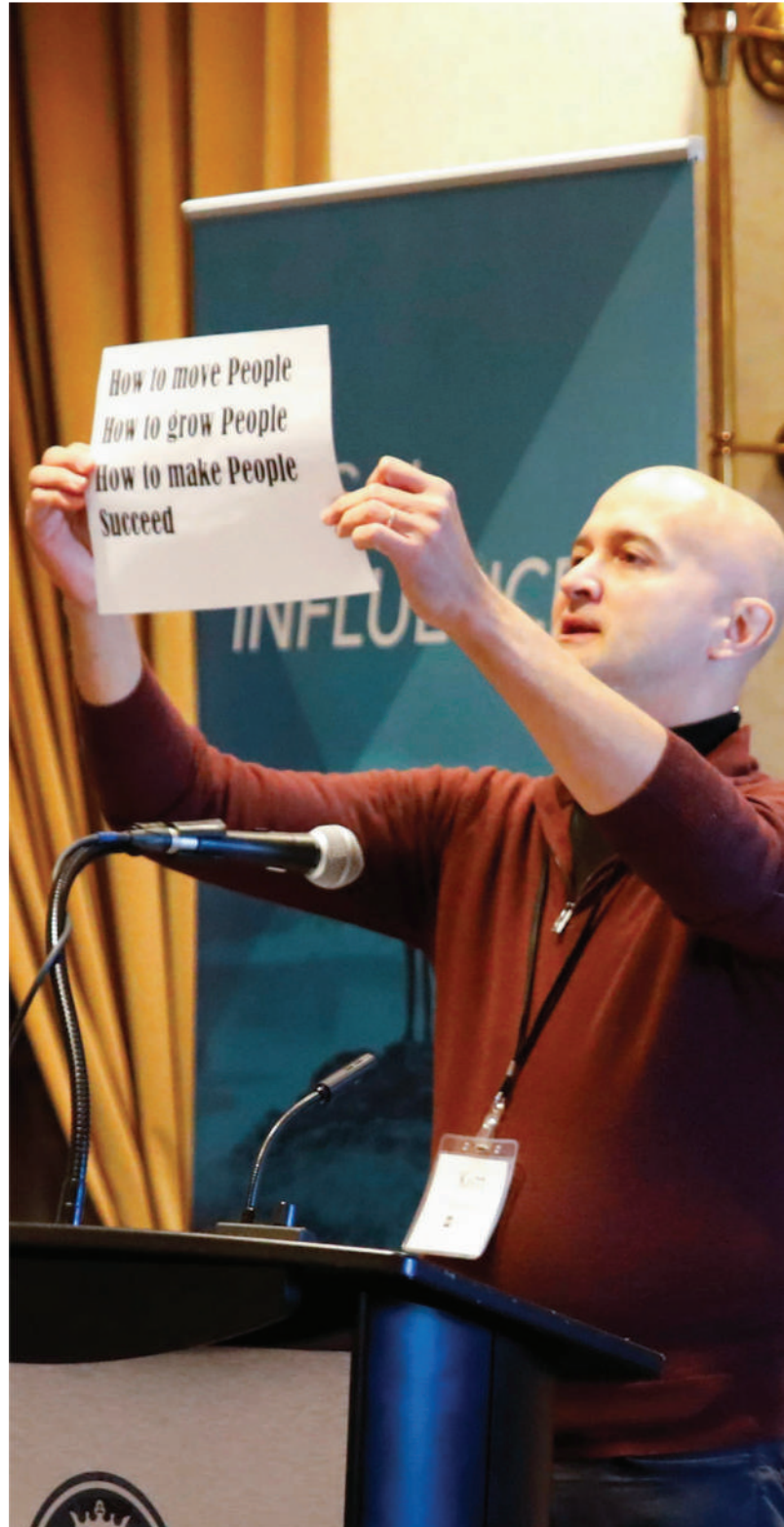
*Susan Ngara*

**I've learned** that I had a lot of privilege coming into this and I still have a lot of privilege and learning how to challenge that. It's more than just acknowledgement, every day we have to have actions in our community. If you haven't had a chance, read the Truth and Reconciliation Report, but do something that gets you out of your comfort zone, so I appreciate Leadership Victoria for making me aware of that.

*Taz Lacroix*

**The most** valuable thing I took from this program is to connect vulnerably with other people on this journey. Imposter syndrome is such a real thing. I remember day one walking in and thinking, "I'm with a room of people that are so out of my league" This course was enlightening and empowering to know we are all on the same journey. Leaders are humans and we all come with struggles and challenges. It is a path of growth and a big thing for me to connect with everybody on a vulnerable level and share the human experience side of leadership.

*Jen Thorndale*





# OUR LEADERS' SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS TO ADVANCE EDI IN VICTORIA:

**CRYSTELLE:**

I will flood my soon with knowledge and experiences that promote his curiosity and acceptance of others.

**TAZ:**

Pass the mic, let others speak.

**KIM:**

Create EDI-oriented training for the community.

**BLAKE:**

Create opportunities to have similar conversations such as this in my own organization.

**DARYA:**

Continuous Learning about EDI, challenging what I already know, leading from the heart.

**MARIA:**

Volunteer for VICCIR

**ANON:**

Educate myself not to rely on mainstream media or reports. Unlearn/relearn. Ask questions and then flip story perspective to ensure all perspective is considered and understood.

**ASHLEY:**

I'm going to define what EDI is for myself and source out 3 local initiatives that are bringing awareness and increasing EDI to continue the conversation and create safety in the discomfort.

**MELANIE:**

Invite curiosity into conversations and spaces I arrive at as a way to further develop and understand my own sense of EDI.

**NEHA:**

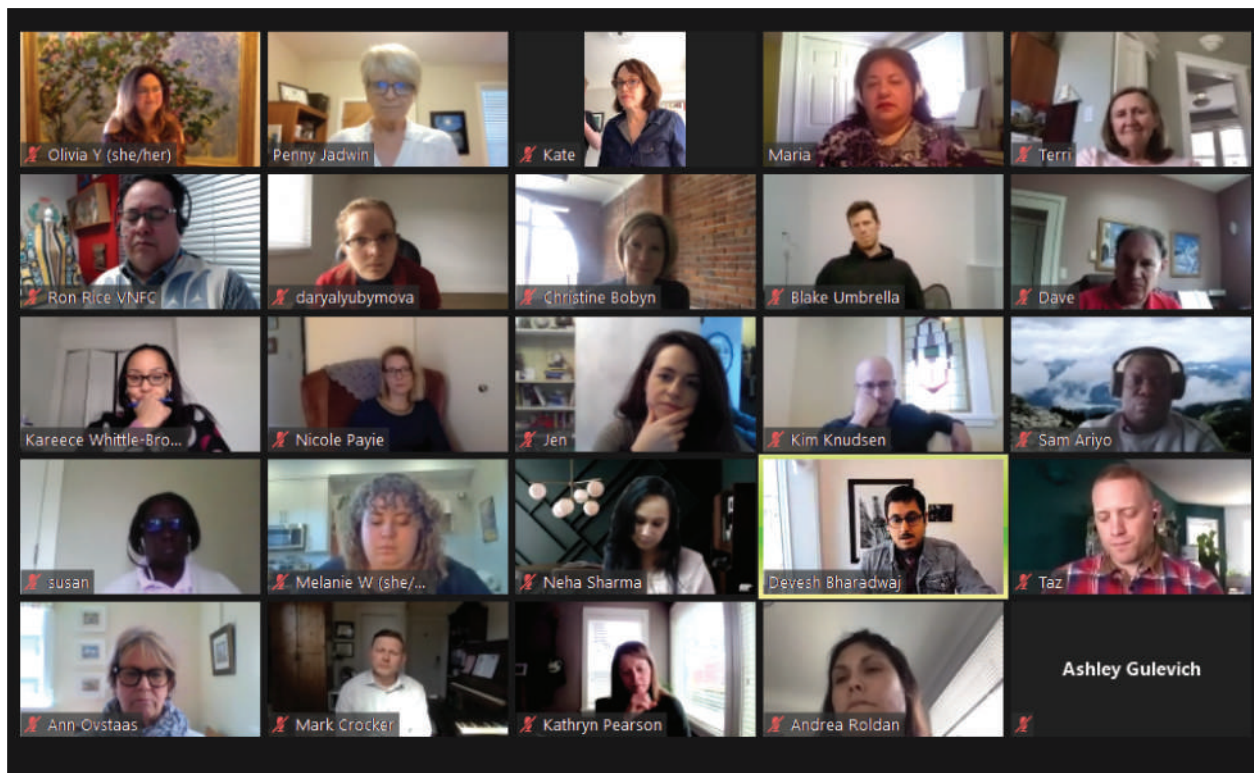
Work on my unconscious biases by actively engaging in conversation with people from different communities, cultures, faiths, genders, and learn from them and share that learning with everyone I know.

**SAM:**

Synergies to advocate for the younger generation in elementary school.

**JEN:**

I will support and encourage the development of an EDI committee at my organization.



# RECOGNITION

The 2020-21 Community Leadership Development Program Cohort members would like to thank all of the following who helped us succeed in our project. We couldn't have done it without you:

- Leadership Victoria (Staff, Board members, Facilitators, and Volunteers).
- Ruth and Mira, The Inclusion Project.
- Team Members.
- Community Action Project participants.
- Team Coaches Ann Ovstaas, Dave Marecek, Kate Taylor, Terri Chyzowski.
- Abeer, Adrienne, and Ana Maria, VICCIR.
- Lisa Mercure, Victoria Native Friendship Centre.
- Ron Rice, Victoria Native Friendship Centre.
- Kareece Whittle-Brown, Here Magazine.
- Devesh Bharadwaj, Pani Energy.
- Our entire 2020-21 cohort.

## PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Erinn Pinkerton  
Jim Tamm  
Cheryl Joslin  
Ian Chisholm  
Penny Jadwin  
Ron Stewart  
Amber MacMillan  
Dawna Day  
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Jason Oliver  
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## EMPLOYERS





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2020-2021

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LEADERSHIP  
VICTORIA



**THE WORLD IS  
CHANGING**

# **ARE YOU READY TO LEAD?**

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DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GIVES AN  
EDGE TO EMERGING LEADERS

JOIN GREATER VICTORIA'S PREMIER  
PROGRAM CONNECTING LOCAL  
INFLUENCERS

6 MONTHS | WEEKENDS & EVENINGS

WORLD CHANGING



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