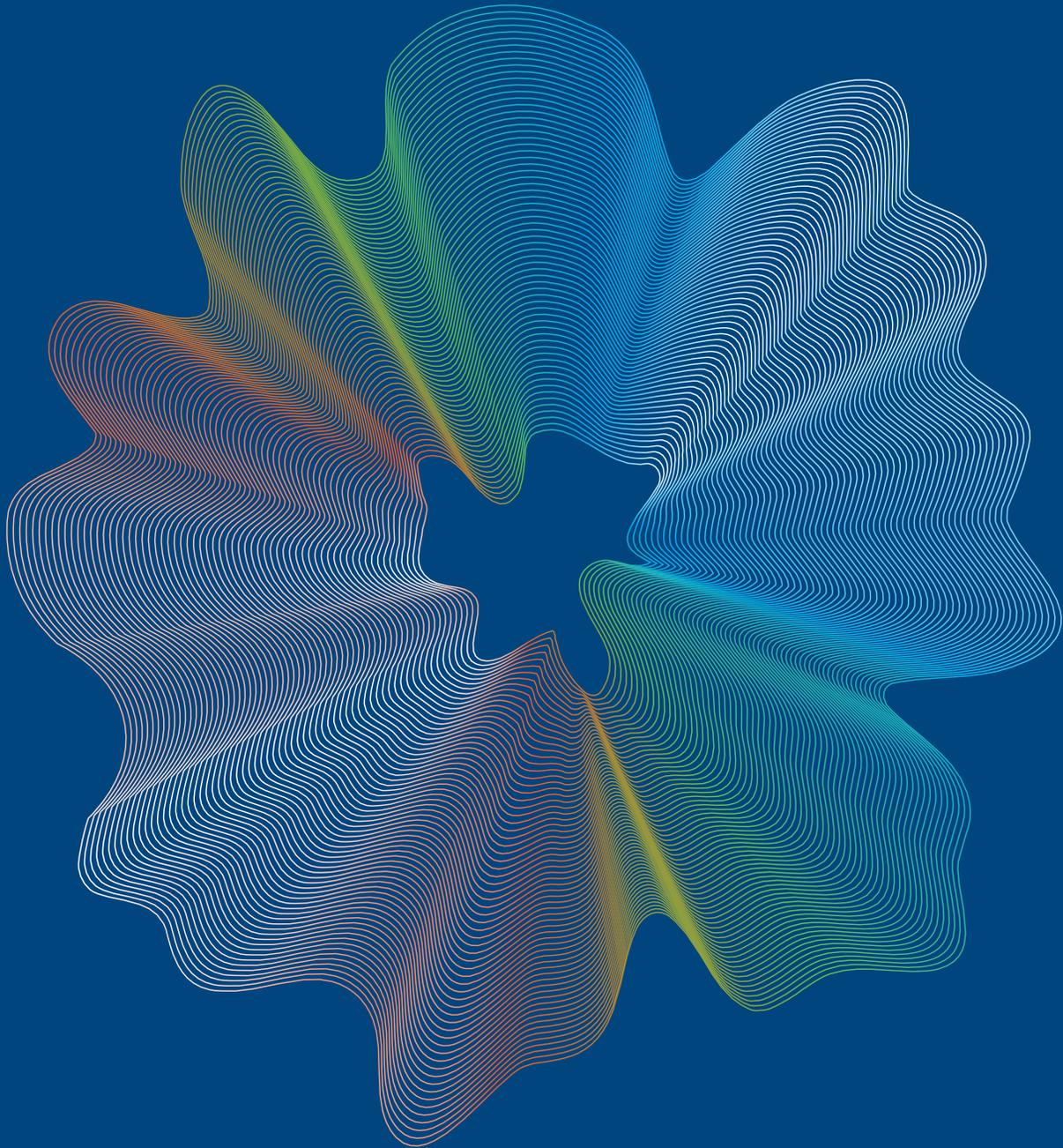




**LEVEL**  
YOUTH POLICY PROGRAM



# 2020 Policy Brief Summaries

*The LEVEL Youth Policy Program takes place on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) & səíilwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh) Coast Salish peoples.*

GRAPHIC DESIGN

And Also Too

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*“I always wondered why somebody  
didn’t do something about that. Then  
I realized, I am somebody.”*

—<https://www.youthdoit.org/themes/advocacy/>



# About the LEVEL Initiative

*LEVEL is a youth engagement initiative of Vancouver Foundation that aims to address racial inequity. We do this by investing in the leadership capacity of Indigenous, racialized, immigrant, and refugee youth to create more opportunities throughout the non-profit and charitable sector.*

Despite being the fastest-growing youth populations in British Columbia, Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee youth don't have the same opportunities as other young people. Race continues to be a factor that hinders their ability to have a say in decisions that impact their lives.

LEVEL empowers these youth by building their capacity to challenge and change those systems that hinder their ability to build a more just world.

## **LEVEL consists of three pillars of work to advance racial equity**

1. LEVEL Youth Policy Program
2. LEVEL Youth Organizing
3. LEVEL Youth Granting

## **About the LEVEL Youth Policy Program (LEVEL YPP)**

The LEVEL Youth Policy Program (LEVEL YPP) brings together young people between the ages of 19 and 29 from across British Columbia who identify as being Indigenous or racialized immigrants or refugees. Indigenous and racialized Newcomer youth are disproportionately impacted by certain public policies but are rarely included in the development and implementation of public policy process. The LEVEL YPP aims to provide these youth with

equitable training and leadership opportunities to better navigate the public policy landscape, and to develop new tools and skills to influence, shape, and advocate for policy changes that are relevant in their own communities. Having young people directly involved in shaping policies that impact their lives is essential to creating systemic, meaningful change. The LEVEL YPP's training is grounded from and within Indigenous peoples' worldviews, which the program acknowledges, could vary from person-to-person or nation-to-nation. Indigenous worldviews place a large emphasis on connections to the land. This perspective views the land as sacred; where everything and everyone is related and connected; where the quality of the relationships formed are key in life; where what matters is the success and well-being of the community, and where there can be many truths as they are based on individual lived experiences.<sup>1</sup> As such, an important premise of this training is to centre and place a particular focus on the fact that the work that has gone into developing this training, as well as the training itself, has taken and will take place on unceded (never given away/stolen) territories of the hən̓q̓'əmin 'əḿ-speaking Musqueam peoples, of the Halkomelem-speaking Tsleil-Waututh peoples, and of the sníchimspeaking Skwx\_wú7mesh (Squamish) peoples.

1. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-peoples-worldviews-vs-western-worldviews>



*“I think this program specifically tends to disrupt who gets to see themselves as policy makers and how we can get young people empowered enough, knowledgeable enough, with enough tools, resources and support to be in those spaces.”*

*—Youth Policy Program Past Participant*



# Adriana Laurent

## CLIMATE MIGRANTS ON UNCEDED LANDS



*Adriana is a recent University of British Columbia (UBC) graduate from the Faculty of Land and Food Systems. She's originally from Honduras, Central America, and is a queer, mixed-race, Afro-Latina who is passionate about social justice, climate change, and food security. She's been an active member of the climate and youth organizing community at UBC and Vancouver for several years. Adriana is a co-founder of the UBC Climate Hub and currently works as their Projects Administrator.*



## Acknowledgements

This policy proposal takes place on the stolen territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́ilwətaʔɫ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples. This policy ask attempts to provide protection for climate migrants and refugees while also trying to uphold Indigenous sovereignty on unceded lands. I hope to center BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) communities impacted by climate change in a way that values their lived experience. This policy ask was created while I was thinking of the people in my

community in Honduras who are already migrating due to the impacts of climate change, and are suffering at the hands of cruel migration policies. I am grateful for the 2020 Vancouver Foundation LEVEL Youth Policy Program (LEVEL YPP) and all of the incredible mentors and participants involved who helped me reflect and think deeply on these issues. I'm particularly grateful for my brilliant and kind mentors Michelle Nahanee and Amanda Aziz for giving me much-needed guidance and support through this process.

# Executive Summary

The acceleration of climate change is a direct result of the systems of White-supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism that continue to exploit people and the planet (Park, 2015). Climate change is already threatening the lives of the most marginalized communities all over the world. It's already becoming apparent that the impacts of climate change are displacing people and impacting migration patterns (Dwyer, 2020). Unfortunately, there is no international and legally binding recognition for climate migration. Although this is an issue that has garnered some international attention from the United Nations Human Rights Committee, most notably the case in New Zealand, the world is still years away from creating legal protection for climate migrants (UN landmark case for people displaced by climate change, 2020). Nations like Canada, who have been notable contributors to the acceleration of climate change, have an obligation to recognize and protect climate migrants through their existing migration pathways. Canada is going to launch the new Municipal Nominee Program (MNP) that mirrors their existing and very successful Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) (Harris, 2020). The MNP will allow for municipalities to nominate economic migrants based on a set of criteria. In order to accommodate climate migrants, who currently have no legal definition, the Minister of Immigration and Refugees can create a new migratory class, specifically for climate migrants, under Section 25.2 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)*, and under humanitarian and compassionate considerations from foreign nationals (Branch, 2020). A municipality like Vancouver, which

has declared a climate emergency, is one of the major cities immigrants move to, and is an ideal candidate for a trial run of this program. It's crucial that is done with the Host Nations and in a way that upholds Indigenous sovereignty. Vancouver has also passed framework to become a "City of Reconciliation," and any work done to implement policy around climate migrants must be done in collaboration with Indigenous communities who will be impacted by this legislation. Climate migrants must be protected from the impacts of climate change through both sudden-onset disasters and slow-onset disasters. The connection between climate change and migration is complex and nuanced. As time goes by, and the impacts of climate change become more detrimental, this issue will become more pressing. Global North nations like Canada have the resources and the responsibility to alter their migration pathways to accommodate climate migrants and refugees. Migration is a form of climate adaptation and the world needs to begin to prepare for it in a way that centers the humanity and dignity of communities who are impacted by it.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
semillites hernández  
velasco



# Aman Saini

## WHAT'S THE SCORE? RETHINKING CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICY THROUGH SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION



***The most you can ever possibly come to know is nothing but yourself.***



*I am a multilingual knowledge mobilizer and public communicator consistently capturing the issues at the intersections of Public Policy Research, International Relations, Social Justice, Religion, Literature, Economics, Politics, Technology, and Media. I have worked with a diverse array of organizations across government, non-governmental, and private sectors. I am currently working on a Public Policy project rethinking the role of the Canadian Immigration policy with regards to Social Cohesion and Reconciliation. I am passionate about Knowledge Management, Policy Research, Public Communication/Facilitation, Global Cultural Awareness, and Social Media Communications.*

## Acknowledgements

I sincerely appreciate all the LEVEL Youth Policy Program (YPP) faculty members for their mentorship and fellow cohort members for their inquisitive natures.

Special thanks to Alejandra López Bravo, Amanda Aziz, and Kris Statnyk!

# Executive Summary

Standing at the intersections of its Indigenous past, colonial present, and ongoing cosmopolitan future, Canada is seeking to reinvent its federation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Still, in this pursuit, its scholars, policymakers, and legislators seem to have overlooked a vital interconnection in the immigration policy. Social cohesion and Reconciliation present an indivisible challenge to the current immigration policy. Since increased levels of migration have changed the demographic profile of the country by a great measure, its accompanying ethnic diversity and the continued marginalization of Indigenous people necessitate an integrated understanding of the situation. Thus, in this regard, a rethinking of immigration policy and its incentive structure is necessary to counteract the logic of settler state, its perpetuation of the colonial legacy, and policies into the future. To this effect, an active policy design, which grows on an interconnected understanding of social cohesion and Reconciliation, offers the best template for effective

action. It not only enhances the intergroup relationships amongst various immigrant communities and Indigenous peoples, but also mainstreams the Indigenous perspectives from centuries of sustained colonial marginalization. Hence, through a reflexive process of dual empowerment of immigrants and Indigenous people, Canadian immigration policy can be the vehicle in furthering responsible national development through meaningful decolonization.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López



**Canadian immigration policy can be the vehicle in furthering responsible national development through meaningful decolonization.**



# Nur Azlan Shah Bin Nur Saidy (Azlan Nur Saidy)

## CREATING SPACES FOR MUSLIM YOUTH IN THE CITY



*I am an uninvited guest and settler living on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Kwikwetlem First Nations. I am Muslim Malay cis-man born in Temasek/ Singapura (Singapore), which is the territory (Negara Selat) of the Orang Laut peoples. My family came to these lands when I was a year old, and I became a Canadian citizen at the age of 10.*

*I am currently pursuing my Masters in Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia (UBC). I am driven by a curiosity of the intersection between urban planning, health, and sustainability and I am passionate about creating inclusive and engaged communities. I am also a research coordinator at Simon Fraser University's (SFU) CoHeaRT lab, where I assist in the study of how socio-economic factors and the urban-built environment can affect population health. In my spare time, I enjoy hiking, cycling, and dragon boating.*



## Acknowledgements

This policy brief was written on the unceded and occupied territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́l ilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples. I am grateful to be on this land that has been stewarded by these Nations since time immemorial. I am also grateful for all the teachings and learnings that the LEVEL program, staff, faculty, and participants

have shared with me. I am especially thankful for Alejandra López Bravo, Marcus Reid, Aida Mwanzia, Nathalie Lozano-Neira, Kevin Huang, Sharmarke Dubow, Aslam Bulbulia, Tariq Malik, and Matraca Ashcroft for helping me realize my work.

Terima kasih.

# Executive Summary

The City of Vancouver was established through the displacement, erasure, and exclusion of Black, Indigenous, Mixed-Race, and People of Colour (BIMPOC) communities. This displacement, erasure, and exclusion based on race had the secondary effect of excluding racialized spiritual beliefs and religious traditions. This erased spiritual spaces that existed pre-colonization and prevented non-Christian spiritual traditions from having space in the City of Vancouver post-colonization. At the same time, land and space were made available to European settlers and their spiritual beliefs. Churches were able to gain access to valuable land in the core of the Metro Vancouver region, and in the most valuable properties in



***The City of Vancouver must ensure that the spiritual needs of all communities are met, not only communities that have privileged from colonization.***

the city, such as Downtown Vancouver. This has created a spatial inequity in which spaces for other spiritual/religious communities are mainly located on the margins, which has led to a less-inclusive city for racialized religions. The focus of this policy brief will be to examine the exclusion of the Muslim community in the City of Vancouver. This exclusion has led to a lack

of spaces for Muslim youth to live in accordance with their cultures and belief systems.

Due to its historic complicity in the dispossession and exclusion of racialized communities and spiritual beliefs, the City of Vancouver has a responsibility to provide redress and reparations for these communities. The lack of spaces in the City of Vancouver for Muslims, and Muslim youth in particular, prevents them from fully engaging in the cultural life, economy, and conversations happening in the city. In order to address this issue, the City of Vancouver must support the creation of spaces for the Muslim community in general, with a specific focus on Muslim youth. The City of Vancouver must also ensure that the spiritual needs of all communities are met, not only communities that have privileged from colonization. Supporting the spiritual needs of all communities should be based on an equity framework that acknowledges the history of erasure and exclusion of BIMPOC peoples.

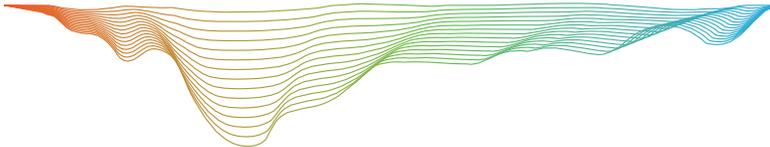


**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López



# Dyllon Longpeter

## UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (UNDRIP) AND URBAN INDIGENOUS YOUTH: BRIDGING THE GAPS



*Dyllon Longpeter is an Anishnaabe-English, male, belonging to an affiliated community in Northern Ontario, Long Lake #58 First Nation. He has been living on the unceded Coast Salish Territory for eight years. He raises up his hands to the unceded traditional territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh for allowing him to learn, work, and play on this beautiful shared territory. Dyllon has a passion and determination to end racial and systemic discrimination. Especially youth aging out of the Foster Care System, who have been incarcerated, who are homeless, who experience drugs and/or alcohol, or are youth of color who experience regular discrimination. Often times youth feel lost and that no one cares. Dyllon wants to help and advocate for youth to reach full access in support and services, without having the fear of being rejected. He wants youth to know they are not alone and that someone does care. He wants to be a positive role model and a leader for our youth; they need to reach their full potential, and he is 100% committed to creating a better tomorrow. Dyllon is a Youth Worker at Direction Youth Services and Urban Native Youth Association and also sometimes works at Watari Youth Services. He enjoys being outdoors—going on hikes, going camping, swimming in lakes, and just getting out of the city for a while. He likes hanging out with friends, by having a good dinner, and spending quality time.*

*Add him on Facebook @ThomasTrodd, and Instagram @Dyllonlongpeter*

# Executive Summary

This document was created to enhance the importance of culture and to provide recommended supports for urban Indigenous youth. In order to address the socioeconomic issues that Indigenous youth experience daily, we need to implement the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), and emphasize on the four quadrants of the Medicine Wheel: mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual.

UNDRIP is made up of 46 articles covering support for Indigenous People. In September 2007, it was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. In November 2019, the government of British Columbia introduced legislation to implement UNDRIP as a framework for Reconciliation. The Declaration Act is “supposed” to provide for the protection of culture, identity, language, employment, health, education, as well as many other provisions that are meant to constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the Indigenous people of the world (UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples pp. 1–15).

However, the United Nations’ Declaration is still not effectively meeting the needs of cities/communities and off-reserve urban Indigenous youth in BC. Urban Indigenous youth are provided the bare minimum of a connection to culture and their well-being. It is evident that there are negative outcomes that are left over

from colonization and assimilation, where high rates of homelessness, addiction, and incarceration still exist.

While BC’s Declaration Act provides a framework to implement UNDRIP, it explicitly includes Indigenous governance structures outside of the Indian-Act imposed Chief and Council system, such as hereditary systems.

However, urban Indigenous youth, who may be separated from their homelands and culture, may not share the benefits of implementing UNDRIP and upholding Indigenous rights, which are often land-based.

What we need to do is partner with organizations that create programs and services to decolonize spaces that provide better supports for urban Indigenous youth, and gives them access to culture, when needed. By creating this policy and having it in place, we can begin to provide connection and achieve positive outcomes that are inspired by traditional values and teachings.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López

# Hasrat Grewal Gill

## DECOLONIZING “INTEGRATION”: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE NEWCOMER AGENCIES



*As a settler, Hasrat lives, learns, and breathes on the unceded, ancestral, occupied, and traditional lands of the Coast Salish peoples—Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh’ (Squamish, BC). She owes her gratitude to every ordinary person who overcomes not-so-ordinary challenges on a daily basis; these are the people who never cease to inspire her, and the work she is doing. She has worked in the field of migrant community work for over five years, and is passionate about advocating for migrant rights. Hasrat completed her MA degree in Immigration and Settlement Studies from Ryerson University. Her graduate research focuses on decolonization of immigrant integration in Canada, while exploring the inclusion of Indigenous and immigrant perspectives into the idea of being “Canadian.” Through her work, she aspires to hold up the resistance of Indigenous peoples, the voices of the immigrants and refugees their resilience and strength in the face of ongoing dispossession and colonial violence. She also works as an Instructor in the Department of Community Development and Outreach at Capilano University.*

# Executive Summary

Migrant “host” countries in the global north demand that Newcomers “integrate” into their societies by demonstrating language skills, economic participation, socialization, and adjusting to the norms and values of the destination country. Migrant “host” countries in the global north demand that Newcomers “integrate” into their societies by demonstrating language skills, economic participation, socialization, and adjusting to the norms and values of the destination country. However, the question that remains unanswered is: Who is the “host” population, and who creates the norms and values that the Newcomers are required to match up to? The concept of immigrant “integration” can be seen as a form of present-day colonialism that works to reimpose the idea of European hegemony over “other” racialized groups, and distracts from the recognition and redress of Indigenous and immigrant rights.

The purpose of this research is to reflect on the following questions, identify the gaps, and suggest policy changes and implementation strategies.

- How do we define and appraise the “integration” of Newcomers in Canada?

- How do the colonial continuities, settler histories, geographies, and ethnicities shape the “integration” policies and practices in Canada?
- In what ways do the Immigrant and Refugee Settlement sector and migrants perpetuate and solidify the ongoing colonial and neo-colonial narratives?

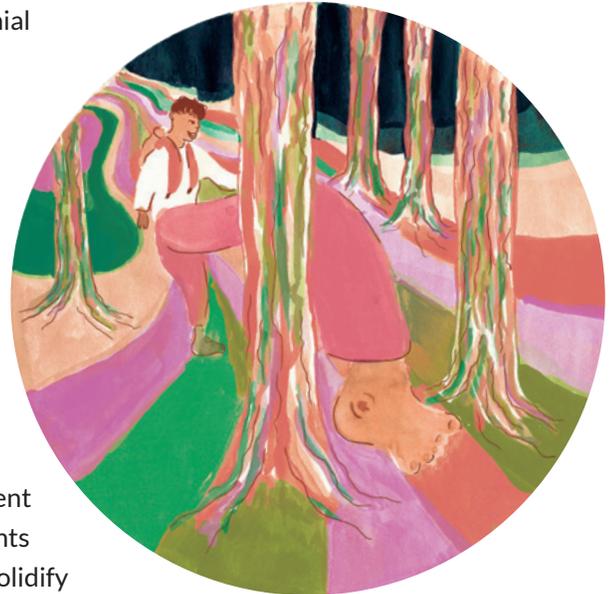


ILLUSTRATION  
semillites hernández  
velasco

***The concept of immigrant “integration” can be seen as a form of present-day colonialism that works to reimpose the idea of European hegemony over “other” racialized groups, and distracts from the recognition and redress of Indigenous and immigrant rights.***



# Julia Chai

## THE LANGUAGE OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH: EQUITABLE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF CANADIAN HEALTHCARE FOR RACIALIZED IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

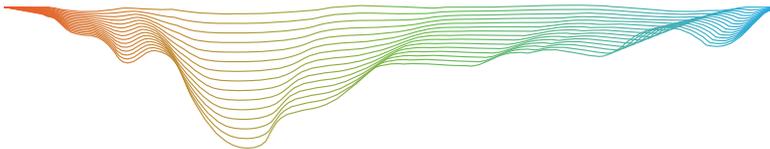


*Julia Chai (채주은) is a first-year medical student pursuing her Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree at the University of Calgary, and a Korean-Canadian first-generation immigrant. She also holds a Bachelor of Sciences (BSc) from the University of British Columbia (UBC).*

*Julia is passionate about addressing race, gender, and socioeconomic inequities in healthcare and disproportionate social determinants of health in under-served populations. With an interest in public health policy, she believes in the power of activism and challenging current institutional systems of thought and function through advocacy, story-telling, innovation, and accountability. Over the past few years, she has researched patient safety and adverse events in multiple-sclerosis treatment and advocated for greater equity, inclusion, and diversity in post-secondary institutional education on multiple boards and representation bodies as a student advocate.*

*She is currently located on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, and the Métis Nation (Region 3) of the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. Julia calls both the Musqueam territory in British Columbia (Vancouver, BC) and Treaty 7 region (Calgary, AB) her home.*

*You can follow her on Twitter: @juliachai\_ or on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/julia-chai/>*



# Executive Summary

The experience of racialized patients with low or no English proficiency in the healthcare system is largely different than what most may endure. Language concordance between the patient and provider ensures effective communication, and communication is a key contributing and differentiating factor toward quality of care and patient safety. Differences in shared language have also indicated lower satisfaction rates for patients, increased risks of safety from miscommunication, increased risk of patient confidentiality and privacy, and increased medication errors among other outcomes. Literature also reveals that the language barrier alone is the most significant barrier to initial health accessibility in Canada.



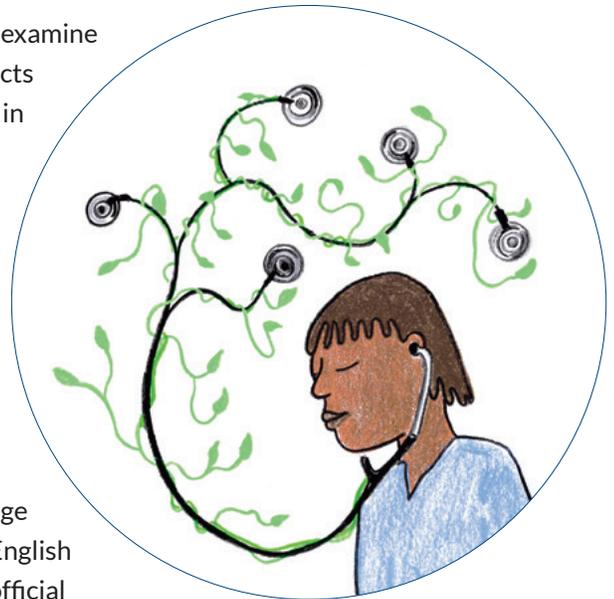
## **The experience of racialized patients with low- or no-English proficiency in the healthcare system is largely different than what most may endure.**

Additionally, the significant insufficiency of available race-based health data and research specific to Canada hinders the capacity to develop effective evidence-informed policies and solutions. It is difficult to generalize research findings to the general population without attention to diversity, and without addressing the impact of systemic and institutional racism on health.

This policy brief will examine and address the effects of language barriers in the quality of care, patient safety, and accessibility of healthcare for racialized foreign-born communities who have undergone the immigration process with Low-English-Language Proficiency (LELP). English and French are the official languages of Canada, and English

is primarily spoken in the province of British Columbia. The terms “racialized” and “visible minority/minorities” (“persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour,” as defined by the Government of Canada) are used interchangeably in this brief as “visible minority” is an official term defined by the Government of Canada. However, it is noted that the usage of the term “visible minority” potentially belittles the presence and importance of racialized communities despite making up a significant portion of the Canadian population.

Five main barriers faced by racialized LELP immigrant communities in Canada impacting accessibility and quality of healthcare were identified:

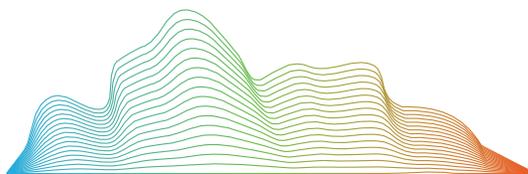


**ILLUSTRATION**  
*semillites hernández velasco*

2. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/reports-publications/health-care-accessibility/language-barriers.html>



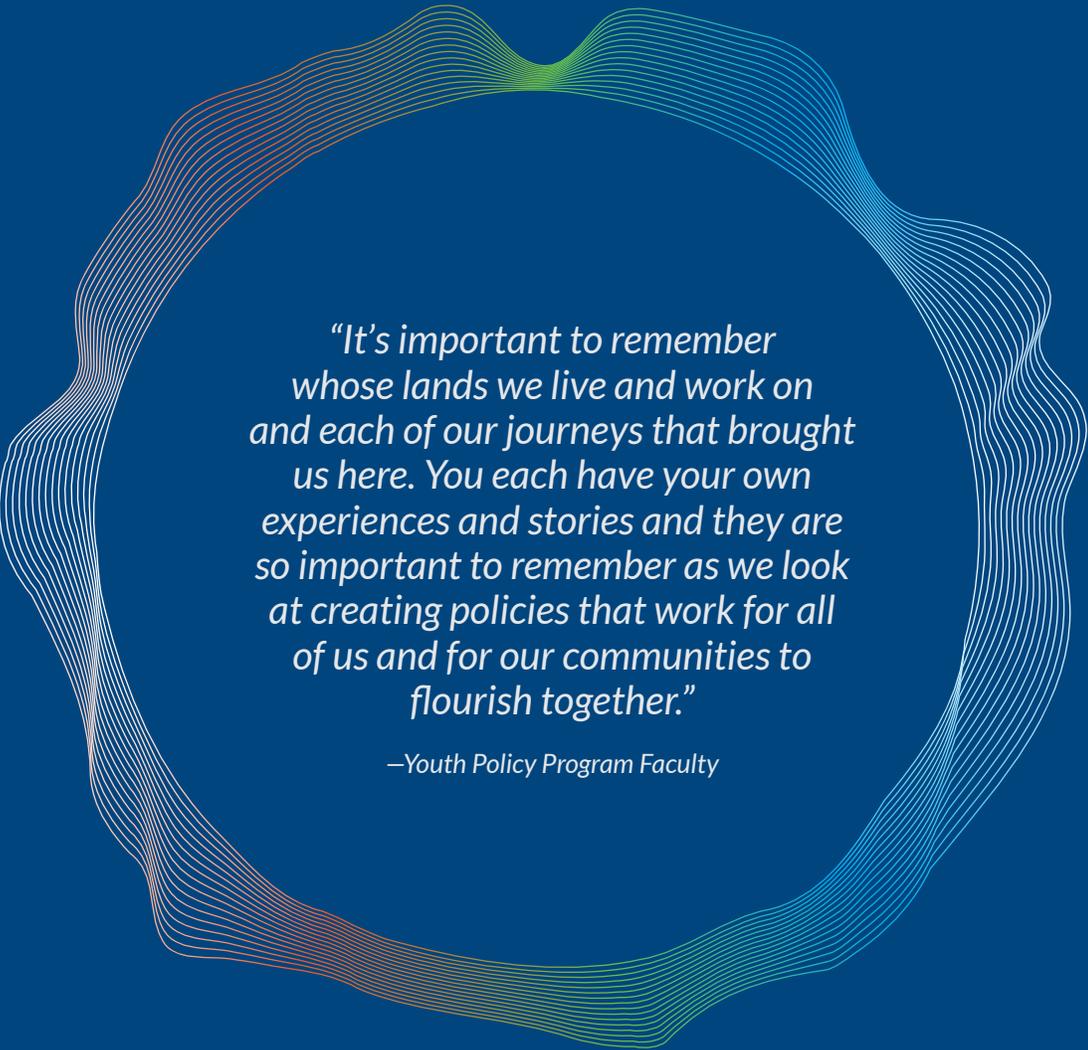
1. Lack of race-based data and research in Canada;
2. Effects on quality of care;
3. Diminished patient safety;
4. Cultural linkage to language;
5. Availability of language interpreters.



As a result, four main recommendations were proposed to address both capacities of short-term and long-term effective change on all levels of community, provincial, and federal systemic policy work:

1. Advocate for collection of race-based, language, and immigrant status data in Canada to better inform policies and solutions for under-served groups;
2. Facilitate creation of standardized visual-aid tools to address the gap in communication between racialized LELP patients and the healthcare system;
3. Promote and enhance cultural competence, safety, and racial-bias training in medical education and current bodies of practicing medicine;
4. Address the lack of diversity in medicine with re-evaluation of medical school admission processes in Canada.

***The language barrier alone is the most significant barrier to initial health accessibility in Canada.***



*“It’s important to remember  
whose lands we live and work on  
and each of our journeys that brought  
us here. You each have your own  
experiences and stories and they are  
so important to remember as we look  
at creating policies that work for all  
of us and for our communities to  
flourish together.”*

*—Youth Policy Program Faculty*

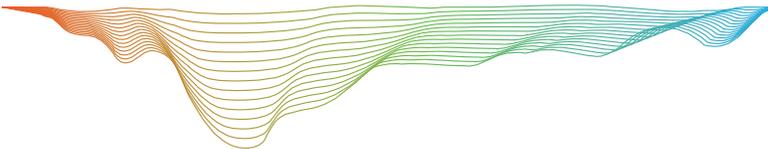


# Kathryn B. McLeod

## TOWARD DECOLONIZING THE NISGA'A CONSTITUTION THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF YOUTH



*My Nisga'a name is Amgoogidim Lik'íńskw, my given name is Kathryn McLeod. I am Nisga'a on my mother's side, and Gitksan and Scottish on my father's side. Being born into a matrilineal society, I identify as a citizen of the Nisga'a Nation, as of May 2000, I have been free from the constraints of the Indian Act. I am from the Village of Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh), I come from Wilps Gwisk'aayn, and my tribe is Gisk'ansnaat (White Grizzly). However, I was born and raised in Ts'msyen territory (Prince Rupert, British Columbia). I hold a Bachelor of Science in Geography from the University of Victoria, and as an alumni of the International Ocean Institute's Ocean Governance: Policy, Law, and Management training programme (Dalhousie University), I am a member of the IOI Ocean Mafia. A geographer and social/cultural scientist by training, I currently work as Lands Officer for Nisga'a Lisims Government. I am incredibly passionate about land sovereignty and body sovereignty, the consilience of traditional ecological knowledge and western science in research and decision-making, and most importantly, the empowerment of youth.*



# Executive Summary

The Nisga'a Highway 113 is numbered after the 113-year struggle toward fighting for the full rights of self-government for the Nisga'a Nation. Various colonial and legal tools under the Indian Act that aimed to assimilate our Nisga'a people into Canadian society, to strip us of our culture and identity, and to prevent our people from reaching our self-determination rights. These colonial and legal tools only served as hurdles that made our leaders stronger. And future generations are going to be better for the work they did.

Pre-contact, all Indigenous Nations were once prosperous societies, especially on the North Coast of British Columbia, on their own terms. With thriving cultures, restorative justice systems, respect and reciprocity for the lands and waters that provided abundant resources, and resource-management systems that sustained people for millennia. The Nisga'a Final Agreement is only the first step towards achieving sustainable prosperity in today's society. Our current governing body, Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN), is closely modelled after the Elected Chief and Band Council system, and current Federal Parliament and Provincial Legislature.

However, in order to reach a sustainable prosperous state once again, a shift further away from the imposed Indian Act governance system is needed. WSN is unique in its multi-generational approach to uphold the

principles of Ayuukhl Nisga'a. And a multi-generational approach, incorporating the voices of Nisga'a youth, is going to be required to decolonize and define the Nisga'a democracy on our own terms.

In this policy ask, I have attempted to define a starting point for forming a Nisga'a Youth Advisory Council by highlighting the importance and need for youth involvement in politics and governance—especially for Indigenous youth. As well, I identify some challenges that may be encountered in getting the Youth Advisory Council off the ground, and offer practical solutions for each hurdle.

It is my dream to have at least one representative of the Nisga'a Youth Advisory Council gain a permanent seat in the Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a with voting power. Today's youth are our future. Young people deserve to have their voices and concerns heard at the table, and ultimately should have a say in the path that is steering our Nation.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
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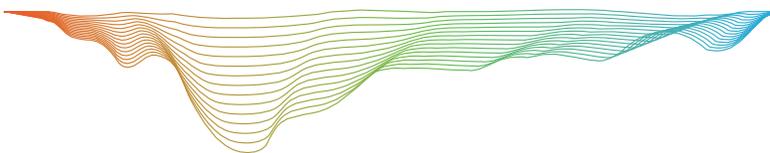


# Matthew Garrett Provost

## REPATRIATION OVER PROFIT



*Matthew is Blackfoot from Piikani Nation in Southern Alberta. He is currently attending a post-secondary institution, and is working toward finishing his degree with a focus on public policy and Indigenous Methodologies through Simon Fraser University (SFU). Matthew works toward supporting the Indigenous Community, and has been involved in many forms of advocacy work. He has been on the Board of the First Nations Students Association, and has recently been elected to a new position at the Simon Fraser Student Society. Matthew does his best to ensure that Indigenous students are recognized within post-secondary institutions, and that they are affirmed in all aspects of their educational journey.*



## Acknowledgements

I want to dedicate this work to our community members who have committed their lives to bringing our relatives home.

I want to acknowledge all of the people who consistently stand beside me and support all of my endeavors. Without the support of my

family, my partner, the SFU Community, the Indigenous Student Centre, and the folks I have met on this journey, I would not be able to take on such valuable work without your teachings and guidance on how to do this in a good way. iikakiimaat.

# Executive Summary

**Content Warning:** This summary includes dialogue around Indian Residential Schools and discussion around oppressive tactics that are impacting Indigenous communities related to repatriation work. There is mention of over-policing of Indigenous peoples and loss of culture and identity.

The repatriation process for Indigenous communities is an extraneous experience. It is something that many Indigenous Communities, if not all, are still being impacted by. In order for communities to feel whole and to find resolution from the loss and exploitation of Indigenous items across the world, the work for repatriation processes and proper community consultation needs to be prioritized so that Indigenous communities can begin to heal. The ongoing sales of Indigenous items in private collections, estate sales, and auctions in the present-day are continuing to perpetuate the harm and erasure of Indigenous people, not only within the North-American context, but globally. This policy ask will cover the issues and problematic tendencies that arise from the ongoing sale of Indigenous items, and how communities continue to advocate for the repatriation of their family and community items in order to bring them home.

It is important to recognize the ongoing work that has been happening within communities, and I hope that this policy ask will act as a framework to hold accountable private collectors, estates, and appraisal organizations, and to end the sales of Indigenous goods that were taken between the years of 1885 to 1951. It's important to acknowledge that Indigenous

items have been collected and harmfully removed from communities through colonial tactics such as the *Indian Act*, policing Indigenous peoples, and outlawing Indigenous ceremonial practices.

For purposes of narrowing down this policy ask, I will be focusing on cases that are specific in the so-called “Canadian” context. Within this summary, I will provide historical context and convey the significance of Indigenous ceremonial items in community, and how these items hold importance for Indigenous communities in the present day. Indigenous ceremonial and cultural items are identifying pieces that have been forcibly removed from our communities.

I will present recommendations for an accountability process regarding the sale of Indigenous items, and underscore the importance of community involvement in the healing processes, especially when reconnecting with our ceremonial items. I write this in the hopes that this policy ask will give other Indigenous folks and/or communities the capacity to use this framework to help support or expand their repatriation efforts to secure and protect their items.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López

# Njoki Mbũrũ

## EAT WELL, EAT TOGETHER: ANTI-RACIST POLICIES TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS FOOD INSECURITY AND SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG INDIGENOUS AND BLACK SENIORS IN VANCOUVER



*Oi Rongai is the place that I feel most at peace. Oi Rongai is a farming community, my mother's community, the home of my grandparents, and the environment that informed my childhood. Moving between Nairobi (Kenya), Freiburg (Germany), and Vancouver (Canada) over the past six years has, in some instances, served to ground me in my passion for creative writing, storytelling, theatre performance, and environmental governance. In other instances, I have had to question the ideologies, behaviours, and identities that have influenced my growing, thinking, and belonging. These tensions continue to inform my daily being—challenging me to live in spaces without searching for “home.” They remind me that the words I speak, the intentions I hold, and the actions I pursue should be informed by history, grounded in the “now” and part of a kind yet radical future.*

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/luizer-njoki-mburu/>

Twitter: @njoki\_13

## Acknowledgements

My heart is full to know that each truth I live is blessed and prayed for by my beautiful, strong, kind, and courageous Cũcũ (grandmother). I feel whole to be named after you. I feel honoured to carry the strength, humility, and wisdom of my Guka (grandfather). I thank Source for my mother's body, heart, and mind—you are precious beyond the realms of these words. To my loving brothers, live every part of your truth every day.

Thank you, Ale, Aida, Marcus, Paul, and Chinu. Thank you LEVEL YPP, 2020 for humbly acknowledging that we are here to “plant seeds for trees whose shade we may not live to sit under.” May we plant seeds of unbreakable connection.

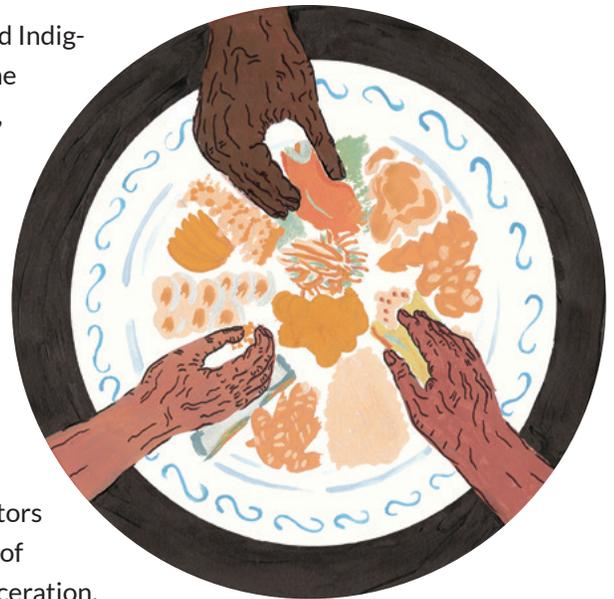
# Executive Summary

In Vancouver, British Columbia between 2017-2018, 28.9% of Black households and 28.2% of Indigenous households reported that they struggled with accessing adequate, nutritious, and affordable food. These statistics were particularly striking compared to the statistic that 11.1% of White households faced food insecurity. Like the reality on the national scale, food insecurity is prevalent amongst Black and Indigenous seniors. This disproportionate impact is primarily attributed to income levels inequality. Research studies show that the level of food insecurity (*i.e.* marginal, moderate, or severe) is negatively related to one's income. This correlation is strong within Canadian society, despite its being praised as having one of the lowest rates of food insecurity among seniors within the list of countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Since 1990, Canada has been collecting data on household food insecurity. Throughout, researchers have consistently concluded that socio-demographic factors such as race and immigration status are essential in determining the level of food insecurity that individuals are exposed to. Unfortunately, policies that address food insecurity at a municipal-to-national level appear ignorant of this reality, choosing instead to purely focus on income levels. By advancing a reductive policy that only focuses on income, governments are perpetuating a cycle of poverty that is inherently sabotaging Black and Indigenous folk's ability to secure high-paying, safe, and secure

jobs. When Black and Indigenous people become eligible for pensions, and other government-funded support programs, they are already at a lower benchmark, given the factors that have impeded their economic progress. These structural factors include higher rates of homelessness, incarceration, drug-related illnesses, and trauma that leads to mental and physiological challenges.

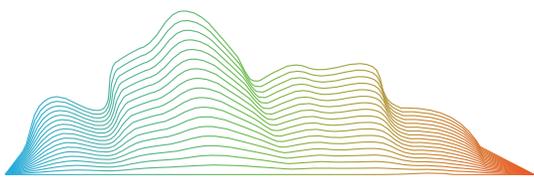
Therefore, this policy proposal is based on an understanding and appreciation for a holistic, longitudinal, context-specific, race-based analysis of the causes of food insecurity, specifically for the senior (65+) population in Vancouver, BC. Currently, the Federal government supports senior citizens through the Old Age Pension Plan program, which includes a universal, income-based, and earnings-contribution plan. While these plans have generally been particularly useful in reducing the level of food insecurity amongst seniors, they have failed to take into account the unequal "starting points" determined by race, ability, immigration status, gender identities, *etc.*



**ILLUSTRATION**  
semillites hernández  
velasco

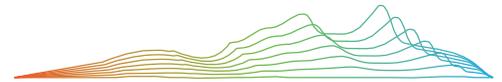


The COVID-19 pandemic has posed the greatest threat to seniors' health and wellbeing around the world. To minimize exposure to infection, restrictions to movement have become a standard feature. One particular consequence of this restriction is social isolation. For seniors in Vancouver who were dependent on subsidized meals from community kitchens or collecting fresh produce in community gardens, social isolation has exacerbated the level of food insecurity that they grapple with. Before the declaration of a state of emergency due to COVID-19, community organizations that run seniors' programs, e.g. luncheons, struggled to access consistent funding to keep their services ongoing. Programs were sometimes short-lived and may have failed to reach a share of seniors in most need. To close this gap and ease insecurity in running senior-focused programs, I propose that the Provincial and Federal government allocate a portion of their annual budgets to supporting community-led programs that support racialized seniors. Municipal governments would play the role of managing and disbursing these funds since they (municipal governments) are perceptively more informed about the community-led programs that are in place.



***By advancing a reductive policy that only focuses on income, governments are perpetuating a cycle of poverty that is inherently sabotaging Black and Indigenous folk's ability to secure high-paying, safe, and secure jobs.***

To effectively reach Black and Indigenous seniors affected by food insecurity and social isolation, collecting accurate data is the first step. With the information that I have encountered during my research, seniors are presented as a monolithic group, assumed to be similar in status. This is misrepresentation and reductiveness, reflective of a political and economic system built on ignorance, erasure, anti-Indigeneity, and anti-Black racism. Collecting data that takes critical socio-demographic factors into account makes room for intersectional policy. Rather than creating policy that is catering to the symptoms of the problem, we would be moving towards policy that is thorough in its root-cause analysis. The role of the government, I propose, is to not only supervise the regular collection and reporting of disaggregated data but also to prepare and follow through with action plans that incorporate race-based and context-specific solutions to the challenges of food insecurity and social isolation. For the City of Vancouver, this would mean investing in health-equity programs whose mission, vision, and theory of change are grounded in reconciliation, upholding Indigenous sovereignty, and responding to the call that Black Lives Matter.



***The COVID-19 pandemic has posed the greatest threat to seniors' health and wellbeing around the world.***



*“Sometimes it felt like I didn’t have the credentials, I didn’t have the work experience to be in the right position to be making analysis and to be making recommendations to be implemented for public policy, it was hard but it was really worth it.”*

*—Youth Policy Program Past Participant*

# Rachel Cheang

## BEYOND ACCOMMODATIONS: ACCESSIBLE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR DISABLED STUDENTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



*Born and raised in Singapore, Rachel is a fourth-year undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia (UBC) pursuing an Honors in Human Geography. As a settler and uninvited guest on stolen Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation, homelands, she organizes for climate and disability justice and believes in using design and art as activism to foster community. Her work includes campaigning for divestment, and organizing solidarity efforts with Indigenous communities with UBCC350 and facilitating workshops with Check Your Head. Rachel believes in the power of youth in driving creative solutions and re-imagining alternative futures through a lens of justice and equity, and seeks to explore deinstitutionalized community care within justice movements.*

## Acknowledgements

This policy brief would not be possible without the support of Vancouver Foundation's LEVEL Youth Policy Program (LEVEL YPP), the gentle guidance of Ale, Marcus, and Aida, and the warmth and kindness I have received from my fellow LEVEL YPP colleagues. Thank you to my mentors Jennifer Reddy and Lily Grewal for your time, input, and affirmation; Corin Parsons de Freitas and Hannah Facknitz for your brilliance and unapologetic advocacy for disabled students at UBC, without which I would not have found the courage to write

this brief; and Gabrielle Peters (who drafted the *Submission to the BC Government on Accessibility Legislation* with contributions from Amina Yasin and Karen Ward) for playing a pivotal role in shaping the recommendations put forth in this report and for leading the way. Lastly, I am the most grateful to my best friend, Emily Mittertreiner, who introduced me to Disability Justice, taught me to embrace my disabilities, and walked alongside me in my healing. I have not looked back since.

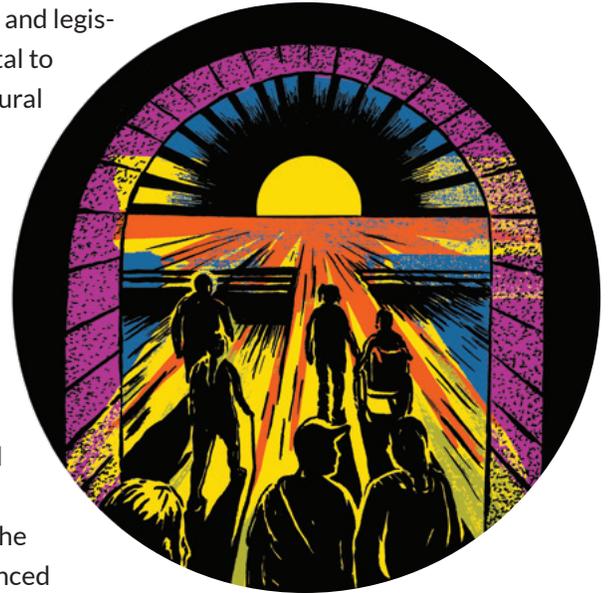
# Executive Summary

British Columbia (BC) is the largest province in Canada without any form of accessibility legislation to help identify, remove, and prevent barriers experienced by disabled people.<sup>3</sup> Despite significant developments in human-rights legislation for disabled people in recent years, there is currently no legislation on a provincial or municipal level to protect them from discrimination. As the BC government is in the process of developing provincial accessibility legislation, it is timely that this policy brief recommends that any protections for disabled students in all universities in BC under the BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training should and must be included in the design of the legislation.

A university education is often regarded as the crucial link between secondary education and success as an adult. Our increasingly competitive and precarious labour market also highlights the pressing need for access to a university education as a predictor of gainful employment and career development in meaningful occupations. This is especially true for disabled people whose range of employment is often limited to jobs that require fewer physical demands and more accommodations. Post-secondary education is therefore seen as essential to the social and economic standing and development of disabled students. However, the exclusion and lack of support for students with disabilities remains a significant issue in universities, and this is often compounded for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC), who also experience other forms of marginalization and exclusion.

Accessibility policies and legislation are fundamental to bringing about a cultural shift toward greater inclusion in higher education, and this requires going beyond academic accommodations. This policy brief aims to lobby the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training, as well as university administrations (senates and governing boards) in BC, for the incorporation of six main recommendations in the BC provincial accessibility legislation:

1. Mandate the collection and intersectional analysis of disability-based data;
2. Mandate disability and accessibility competency training and accessible teaching and learning approaches for all deans, department chairs, faculty, and staff members;
3. Revise accommodation policies to eliminate the need for medical documentation and include transparent conflict-resolution processes;
4. Reallocate funding to expand disability and mental-health services on campus;



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López

3. Inclusion BC. (2019). *New Accessibility Legislation promised for BC*. Inclusion BC. Retrieved from <https://inclusionbc.org/new-accessibility-legislation-for-bc/>



5. Establish a Disability Advisory Committee to support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategic or action plans;
6. Mandate accessible building codes.

Universities have a long way to go in reducing the gap in social inclusion of disabled students, and to adjust academic standards to meet their needs. It is clear that without these recommendations compelled by law, university administrations will be unlikely to implement them. This policy brief also comes at a critical time as universities formulate and advance COVID-19 recovery plans and deepen calls for stronger EDI mandates and policies in recovery efforts to ensure that no students are left behind.

In order for universities to be truly inclusive, we must centre the voices and lived experiences of disabled students, especially disabled Queer and Trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (QTBIPOC) students, in all levels of university governance, and develop strategies to advocate for meaningful change based on sound research and best practices. The responsibility for change rests with universities to lead the way forward, and university leadership must be committed to pushing back against a prevalent ableist institutional culture and internal bureaucratic structures. Stronger accessibility policies that seek to remove ableist barriers and create inclusive learning cultures in higher education can have a significant impact on the quality of education and life for many in BC.

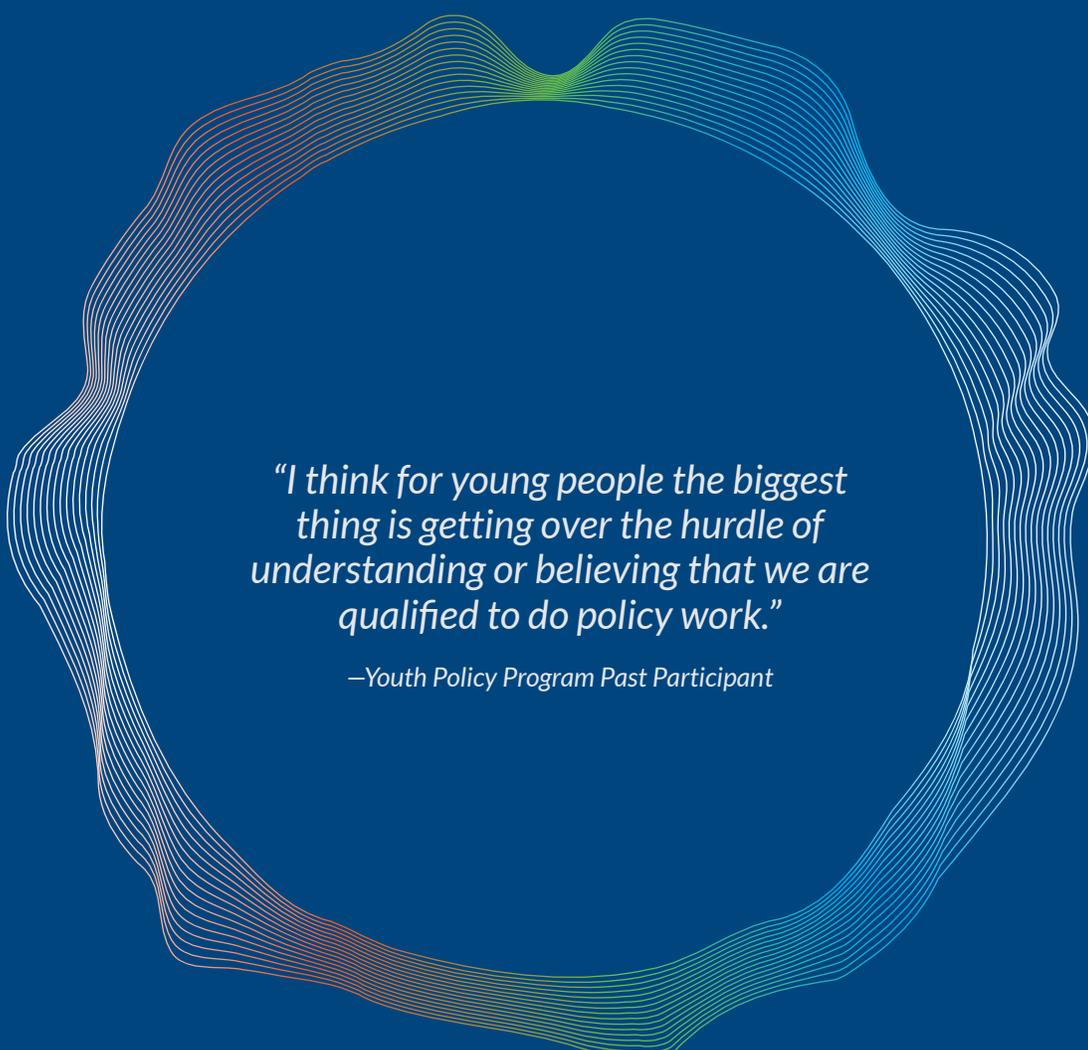
## PREAMBLE

The use of the term “disabled persons/ students” in this policy brief refers to individuals with either physical or learning disabilities including, but not limited to, persons with visual, hearing, physical, speech, and cognitive disabilities. It also includes neurodivergent and

autistic individuals and individuals with chronic illnesses and mental-health disorders. The term “persons/students with disabilities” will not be used unless directly cited from a source, as it is my opinion that such person-first language functions to separate our personhood from our disability. Instead, the term “disabled students” embraces disability as an identity, and reinforces disability as a positive identifier. It is important to note that whether an individual prefers people-first or identity-first language is not universal. I will also refer to non-disabled persons as “abled(s).”

## AUTHOR’S POSITIONALITY

As a temporary settler on the homelands and traditional territories of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Wautuh) and x̣ʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations, I benefit directly from settler colonialism and other systems of oppression built on stolen Black labour and Indigenous lands. I am a disabled cis Woman of Colour with the privilege of accessing a university education, and I speak only from my own lived experiences. I do not speak to the experiences of all disabled People of Colour, especially those of Black, Indigenous, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S) communities. I call on my readers to consider the ways the imbricated identities of these communities cannot be neatly parsed or separated, creating experiences with disability that cannot be overlaid with experiences of my (and your) own.



*“I think for young people the biggest thing is getting over the hurdle of understanding or believing that we are qualified to do policy work.”*

*—Youth Policy Program Past Participant*

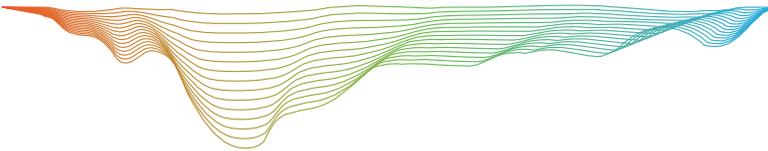


# Rasheed Ahmed

## **BUILDING INTEGRATED SETTLEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES FOR LGBTQ+ IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**



*Rasheed is a Queer, Immigrant of Colour residing in the Lower Mainland over the past decade. He has a keen interest in issues of social justice, especially as they relate to migration, LGBTQ+ causes, racial discrimination, and food security. Over the past few years he has worked on various projects with local and international non-profits in Bangladesh, Canada, India, and Uganda. Rasheed is interested in the intersections of public policy, community organizing, and social change.*



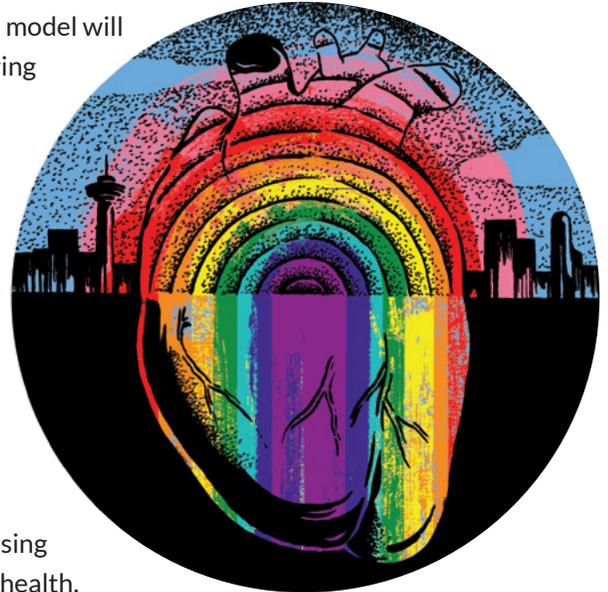
# Executive Summary

In British Columbia, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ (LGBTQ+) immigrants and refugees encounter barriers to safely access settlement and health services because of their particular and intersecting social positioning in regards to race, culture, same-sex sexuality, and/ or gender identity. This inability to receive necessary services increases the social and health vulnerability of LGBTQ+ Newcomers, which can further impact economic outcomes and affect these Newcomers' overall well-being. In order to better meet the health and settlement needs of LGBTQ+ immigrants and refugees, this report outlines recommendations for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Federal and Provincial health agencies and programs, as well as settlement and social-services agencies to implement.

The primary recommendation is for the creation of a central agency for LGBTQ+ Newcomers in British Columbia, which would efficiently address the need for integrated and culturally appropriate services. This would ensure that multiple necessary provisions are delivered in a welcoming environment and would allow for uniform and continual delivery of these services in communities across BC.

Importantly, this hub model will also provide a gathering space for LGBTQ+ Newcomers to form social connections and build community with others, addressing the sense of isolation and loneliness experienced by these groups.

Recognizing the pressing need for settlement, health, and LGBTQ+ agencies to take action, the secondary recommendations suggest changes to organizational approaches towards LGBTQ+ Newcomers that can be implemented in the short- and medium-terms. The recommendations discuss strategies and actions that would minimize the danger and risks of discrimination, stigmatization, and threat to personal safety for LGBTQ+ Newcomers accessing these organizations.



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López



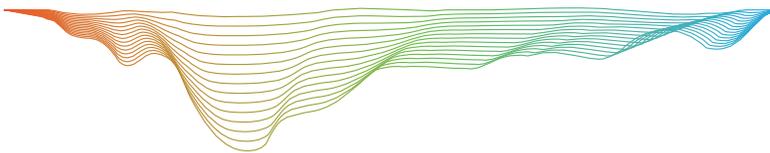
# Shania Sandoval-Cross

## CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR BIPOC STUDENTS IN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS



*Skén:nen sewakwé:kon. Shania Sontariakon iontiáts. Kanien'kehá:ka táhnon Maya niwakonhwentsiò:ten. Kahnawà:ke nitewaké:non. Tsi unceded x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm, Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw, and səilíwətaʔ territories kenákere. I'm Shania Sandoval-Cross, I am Mohawk from Kahnawà:ke and Maya from Guatemala, but I grew up and reside in unceded x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm, Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw, and səilíwətaʔ territories. I work and volunteer with Indigenous youth in creating/participating in culturally relevant art and activism-based curriculum and programming. I am also a student at the University of British Columbia (UBC), pursuing my BA with a major in First Nations and Indigenous Studies, and a minor in Gender, Race, and Social Justice.*

*Instagram handle: shania\_cross*



# Executive Summary

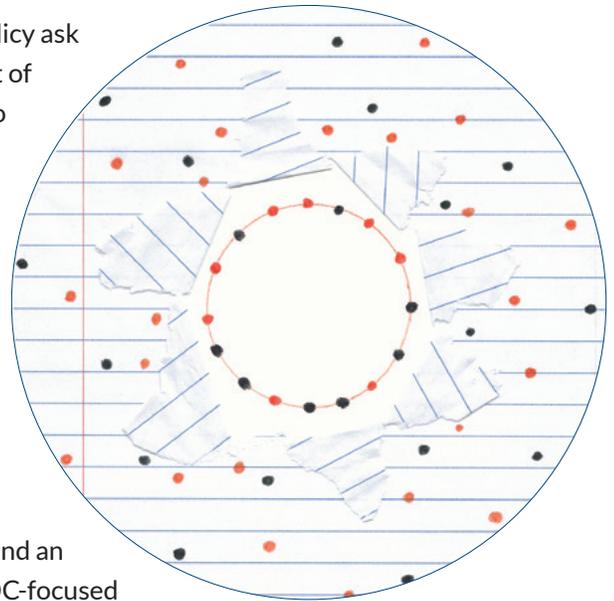
The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has wildly impacted the social push for anti-racism work and accountability, as well as pushing marginalized conversations to the forefront. Black social-justice activists, academics, artist, politicians, etc., have done a tremendous amount of influential, intellectual, and emotional labour in terms of equity and anti-racism work. We here on unceded Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh, Səlílwətaʔ/Selil-witulh and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm territory have seen 2020 starting off with major Indigenous-led Wet’suwe’ten solidarity actions across the country, anti-Asian sentiment as a product of COVID-19, and now BLM actions happening across Turtle Island (so called “North-America”) making its way here.



***With the impact of the past year’s social-justice movements leading the way for change, it has become impossible to ignore the work that must be done to affect and effect success, access, and accountability to and in systems and institutions that were founded in inequitable and cis-heteropatriarchal White-supremacist, settler-colonial intension.***

The vision of this policy ask is to implement a set of recommendations to hold post secondary institutions accountable for their anti-racism work. This would consist of Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) student advisory boards and their recommendations, and an Indigenous- or BIPOC-focused course becoming mandatory and grounded in anti-racism, anti-ageism, disability, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirited+-inclusive frameworks (LGBTQ2S+). For this policy ask, I will focus my references on my lived experience at UBC because the call for this policy is to hold post-secondary institutions accountable to ensuring student and faculty safety, while bridging the gap of education and wellness resources that produce an environment inclusive of everyone impacted by colonial suppressive systems, and the intersections of BIPOC social justice and equity.

With the impact of the past year’s social-justice movements leading the way for change, it has become impossible to ignore the work that must be done to affect and effect success, access, and accountability to and in systems and institutions that were founded in inequi-



**ILLUSTRATION**  
semillites hernández  
velasco



table and cis-heteropatriarchal White-supremacist, settler-colonial intension. We must examine the ways in which we benefit from certain systems set in place to oppress certain groups of people. We must hold ourselves accountable to being actively anti-racist, as Ibram X. Kendi said in an interview with the *Washington Post*, "[W]hen an antiracist is called racist, they assess whether what they said or did or did not do was racist based on clear definitions, and if they did say something was wrong with a racial group, if they did support a policy that was leading to racial inequity, then they admit they were being racist."

Kendi's quote puts into practice what being anti-racist is, but to be able to ensure we live in an actively anti-racist society we must first provide education of what racism looks like on a micro- and macro-scale. We must ensure students and staff are learning from people in their community who approach education from a decolonized framework, one that values lived experiences and provides a vocabulary to deconstruct systems of oppression. We need to bring about a well-rounded understanding of what racism is, so we can be secure in knowing that people going into the world are, in fact, well-equipped to hold themselves accountable, and that they continue the conversation and practices of being anti-racist with folks and systems they come into contact with throughout their lives. Anti-racism work and education always goes beyond the individual, and it upholds a standard to which one must keep themselves informed and accountable to their lifelong learning and unlearning processes to ensure an equitable and anti-racist world.



**We need to bring about a well-rounded understanding of what racism is, so we can be secure in knowing that people going into the world are, in fact, well-equipped to hold themselves accountable, and that they continue the conversation and practices of being anti-racist with folks and systems they come into contact with throughout their lives.**

We need an advisory board of students who understand and experience racism at its micro- and macro-levels within the institutions in which they're enrolled. We need to have the support and advocacy of those in positions of power within these institutions actively teaching anti-racist- and BIPOC-inclusive curriculum that competently addresses Indigenous content and local community involvement as the base of these mandatory courses, which would prevent Indigenous dispossession and erasure in BIPOC equity work.



*“It is so important to have  
Indigenous and racialized newcomers’  
voices in the conversations about  
public policy. We are all public policy  
analysts, know that what you have  
and what you bring to the table  
is more than enough.”*

*—Youth Policy Program Past Participant*



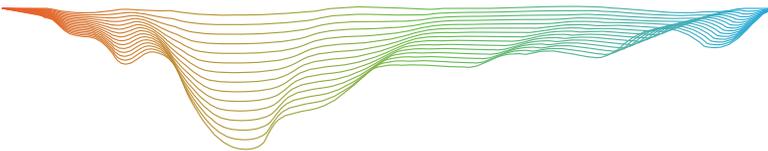
# Trisha Barbarona

## PROTECTING CITIZENS: THE CANADIAN RESPONSE TO THE ANTI-TERROR LAW IN THE PHILIPPINES



*Trisha (they/them) is a non-binary first-generation Filipinx immigrant who has called the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples home for the last 10 years. A passionate advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights, environmental justice and BBIPOC-led community organizing, Trisha aims to bring BBIPOC voices and issues through a career in Journalism at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). Alongside that, Trisha is also a poet, as poetry is their means to engage in activism and connect to their Pilipinx roots.*

*Instagram: @trish\_the\_fishhh*



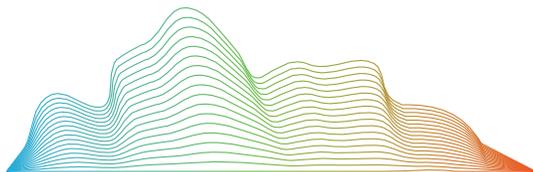
## Acknowledgements

I acknowledge that my work and life is situated on the ancestral unceded homelands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples, and that the place I call home belongs to the Semiahmoo, Kwikwitlem, Katzie, Kwantlen, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen peoples.

This is important to acknowledge as I am an uninvited settler from the Philippines aiming to build a life and better allyship and solidarity between the Filipinx and the Indigenous community on these stolen lands.

# Executive Summary

On July 3, 2020, the Anti-Terror Bill was signed into law by the president of the Philippines and officially took effect by July 23. Fast-tracked and supported by 168 lawmakers of the House of Representatives (Cepeda, 2020), the law holds the power to prevent and stop terrorist attacks in the country by directly targeting individuals who are profiled to be most likely to join considered terrorist groups or perform such acts. President Rodrigo Duterte has issued the creation of the Anti-Terror Council (ATC), a group likely made up of die-hard supporters of Duterte and his policies, who will target, surveil, and dictate the fates of those suspected of speaking, plotting, or rallying against the president and his government.

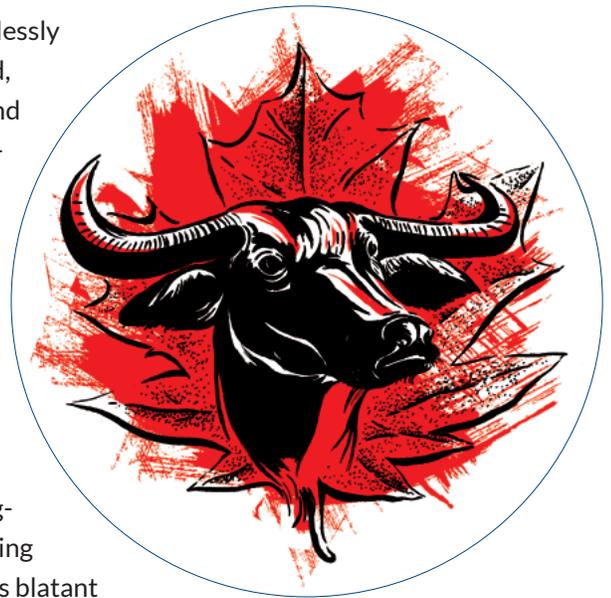


***The Anti-Terror Law is a glaring attack on human rights as it aims to infringe on a person's privacy, silences dissent, and gives the police and military more reasons to abuse their power.***

This law comes at a time during a worldwide pandemic, when the state of the health and financial security of Filipinxs are unmanageable and jeopardized by the government daily, and the worldwide protesting for human rights as seen in Hong Kong and the United States. Since their rise to power in 2016, Duterte's

government has tirelessly targeted, imprisoned, and killed political and environmental activists, poor people and peasant farmers, journalists and media outlets, and non-profit grassroots organizers for defending their rights, demanding respect of their Indigenous lands, and calling out the government's blatant abuse of power over their people. The Anti-Terror Law (ATL) is a glaring attack on human rights as it aims to infringe on a person's privacy, silences dissent, and gives the police and military more reasons to abuse their power.

As the ATL develops into a new plague on the lives of Filipinxs demanding justice and rights, Filipinxs living outside of the Philippines will also be targeted by this law. The new Anti-Terror Council, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Philippine National Police will be given the ability to monitor social media and use that as a means of surveillance to prey on individuals who use online platforms to mobilize and educate their communities, voice out their concerns, and share petitions or fundraising against non-state recognized organizations. With this authority, the ATL has clear power to deem Filipinxs living in so-called "Canada" as "terrorists." There are



**ILLUSTRATION**  
Yaimel López

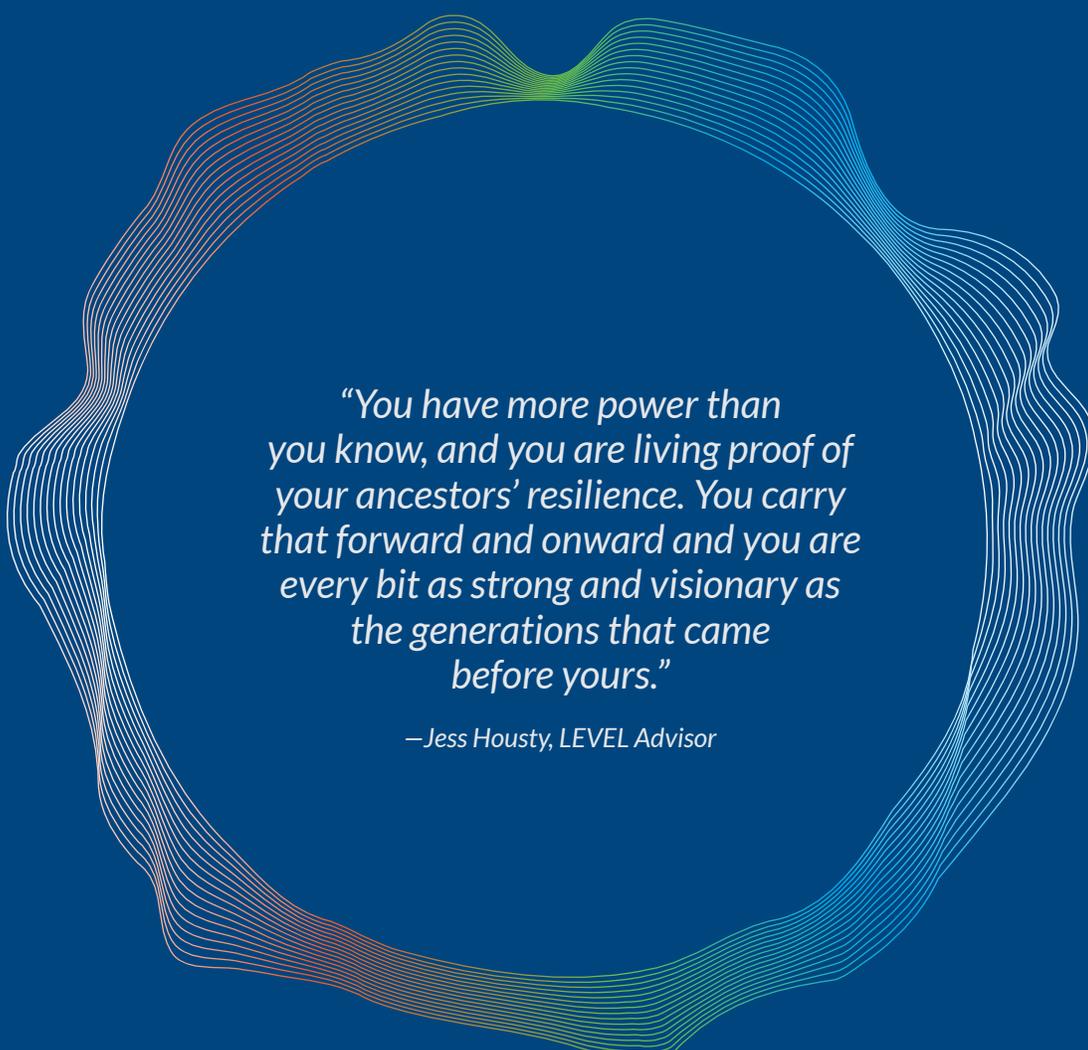


approximately 800,000 Filipinxs living in so-called “Canada.” They are a population composed of migrant workers, families, and students all supporting dreams of prosperous and protected lives on Turtle Island, while financially assisting their families back home. As the Philippines declares an economic recession, COVID-19 cases continue to rise, and the country gears up to enter another cycle of typhoon season, the families on the homeland are being constantly bombarded with pain and hardship. Thus, affecting those living on Turtle Island. More and more, the Filipinx people, both on Turtle Island and the homeland, are waking up to the atrocities spearheaded by the Philippine government. They are realizing that the president is using Filipinxs as disposable commodities to appease modern colonizers, and to exploit cheap labour and feed resource-hungry corporations. With this, Filipinx-Canadians are using their privileges to organize and speak out against these exploitations, including lack of protection and unjust imprisonment and murders of activists, journalists, and other innocent people. The ATL was created to scare the Filipinx people into silence and compliance when their rights are being infringed upon and wrongfully taken from them, just when the people are already suffering under displacement from their Indigenous lands, a pandemic, and financial instability.

Therefore, Filipinx-Canadians must urge the Canadian government to step in and condemn this law. The aim of this policy is for Filipinxs to realize the atrocities happening in their homeland, collectively pressure the Canadian Federal government to listen, suspend the export of military products that could be used to violate human rights, and suspend the extradition treaty with the Philippines. Similar to the way in which the Canadian government responded to the outcry against the National Security Act in Hong Kong, the Canadian government needs to protect the Filipinx

people from the potential abuse that the ATL may encourage when it comes to Philippine government critics. The Anti-Terror Law of the Philippines and the National Security Law of China are two of many policies that seek to silence people. The Canadian government should address these issues, as they directly affect the constituents of their multicultural country, therefore, all levels of government have an obligation to speak out against the issue that is the ATL.

*Author’s note: Some of the language used in this policy is intentionally chosen for the purpose of decolonizing the names of the land we live on and to be inclusive of the people I am referring to. It will be common to see “so-called Canada,” “Turtle Island,” and “Filipinx/s” throughout this written piece due to my role as a queer, Filipinx immigrant who is an uninvited guest on these lands, and also not encompassed within the gendered term “Filipino/a.” All of this is to show respect and actively work on exposing the genocidal erasures of history, culture, and identity within written and spoken language.*



*“You have more power than  
you know, and you are living proof of  
your ancestors’ resilience. You carry  
that forward and onward and you are  
every bit as strong and visionary as  
the generations that came  
before yours.”*

*—Jess Housty, LEVEL Advisor*



# Illustrators

## ***semillites hernández velasco***

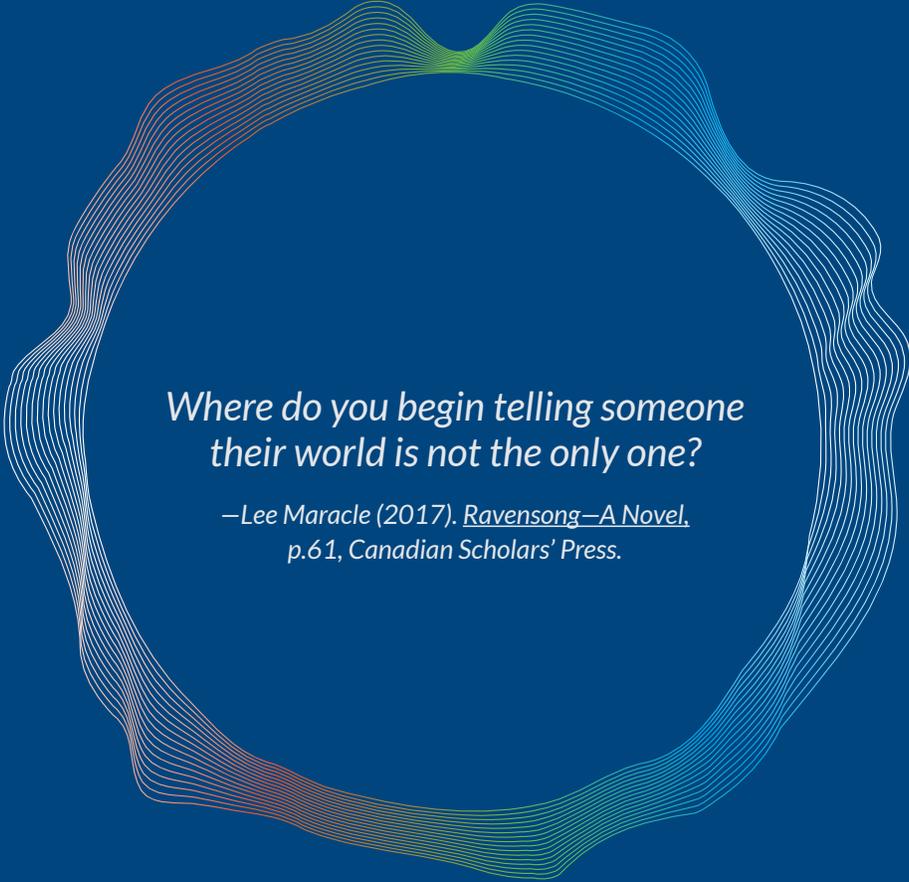
semillites is a brown non-binary visual artist and printmaker based in “vancouver”, on the unceded territories of the Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam Nations. semillites was born in mexico city in 1995 and, at the age of nineteen they immigrated to Vancouver. semillites grew up in the city, far from the land and through their artwork they look for a path to get back to their ancestors, campesinos from central "méxico". semillites' artwork focuses mainly on portraits depicting joy, pleasure and the intricate emotions of brown and trans bodies through drawing, book-making and screen-printing. semillites is interested in multi-media collaborations and horizontal story-telling.

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## ***Yaimel López Zaldívar (Havana, 1983)***

Yaimel is a Cuban graphic artist specialized in drawing, using either analogical and digital media. With more than 10 years of experience in graphic design, his work has been published in magazines and books. His professional projection includes editorial design, motion graphics, and branding. He has been based in Vancouver since May 2019, where he works as an artist and graphic designer. He has collaborated with Watari, Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Vancouver Latin-American Cultural Centre (VLACC), and Vancouver Film Festival (VLAFF). He has taken part in several group and personal exhibitions.

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*Where do you begin telling someone  
their world is not the only one?*

—Lee Maracle (2017). *Ravensong—A Novel*,  
p.61, Canadian Scholars' Press.

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