

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS



April 2001

Call us toll-free
1-877-483-4554

INTERCEDE for the Rights of Domestic Workers, Caregivers, and Newcomers

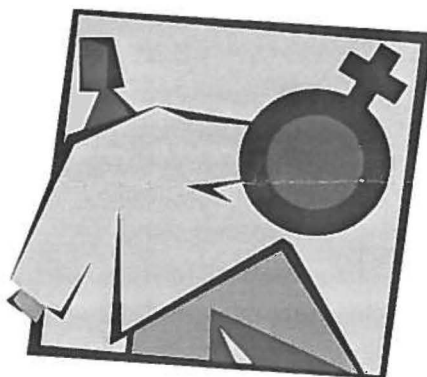
CAREGIVERS LINK ANTI-RACISM & CLASS TO STRUGGLE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

On February 14, 2001 sixteen women attended our Advocacy and Leadership Training Program for Domestic Workers. A workshop on Anti-Racism was facilitated by Martha Ocampo, representing the Carlos Bulosan Cultural Workshop.

Participants candidly explored their understanding of racism and discussed the difference between those in who are located in positions of power and those who are not, using the 'Power Flower' exercise.

The exercise set the basis for analyzing the power relations between white people and people of colour; women's subordinate position to men; and the poverty experienced by women and children.

The women concluded that the categories of **race, gender and class** were key determinants of *which* groups hold power in



Canadian society. In all three categories, the women did not find themselves in the dominant group.

Participants said the exercise made them realize that even among women, some have privilege over other women: such as heterosexual women over lesbians, higher educated or more skilled over lesser educated and lesser skilled, and being in a nuclear family over being a single mother, etc.

The discussion moved to

effective communication strategies when faced with oppressive behaviour. Women learned about passive, aggressive and assertive communication styles; verbal and non-verbal cues, body language, and how to give and receive feedback.

Each workshop in our six-month series involves a practical component. In this workshop, participants learned various stress-management techniques to help relieve tension and achieve relaxation.

At the end of the workshop, each participant gave a brief summary of what she liked most about the session and what she plans to do about her newly acquired knowledge and skills.

The next meeting is on Sunday April 8, from noon to 6 p.m. Call 416-483-4554 ext. 25 if you want to attend.



*All Domestic/Caregiver workers,
Newcomers and those on Temporary Work
Permit are welcome to attend*

**INTERCEDE MEETING
Every First Sunday of the Month**

(if holiday, meeting is on the second Sunday)

Next Meeting:

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Location:

Sunday April 1, 2001

Coping with Family Separation & Reunification

- An Art Therapy Workshop facilitated by SAWA
(Filipino Students Artists Workers Activists)

Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street

(1 block south of College, at Spadina Ave)



INTERCEDE ANNOUCEMENTS

BOOK LAUNCH:
CAREGIVERS BREAK THE SILENCE
Written by Sedef Arat-Koc & Fely Villasin

Sunday May 6, 2001

3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Free event

Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street
 (one block south of College St. at Spadina Ave)
wheelchair accessible
sign language interpretation provided

Popular Theatre performance by women from
 our Advocacy & Leadership Training Program

Readings by Youth Participants:
 "Why I'm Proud of My Mom's Work as a Caregiver"

Caregiver's Mural Display

Toronto Women's Bookstore book tables
 10% of sales donated to INTERCEDE

Caregivers Break The Silence addresses the issue of violence against women of colour who immigrate from less developed countries, such as the Philippines and the Caribbean, to work in Canada under Immigration's Live-in Caregiver Program. It deals with their vulnerability to abuse and violence and the impact of forced separation from their families.

Our official book launch is sponsored by the MAYWORKS Festival for Working People and the Arts and the Toronto Women's Bookstore. For more Information contact Jo Alcampo, Interim Coordinator: **(416) 483-4554 ext. 25**

Project funded by Status of Women Canada's Women's Program



INTERCEDE's Caribbean Domestic Worker Support Group is held every Tuesday from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. The creation of this group was based on the fact that there are gaps in services such as family reunification, labour, and settlement for black women and women of colour from the Caribbean islands who are domestic workers. The goal is to find and create solutions to better cope with worries, fears and frustration. The group also welcomes women who have been domestic workers in the past and who would like to also share their experience and coping strategies with newcomers.

It is a place where pain, loss, sadness and joy can be shared. It is a time when solutions can be created to help us better cope with difficult situations.

For more information contact
Carol Seeley, Settlement Counsellor
(416) 483-4554 ext. 22

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

**Caribbean
 Domestic Worker's
 Support Group**



Would you like to share your feelings and create solutions so that you can better cope with worry, fears, and other concerns?

Join us every Tuesday
11:30 am - 1:30 p.m.

at Intercede, 234 Eglinton Ave E, suite 205
 Northwest corner of Eglinton & Mt. Pleasant

Free and Confidential



Questions & Answers *by Coco Diaz*

Q: I am on Open Employment Authorization under the LCP program, I went home to the Philippines two months ago and got married. Do I need to inform Immigration and can I sponsor my husband now ?

A: Yes, you need to inform Immigration about the change to your marital status. Your spouse needs to comply with the statutory requirements like medical and security clearance. You can request concurrent processing of his permanent residence visa or you can decide to sponsor him at a later date.

Q: My two years of live-in work will be completed in June 2001. My friend told me I could file my permanent residence application on April and request an Open Employment Authorization to avoid another payment for an extension of my current Employment Authorization that will expire on May 15th. Should I follow my friends advice ?

A: Under the Live-In Caregiver Program, you can only apply for Permanent Residence after you fully complete 24 months live-in work with a valid Employment Authorization within a three year period. You must apply to extend your current Employment Authorization at least 30 days before the expiry, so make sure that you have mailed your application or before April 15.

Q: I am employed as caregiver for an elderly client. I travelled with her in the U.S. from November 2000 to March 2001. During our visit, I was only given one day off a week and worked long hours. Prior to the trip my employer agreed to pay me extra money on our return to Toronto, but now she refuses to pay me. She claims that my overtime was paid off because she paid for my entrance fee at the amusement parks we visited in the States. I feel cheated. What should I do?

A: Entrance fees to amusement park and other expenses while you are accompanying your employer should not replace your salary unless you and your employer agreed to this arrangement. Explain to her that you only went to those places because she needed your services and you deserved the extra payment as agreed before you went to Florida. If she refuses to pay contact INTERCEDE or the Employment Standards Branch of the Ministry of Labour for assistance.

Q: I've been in Canada for two months under the Live-In Caregiver Program. I was recruited by an Employment Agency to work as caregiver for a child with special needs. My contract stated that my duties would mainly be caregiving with some light housekeeping as necessary. Since my arrival, I have been asked to do major housework, cook for the whole family, shovel snow and clean my employers garage. I have complained to my employers and to my agency and I even considered moving out, but my agency told me that I will be deported if I move-out of my employer's house. Is this true?

A: Your employment agency and your employer do not have the power to deport you, that is a decision made by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Your employer is violating your employment rights by not following what was in the employment contract. You can try to explain your concerns to your employer again, but if your conditions do not improve, you have the option of looking for another job.





Is your mother a domestic worker in Canada/Overseas? Are you 16-25 years old?
ENTER OUR WRITING CONTEST!

- Topic:** "Why I'm Proud of My Mom's Work as a Caregiver"
Format: Be creative! Use poetry, song, a letter, a rap, a story, a journal entry, etc
Length: When you read it out loud, it should be 5 minutes or shorter! Time yourself!
Deadline: April 20, 2001 at 5 p.m. (Send to INTERCEDE address below)
Prizes: Judges will chose 3 contestants that best represent the topic. Winners will be notified by April 27, 2001. Cash Prize of \$25 each, plus opportunity to read at our Mayworks Book Launch!

INTERCEDE provides free and confidential information and counselling to Caregivers and Domestic Workers employed through the Live-In Caregiver Program. INTERCEDE provides assistance to sponsored family members, caregivers working in related fields and other newcomers.

Membership is open to domestic workers, caregivers, and newcomers. Fee is \$10/year, which includes subscription to our monthly newsletter, *DOMESTICS CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS* and subsidized training programs in First Aid & CPR certification, Childcare & Eldercare Certificate Program, and a University Bridging Program. Call office for application. Donations or newsletter subscriptions from other individuals and organizations are also greatly appreciated (see form below).

Address: 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 205
 Toronto Ontario M4P 1K5
Hours: Mon-Fri 9 am - 4 p.m.
Telephone: (416) 483-4554
Fax: (416) 483-9781
Toll-Free: 1-877-483-4554
E-mail: office@tofdwr.org

We wish to thank: Citizenship and Immigration Canada - ISAP Program and Job Search Program with COSTI-OCASI; the Federal Status of Women & Status of Women Ontario; the Maytree Foundation, and the Municipality of Toronto CSGP for their financial support.

INTERCEDE STAFF:
 Jo Alcampo - JSW Facilitator & Interim Coordinator / Layout
 Columbia Diaz - Settlement Counsellor
 Anita Fortuno - Intake & Administrative Assistant
 Carol Seeley - Settlement Counsellor
 Fely Villasin - Coordinator (on-leave)

SPECIAL THANKS to Nestor Perez, President of the Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants who conducted our free tax clinic last month. His organization can provide information to newcomers regarding accreditation in the field of accounting. Call Nestor at (905) 896-3106 or visit: www.afcatoronto.org

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