

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

INTERCEDE for the Rights of Domestic Workers, Caregivers and Newcomers

April 2004

Toll Free 1-877-483-4554



MEETING WITH CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION CANADA

On March 26th INTERCEDE hosted a group meeting with Antoinette De Kir, Programs Specialist for Social Policy and Programs Division of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Robert Fisher from the Foreign Worker Recruitment Ontario Region of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), Elizabeth Salvilla, President of the INTERCEDE Board of Directors, Karen Dick from the Workers Information Centre, and Professor Sedef Arat-Koc of Trent University and the author of *Caregivers Break the Silence*.

INTERCEDE counsellors, Coco Diaz and Salma Saadi joined the discussion on the Live-in Caregiver Program's (LCP) impact on workers and our recommendations for change.

We said that the LCP forces caregivers to tolerate abusive work conditions because they are too scared to leave their employer or advocate for their rights because of their temporary work status. We also talked about mistreatment by employment agencies, the difficulty of completing the 24-month live-in requirement in three years, the lengthy processing time by HRDC and CIC, the role of employment contracts, labour abuses, and the need for HRDC, CIC and the Ministry of Labour to work together.

When INTERCEDE was asked what could make the program better for caregivers, we said that caregivers must be granted landed status instead of temporary work permits and the live-in requirement should be optional. We also suggested that there only be one generic work permit, so that caregivers would not have to apply for a new permit with each new employer.

CIC plans to hold roundtable discussions in Ottawa to further assess the Live-in Caregiver Program. INTERCEDE will participate in those meetings. In the meantime, INTERCEDE and our partner advocates will submit a letter to CIC to reinforce our ideas and recommendations.



GREETINGS ON INTERCEDE'S 20th YEAR OF SERVICE

I have been in Canada for three years and I have seen how hard INTERCEDE works to help caregivers and newcomers. The Job Search workshops and Advocacy trainings helped me and others gain more confidence and find ourselves in this new society. The people behind INTERCEDE not only give important information but also provide much needed support and counselling. Many Live-In Caregivers have benefited from INTERCEDE in the past twenty years. To INTERCEDE and to all people behind it, Happy 20th Anniversary! - *Vicky Policarpio*

In 1993, I had been working as live-in caregiver for 24 months when I was offered a different job. INTERCEDE advocated for the immediate release of my immigration papers and I was able to change to a teaching job that I am still enjoying today. Keep up the good work. There are many more people who need support. Happy 20th Anniversary! - *Elenita Feliciano*

My years as an INTERCEDE member and eventually as a Board Member are something I will always treasure. I knew that I was a part of an organization doing an invaluable service not only to the caregivers, migrant women and newcomers but also to the Canadian family. Congratulations INTERCEDE on your 20th year of service. - *Ellie Bisenio*

I remember how my INTERCEDE counsellor accompanied me to the Immigration office each time I changed employers and had to get a new work permit. My counselor was also with me when I attended my second assessment interview to qualified for Permanent Residence. Now, I refer everyone who has immigration problems and every newcomer I met to INTERCEDE. Twenty years of service is a remarkable length of time. Congratulations! - *Lorie Maneja*

During my ordeal as a SARS survivor, INTERCEDE played a big role in my life. The assistance provided to me by my counselor was immeasurable not only for my recovery, immigration papers, and shelter but most importantly, I am grateful for the total-ity of support extended to me. Happy 20th anniversary of service. - *Maritess Maydan*



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)

Apply or renew your membership - \$10.

Sunday, April 4, 2004, 1-5 p.m.
At Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil St.
(one block south of College cor. Spadina)

FREE INCOME TAX CLINIC
Association of Filipino Canadian Chartered Accountants (AFCCA)

Note: Please bring all your supporting documents

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

INTERCEDE was present at the annual International Women's Day (IWD) rally and march. The rally was held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education on Saturday March 6th. Speakers represented the theme: "because I want to change the world." Afterwards, INTERCEDE members, advocacy training participants, and staff joined hundreds of others on the lively march from St. George and Bloor Street, all the way to Yonge and Dundas Street. A community fair was held at Ryerson University and INTERCEDE set up an information table to educate about our activities and programs. Thank you to our volunteers and participants for representing INTERCEDE at IWD 2004.



NEW LOCATION FOR SUNDAY INTERCEDE MAY 2, 2004, MONTHLY MEETING

Mark your calendars now! The May 2nd INTERCEDE meeting will not be at Cecil St. Community Centre, instead it will be at the **Toronto Women's Bookstore** at 73 Harbord Street (just two streets south of Bloor St. West at Spadina Ave) from 3-5 pm.

Our meeting coincides with the opening reception for an art exhibit by Jo SiMalaya (former INTERCEDE JSW Facilitator and Interim Coordinator). The name of the exhibit is: **What If The Prime Minister Was A Domestic Worker?**

Jo will exhibit her photography and speakers from INTERCEDE's Advocacy Training will talk about their experiences as domestic workers and make recommendations for change. Everyone is welcome to this free event.

Remember, the next INTERCEDE monthly meeting is Sunday May 2, 2004 at the Toronto Women's Bookstore (not Cecil St). Call 416-483-4554 ext. 21 for more information.



Artist asks, 'What if the Prime Minister was a Domestic Worker?'

CASINO NIAGARA SPRING TRIP

Sightseeing:

**Niagara on the Lake, Winery,
Flower Clock, See Tulips of different colours
and Cherry Blossoms in full bloom**

And of course the breathtaking beauty of Niagara Falls

For only \$25.00

Saturday, May 15, 2004

8:30 - Assembly Time

9:00 - Departure Time

Meeting Place: York Mills Subway Stn.
(at Shell Gas Stn., Southeast of Yonge)

**Free \$10 Voucher for Casino Niagara
And \$5 Voucher for Food**

To register, please call Genie at 416-483-4554 ext. 21

NOTE: For those who don't have the Niagara Casino Membership card bring your passport or driving license to be able to claim the \$10 and \$5 vouchers at the Casino. Under 19 years old not allowed.

CARIBBEAN CONNECTION

On Saturday March 13th, the Caribbean Connection: INTERCEDE Black Support Group welcomed guest speaker Camille deHaneY to facilitate a discussion of coping with stress. Camille is a Child and Youth Worker from the Epilepsy Association of Toronto and has been working in the social work field for the last ten years. She has extensive experience leading workshops on coping with stress and finding the power within oneself.

Camille asked members of the Caribbean Connection to discuss the types of stresses they encounter in their lives. Women said the majority of stress comes from dealing with immigration and labour-related problems that are connected to lack of money and being separated from their families.

Camille validated the extensive systemic barriers faced by the women in the group and encouraged them to visualize a plan for a better future and find solace in "a spiritual anchor" of their choice.

The women were guided on how to find the power and beauty within, and stay focused and determined that the future will hold good things. The women had a very positive response to Camille's presentation and many acknowledged that they felt stronger and more positive after meeting as a group.

If you are a domestic worker or caregiver from the Black Community and would like to be part of the Caribbean Connection, please contact Salma Saadi at (416) 483-4554 x 22.



KAPISANAN PHILIPPINE CENTRE (KPC)

And INTERCEDE

Invite you to an

EDUCATIONAL FORUM

On

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Guest Speaker : **MS. WENDY KOMIOTIS**
 Interim Executive Coordinator
 METROPOLITAN ACTION COMMITTEE
 ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN &
 CHILDREN

Where : NORTHERN DISTRICT LIBRARY
 40 Orchard View Boulevard (Yonge/Eglinton)

When : SATURDAY—May 1, 2004

Time : 4:00—7:00 p.m.

*Certificates will be distributed to the graduates of
 the Volunteer Advocacy Training
 on Violence Against Women in the Filipino Community.*

Light snacks and refreshments will be served

For more information call 416-887-6126
*This project is funded by the Ministry of the
 Attorney General Victims Services Division*

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE

365 Bloor St. East, Ste. 900
 Toronto, On, M4W 3L4

Emergency First Aid + Infant/Child CPR (1 day) - \$75.00

Sunday, April 11, 2004—9:30—6:30 p.m.
 Sunday, April 25, 2004—9:30—6:30 p.m.
 Saturday, May 8, 2004—9:00—6:00 p.m.
 Saturday, May 29, 2004—9:00—6:00 p.m.

Emergency First Aid + Heartsaver (1day) \$79.00

Saturday, April 17, 2004—9:00—5:00 p.m.
 Saturday, May 8, 2004—9:00—5:00 p.m.

Basic Rescuer CPR (1 day) \$79.00

Sunday, April 18, 2004—9:30—6:30 p.m.
 Saturday, May 01, 2004—9:00—6:00 p. m.

Basic Rescuer CPR Renewal (1/2 day) \$49.00

Sunday, April 25, 2004—9:30—1:30 p.m.
 Saturday, May 2004, - 9:00—1:00 p.m.

Heartsaver CPR (1/2 day) \$49.00

Saturday, April 17, 2004—9:00—2:00 p.m.

Please register at least 2 weeks before the start of training date by sending a cheque payable to INTERCEDE:

For further details, please call Genie at 416-483-4554 ext. 21

Q & A

Q: *I have applied for Permanent Residence and an open work permit. Do I have to apply for an extension of work permit too?*

A: You must always have a valid work permit, even while your application for Permanent Residence and open work permit are being processed. If you do not renew your work permit before it expires, you will be out of status. However, you have 90 days upon expiry of your work permit to apply for restoration of status. The application for restoration of status costs \$200.00, and the application to renew your work permit costs an additional \$150.00.

If 90 days has lapsed and you do not apply for restoration of status, Immigration will send you a letter advising you to leave Canada because you are without valid status.

Q: *What documents do I need from my employer if I am terminated?*

A: Be sure to ask for your Record of Employment (ROE), and if possible your income tax record or T4. If were fired during the middle of the year, your employer may issue your T4 in February or March of the following year. This will still give you enough time to file your income tax return.

Aside from your ROE, ask your employer for a letter stating the date you started working with a valid work permit and the date your employment was terminated. You can use this letter as proof of employment when you file for Permanent Residence. For more information call INTERCEDE and talk to any of the counselors.

Q: *My previous employer terminated me in October 2003. I requested my T4 but until now she has not returned my calls. I tried to talk to her in person, but I was told she was out of town. I know that I received a net income of \$860.00 monthly but unfortunately, I did not receive any pay stubs. I want to file my income tax return because I know Immigration will ask me to submit a Notice of Assessment when I apply for Permanent Residence. What should I do?*

A: Come to INTERCEDE's Tax Clinic on April 4th at Cecil Community Centre. Bring your Notice of Assessment and any other documents you have. There will be Filipino Canadian accountants who will compute income tax returns for all INTERCEDE members free of charge. Everyone is welcome.

Please note that all workers have a right to ask for a statement of earnings (i.e. pay slip or pay stub) whenever you receive your pay. It should state all the deductions from your salary.

Q: *Do I have to meet the income requirement when I sponsor my husband?*

A: No, since he is your family member, Immigration will not ask you to meet the income requirement but you must provide a letter from your employer confirming that you are employed full-time. If you plan to sponsor

your parents and/or brothers and sisters (who are underage), you will be required to meet the income requirement also known as low-income cut-off.



Looking for job leads or career connections?



INTERCEDE Offers



Saturday Cafe



Have fun in an informal group setting while you:

Interview foreign-trained nurses who are now "success stories"

Know the terms, trends & the hidden job market for nurses.

Know which organizations you may professionally connect .

Explore training options for nurses



Meet new friends who can be your potential job leads

Saturday -- April 24, 2004, 3 to 5 p.m.
234 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 405
(North of Eglinton Ave E. & West of Mt. Pleasant)
Toronto, Ontario
Bus # 34, 54 103 & 100

Please call for trade-specific information. Seating is limited.
(416) 483-4554 ext. 21 or 30

INTERCEDE also provides free and confidential counseling, information and referral services for domestic workers, caregivers and newcomers.

**In coordination with the
Filipino Nurses' Association**

FREE JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP

FOR CAREGIVERS & FOR NEWCOMERS

WHEN: Sunday
April 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2004
May 2, 9, 16 & 30, 2004
June 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2004

TIME : 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: INTERCEDE
234 Eglinton Ave E., Suite 405
Toronto, On, M4P 1K5

Please call (416)483-4554 ext. 30 or 21 to sign up.
Seating is limited.

Funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada & sponsored by COSTI & OCASI

INTERCEDE

Address: 234 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 405
Toronto Ontario
M4P 1K5

Regular Hours: Mon-Fri 9 am - 4 p.m.
Telephone: (416) 483-4554
Fax: (416) 483-9781
Toll-Free: 1-877-483-4554
E-mail: info@intercedetoronto.org

INTERCEDE STAFF:

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- Anita Fortuno - Settlement Counsellor
- Salma Saadi - Settlement Counsellor
- Genie Policarpio - Intake & Administrative Assistant
- Fely Villasin - Coordinator—on leave

We wish to thank: Citizenship and Immigration Canada - ISAP Program and Job Search Program with COSTI-OCASI; Ontario Status of Women; the Municipality of Toronto CSGP, Access & Equity and "Breaking the Cycle of Violence" grant programs. for their financial support.



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