

# DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

February 1993



(INTERSEDE)

## PAY EQUITY MUST ALSO APPLY TO DOMESTIC WORKERS

Over the course of history, certain jobs have been identified as "women's work" and others as "men's work". In many cases the work women do requires the same or more education, training and responsibilities as that done by men in men's jobs. And as we are aware it is the "women's work" that is often valued less and paid less.

This devaluing of our labour has contributed to the difference in salaries that are paid to men and women. In 1991, for example, the average salary for a full-time working woman in Ontario was \$26,842 and \$38,567 for a man. This is a wage gap of about 35%.

Pay equity requires employers to pay men and women the same rate for jobs that are different but are of similar value.

One step in the implementation of Pay equity is to determine job content by describing the skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions involved in the job. Jobs can be evaluated using this criteria by assigning points to each job. Therefore, jobs with the same point range can be considered of comparable value and the wage should be the same.

Domestic work, for example, requires training, a great deal of responsibility, skill to be able to balance childcare and housekeeping and the lifting of heavy objects under various working conditions. The points allotted to this kind of work would undoubtedly be quite high and of compa

*Cont'd Pg 3*

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO UI WORSE FOR WOMEN

If changes to Unemployment Insurance being made by the Mulroney government pass, benefits will be reduced by 3 per cent (From 60% TO 57% of average insurable earnings), and workers who quit "without just cause" or who are fired "for misconduct" will not get UI benefits unless they go through a lengthy appeal process.

These changes will hit women hardest, according to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, one of the many groups now opposing the proposed changes. According to statistics, 53 per cent of those who voluntarily quit their jobs are women in low-income and non-unionized jobs where they are vulnerable to arbitrary and abusive employment practices. With the suggested changes, these are the women who will not have the right to UI benefits.

Domestic workers on temporary status pay Unemployment Insurance. But because working as live-in caregiver and housekeeper is a condition of their temporary stay, most of them are effectively barred from the right to receive UI benefits. Clearly they are not inclined to leave an employer because of this condition of their temporary status in Canada.

Domestic workers who are citizens or have obtained permanent resident status will be less inclined to leave an abusive employer if the UI changes are passed because they will be afraid to be unemployed with no prospect of an income from UI. These workers are among the women

*Cont'd Pg 3*

The monthly meeting will be on Sunday, February 7, 1993. 3 - 6 p.m.

**NOTE: Place of Meeting is 33 Cecil Street** (ILGWU Basement Hall, south of College, east of Spadina)

3-4 pm **"HOW TO AVOID BUSINESS SCAMS THAT VICTIMIZE DOMESTIC WORKERS"**

Speaker: Paul Tuz, President of Better Business Bureau -

Consumer rights have been violated by scams offering "Fast" loans, "Special offers", "Discounts" etc. Learn how to protect yourself.

4-5 pm **VALENTINE TALENT SHOW** - Show off your musical, comical, theatrical and any other talent!!!

Guest Singer: Faith Nolan

CLASP Legal Clinic open during the meeting.

2-3 pm New Member Applications and Renewals. Members with ID numbers 92-289 to 92-587 must renew or be dropped from membership list.

## MARCH 30 - INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HOUSEHOLD WORKERS

We are reprinting the following Editorial of issue number 10 of Por Un Nuevo Despertar published by Confederacion Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Trabajadoras del Hogar (CONLACTRAHO), based in Chile:

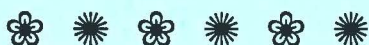
"This date represents the beginning of the work done together by organizations of domestic workers in Latin America and the Caribbean that were established in each country.

"We know it is not easy, we have many limitations, still we have begun to make ourselves visible, to reclaim our voice to denounce the social marginalization of our big sector of household women workers.

"As a sector of workers that will continue to be part of our countries for a long time, what we hope is that future generations will take up this work under better conditions.

"The struggle of the poor is slow and difficult but we believe that little by little, we can count on the solidarity of other sectors of women and workers who also fight for better living conditions.

"March 30 is a day of unity of organizations of household workers, to wake up and share our ideals, to walk forward together with not a moment of hesitation to achieve a future of equality and justice and respect for the millions of women who do work that is as dignified and as important as any other.



## Background of the International Day of Household Workers

On March 30, 1988, organizations of domestic workers from 14 countries met in Bogota, Colombia and founded CONLACTRAHO, the Latinamerican and Caribbean Confederation of Household Workers. Since then, March 30 has been designated as the International Day of Household Workers.

The Program of Struggle of CONLACTRAHO are:

1. To create a consciousness in all social levels of each country of our role and the conditions in which we work.
2. Application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations to Household workers.
3. The right to participate in and to organize labour unions so that our interests will be represented.
4. No exclusion of household workers from any law that benefits other workers.
5. Social Security for all household workers to allow them to have adequate pension in their old age.
6. Employment and wages for all household workers which allow them to live in dignity.
7. The right to a clearly established work schedule.
8. The right to education.

We wish to thank the Employment and Immigration Canada (Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program); Secretary of State; Multiculturalism and Citizenship; Ontario Ministry of Citizenship; Ontario Women's Directorate; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Community and Social Services); and the City of Toronto Grants Review Board for their continuing support.

### TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS (Does not apply to current members)

INTERESTED TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER? SEND THE FORM BELOW WITH PAYMENT.  
IF NO RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION BY END OF FEBRUARY, WE'LL REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION :

NEW SUBSCRIPTION :

CHANGE OF ADDRESS :

MAIL TO : INTERCEDE, 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5

Please send DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS to :

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/PROVINCE : \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE : \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE : \_\_\_\_\_

#### YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES :

INTERCEDE Members :

FREE

Non-member Domestic :

\$20.00

Non-Profit Organizations:

FREE

Others

\$25.00

### From Pg 1 - Pay Equity

vable value to a job with a higher wage. If this were found to be the case your wages would be increased to that level.

Current legislation says that there must be 10 or more employees in the workplace before employers are required to implement Pay Equity. INTERCEDE strongly believes that the Pay Equity Act must be changed to address the needs of workers, including domestic workers and homeworkers who are often the only employee in a workplace.

*(INTERCEDE wishes to thank Katerina Makovec of Pay Equity and Advocacy Legal Services, for her talk at our January Monthly Meeting.)*

## QUESTION AND ANSWER

### IMMIGRATION

**Q.** I received my Open Employment Authorization in May 1990 and despite completion of all the requirements, I have not received my Landing. Why is it that my friends who applied in March 1992 for their Permanent Residence have received their Landing already, when I applied first?

**A.** The processing of applications for landed status is not the same for everyone. Delays may be caused by the submission of incomplete documents, work load of Immigration officer assigned, slow response by a third party for information necessary to complete the security check, etc.

**Q.** My Employment Authorization expires one month after my two years of domestic work in Canada. Will I have to submit my application for Permanent Residence, including fee of \$550 and then another application to renew my Employment Authorization?

**A.** Yes. You should never allow your Employment Authorization to expire. It could take up to 6 months before you receive an Open Permit and you must be in status to be issued one.

**Q.** The use of the old application forms for Permanent Residence is confusing because we are now bounded to the requirements under the new Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP). Should I decide not to answer the questions on financial management, volunteer work, upgrading, etc what effect will it have on my application.

**A.** Under the new LCP, the only criteria you are required to meet before applying for Permanent Residence is proof of 24 months of legal, live-in domestic work such as T4 slips, Records of Employment etc. The above questions are merely additional data and will not be used in your assessment. If you choose not to answer, put not applicable.

### From Pg 1 - UI Changes

who are likely to be penalized by the proposed stricter rules on UI.

In both situations of domestic workers who are on temporary status and those who are permanent residents, employers will be more able to get away with abuses such as excessively long working hours and unpaid overtime, human rights violations, sexual harassment, etc. because domestic workers will endure these abuses for fear of being fired.

## LEARN TO COMPLETE INCOME TAX RETURN

One-day training on how to help yourself and others to complete an Income Tax Return is offered each year by Revenue Canada, Taxation. No previous experience necessary, only a desire to help others. To be a Tax Volunteer, call any number below and ask for the Public Affairs Officer.

Scarborough	973-4163
North York	973-5437
Mississauga	566-6168
Toronto	973-9415

### SPONSORSHIP

**Q.** I would like to sponsor my husband and children, are there any financial requirements that I must meet?

**A.** No. But, you will need to submit an Employment Certificate showing that you are gainfully employed. And remember, your children must be under the age of 19 and if older, must be attending school continuously in order to be classified as dependents while sponsoring.

**Q.** I have almost completed my 2 years under the LCP. I recently was married to a Canadian citizen. Should I let my husband sponsor me?

**A.** You are strongly advised to pursue an application through the LCP since you have almost completed the 2 year requirement. By applying through the LCP and not your husband, your chances of obtaining Permanent Resident Status will not be jeopardized by your dependent relationship with your husband should you separate or divorce, for example.

*(Thank you to Immigration officers, Ms. Ramkumar and Mr. Perriccioli for answering questions at INTERCEDE's January Meeting)*

## MARK YOUR INTERCEDE CALENDAR

MONTHLY MEETING: Planned topics and activities:

**Sunday, March 7, 1993**

WEN-DO Demonstration: Guarding against  
Sexual Assault  
Portable Theatre on Violence Against Women

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**Sunday, April 4, 1993**

How to Manage Our Limited Income and  
Tax Return  
Easter Songfest

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**Sunday, May 2, 1993**

Domestic Workers' Rights in New  
Immigration Law  
Learn to Dance

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### INTERCEDE BOWLING SUNDAYS

Thorncliffe Park Bowlerama  
Thorncliffe Park Drive (Pape Subway, Thorncliffe  
Bus) Call 324-8751 for dates

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**Sunday, February 14, 1993**

CHINESE DOMESTIC WORKERS' NEW YEAR  
LUNCH - 12 noon  
Chinatown International Restaurant  
421 Dundas Street, Toronto  
Please Register by calling 324-8751  
Note change of date from last announcement.

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	973-4444
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	345-9312
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7160
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	323-9986
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	656-8933
OHIP Toronto	482-1111
Scarborough	1-800-263-3814
Mississauga	275-2730
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
Workers' Compensation	927-9555
Revenue Canada (taxation)	869-1500

Toronto Rape Crisis Center (24 Hr line)	597-8808
Assaulted Help Line	863-0511

#### EMERGENCY HOUSING

Nellie's Hostel	461-1084
Evangeline's	762-9636

#### LEGAL SERVICES

Parkdale Community Legal Services	531-2411
CLASP (Osgoode Law School) Legal Clinic	736-5029
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Serv.	363-0304
Metro Tor. Chinese & SE Asian Legal Clinic	971-9674
Toronto Workers' Health & Safety Legal Clinic	971-8832

### DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

c/o INTERCEDE  
489 College Street., Suite 402  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

**FIRST CLASS**

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**Sunday, February 21, 1993**

ALL-DAY ORIENTATION FOR NEWCOMERS  
Workplace rights and Immigration LCP program  
for domestic workers  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
George Brown College, Room 536  
200 King St. East (King Subway)  
Lunch included - Call now to register 324-8751

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**Sunday, February 21, 1993**

CARIBBEAN DOMESTIC WORKERS MEETING  
Black History Month : 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
INTERCEDE Office, 489 College St. Room 402  
Call Carol 324-8751

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**Sunday, February 28, 1993 - Tentative:**

WORKSHOP WITH SISTREN  
About Relating Domestic Workers to the World  
Economy and the Economy of their Own  
Countries  
SISTREN means Sister. SISTREN is a women's  
theatre group from Kingston, Jamaica that will be  
in Toronto in February.  
1 - 6 pm  
REGISTER NOW 324-8751. Place to be announced.

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**Sunday, March 14, 1993**

SOUTHASIAN DOMESTIC WORKERS LUNCH  
12 noon - 3 pm  
Siddhartha Restaurant  
1431 Gerrard St. East (corner Ashdale)  
Coxwell Subway, Bus 22A to Gerrard St.)  
Please register to join 324-8751

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**Domingo, 14 de Marzo 1993**

REUNION HISPANA  
3 - 5 pm  
Llama a Coco Diaz, tel. 324-8751

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**Saturday and Sunday March 20 and 21, 1993**

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
Anti-Racist Facilitators Workshop  
10 am - 4 pm  
Place to be announced. Register now 324-8751

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**INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT**

Place : 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ont  
Time : Monday - Friday, 9 am - 4 pm  
Telephone : (416) 324-8751 Fax No. 324-8790

**INTERCEDE STAFF**

Coordinator/Editor : Fely Villalón  
Counsellors : Columba Diaz  
Carol Salmon  
Intake Worker : Eva Jacob