

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

INTERCEDE for the Rights of Domestic Workers, Caregivers and Newcomers

February 2005

Toll Free 1-877-483-4554



FOCUS OF MANILA CONFERENCE: FUTURE OF FILIPINO MIGRATION

Filipino migrant workers and migrant advocacy organizations, including INTERCEDE, spent three days in December assessing trends in world migration, its social costs as well as gender dimensions, and current efforts to protect migrants' rights and to establish reintegration programs for returnees.

The World Conference of Overseas Filipino Workers, organized by the coalition, Philippine Migrant Rights Watch, took place at the Manila Bayview Hotel from December 16 to 18 and attracted 236 participants from 21 countries around the globe.

Among the objectives achieved during the assembly were analyses and discussions of issues and concerns that impact on overseas Filipino workers (OFW) and their families. The meeting concluded with 33 recommendations directed at the Philippine government, at policy makers and other governments, at non-government organizations (NGO) and at migrant workers themselves.

The conference provided a venue for information exchange and solidarity among participants, a key support and source of energy for the advocacy and lobby work being undertaken particularly by community groups or NGOs in their respective localities.

More importantly, the conference represented a significant contribution to establishing guidelines for future migration policies – policies which should be more consistent with human rights and international labour standards and which can inform future negotiations and agreements among sending and receiving nations, international bodies and NGOs.

Ever expanding labour migration

In the present state of labour migration which has grown to 86 million worldwide, there is an urgency to prevent the wholesale exploitation of workers and widespread erosion of human rights standards. This spurs the International Labour Organization (ILO), for one, to propose an action plan which consists of a "rights-based" multilateral approach to the global trade in workers.

Participants updated their information about staggering migration statistics: out of a population of over 80 million, there are about 7.5 to 8 million Filipinos living and working in over 100 countries outside the Philippines. Of this number, about 70 per cent are women working primarily as domestic workers, caregivers, service workers and entertainers.

In addition, this year, migrant workers increased dollar remittances to the Philippines, the figures ranging from US\$6.2 Billion, according to the Central Bank of the Philippines, to US\$9.5 Billion, when including estimates of remittances through informal channels.

There might have been critical consensus against the Philippine government's economic policies which submit to the dictates of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO) – policies which further aggravate inequality and impoverishment among the people, and thus force further migration to find work abroad.

Several presenters and speakers made this point. However, it was the focus on the consequences of the migration process - on family, society and the migrant workers themselves - which occupied the workshops and influenced the resulting recommendations.

33 Recommendations

Among the key recommendations are the following:

Education and information throughout the migration process figures as a principal obligation of policy makers involved at all levels of government. This is meant to raise the awareness of migrants, their families and all stakeholders, of State authorities as well as the general public about the realities of migration and their impact on the family and community, about the rights of migrant-grants as they cross borders, and about the risks of unauthorized migration and trafficking.

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*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 for/renew your membership - \$10.

Sunday, February 6, 3-6 p.m.
At Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil St.
(one block south of College cor. Spadina)

Black History Month
Guest Speaker: Mr. Warrick Russel,
Counsellor, Jamaican Association

See you there!

Effective implementation of reintegration programs for returnees has become more pressing, requiring political will and active government programs to encourage and protect investments by migrant workers. At the same time, governments are enjoined to enhance the cultural life of Filipinos abroad in order to break the isolation they suffer as a result of separation from family and community.

The Overseas Voting Act (OVA) is one of the concrete channels for overseas participation in the life of the nation, but its initial implementation during the recent national elections raised the need to improve certain provisions in order to facilitate voting abroad. Another recommendation is for the government to facilitate ways by which overseas citizens can meaningfully interact in their country's policy-making and nation-building.

The Philippine Government must enact, improve and implement laws against illegal recruitment, trafficking and unauthorized migration such as the Migrant Rights law (RA8042) and the Anti-Trafficking Law. It must negotiate with destination countries in favour of protecting the migrant workers it is sending.

Migrant advocacy organizations and NGOs could issue alternative reports about the implementation of the Migrant Rights Convention and lobby in regional venues such as ASEAN for ratification and implementation of international conventions and agreements which protect workers. These advocacy groups are in a good position to document best - and worst - practices in migrant-related work while increasing their contacts and networks. They are also expected to lobby for effectivity of business information, reintegration, investment and livelihood programs for returning workers.

Recommendations are directed at migrants to assume responsibility for arming themselves with proper information about the realities, processes and their rights throughout the migration process. They are enjoined to be "actors and advocates", to integrate knowledgeably in their country of destination or to prepare adequately for their return to their homeland.

**CARIBBEAN CONNECTION
BLACK SUPPORT GROUP**

The Caribbean Connection Black Support Group met on January 15, 2005 at INTERCEDE's office to discuss plans on the celebration of Black History month.

The celebration will be held on February 6, 2005 at the Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil St., from 3:00-6:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Mr. Warrick Russel will be our guest speaker followed by three other performing artists. In addition, there will be a D J and a wide variety of cultural food and beverages.

This celebration is not just for the Black Support Group, it is for all INTERCEDE members, supports, friends and well-wishers.

If you are a Caregiver or a domestic worker and are interested in attending a Caribbean Connection Meeting please call Bernice Small at (416) 483-4554 ext 22.

**Caribbean Connection Black Support Group
Next Meeting: Saturday, March 12, 2005
INTERCEDE Office from 2:00-4:00 p.m.**



**FREE Income Tax Clinic
Sunday, March 20, 2004, 1:00—5:00 p.m.
INTERCEDE's Office, 234 Eglinton Ave. E, Ste. 405**

Please bring these supporting documents:

1. Income Tax Return Form
2. T-4 Slips from employer
3. All T-Slips received from other sources:
 - ◆ T2202/A – Tuition and Education Amount
 - ◆ T5 – Investment Income
4. Receipts
 - ◆ RRSP
 - ◆ Rent
 - ◆ Donations
 - ◆ Medical Expenses
 - ◆ Tuition Fees
 - ◆ Union Dues /Interest Expense on Student Loan
5. Information required:
 - ◆ Marital Status
 - ◆ SIN of taxpayer (and spouse, if here)
 - ◆ Date of birth
 - ◆ Name of dependents, including parents living with tax payer
 - ◆ Income of spouse
6. 2002 Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada, or taxpayer 2002 Income Tax Return.



This is your invitation to

**INTERCEDE
POST VALENTINE DINNER DANCE**

**Saturday, February 19, 2005
7:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.
Essex Room , Ramada Hotel
300 Jarvis St., Toronto, ON**

Attire: Semi Formal Hot Buffet served at 7:30 p.m.

Ticket : \$35 Cash Bar

Please call Genie at 416-483-4554 ext. 21 for reservation.

Effective February 1, 2005

HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR PAY

44 Hour Work Week / Minimum Wage = \$7.45 per hour

Pay Schedule	Monthly (12/year)	Semi-Monthly (24/year)	Bi-Weekly (26/year)	Weekly (52/year)
Gross Wages	\$1,420.47	710.23	\$655.60	\$327.80
DEDUCTIONS				
Income Tax				
Federal	106.10	53.20	48.35	24.15
Provincial	39.55	19.75	18.30	9.15
Canada Pension Plan	55.88	27.94	25.79	12.89
Employment Insurance	27.70	13.85	12.78	6.39
Total Deductions	229.23	114.74	105.22	52.58
NET PAY for Live-out	\$1,191.24	\$595.49	\$550.38	\$275.22
Less: (Room & Board)	369.42	184.71	170.50	85.25
NET PAY for Live-in	\$821.82	\$410.78	\$379.88	\$189.97

Minimum wage in Ontario is currently \$7.45 per hour. Even though your employment agreement or "contract" may have stated your wage at less, your employer must pay you the current legal minimum wage.

Gross wages are based on a 44 hour work week, and does not include overtime calculations. Overtime must be paid for any hours above 44 in a week.

It is important that you keep a list of all hours you worked daily in case there is any dispute about your overtime.

Overtime pay is a "time-and-a-half" your regular hourly wage. If you are paid the minimum wage of \$7.45 per hour, your overtime pay should be \$11.18. You may agree to take paid time-off instead. This is also at the "time-and-a-half" rate. For example, if you worked 10 hours overtime, you should get 15 hours off with pay.

The maximum deduction for board is \$ 53.55 per week (\$2.55 per meal). However, if you miss all six meals during your two days off, only \$38.25 (\$53.55-\$15.30) should be deducted. Room is calculated at a rate of \$31.70 per week for a private room.

Income Tax Deductions are based on Code 1 exemption.

Your employer is required by law to withhold Income Tax deductions, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions and Employment Insurance (EI) premium from your gross wages. Your employer sends these deductions together with their own contributions to Revenue Canada every month. Each pay day, your employer should give you a - **Written Statement of Earnings** (see below).

Example: **Name of employee:** Mary Grace Joy **Salary:** \$7.45 per hour
Pay period: February 7-11, 2005 (one week) **Total hours worked:** 44 hours

GROSS WAGES: \$327.80 **Notes:**

Deductions:

Fed. & Prov. Income Tax	33.30
CPP	12.89
E I	6.39
Room & Board	85.25
Total Deductions:	\$137.83

Overtime worked:

Overtime rate of pay: \$11.18 per hour

NET PAY**\$189.97**

SUCCESS STORY FEATURES



*Office Assistant, Pizza Pizza, Toronto
Menchi Garvez*



*Accounting Staff
Jezz Garvez*

Our family arrived in Toronto in October 2003. After four months of fruitless job-hunting, we decided to attend INTERCEDE's Job Search Workshop last January 2004. Here we discovered we were doing it all wrong. INTERCEDE's JSW gave us all the tools and tips vital to job search. Soon thereafter we completed the workshop. I got a part-time job as proof operator at SYMCOR in Toronto, while my wife got in as a temp-receptionist for an optometrist at Leslie Medical Center. Over a year's time, I finally got my full-time job as accounting staff for a landscaping firm in April 2004.

Then my wife, Menchi also got an office assistant position at Pizza Pizza's franchising department.

INTERCEDE indeed put us on the right track by giving us the push in starting our life here in our new home country.

Our advice for new immigrants and job-seekers is to attend workshops, seminars, do volunteer work and do networking to access the hidden job market. Canada has immigrant-serving agencies strategically located all over. We were fortunate to have learned about INTERCEDE's services for newcomers like us.



INTERCEDE's next monthly meeting

Sunday, March 6, 2005, 3 - 5 p.m.
At Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil St.
(one block south of College cor. Spadina)

FREE JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP

FOR CAREGIVERS & NEWCOMERS

WHEN: SUNDAY

February 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2005

March 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2005

April 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2005

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

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:

Fely Villasin - Part — Time Executive Director

Jo Alcampo — Interim Administrative Co-ordinator

Des Balce - JSW Facilitator

Columbia Diaz - Settlement Counsellor & Program Manager

Anita Fortuno - Settlement Counsellor

Bernice Small - Settlement Counsellor

Genie Policarpio - Intake & Administrative Assistant

We wish to thank: Citizenship and Immigration Canada - ISAP Program and Job Search Program; Ontario Status of Women; the Municipality of Toronto CSGP, Maytree and Trillium Foundations grant programs, for their financial support.



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MAIL TO: INTERCEDE, 234 Eglinton Ave East, Suite 405, Toronto, ON, M4P 1K5

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