

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

INTERCEDE for the Rights of Domestic Workers, Caregivers and Newcomers

July 2005

Call Free 1-877-483-4554



PRINCIPLES FOR REGULARIZATION

As Immigration Minister Joe Volpe contemplates the potential regularization of a sector of non-status workers, we are publishing below the "12 principles for a regularization program in Canada" which was drafted at the status conference in Toronto on November 2004. We ask the Canadian government to exercise a broad, all-inclusive and just policy of regularizing people who are without legal immigrant status in this country.

Principle 1: We need a comprehensive, transparent, inclusive and ongoing regularization program that is both equitable and accessible to ALL persons living without legal immigration status in Canada (non-status). Any such program must not be contingent upon a person's participation in the labour force, nor should it exclude particular groups such as the poor, unwaged, unemployed or those who have ever accessed any government assistance. Likewise, it should not be limited to any group, such as members of a trade or profession, selected sectors or industries, those determined to be successfully integrated, and so on.

Principle 2: Any regularization program must provide immediate access to unrestricted and unconditional permanent resident or landed immigrant status in Canada.

Principle 3: Any regularization program must be non-discretionary, non-arbitrary and be applied consistently. As well as guaranteeing the right to due process for all applicants, it must also include a right to appeal for those whose applications are rejected.

Principle 4: Any regularization program must not be discriminatory on such basis as race, colour, national or ethnic origin, faith or religion, gender, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, family status, etc.

Principle 5: Any regularization program must not be based on length of residency in Canada.

Principle 6: Medical inadmissibility is deeply discriminatory, violates fundamental human rights and is an affront to basic principles of justice and compassion. Any regularization program must not discriminate on the basis of an applicant's medical condition.

Principle 7: Any regularization program must respect the principle of family reunification in Canada, and respect the right of children to be with their primary caregiver (s) in Canada. It must allow regularized non-status individuals to sponsor their family members there and abroad on an immediate basis. The definition of family must be fully inclusive so as to recognize diverse cultural norms and practices, de facto family arrangements, same sex relationships, and the evolving realities that characterize people's lives. In all cases, proof of family relationships must not be determined on the basis of medical testing.

Cont. next page

*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, July 10, 2005, 3-5 p.m.
At Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil St.
(one block south of College cor. Spadina)

REGULARIZATION
Guest Speaker: To be announced

See you there!

Principle 8: Non-status persons must not be penalized for having been forced to live 'underground' in Canada. The regularization program must allow non-status individuals to submit their application on an anonymous basis or through a third party, without fear of criminalization, detention, deportation or any other kind of enforcement.

Principle 9: While any regularization program is in process, all levels of government in Canada must guarantee non-status people full and equal access to health care, social assistance, education, childcare, employment, labour protection, housing, legal aid, domestic violence services etc., without fear of identification, criminalization, detention, deportation or any other kind of enforcement.

Principle 10: There should be no application or processing fees as they would constitute an unjustified barrier to any regularization program.

Principle 11: Anyone with less than full status in Canada—including people on temporary work permits—must be eligible for the regularization program.

Principle 12: Any regularization framework must not impose the 'double punishment' currently faced by non-status migrants, where a criminal conviction results not just in punishment as set out in the Criminal Code, but also a second punishment by way of removal. The criminal justice system in Canada or abroad must not exclude any persons from any regularization process.

An excerpts from Solidarity Across Borders May 2005 issue

PLEASE NOTE:

**INTERCEDE
SUMMER HOURS**

From June 20 to August 26, 2005

Monday to Thursday : 9:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Friday: Closed

JOIN INTERCEDE FUNDRAISING TRIP

**NIAGARA FALLS
CHERRY PICKING & CASINO**

Is moved on Saturday, July 16, 2005

Assembly time: 7:00 am

Departure time: 8:00 am

Meeting place: York Mills Subway Station
Behind Shell Gas Station

For only \$45.00

FREE \$10 Voucher for Casino Niagara

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

**HAPPY WITH INTERCEDE'S
TRIP TO MONTREAL AND OTTAWA**

On May 21 and 22, INTERCEDE brought members on a trip to Montreal and Ottawa where everyone had fun.

We left Toronto on May 20 at midnight and arrived in Montreal at around six the next morning. We had a guided tour of St Joseph Oratory and Notre-Dame Basilica where we were all amazed at the beauty and history of these places. We marveled at their magnificent architectural structures, particularly St. Joseph Oratory which is located on top of a hill overlooking the city of Montreal. We also visited the Biosphere where we gathered information related to science.

After our visit to Montreal, we proceeded to Ottawa where we spent the night at Carleton University Residence. It was a cozy accommodation that exceeded our expectation. The following day, May 22, we toured Ottawa and visited breath-taking places such as Parliament Hill, Rideau Canal, Basilica of Notre Dame, Garden of the Provinces, and Commissioners Park. We enjoyed the beauty of different varieties and colors of tulips. We also went to Byward Market where we bought some souvenir items.

Everyone had fun walking around, taking pictures and enjoying the moment of being with old and new-found friends. Our driver who acted as our tour guide was very helpful in making this trip very informative and educational.

It was "chaos" in the bus the drive back. We sang and danced, watched a movie and a concert on DVD and had fun all the way to Toronto.

Now, everyone can hardly wait for our next trip to Niagara Falls with cherry-picking in St. Catharines schedules for July 16.

To all who joined this trip to Ottawa and Montreal, thank you so much for your support, we really enjoyed your company and we are looking forward to see you again in our forthcoming activities.

Appreciative quotes

From Vivian Baluyut:

"We would like to express our million thanks for the great, wonderful and amazing best trip ever. This trip to Montreal and Ottawa was really an awesome and unforgettable experience for us. Words could not express how much we enjoyed this trip. My friends and I are hoping that this will not be the last and we are looking forward to INTERCEDE's upcoming events. Thank you again to INTERCEDE's staff and Board members for organizing this trip.

From Sheila Fernandez:

"I am very glad and satisfied with the Montreal and Ottawa tour organized by INTERCEDE. At first, I was skeptical if it was worth the money I had to pay but my answer now is "Yes, Absolutely". Right now I am wondering when will be the next tour? I want to be on the front seat!

COCO'S CORNER

A face I can't forget belongs to Lilia. She recently came for assistance to apply for Canadian Citizenship.

Fourteen long years ago, the same Lilia came to me with a face full of agony and uncertainty after a letter from Immigration, informed that she could no longer extend her temporary Employment Authorization and that she has to leave Canada on or before the expiry of her work permit.

What led to this imminent departure?

After meeting the LCP requirements, Lilia filed her application for permanent residence. But soon after, she underwent medical exams she was diagnosed with cancer.

As Lilia's health continued to deteriorate there was no way she could pass the medical requirements for permanent residence.

Radiation, chemotherapy, weight loss, changes in physical appearance – all resulting from cancer were experienced by Lilia.

But Lilia was full of determination to overcome her sickness. She was fully supported by her employers and surrounded by friends who constantly prayed for her recovery.

Meanwhile, communication between INTERCEDE and CIC regarding her appeal to stay in Canada while undergoing treatment went exchanged back and forth.

When her LCP application and appeal were refused, we filed immediately an application under Humanitarian and Compassionate consideration.

Under the Humanitarian and Compassionate Consideration, with the support letters from the social workers, doctors, hospital staff, friends and INTERCEDE, Lilia finally got approved to stay in Canada permanently two years ago in 2002.

Today, Lilia considers herself lucky and blessed because her strength is back, she no longer needs medication, and she is looking forward to becoming a citizen of Canada.

All throughout her ordeal Lilia never spent money to work on her papers because INTERCEDE services are free.

STORIES IN THE LCP

After meeting the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) requirement, I finally applied for permanent residence in December 2004. As my work permit was expiring on January 25, 2005, I called Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) call centre for information and was told that I would be on "implied status" when my current work permit expired as long as I was working with the same employer while waiting for the issuance of my open work permit. I felt relieved because I saved me \$150, the processing fee for renewal of my work permit.

However, being on "implied status", meant I could not apply for renewal of OHIP coverage and SIN, because the required document to do so is a valid work permit. This meant that I had no OHIP while waiting to receive my open work permit.

One night, I had to be rushed to the hospital because I was having chest pains and palpitations. I had been having chest pains before this but I ignored them knowing that I no longer had OHIP coverage. I knew that if I went to my family doctor, I would have to pay for consultations myself. I did not have any savings because I had been sending most of my income to my family since my husband lost his job.

Upon admission at the Emergency Room, my employer was asked to pay \$275 as a deposit. I went through several medical procedures and before sunrise I insisted to go home in spite of doctors' advice that I be seen by a cardiologist. I was told that I needed to undergo further tests to determine the extent of my problem and that I might need to stay one or two more days at the hospital.

The thought of having to pay huge hospital bills scared me more than the risk of having a heart attack. I don't have OHIP coverage and, worse of all I, don't have any savings. I don't want to ask my relatives for financial assistance because they have already helped me enough.

Finally, I convinced the doctor to let me go home with my relatives and signed a waiver that they are not responsible if anything happens to me. I took the risk because I could not afford to pay the bills for one more day at the hospital. My relatives paid \$400.00 on top of the \$275 deposit given by my employer before I could leave.

Now I realize I should have applied for extension of my work permit. I should not have been contented with "implied status" because no one can tell if there will be a medical emergency, like I had.

What I experienced could happen to anyone who is on "implied status". It is your choice but to be honest, I would rather apply for extension of work permit rather than being on implied status without any health coverage.

But even better, I would wish that caregivers in the LCP did not lose OHIP coverage at all for as long as they are in the program.

It makes me wonder how many of us cannot receive health care while we give care to Canadians.

INTERCEDE CARIBBEAN CONNECTION BLACK SUPPORT GROUP

Invites everyone to join us at our

Fundraising BBQ

Place: Earl Bales Park (South of Sheppard)

When: August 13, 2005, Sunday

Time: 12:00 - 8:00 pm

Ticket Price:

Adult - \$10 Child: under 8 - \$5 No. of Child _____



“FOLLOW YOUR DREAM”

“I wasn’t sure what shape my life would take, what was in store my career and my family in Canada.” This was my preoccupation before attending INTERCEDE’S Job Search Workshop.

My family arrived in Toronto in October 2004, as immigrants from the Philippines. Like most newcomers, I was full of hopes and dreams. I left a career as Marketing Specialist for 18 years at a telecom company, because I was convinced “the grass is always greener” elsewhere, on the other side of the world. However, after listening to stories and getting a real feel of what it takes to make a new life in Canada, I became confused, and worse, not knowing where and how to find employment. With my wealth of experience, I thought I could dive in and roll with the punches, adjust to a new environment. But it turned out, not here, in a multiracial country, where even highly skilled professionals are racing to get a decent job, and keep abreast with global trends.

Luckily I met a Filipina who introduced me to INTERCEDE. That’s networking! Inspired by her job search success story, I wasted no time and signed-up for the JSW program. The content of the workshop was designed to suit the needs of a new immigrant like me. Indeed, the tips and strategies discussed were all very helpful in my job search. I came to learn the basics of making an impressive resume. I’ve discovered the tools in job hunting, so I could access the hidden job market; ace tough interview questions, and finally, landed a job that related to my background.

I was in the middle of the program when I found work in a Private Career College. My entry level was then as a Receptionist. After a month, I was promoted to Administrative Support for the International Students Admission group. Although I was trained in a corporate setting, joining the academe was a welcome challenge for me.

Now I realized that making a big change, in life or career is not so scary after all. Just stick to the common sense, keep an open mind and follow your dream. With patience, perseverance and prayers it could be at hand. Thank you INTERCEDE!

Ruthie Escartin Administrative Assistant,
Computech Institute of Technology, Toronto

FREE JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP FOR CAREGIVERS & NEWCOMERS

WHEN: SUNDAY

July 10, 17, 24 & 31, 2005
August 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2005
September 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2005

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

**WHERE: 164 Eglinton Ave. E., Ste. 300
West of Mt. Pleasant**

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

Funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada

INTERCEDE

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Toronto Ontario
M4P 1K5**

Summer Hours: Mon-Thursday 9 am - 5p.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 Foundation and Trillium Foundation grant programs, for their financial support..



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