

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

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

MAY 1999



SHALL WE FORESEE THE LIBERATION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS?

By Gene Lara

INTERCEDE has written a letter to Minister of Immigration Hon. Lucienne Robillard requesting her to include the domestic workers in the policy changes of Immigration Laws. We are requesting that domestic workers enter Canada as landed immigrants. If this happens it will mean the **LIBERATION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS IN CANADA.**

Through the initiative of the Status of Women and the Canadian Heritage, a consultation conference was called in Ottawa, whereby organizations were invited who are involved in caring for domestic workers. INTERCEDE was represented by our President, Allen Fabro, board member, Rose Canono and our Coordinator, Gene Lara.

It was identified in the consultation conference all violence committed against domestic workers.

Violence committed by Employers: the non-payment of overtime work which is considered economic abuse as well as sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and physical violence.

Violence committed by family members (long distance violence): emotional abuse such as unfaithfulness of partner or husband due to separation, economic abuse such as consistent demands of family members for financial assistance.

Violence committed by the State: although domestic workers pay taxes to the government, no where in funding criteria for development will you find that caregivers are included.

It is only in the Job Search Workshop Program sponsored by COSTI AND OCASI, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada that live-in caregivers have been included in funding criteria.

Economic abuse has also been committed by the state due to long processing of immigration papers that result in caregivers having to continually renew work permits and redo tests. The cost for these documents and for the Right of Landing is a heavy financial burden.

It was interesting to note that women who are in the live-in caregiver program, because of religion, traditions and culture, are deprived of the

**You are welcome to INTERCEDE meeting every
first Sunday of the Month**

(if it falls on a holiday, meeting is on second Sunday)

Sunday, May 3, 1999 3 – 5 p.m.

Cecil Community Center, 58 Cecil St.

Topic: Financial Strategies

Next meetings: Sunday, June 6, 1999 - Team Building

Sunday, July 4, 1999 - Organization & Leadership

expression of sexuality as they often have to be celibate for as long as their partners are not around.

Health issues were also raised during the conference. If a domestic worker becomes seriously ill she could face a delay in completing her two years of domestic work and her eligibility for landing in Canada may be jeopardized. In the end, the LCP and the settlement process can have a heavy toll on the health of the domestic worker.

Since it can take five or six years before a live-in caregiver is reunited with her family in Canada, there are additional problems that can affect her and the survival of the family unit during this period of adjustment.

Family problems may arise because the husband and children encounter culture shock. Sometimes, the husband becomes so insecure because of the difficulties in getting used to the Canadian way of life. It is either he could not land a job that he likes or inner jealousy sprouts because the woman is more accustomed to the way of life here. The husband's self-ego dominates as an outlet of frustration and the domestic worker is affected by these tensions after working so hard to prepare a better life for her family.

Separation, culture shock, poverty, isolation and loneliness are recipes for violence. These are also applicable to the children who develop resentment towards their mother for leaving them behind during their early years.

Ethnic communities tend to discriminate domestic workers and they look at them as second class citizens. It appears that the majority of ethnic groups remember domestic workers for fund raising, or when they need their arms in activities and functions. You will seldom find a domestic worker an officer of any ethnic organizations.

**ATTENTION! INTERCEDE Members
FREE USE OF COMPUTER
AVAILABLE!**

Need to practice your computer skills
or write your resume?
Call 483-4554 to schedule an appointment

Domestic workers are remembered only for outlet of businesses, in short they are only being used for financial gains.

Domestic workers must be granted landed immigrant status upon entrance to Canada in order to prevent the chain of abuses that follow them even after their family arrives.

INTERCEDE would like to thank all the organizations who have included the concerns of domestic workers in the brief submitted to the government of Canada regarding immigration policy changes.

For our membership, have a little faith, a little prayer, a little confidence and the will to succeed in this struggle. With all of us united we can make a difference.

**TO ALL MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND
SUPPORTERS:**

ATTEND AND JOIN THE FUN AT:

INTERCEDE's

Let's Celebrate Spring'99 Dance

Saturday, May 29, 1999

Scadding Court Community Center

**707 Dundas St. W. cor Bathurst
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION NEW SUBSCRIPTION CHANGE OF ADDRESS

MAIL TO : INTERCEDE, 234 Eglinton Ave East, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario M4P 1K5

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:	\$20.00	Others	\$25.00

QUESTION & ANSWER

By Carol Salmon

Q. Where is the best place to be on May 29, 1999?

A. At INTERCEDE's Spring Dance at Scadding Court Community Centre, 7pm to 1am. Come help us celebrate 15 years of service to domestic workers and their families!

Q. I just received my T4 from my employer and noticed that there was no tax remitted on my behalf. My employer was annoyed when I asked her about this and advised me that I should let her accountant do my tax return and that if I owe anything because no tax was paid, she will pay the balance. What should I do?

A. Employers of live-in caregivers are responsible for deducting the correct tax, CPP and EI from their pay and remitting it to Revenue Canada. You should advise your employer that you already have someone to do your tax return and that you would like her to correct your T4 slip to show the tax that was deducted from your salary. It is important for all domestic workers and caregivers before starting a job to request and receive, from their employer, a statement of earnings with each pay. Contact INTERCEDE for further information.

Q. My employers are planning to go on vacation in May 1999 and have "asked" me to look after their children while they are away. They have not said anything about what my salary will be during this period, should I say something now or wait until they return?

A. You should definitely advise your employer before they leave that it is an additional responsibility to care for their children 24 hours a day and that you have to be paid extra. You should work out an amount that you will be happy with prior to meeting with your employer or you could just ask for an extra week of vacation with pay to compensate for the additional hours and responsibility. Make sure that both you and your employer agree to the arrangement before their departure.

Q. My teenage children arrived from overseas in September 1998. They would like to get a summer job and are asking for my help. Where should I refer them?

A. To a computer that has the internet! There are a variety of locations across Toronto that offer free use of computers by appointment such as employment resource centres, many libraries and some community organizations, including INTERCEDE. So, if your teenagers are looking for information on summer job opportunities, volunteer and community services, educational institutions and other relevant sites they can find much of this information over the internet. Here are a few websites that might be helpful to them: www.youth.gc.ca and www.hrhc-drhc.gc.ca.

PHILIPPINE INCOME TAX RELIEF!

By Coco Diaz

No more paying taxes to the Philippine government. Filipino workers and permanent residents abroad are no longer required to file an Income Tax Return (ITR) for income earned outside the Philippines starting in the 1998 tax year. The Philippine Republic Act No. 8424, known as the Tax Reform Act of 1997, took effect on January 1, 1998.

Nannies and domestic workers in Canada who have not received their permanent residence are happy to be relieved of this financial burden!

Beginning April 1999, the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto will no longer issue Certification for Income Tax Payment and Unemployment. Those below 18 years of age or above 60 do not need any clearance to avail themselves of the travel tax exemption privilege. They only need to show their passport and proof of permanent resident status. For Filipinos working abroad a travel tax of \$1620.00 pesos is payable upon departure from the Philippines.

Thanks to the Philippine Consulate staff who visited INTERCEDE's office to share the above information.

Free Classes every Saturday and Sunday at
GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE (St. James Campus
- 200 King St., East, Toronto)

JOB SEARCH WORKSHOPS PROGRAM

Learn how to:

- Prepare Resume
- Develop Self-esteem and confidence building
- Use Self-marketing skills
- Develop network and linkages in the community for jobs
- Use Computer Job Search

Schedule of Classes:

*Every Saturday (May 8, 15, 29 and June 5 / 99)
Sunday (June 13, 20, 27, July 4 / 99)*

Classes starts from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A certificate of Completion will be issued by George Brown College. Enroll now by calling :

INTERCEDE Tel. 483-0548 or 483-1142
Funded by: Citizenship & Immigration Canada
(Sponsored by COSTI AND OCASI)

VANCOUVER CDWCR

Committee for Domestic Workers' & Caregivers' Rights
(an INTERCEDE Affiliate)

Contact Julie or Lorina (604) 874-0649

SUCCESS STORIES

By Coco Diaz

Cora, a trained nurse and mother of three children had been able to escape her abusive husband by coming to Canada as a live-in caregiver. However, she chose to state in her Immigration documents that she was single with no dependents. Cora came to INTERCEDE for help regarding the misrepresentation of her status. After correcting her status in her application for permanent residence and declaring her husband and children, Cora began to have other problems. Her husband refused to allow the children to comply with Immigration requirements once he learned that he was not included in the application. Cora was determined not to allow her husband to abuse her mentally and physically any longer and filed for a divorce. After a long four-year battle, she was able to get permanent resident status and is now happily reunited with her three teenage children.

Josie, a domestic worker from the Philippines had been employed as a live-in caregiver in Saudi Arabia for two years. During her employment there, she was treated like a slave. She had no days off and no set time to finish. An attempted sexual assault by her male employer prompted her to do everything to escape. This was not easy as she was not allowed to leave the palatial house or to contact other Filipino workers. If her employers went out, they locked her in. She could not send letters nor did she receive any of the letters her family mailed. Josie took a chance when she accompanied her employer to a doctor's

appointment. She had prepared letters beforehand addressed to the Philippine Embassy in Saudi, to her parents and to a friend who was in Canada, all without signing her name for fear that her employer would find out. Her friend in Canada received the letter and immediately contacted her parents in the Philippines who then notified the Department of Labour and the Embassy in Saudi to facilitate her return to the Philippines. At the same time, Josie's friend in Canada found an employer to hire her under the Live-in Caregiver Program. Josie is now landed, operating her own business, married with children and was able to sponsor her parents and younger siblings!

NANNIES & CAREGIVERS

FREE Information Session:

Learn about your legal rights and the community resources that can help you!

COME AND ASK YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT:

- Working in Canada, Applying for Permanent Residence, Sponsorship
- Knowing and Asserting your Employment Rights
- Future Job and Education Plans
- Community Resources and Activities
- Toronto Housing Vacancy Registry
- Child and Senior Caregiver Registries

Wednesday, May 5, 1999 **Thursday, May 6, 1999**

9:30am - 11:00am OR 7:00pm - 8:30pm
(Room C) (Committee Room)

LOCATION:

North Toronto Memorial Community Centre,
200 Eglinton Avenue West

Register by calling POINT at (416)487-2390 or
INTERCEDE at 483-4554

Refreshments and Materials will be provided!

****kids welcome****

*Jointly sponsored by P.O.I.N.T. Inc. People and Organizations
in North Toronto & INTERCEDE For the Rights of Domestic
Workers, Caregivers and Newcomers*

YOU MIGHT BE MISSING SOMETHING IF YOU HAVEN'T JOINED YET.

INTERCEDE Caregivers Co-operative, Inc.

Your employment agency

Giving our best service, Getting the best benefits

Call 486-0548

*We wish to thank the Citizenship and Immigration
Canada (Immigration Settlement and Adaptation
Program); Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism
Program, Ministry of Citizenship, Culture &
Recreation (NSP) and the Municipality of
Toronto for their financial support.*

INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place: 234 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 205,
Toronto, Ont. M4P 1K5

Time: Monday-Friday, 9 am - 4 pm

Tel: (416) 483-4554 Fax: (416) 483-9781-

INTERCEDE STAFF

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Counsellors: Columbia Diaz
Carol Salmon

Intake Worker: Eva Jacob