

# ***DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS***

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

October 2004

Toll Free 1-877-483-4554



## **INTERCEDE's CLIENT SERVICES FOR THE YEAR**

A total of 8,165 people contacted INTERCEDE for various services this year, of which 7,161 were workers in the Live-in Caregiver Program. Of these clients, 733 were in Canada less than one year and 1,814 were in Canada for more than one year.

We dispensed a total of 20,917 services which consisted of information and orientation, referral, employment, interpretation and counselling. 8,481 inquiries were about immigration and the LCP rules, 6,501 touched on labour issues, 1,564 were about housing, health, education and training and other social services. There were 16 human rights-related questions and 3,371 inquiries about INTERCEDE, its events and programs. Our monthly education and other meetings saw an attendance of 687 people. Services were provided mostly in Pilipino and two other Philippine dialects, English, some Spanish and French. Contacts were predominantly from the Philippines (estimated 92 per cent), predominantly women (93 per cent) and (7 per cent) were men.

We noted an increase in the numbers of live in caregivers who were not able to complete twenty four months within three years of their arrival. This problem resulted mostly from the implementation of new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) on June 28, 2002. It caused delays in the processing of new work permits for caregivers who changed employers, coupled with delays in processing employers' request for validated job offer at HRDC. The processing of application for permanent residence also suffered delays and it took a maximum of eight to nine months, just for the issuance of open work permit when before it only took months

There was also confusion regarding employers' request for HRDC validation job offers caregivers who are on their third year in the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP). Some HRDC staff were not aware that live in caregivers need to submit a new HRDC validated job offer with their application for extension of their work permit if they were on their third year, otherwise CPC, Vegreville, Alberta would not grant extension of work permits. This caused delays in extension of work permits, stress and confusion among the live in caregivers, employers and HRDC. Caregivers were affected and suffered the most due to their temporary status and lack of information.

We also noted increased numbers of health related problems among live in caregivers, arising from stress and emotional impact of family separation and other illnesses brought about by working long hours. There was decrease in the number of office visits and attendance in our monthly meetings in spring of 2003 because of SARS when employers advised their live-in caregivers to stay home during their days off to avoid exposure to the SARS virus.

Counsellors conducted 36 outreach and information activities to various communities. They discussed changes in the new IRPA, its implementation and effects on the LCP, the new Ontario ESA and employees' rights, money management for new immigrants and caregivers, job search workshops, women's health, tenant's rights, and other topics related to their settlement.

We continued with our outreach strategy focused on Caribbean newcomers. We increased ads in Caribbean newsmagazines, visited and distributed leaflets at various Caribbean stores and businesses. Counsellors met with Caribbean consulate officials and

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## ***INTERCEDE***

*cordially invites you to its*

## ***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

**Sunday, October 3, 2004**

***Cecil Community Centre***

**58 Cecil St., Toronto, On. (south of College St., east of Spadina)**

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 3:00 p.m. | Business Meeting   |
| 4:30 p.m. | <b>Guest Speaker : Mr. Paul Evans</b><br>Regional Project Coordinator<br>Employment Standard Program, Ministry of Labour |
| 5:30 p.m. | Snacks & Refreshments  |

noted the gap in access and information experienced by Caribbean caregivers. The result of this outreach has been a 60% increase in Caribbean visitors to the office. INTERCEDE formed the Black Support group to focus on their needs and find the best way to handle their problems.

We continue to target newcomers and recent arrivals from the Philippines by distributing INTERCEDE's card through the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency and Commission on Filipino Overseas, both of which conduct pre-departure orientation to Canada-bound immigrants. As a result, we received calls from as far as Vancouver, BC to Newfoundland. We had six newcomers' orientation sessions held at INTERCEDE's office, two sessions for families under family class, two sessions for families who came to Canada on Skilled worker category and two sessions for live in caregivers who had been recently reunited with their family members from the Philippines.

Apart from current services located at INTERCEDE's office, we have opened Sunday service at Cecil Community Centre 1-3 p.m. (by appointment only) during the monthly meeting.



### CANADIANS REMAIN OPEN TO NEWCOMERS

*Excerpt from Opinion Canada,  
Centre for Research and Information on Canada*

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, there has been much more emphasis placed on security. Has that emphasis made Canadians distrustful of newcomers? Despite a brief upsurge in opinion in favour of accepting fewer immigrants immediately following the attacks, Canadians are currently quite open to immigration as the results of this recently released survey from the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) show.

Most Canadians (56%) feel the country should keep accepting the same level of immigrants as it currently does. Eighteen percent say it should accept more.

Twenty-three percent think Canada should accept fewer immigrants the lowest percentage holding this view since October 2000. And the figure represents a drop of 22% from a high of 45% who felt the country should accept fewer immigrants when the question was asked in October 2001, right after the attacks on the Twin Towers.

This is a central finding of a recent survey conducted by (CRIC). The telephone survey of 1,500 adult Canadians was carried out by Environics Research Group between June 16 and 21, 2004. Surveys of this size have a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5%, 19 times out of 20.

Women (28%) were more likely to say that Canada should accept fewer immigrants than were men (18%). Men (22%) were more likely than women (15%) to say Canada should accept more immigrants.

#### Little desire for exclusion

In another question, respondents were asked to identify specific groups that they would like to keep out, if Canada does allow more immigration (an open-ended question with no prompted responses). Sixty-five percent said they would keep no groups out while 12% volunteered that they would keep out criminals, and 11% said they would keep out terrorists. Approximately 7% of respondents mentioned Muslims, Arabs, Asians, or other non-European ethnic groups as groups of people they would like to keep out.

A strong majority disagreed with the statement that people from Islamic countries should be prohibited from immigrating to Canada in order to reduce the threat of terrorism. Seventy-nine percent of Canadians disagreed with the statement, while 18% agreed. Agreement was highest in Saskatchewan (28%) and Atlantic Canada (25%). It was lowest in Ontario (15%).

These results are similar to answers to a comparable question asked in October 2001, when Canadians were asked if people of Arab descent or Muslim faith should be forbidden to enter the country; 83% opposed forbidding entry to Canada while 12% took the opposite view. (Leger Marketing, October 2001)

In CRIC's survey, respondents who identified themselves as part of a visible minority were more inclined to agree that Canada should prohibit immigration from Islamic countries (26%) compared to respondents who were not part of a visible minority (17%). Agreement also increased with age: 13% of Canadians, aged 18-29, were in agreement, rising to 15% among those aged 30-44, 19% among those aged 45-59, and 25% among those aged 60 or more.

#### Screening acceptable to most

However, a majority was prepared to see ethnic origin used as a factor in screening immigrants.

Respondents were asked this question: "Some say that screening a person on the basis of their perceived race or ethnicity as a potential proponent of terrorist activities is inappropriate. Others say that screening a person on the basis of their perceived race or ethnicity is a necessary step to counter terrorist activities in Canada. Which view is closer to your own view?"

Fifty-four percent of Canadians agreed that screening a person on the basis of their perceived race or ethnicity is a necessary step to counter terrorist activities in Canada, while 43% believed that such screening is inappropriate when this question was asked in a survey by Environics in December or 2001, 49% of Canadians agreed that such screening was necessary, while 45% deemed it inappropriate. (Environics Focus Canada, December 2001)

#### Levels of racism and discrimination

The present survey found that 60% of Canadians feel that levels of racism or discrimination against minorities have not changed over the last few years while 23% said they had become less of a problem and 11% said they had become more of a problem. Regionally, Atlantic Canadians were the least likely to think that level of racism or discrimination in their communities had increased (6%) whereas in Alberta, this figure was at 16%, the highest of all the provinces.



TO MARK  
THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF INTERCEDE SERVICES,  
YOU ARE INVITED TO

### A FUNDRAISING BUFFET DINNER AND DANCE

Saturday, October 30, 2004

7 p.m.

At the Cecil Community Centre

58 Cecil St., Toronto (south of College, east of Spadina)

(Guest Speaker to be announced)

*Suggested Attire: Formal or National Dress*      *Ticket \$30*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Let's Celebrate  
INTERCEDE's 20th Year Anniversary

Watch for upcoming INTERCEDE  
ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES:

☞ December 4, 2004 - Christmas Dinner  
Dance at Ramada Hotel

Mabuhay! Long Live INTERCEDE!

**COCO'S CORNER...**

As we celebrate INTERCEDE's 20 years in Service, countless domestic worker, caregivers who came or availed our services, keep on calling and sending their congratulatory wishes in which some were published in previous newsletters.

In recognition to extended services of INTERCEDE to the community, here are some testimonies sent through e-mails, letters and calls:

- ☞ I've have called several offices like Immigration, Labour and even my lawyer for information on the rights and entitlements of my caregiver, but no one could give me an answer as clear and simple as you do. Your staff at INTERCEDE are helpful and knowledgeable ... Congratulations and keep up the good work! ...*employer*
- ☞ INTERCEDE, thank you for your free guidance and assistance when I sponsored my caregiver who arrived in Canada. It could have cost me an enormous amount of money if I was assisted by an employment agency...*employer*
- ☞ Congratulations on your 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, you made my job easier when you shared information regarding one of our patients who was a caregiver without OHIP coverage due to her Immigration status.... Wish more people will be informed about the existence of your organization...*from a hospital social worker.*
- ☞ Your outreach in my ESL class made the caregivers and other newcomers became aware of their rights and I myself was enlightened... more power and more funding to your organization!
- ☞ I was skeptical when I first called for appointment regarding my plan to sponsor a family member. I called Immigration, consultant and a lawyer who gave the same answer that I'm not qualified to sponsor, but due to your encouragement, information and assistance, my niece arrived in Canada. Now I am no longer alone! Thank you very much and congratulations!



Hi, my name is Bernice Small, a new counselor at INTERCEDE. I am from the sunny isles of St. Vincent and the Grenadine. I enjoy meeting people and have spend five years as a volunteer working

with women of diverse cultures. I am glad of this opportunity to work at INTERCEDE and be of service to caregivers and domestic workers. I ask you to call me for assistance... or just to say hello!

**Q & A**

**Q-** *I am under the Live-In Caregiver Program, and gave birth here in Canada to my first child three months ago. My husband came to Canada to visit and we mutually agreed to bring our son home to the Philippines in order for me to continue employment as live-in caregiver and be able to complete the two-year requirement for Permanent Residence. Our problem is the long wait for our son's birth certificate which is required for his Canadian Passport. Can our son apply for a Philippine Passport since we, his parents, are both citizens of the Philippines. Can the Philippine Consulate issue a special document for our son to be able to travel as soon as possible?*

**A-** A Birth certificate is an important document needed when applying for a Passport and you are just one of those frustrated people affected by the long process of getting a birth certificate in the province of Ontario. However, your alternative to apply for a Philippine Passport for your child is possible since you are both citizen of the Philippines. The Philippine Consulate Office at 161 Eglinton Avenue, confirms that your son may be issued a Passport or special papers to travel if you as parents will both be at their office to execute an affidavit and bring supporting papers like identity cards, your Philippine Passports, copies of application forms and receipt of payment when you apply for your son's passport. For information, call the Philippine Consulate office at (416) 922-7181.

**Q-** *My application for Permanent Resident under the LCP was filed last year. I currently hold an Open Employment Authorization and am anticipating that my landed immigrant status will soon be issued. I have a boyfriend who recently lost his appeal for a Refugee status and we were set to get married. Can I sponsorship him from within Canada or does he still need to go out of the country?*

**A-** Before I will say congratulations on your engagement, please postpone your wedding plans if you intend to avoid delay and complications in the approval of your long awaited Permanent Residence status. If you marry before the approval of your landed status, you have the obligation to inform Immigration the change of your civil status. Your husband will be required to comply with all the necessary statutory requirements since he will become your dependent, and if there are issues about his status, your landed status will surely be affected and long-delayed.

After you receive your landed immigrant status, you can either file to sponsor him from within Canada if he has a valid immigration status, or from outside of Canada i.e. from his country of origin. Call INTERCEDE Office for further information and referral.

**Q-** *I am a live in caregiver and I will soon apply for my permanent residence status. Can I request for concurrent processing of my parents in the Philippines since I am not married and I have no other relatives here in Canada?*

**A-** No, you cannot request for concurrent processing of your parents in your application for permanent residence because they are not your family members. Family members mean husband and children but not parents.

If you received your permanent residence and you have been working for 12 months, you can sponsor your parents but you have to meet the income requirement to qualify as a sponsor.

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Q- Do I have to submit the original copies of my work permit as proof of my employment when I apply for permanent residence?

A- No, You don't need to submit original nor photo copies of your work permit as proof of your employment. You could have a work permit but you did not actually work for that employer. What Immigration wants are original letter from your present and previous employers stating date of employment and termination, your ROE from previous employers and CCRA Notice of assessment.

Call INTERCEDE for more information.

Q- I applied for permanent residence and open work permit on July, 2004. My current work permit will expire on October 15, 2004. Do I still have to apply for extension of my work permit?

A- No, since you already applied for open work permit with your application for permanent residence you will be on implied status when your work permit expires but you cannot work for any employer other than the one stated in your current work permit until you received your open work permit.

**VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION**

*By Tess Meriel, Volunteer*

I have always enjoyed reaching out to people. In March 2004, I started volunteering at INTERCEDE. At first, I helped Des in the preparation of hand out materials for Job Search Workshop (JSW). Then, in May I have been helping Genie in the administrative work.

Most of the time, I do the reception work; answering the phone, greeting visitors and providing information. Sometimes clients who have appointments would love to share their joys and pains experienced at their workplace. I share the same relief after listening to their stories. For me this means I already provided a needed service.

It is a personal fulfillment for me to contribute my time and skills whenever I can. I don't have a fixed schedule but I come to volunteer twice or thrice a week.

Opportunity to meet new people, to develop new skills, to explore new challenges and social interaction are some of the benefits I gain.



**FREE JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP**

**FOR CAREGIVERS & NEWCOMERS**

**WHEN: SUNDAY**  
October 17, 24 & 31, 2004  
November 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2004  
December 4, 5, 11 & 12, 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**

**I N T E R C E D E**

**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:**

- Jo Alcampo** — Interim Administrative Co-ordinator
- Des Balce** - JSW Facilitator
- Fely Villasin** - Part — Time 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 with COSTI-OCASI; Ontario Status of Women; the Municipality of Toronto CSGP, Maytree and Trillium Foundations grant programs, for their financial support..*



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