

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

September 1997



(INTERCEDE)

MANY FORMER DOMESTICS/CAREGIVERS NOW IN UNIONS ORGANIZING FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS IN HOTELS, RESTAURANTS

Former domestic workers and caregivers, those who entered Canada either through the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) or Live-in Caregiver (LCP) programs, are among the "backroom" workers of the burgeoning hotel and restaurant industry in Metro, cleaning rooms and sweating in kitchens.

In a lively discussion with representatives from Local 75, a union that counts 60 per cent of hotel and restaurant workers in its ranks, INTERCEDE members saw a vision of the future: how important union organizing will be in their lives as they transition to the growing service sector.

Fresh from a victory that resulted from a demonstration held by workers of Holiday Inn on King and supported by friends, union activist Winnie Ng described the settlement that was reached with Holiday Inn's management which included a freeze on "contracting out".

Contracting out services such as laundry or pastry-making is a threat to the security of workers; it means losing full-time jobs and benefits to lower paid and more insecure workers of the contracted company.

Ironically, Winnie said, just as the service industry is growing, the number of workers is being reduced and each worker is being asked to work more. At the Sheraton Hotel, for example, the 1100 workforce has now been cut to 750. Today it is common for someone in housekeeping to be required to clean 16 rooms a day, that is half an hour per room.

While there is an unmistakable racial hierarchy in hotel and restaurants' pecking order, mostly white at the reception desk and getting darker from there, there's also a highering of educational and training standards that's replacing immigrant workers with, say, more "computer-literate" room attendants.

Women of colour, Black, Chinese and Filipina,

INTERCEDE members, domestic workers and caregivers, past & present

WELCOME to the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, October 5, 1997

3-5 pm at Cecil Community Centre
58 Cecil St., South of College/Spadina

- * Annual & Financial Reports
 - * Constitutional amendments
 - * Election of Board members
 - * Service & Program Evaluations
 - * Guest speakers
 - * Socials & Snacks

INTERCEDE's annual meetings are always an exciting and happy occasion to meet friends and participate in important discussions. It's your organization, take care of it!

make up the majority of the "backroom" workers in hotels and restaurants, hired as room attendants, in housekeeping and kitchens. Many have worked as domestic workers and nannies in the past and quite a few were members of INTERCEDE. Among them now are active organizers in their unions such as Filomena Canebo who works at King Edward Hotel. **Filomena will be a guest speaker at INTERCEDE's annual general meeting October 5 where she will share her story about how she became an active union member.**

"It's clear that there has to be more linkages between the union and the community, among unionized and non-unionized workers," said Winnie, "if we're going to succeed in the struggle to strengthen workers' rights."

UPGRADING YOUR JOB SKILLS

You can register now for:

- * *FREE Computer classes, basic and advanced (to be scheduled)*
- * *FREE English Upgrading*
- * *Discounted First Aid/CPR Courses by St. John Ambulance*
- * *\$80 Course on Elder Care at Seneca College beginning October 4*

Just call 483-4554

JOIN US IN VANCOUVER, REGISTER NOW!

4TH INTERCEDE DOMESTIC WORKERS CONFERENCE

November 15 & 16 in Vancouver, B.C.

This meeting will discuss labour, immigration and other policies that affect domestic workers and workers on temporary work permits. It will update members about the impact of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) on women and labour migration, as well as prepare for participation in the Women's Conference and People's Summit on APEC.

Vancouver contact - Julie Diesta (604)874-0649

Toronto contact - (416) 483-4554

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

INTERCEDE Caregivers Cooperative, Inc.

Giving our best service, Getting the best benefits

Call 483-4554

The Intercede Caregivers Cooperative has recently been established to provide employment services, benefits and better work conditions for domestic workers.

Join early, Join now.

DID YOU CHANGE ADDRESS ?

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES :

INTERCEDE Members :	FREE	Non-member Domestic :	\$20.00
Non-Profit Organizations:	\$20.00	Others	\$25.00

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SPONSORING YOUR FAMILY AND RELATIVES

Q1. How can I sponsor my family to come to Canada?

A. To sponsor an application for landing of a member of the "family class" you must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident who is at least 19 years of age. Applications can be picked up at 443 University Avenue (corner of Dundas) or by calling the teletmessage service at 973-4444.

Q2. Which of my family members are considered part of the family class?

A. Spouse, fiance(e), dependent children, parents, grandparents; Orphaned, unmarried and under 19 -- brother, sister, nephew, niece, grandson and granddaughter; Child to be adopted -- should be orphaned or an abandoned child whose parents cannot be identified.

Q3. Do I need to have a certain level of income to sponsor my husband and children?

A. You do not have to have a certain level of income but you still have to complete the financial evaluation form when sponsoring your spouse and/or dependent children. Dependent children are less than 19, unmarried and have no children themselves.

If you have a dependent child over 19 as defined by Immigration and want to include him/her in your sponsorship application, you will be required to have an income level sufficient to take care of you and all those being sponsored.

Financial resources may include a spouse's resources if the sponsor's financial resources are inadequate.

Q4. My sister and I are both permanent residents of Canada and single. Can we co-sponsor our parents to come to Canada?

A. The practice of administrative "co-sponsorship" by other family members has been cancelled.

Only spouses who co-sign an undertaking are called "co-signers". Married and common-law spouses can be the co-signers of a sponsorship application.

Q5. I was on welfare for the last three months but I recently found a job that pays good money. Can I sponsor my parents now?

A. No. You cannot if you received welfare within the 12 months prior to submitting your application. You must also be able to show that you have had the required income during the 12 months

prior to applying to sponsor your parents.

Q6. I sponsored my husband 6 years ago. We have since been separated and divorced. I heard that he is not working, has a girlfriend and is on welfare. I have re-married and am getting on with my life. How do I go about sponsoring my new husband?

A. Your application to sponsor your new husband may be refused if you failed to live up to your sponsorship obligations with your previous husband. If you signed an undertaking stating that you will take care of him for 10 years and he goes on welfare during this period, you may be sued by Immigration for the money paid out by welfare or you may have to begin making arrangements to pay back the money to welfare before submitting another sponsorship application.

Q7. My salary is only \$2000 short of the amount needed to sponsor my fiance. Can I just submit the application with a letter asking for special consideration?

A. Unlike before, the method for calculating the applicable income level has now been put into the regulations. This means that the law must be followed and not the Immigration officer's discretion, so the exact amount required by Immigration is the income you must prove in order for your application to be accepted.

Q8. Is it true that the \$975 Right of Landing Fee (ROLF) no longer has to be paid at the time an application is filed?

A. Yes. As of April 20, 1997, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration announced that those applying for permanent residence in Canada will now have the option of paying the ROLF at the time of landing or during any point of the application process rather than during their initial submission. However, Immigration still encourages people to make the ROLF payment upfront with their application.

Q9. I recently received my permanent residence and am thinking of getting married to a visitor. I do not want him to have to return home. Can I sponsor him from within Canada?

A. Yes. However, an Inland Family Sponsorship under humanitarian grounds is dependent on the Immigration officer's approval.

**IPASA PAGKABASA -
TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE
FOLLOWING EVENTS:**

LESBIAN COUPLES DISCUSS

issues, problems, adjusting to newly sponsored family members, and anything else under the sun!

Thursday, Sept.25 at 6 pm
Call 483-4554 to register

It's here! Register with INTERCEDE now!

COURSE IN ELDER CARE

Oct. 4 to Nov. 22, 1997 (eight Saturdays)
1 pm to 5 pm

A 30-hour course for \$80 only specifically for domestic workers and caregivers arranged by INTERCEDE with

SENECA COLLEGE

Faculty of Continuing Education
Classes at Leslie Campus, 1255 Sheppard Ave. East
(southwest corner Leslie & Sheppard)

Increase your Confidence! Be a Leader!

End violence against women!

A Workshop about the Role of Women

Sunday, Oct.19 at 2 pm.
Call to register 483-4554

VANCOUVER CDWCR

Committee for Domestic Workers' & Caregivers' Rights

(an INTERCEDE Affiliate)

Contact Julie or Lorina (604) 874-0649

We wish to thank the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program); Canadian Heritage; Multiculturalism Program; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Community and Social Services); the City of Toronto Grants Review Board, Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) the Trillium Foundation, and Urban Rural Mission for their financial support.

**ATTENTION NON-IMMIGRANTS
ON TEMPORARY WORK PERMIT**

You have probably seen the sensational newspaper stories published recently about "sex slaves" from Asia being rounded up by police. Pictures showed women reportedly from Thailand and Malaysia, handcuffed and being hassled into police cars.

In an interview on Global TV, Fely Villasin, INTERCEDE Coordinator, expressed the injustice of treating the victims as criminals; of "criminalizing" the women who are prostituted by poverty and economic need and who are the commodities in an international sex trade that produces profits for businesses and governments.

In fact, those entering Canada as part of a global trafficking in women for prostitution may be visitors categorized as "entertainers" on one-year temporary work permits.

Aside from domestic workers in the Live-in Caregiver Program and farmworkers, there seems to be an increasing number of people who are in Canada on temporary employment authorization or work permit for one or two years. They may have come as tourists or students or job "trainees" or "entertainers" or under other categories.

INTERCEDE is concerned that these workers have access to information and assistance. They may not know what rights they have; they may not know how they are protected by labour laws or they may need to be informed what immigration requirements they must fulfill. They may not know what health and other services are available to them.

If you know someone working in Metro on a temporary work permit and who may need some assistance, please call:

INTERCEDE 483-4554.

INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

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