



FCJ Refugee Centre

Refugee Forum - Oct 25
Anniversary Gala - Nov 17

Newsletter

SUMMER 2011

FCJ Refugee Centre has been walking with uprooted people for 20 years. Throughout this time we have been serving refugees and other uprooted people at risk due to their immigration status, and welcoming anyone asking for advice, counsel and support regarding these issues.



SUMMER 2011

The Summer edition of the newsletter is produced by FCJ Refugee Centre
(The individuals in the photographs have consented for their publication.)

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Temporary housing for women and children

We continue to serve newly arrived refugee women from different parts of the world. We offer them settlement services such as support through the immigration process; shelter, food, counselling and referrals to different programs according to their needs. We also help them with doctor's appointments, school admissions, banking, translation, etc. .



Understanding each other

Understanding each other is one of the workshops we offered this year. They learned how to build a relationship of trust and confidence amongst all the resident women as well as with FCJ staff members.

Resources for women who are victims of violence, was another successful workshop, giving them basic awareness about Mental and Physical health.

Celebrating togetherness with nature

This summer, the resident women, their children and the female staff and volunteers went on a two-day camping trip. It was a great opportunity for women to explore Canada through a different lens other than everyday life in the city.

"The adventure was a very interesting one. While it was my first time travelling to visit some places, to me it was a lesson and I find it so good meeting women from other countries. I learned how to swim and I went canoeing for the first time. I also shared foods different from mine. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to be part of this team." Adebujunola Adesu.

Sanctuary North in pictures



Leaving FCJ



Arriving at Sanctuary



Time to cook



Catching a fish

"As a placement student the camping trip was a great personal and professional experience; I got to enjoy the beauty of nature as well as the beauty of sharing different cultural experiences with all women. Camping serves as a great context to interact with other women as equals and gain an invaluable insight into intercultural communication" L. Dijanich



Story time

The trip provided not only our residents, but volunteers and staff, with a safe space to enjoy outdoor life and activities... rich in the novelty of a first time canoe trip, seated around a campfire, sharing songs from different parts of the world, basking in our differences and commonalities at once.



Settlement Programs

Welcoming clients and visitors



Patricia Echeverria helping clients over the phone. We assist uprooted people independently of their status in Canada. The Centre receives around 1000 phone calls every month. 65 % of the phone calls are from women.

Emotional Support



Many newcomers to Canada, particularly those fleeing trauma, are in need of responsive and timely emotional support. We have provided emotional support through the counselling program to 15 women from our houses and clients.

Women's Community Economic Development Project



The craft group had the opportunity to sell their handwork during different events at the FCJ Refugee Centre and through other activities outside the Centre. (Selling during street party June 11).

Interpretation, translation and referrals

Shaun assisting people with interpretation. We provide this service mainly on Wednesdays. Since January 2011 we have assisted more than 200 clients. We helped them with translation of documents and interpretation through applications to Ontario Works, Legal Aid, medical etc.



Walking with our residents in their way to be Canadians



Through our integrated model of Refugee Settlement we have supported around 30 women from January to August. Palwasha Wajdi is the coordinator of the program. She welcomes each one of our residents and offered support to them in their process of settle.

From January to August some of our residents had their refugee hearing and they already received a positive decision. They climbed successfully one more step in their process of settle in Canada. We accompanied them in their journey since they come to Canada.

Popular Education

Sharing Skills and Resources with Settlement Community program



The Law Foundation of Ontario
Building a better foundation for justice in Ontario

We have delivered more than 50 workshops in different cities. Through these presentations settlement workers and clients benefited from informative sessions about different topics related to immigration. We keep updating each presentation according to the information emerging from the Immigration authorities.

Anti-Trafficking Training Program



Over the past few months, FCJ Refugee Centre has been collaborating with various agencies across Ontario to raise awareness about human trafficking. Specifically, the organization has been developing and delivering workshops to help service providers better identify and assist victims and survivors of human trafficking. We've received a lot of positive feedback from these workshops, and anticipate the continuation of this project. Additionally, the project will be expanded to reach a greater audience, develop best practices, and provide more timely and responsive services for these populations. This important work couldn't have been done without the generous support of the Canadian Women's Foundation and our partners, Walk-With-Me, St. Joseph's Women's Health Centre and the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture. Finally, we'd like to thank our staff and volunteers for their tireless efforts throughout this endeavour.

Counter Human Trafficking Capacity Building project in the Peel Region.

The Counter Human Trafficking Capacity Building project in the Peel Region is funded by the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General and is being implemented by the Sexual Assault Rape Crisis Centre of Peel. The aim of the endeavour is to build capacity among service providing agencies in the Peel Region who provide, or are likely to provide, services to trafficked persons. The main outcome is to develop a Resources and Tools Training Manual for community organizations assisting victims and survivors of human trafficking. The project is set to launch a sustainable network to counter trafficking in the Peel region. The purpose of this network is to enhance the services delivered, as well as inter-service coordination for the identified trafficked persons.

The FCJ Refugee Centre was chosen to coordinate the project, giving the extensive experience of the organization in assisting trafficked persons with the provision of safe housing and ongoing support through the legal process. Loly Rico is a renowned expert in the area of human trafficking, as well as a devoted activist, working toward comprehensive service provision and the protection of trafficked persons. The project will build on the Anti-Trafficking training program delivered by the FCJ Refugee Centre, which is intended to raise awareness among service providers in Ontario who are likely to encounter trafficked persons. Loly Rico, one of the Co-Directors of FCJ Refugee Centre, is coordinating the project.

WORKSHOPS BY MONTH 2011

Month	Toronto	Other city	No. Workshops	No. Participants
January	2	0	2	35
February	10	2	12	395
March	6	1	7	130
April	12	1	13	367
May	2	4	6	161
June	12	2	14	495
Total	44	10	54	1583

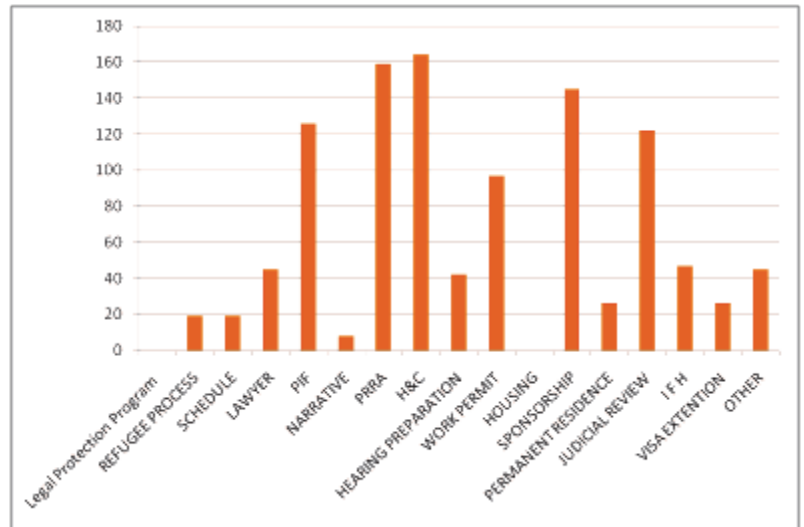
Workshops by topics

	Recur rence
Understanding Sponsorship "The Process of Reuniting Families	6
The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, IRPA (its application and procedures)	1
Recent Policy Changes and Citizenship Guidelines.	1
Sponsorship Breakdown	4
Violence against women and immigration process	5
Introduction to the Canadian Refugee Process (overseas and inland).	2
Policy changes and Refugee Reform	20
Refugee Process	5
The Personal Information Form	5
The Refugee Hearing	4
The Judicial Review	6
The Pre-removal Risk Assessment	8
Humanitarian and Compassionate Applications (H&C)	10
Immigration possibilities for non status people	2
Services for Refugee and Non-status: Education, health system	21
Trafficking: causes and legal options	21

Legal Protection Program

This program involves inland activities related to case work at every step of the refugee determination process or any other immigration process. From information-gathering delegations to other countries, to collaborations with local NGOs, all activities are geared toward greater access and equity.

We had seen a growth in the rejection of refugee claims, most of the rejection claims are from Mexico and Colombia; nevertheless, we see cases from El Salvador, Haiti, Guatemala, Afghanistan, St. Vincent, Jamaica, Honduras, etc. Due to the influx of refugee claim rejections, Judicial Reviews have risen, in the past three months there has been an average of 70 Judicial Reviews done by our office. The average number of people who come to our office to get help filling out their PRRA (PRE-REMOVAL RISK ASSESSMENT) was 20-25.



Pro-bono Placement



A Wonderful Experience at FCJ Refugee Centre!

My name is Yocelyn Blanco. I have been volunteering for FCJ Centre since April 2011. During this time I have been able to learn many things about immigration and the applications. Thanks to the FCJ personnel I have been able to work with many clients from different nationalities and I have been able to help them with their applications for sponsorship, PIFs, PRAAs, Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds applications and others. It gives me joy to know that I have been able to help someone in moments of despair

because they did not know about the system and what processes they had to follow.

The FCJ Centre is a great place, I can speak very proudly and highly of them since I had the opportunity to be a client as well when I first came to Canada in 2003. They care about their clients and the problems they are facing; they do not only care about people who are legally in Canada but also those who do not have status. They give them advice as to what steps they need to take to legalize their status. I am really happy and THANKFUL to the FCJ Centre for giving the opportunity to volunteer with them and for all the knowledge they have given me. The people who work for FCJ Centre are awesome; they mean so much to me. They are hard working persons and most of all they care deeply about the welfare of others.

THANKS FCJ FOR THIS EXCITING AND WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET.



Fundraising

Successful Garage Sale

Three sturdy singer sewing machines, a state of the art rusty barbeque and a small fridge and the FCJ annual sidewalk sale began with a bang. There were shoes that would make Imelda Marcos green with envy and books that would make many long winter nights pass with ease. The small kitchen items and other household items were great for bargain hunters and clothes allowed some people to walk away with new styles for the work days. As usual, the jewellery tables were popular with the original designs of the FCJ ladies and the pieces donated by well-wishers. There were even potted plants for sale for the balcony or the indoor corner that needed that special something. The volunteers and staff made the day fun, even after having spent several days sorting through the piles of merchandise and pricing individual items. The chef with hotdogs and salad provided some sustenance and a well-deserved break!

The sidewalk sale yielded a grand total of 400 dollars, which will go toward the FCJ Refugee House projects. There will be another sale on the 17th of September when we join with the neighbours for a grand street sale. Be there – you never know what treasures you might find!



Campaign for Emmanuel Koroma

FCJ Refugee Centre was accepting donations to support a case of family reunification. Emanuel Koroma was accepted here in Canada as a refugee from Sierra Leone. His family was displaced and separated during the civil war in Sierra Leone and Emanuel found out that his wife and their children were living in Lagos Nigeria. His children have received visas to come to Canada but Emanuel has not been able to raise the funds and because of his financial situation is not eligible for any type of government or bank loan. On August 1st in the Toronto Star an article appeared in regards to a family trying to reunite in Canada. Check the article: <http://www.thestar.com/news/investigations/immigration/article/1033287--dream-of-reunification-in-limbo>

Activities 2011

Street party



The co-directors Loly Rico and Francisco Rico with the Councilor Joe Mihevc at the Street party that FCJ Refugee Centre host on June 11, 2011 as part of the celebration of our 20 anniversary.



Guests at FCJ Refugee Centre

Andrew Cash, member of Parliament for the Toronto riding of Davenport, in a meeting with Varka Kalaydzhieva and Francisco Rico. The meeting is part of the tour that the member of the parliament had at FCJ Refugee Centre getting familiar with the work that the centre does with uprooted people.



Celebrating Summer

Yohanna, Yoselyn and Jazmine celebrating summer. Every year, before summer holidays, students, volunteers and staff get together to share and enjoy.



In the News

A precarious safety, at last

> [Read more](#)

A Warm Welcome

> [Read more](#)

Mexican woman deported to her death

> [Read more](#)

Events

CAMP PEACE

> [Read more](#)

Our Annual Street Party Aug. 7

> [Read more](#)

FCJ Refugee Centre continued strengthening the communication area. One effort is on the Web site: FCJ uploads all the new information received or produced at the office. The Centre had received excellent feedback from people who had checked the website. One of the main comments is related to the new information they now are able to access through the website.

In the news

FCJ Refugee Centre had become a reference for the media. Through this year we were interviewed by newspapers, TV shows and radio. One of the interviews was given to the Toronto Sun. The journalist Tom Godfrey interviewed Francisco Rico about the Assisted Voluntary Returns as part of the Balanced Refugee Reform Act. You can check the article published on August 24 here:

<http://www.torontosun.com/2011/08/24/failed-refugees-can-get-2g-to-leave>

The journalist Nicholas Keung linked the article Dream of reunification in limbo with FCJ Refugee Centre after received several e-mails and phone calls from people offering donations to help the family reunification of Manuel Koroma with his 5 children. The article was published on August 1st, 2011:

<http://www.thestar.com/news/investigations/immigration/article/1033287--dream-of-reunification-in-limbo>

On August 18 the Public Safety Minister Vic Toews announced that the Canada Border Services Agency added 32 people to a new section of the "Wanted by the CBSA". The news caused reactions and CP24 called FCJ Refugee Centre for a live interview on the news show.

CBC news covered the case of a teenager refugee wrongfully removed to Mexico. Josette Rosenzweig Issasi, 14, was deported to Mexico last fall, despite having refugee status. Matt Galloway spoke with Francisco Rico-Martinez, co-director of FCJ Refugee Centre about this topic. To hear the interview click here:

<http://www.cbc.ca/metromorning/episodes/2011/05/06/didnt-pay-attention/>

Refugee Update

Refugee Update is a journal published by the FCJ Refugee Centre which is linked to the Canadian Council for Refugees. The journal aims to reflect the life, experiences and issues facing refugees in Canada and other countries, assist Canadian refugee rights workers with information to support their advocacy activities, as well as to provide critiques on Canadian refugee policy and practices. With a circulation of 250 individuals and institutions, Refugee Update is published three times per year. Some of our articles published in our last issue: Middle East Revolutions, Power Changes and Refugees, Detention of Immigrants and Refugees, Why should Canada care about the Roma people, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights condemns Canada's Direct-Back Policy, etc. Refugee Update is available at our website.

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SPECIAL EVENTS ON OUR 20 ANNIVERSARY

2011 Refugee Forum on October 25th

As part of our 20 anniversary, FCJ Refugee Centre, along with Salvation Army, is organizing a forum focused on the Refugee Reform and the future of refugees.

The goal is to create awareness about the new refugee process and to exchange ideas about how the reform is going to affect refugee claimants and non status people.

For registration click here:

<http://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/?p=1658> (space is limited)

Anniversary Gala

We are going to close the year 2011 with our main event: the Anniversary Gala. Join us to celebrate our 20 years walking with uprooted people.

We want to share with you an evening of celebration with music, dinner and dancing on November 17.

The event is going to take place at : Lithuanian House (1573 Bloor Street West, Toronto) and the cost is \$50.00.

Please RSVP by October 31, 2011
with loisannefcj@gmail.com or
cteves@fcjrefugeecentre.org

