

FCJ Refugee Centre

Newsletter

Summer 2010

WALKING WITH UPROOTED PEOPLE.

FCJ Refugee Centre strives to meet the diverse needs of uprooted people in communities across Ontario. FCJ Refugee Centre attempts to address the problems of poverty and lack of resources, isolation, and discrimination, through community based programs which promote self-help, personal growth, community economic development and social justice.



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Our work is made possible by the generosity of our donors. See more details at:

http://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/?page_id=31

Thank you

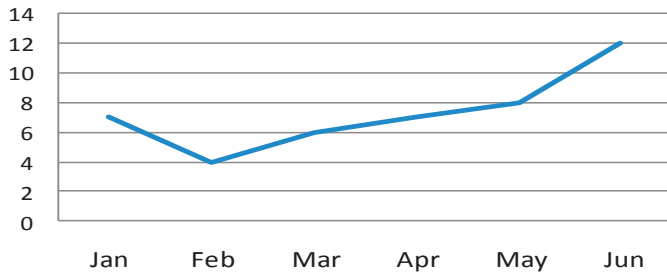
Sharing Skills and Resources with the Settlement Community



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

Over **40 workshops** have taken place throughout these past months, and there are many more planned for the rest of the year, due to pending changes in immigration legislation. These workshops are sponsored by the Law Foundation of Ontario and are **free of charge**.

2010 FCJ Refugee Centre Workshops - Monthly Totals



These workshops provide training, educational resources and information for refugee claimants, non-status people, settlement workers, communities, etc.



The changes in immigration laws have provoked many expectations in the community. As a result, the applications and orientations concerning Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds had the greatest demand in the first seven months of 2010.



Reactivation of Coalition

The first meeting of the **re-established Coalition of Service Providers for Refugee Claimants** took place thanks to FCJ Refugee Centre. The coalition continues its efforts to give better service to refugee claimants and to keep informed of any changes regarding immigration laws. The agenda included updates about what and how each organization was doing and problems they are facing at this moment. The coalition had a facilitator from the Management Advisory Services (MAS) who helped the coalition to define goals and make a work plan.

The FCJ Refugee Centre has participated in various initiatives, and conferences: ISAP Conference, spring 2010 OCASI Professional Development Conference, Spring Consultations of CCR, and Refugee Rights Day activities.

Counselling

A very promising new program that provides **professional counselling** to clients and residents of the Centre is now being offered. Elana Leman is leading this program with the expertise from her Masters Degree in Counselling Psychology and Post Graduate studies in Marriage and Family Therapy. She has been working with refugee claimants and their families at FCJ since 2009.

We assist clients in dealing with personal experiences of domestic violence, trafficking, and abuse, along with the impact these issues have on their lives. In doing so, we ensure the provision of a safe environment where clients can, at their own pace, regain a sense of trust commonly lost due to their experiences.



■ Volunteer Experience

FCJ Refugee Centre has approximately 50 dedicated volunteers, many of whom are students, who come weekly to help the staff and clients. The volunteers not only gain a great deal of knowledge, but also get rewarded with the pleasure of knowing they are helping others who are in need.

Sunita Miya is one of the many volunteers, she speaks of her experience at the Centre:

“ I have greatly enjoyed my internship here at the FCJ Refugee Centre. I have worked with many organizations and law firms but I have to say that the FCJ Refugee Centre stands out because of its loving atmosphere and its people. It has also provided me with the tools to succeed in immigration law in the future. We help a lot of people who come from different backgrounds and various situations and the Centre has taught me that you must do your best in your job, and never judge people and their circumstances. ”

Colour it Up

A **new** program that will be starting September 15, **Colour it Up**, will teach women how to eat and cook in a healthy way, whilst dealing with a tight budget. The program will be run at the FCJ Centre once per week. It will be run by two RNs working for Public Health Canada, along with FCJ Centre staff.

Job Search Workshop

A job-finding club run by the **Skills for Change** organization is being offered for the clients and residents of the FCJ Refugee Centre. The workshop teaches attendees interview skills, resume building, workers rights, etc.

Website

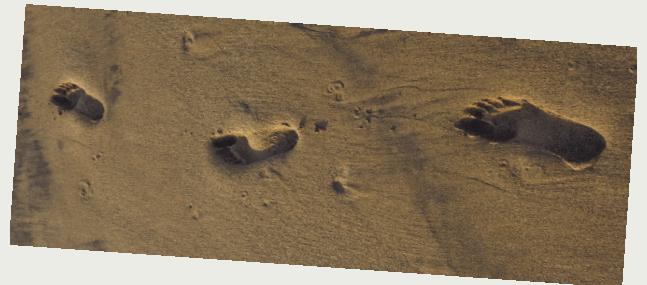
Better than ever, the FCJ Refugee Centre site has recently been re-designed and updated. Information on the various programs and services is available online, as well as PowerPoint presentations. We are also in the process of creating videos of our workshops, and an internet based radio station that provides information on settlement and integration issues.

Visit us now at: www.fcjrefugeecentre.org



Testimony

“ When I first got to the FCJ Refugee Centre, alone with my son, I came to know what real generosity was. The first time I talked to Francisco Rico, I begged him for help and offered him my car as payment—he resolutely rejected my offer and along with his wife, Loly Rico, and the FCJ staff started to help me and my family in any way they could. ”



They let me stay in their home for nearly three months, found me a good lawyer who took charge of our immigration process and also helped get my husband out of an immigration holding centre. What's more, they provided me with valuable orientation as a newcomer to Canada such as housing, parenting, counselling, programs for my 4 year old son and health care for me during my pregnancy.

Overall what I have to say about the Rico Martinez Family, the FCJ Refugee Centre, and its staff is that they are always willing to be the family of every newcomer—doing it with plenty of love and generosity. ”

- Angelica Torres

■ The Yard Sale



19 June dawned.... bright and sunny "with a 60% chance of rain". The volunteers arrived and started to put out the things, potential customers began to arrive. After weeks of collecting donations the yard sale was a success. The best customers were the little people, pulling the big people behinds them, begging for toys and books and DVDs!

The best part of all – at the end of the day, there was over \$400 in the box....!

Human Trafficking Awareness

The screening of the film "**Avenue Zero**" was received enthusiastically by the community. This is a documentary related to the issue of Human Trafficking, with a series of interviews with victims of trafficking and people working with them. We shared this film with our volunteers, staff and agencies who are now interested in showing the film to a wider audience. We are available to give workshops related to this issue.

■ Camp Peace

Play, laugh, travel, do arts and crafts, including making your very own piñata, you can expect all of this and more at FCJ Centre's summer camp! Camp Peace is run by student Ronnie Wong at the FCJ Refugee Centre between 10 am – 4pm and is available for children from any background, ages 6 – 12. Besides the activities at the Centre, the children also go on many field trips to vary their routine, including going to the swimming pool and the Ontario Science Center.

The staff and the volunteers are very friendly and share a loving passion for the children. The camp is a great and productive way for children to spend their summer with lots of exercise and enjoyment, plus the parents get a chance to pull away from their busy life and not have to worry about their child during the day.



■ Street Party

On August 7th we had our street party in front of the Refugee Centre, and it was a great hit. Many people joined us on this beautiful day filled with delicious food, dances, artistic presentations, face painting, and even a piñata! All were welcome to attend, and those that did can confirm that they had a blast. Both young and old greatly enjoyed each other's company and the entertainment offered. Overall it was a day that will not be soon forgotten.

