Fall Newsletter, 2016

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208 Oakwood Ave. Toronto ON
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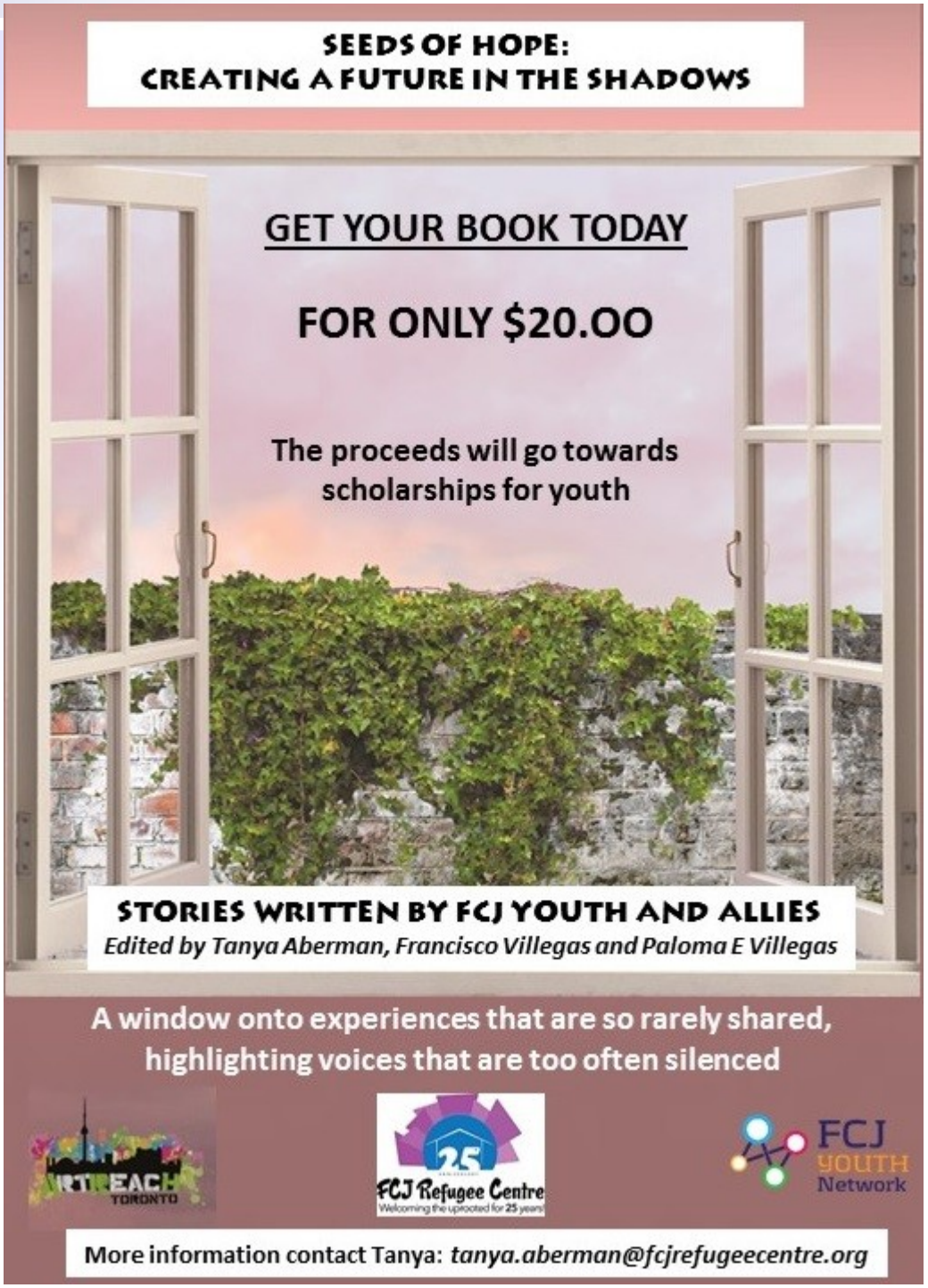
GET YOUR BOOK FOR ONLY $20.OO

(+$3:00 shipping)
The proceeds will go towards scholarships for youth.

If you want to receive it by mail (the shipping amount might vary if you order more than one book)

How to get your book:
At FCJ Refugee Centre location 208 Oakwood Ave. Toronto, ON M6E 2V4

By Mail: Send your cheque payable to FCJ Refugee Centre (Please include shipping in the total) or you can pay through canadahelps



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

-WORKSHOPS

-HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

-READY TOURS/ RAD INFO-SESSIONS

-FCJ YOUTH NETWORK SESSIONS

-COMMUNITY KITCHEN

SEEDS OF HOPE

The FCJ Youth Network is proud to celebrate the launch of their first book, titled "*SEEDS OF HOPE: CREATING A FUTURE IN THE SHADOWS*." This youth-led initiative was born out of the interest and enthusiasm of members of the FCJ Youth Network, who wanted to share their stories and experiences in writing.

With the generous support of Artreach Toronto and Toronto Arts Council, the youth benefited from financial support to hold a series of workshops to build and improve writing skills, self confidence, leadership and event planning skills. Over a period of one year, these workshops were run by mentors with specific skill sets, and monitored by Tanya Aberman, one of the FCJ Refugee Centre's staff who oversaw the project and edited the book with Paloma and Francisco Villegas.

The book is an epic portrayal of real life experiences of Newcomer and Refugee Youth who share their experiences as newcomers to Canada, their route and journey, and their expectations of Canada. This piece of art creatively challenges numerous stereotypes. As a result, this book is an invaluable tool to address barriers and create awareness of different intersectionalities. Some University Professors in Ontario have already included this project in their curriculum for students. It is our hope that every institution will officially include this in their curriculum.

It is important to note that proceeds from the book, "*SEEDS OF HOPE; CREATING A FUTURE IN THE SHADOWS*" will be used to provide a scholarship for refugee youth to access Post-Secondary education.

To support this cause, please contact Tanya Aberman at

tanya.aberman@fcjrefugeecentre.org or Call 416 469 9754 to get your copies!

SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

TRANSITIONAL HOUSES

Through our settlement program we offer women and children temporary accommodation while we help them to get settled and feel safe in their new surroundings. We serve marginalized immigrant populations who are experiencing settlement barriers due to their immigration status. This includes issues of discrimination, prejudice and domestic violence. Our staff works with our contacts in Toronto to help highlight the existing limitations of the settlement programs and to help provide individuals with temporal, transitional and ultimately permanent housing options. During the last period of this year the housing crisis has been a challenge for every family who comes to our Centre looking for a place to live.

A lot of changes are happening at the transitional houses. We have full houses with 25 women and 6 children. Our support team has been organizing many events during the last period of the year. The residents have been involved in engaging activities such as the community kitchen, circle of conversation, monthly meetings, etc. The majority of the residents are going through their refugee process and the FCJ team has been supporting them in their integration process.

IKEA DONATIONS

Thanks to Ikea Foundation the living room of every house was totally redecorated and furnished at the end of the fall. New sofas, curtains, carpets, coffee tables, etc. are part of this donation. Now the living rooms are more comfortable, and invite residents to spend time together. The GREAT HALL (where the FCJ Youth Network meets every Wednesday) was also equipped with a new desk.

ANTI- HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

To honor this year's Victims and Survivors of Crime Week's theme "The Power of Our Voices", FCJ Refugee Centre in partnership with East Metro Youth Services provided a safe space for survivors of human trafficking (domestic and international) to share their experiences in receiving support from community organizations and law enforcement.

The peer facilitated focus groups discussed at length the existing challenges in accessing services as well as how to work in collaboration to identify promising practices. The meetings culminated in a roundtable **"From the Bottom Up"** where conclusions and recommendations from the focus groups were shared with service providers from the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network (TCHTN) and members of the Human Trafficking Intervention and Prevention Strategy collaborative (HIPS) as well as others. The event which was funded by the Department of Justice Canada was an opportunity to discuss how the voices of survivors can be heard and included in the ongoing delivery of services, allowing us to prioritize a need that's currently being identified by multiple stakeholders. Report of the meetings will be published on FCJ Refugee Centre's website as well as at the TCHTN blogpost http://torontocounterhumantraffickingnet.wordpress.com/

FCJ Refugee Centre continues to support internationally trafficked persons through their journey to recovery as well as to facilitate the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network. The Centre is also actively delivering trainings to service providers to share our experience in working with trafficked persons as well as promising practices and current trends. The workshops are free of charge and can be requested by contacting Varka at varka@fcjrefugeecentre.org

Currently our Centre is working on promoting the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Response Model among service providers. The human trafficking helpline, which is a central piece of the uniform response, was launched in 2015. The line, part of the Toronto Rape Crisis Center crisis line, is serviced by experienced counsellors trained to identify human trafficking situations. This project is financed through the Community Safety Initiative program provided by the City of Toronto. The aim of this initiative is threefold: 1) increase the visibility of the helpline among service providers and potentially trafficked persons; 2) solicit service providing organizations in Toronto to join the Response Model and fill gaps of service provision; 3) raise-awareness and train various service providers to identify and support survivors of human trafficking.

LET'S CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS AND SUPPORT FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE BY BUYING A CHRISTMAS TREE

The holiday season is here and the FCJ Youth Network is selling Christmas Trees at Ikea North York. Every time you buy a tree at this location, you will be supporting newcomers and refugees.

IMMIGRATION HELP AND REFUGEE PROTECTION

FCJ Refugee Centre continues to deliver services to precarious migrant populations living in Toronto through the Precarious Migrant Support Program. The program was funded for the third consecutive year by the Newcomer Settlement Program under the Target and Innovative Settlement and Integration Services Stream of Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. This project targets refugee claimants, international students, and temporary workers, understanding that these groups face additional barriers and may have increased vulnerabilities as a result of recent federal changes (including changes to the refugee determination process and the temporary foreign worker program; and the introduction of express entry program).

Services delivered through this program include: legal aid applications; referrals to lawyers (depending on the need of the case); assistance in finding safe and sustainable housing; assistance with employment related issues; applications for identification; providing information and orientation about rights, and possible avenues to access those rights; support getting into school, and any other school-related issues; and referrals to appropriate and timely health and mental health services. This unique service delivery response reflects the ongoing changes to Canadian immigration and refugee systems, and strives to improve the facilitation of the provision of wrap-around services through improved linkages with other services. Every month we have been receiving around 400 clients (follow ups and new clients)

Lewhat Kidane and Diana Gallego, Immigration and Refugee Worker

Lewhat Kidane

My name is Lewhat Kidane and I am a Social service worker at Seneca College doing my placement at FCJ Refugee Center.

My experience here has been amazing so far. It has only been 4 months but I have learnt so much during my time here from the clients and from the people who work here.

The people who work here are so helpful and friendly and willing to help anyone. I have never seen a work place where the people who work there are closer than family.

So far since I've been here I've learnt about all the immigration applications, made legal aid calls, met and assisted clients, helped create the employment manual, and assisted with the food distribution from Second Harvest.

This has been a great learning experience as well as a great place to network and meet all kinds of people and I am very excited to complete my placement at FCJ Refugee Center

POPULAR EDUCATION

WE continue to work with other organizations and communities offering workshops. During the last 4 months we provided approximately 30 presentations to different organizations and communities.
Recently we implemented group sessions. Every Monday afternoon we facilitate 3 informative sessions for our clients on the following topics: Visa extension/ work permit, Humanitarian & Compassionate application form and the Sponsorship Process .
Check out the list of workshops on our website

READY TOUR

The Ready Tour is becoming a very well known program throughout the settlement communities. Many agencies, shelters and lawyers are referring refugee claimants. Also the IRCC office in Etobicoke is distributing the flyer to refugee claimants. Due to the high number of participants for the Ready Tour we started to split the groups and offer two simultaneous Ready Tours.

RAD info-sessions

We continue organizing the RAD info-sessions. Through the last 3 months we implemented a short presentation on the appeal process. The session is provided after every Ready Tour. The goal is to create awareness about the timelines in the appeal process.

Andrea Mahony

The FCJ Refugee Centre is a warm and welcoming place where all individuals can come for support with the immigration process. The Centre is also a connection for people who are trying to build new networks and communities in Canada.
As a student of Community Work, I found the FCJ Refugee Centre to be a great environment for me to learn as much as I can about the issues surrounding immigration, and the refugee claimant process in particular. It is a great honour to be able to do my placement here, where everyone is extremely encouraging and knowledgeable.
The FCJ Refugee Centre has given me the opportunity to learn more than I ever thought possible, not just about the processes and policies, but about the individuals, families, and communities that are affected by these issues.

Carla Rocha

My name is Carla, and I was a student at Humber College doing my Office Administration Certificate. On September 2016 I came to the FCJ Refugee Centre to start my six month student placement. Since I joined the staff I was able to learn a lot of new things and meet a lot of people. It gave me knowledge of the many services offered at the Centre and the help that is given to people. As my placement came to an end I continued volunteering at the Centre. I had a good experience in the working environment. After my time came to an end I was employed and joined the FCJ staff. Now I still continue working at the Centre and I am glad to be part of the staff, surrounded by hard working people .

FCJ Refugee Centre
Welcoming the uprooted for 25 years!

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE INFORMATIVE SESSIONS

How can I extend my stay as a visitor?

Do I need a work permit to work in Canada?

What is a humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) application?

What is the proper procedure on how to sponsor my family?

EVERY MONDAY
AT FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE.
(Except long weekends)

YOU ARE WELCOME TO COME AND LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT IMMIGRATION TOPICS:

1) MONDAYS FROM 2:00 PM TO 3:00 PM
EXTENSION VISA/ WORK PERMIT
-Learn the requirements and how to be prepare to do a visa extension/work permit

2) MONDAYS FROM 3:00 PM TO 4:00 PM
HUMANITARIAN AND COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATIONS (H&C)
- Requirements for an H&C application
- The most common documents that H&C applicants need

3) MONDAYS FROM 4:00 PM TO 5:00 PM
APPLICATION TO SPONSOR A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY
-Learn the difference between family reunification and sponsorship
-Determine your eligibility to sponsor a relative
-Be familiar with the steps you have to follow to sponsor.

OTHER IMMIGRATION ISSUES.

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