

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

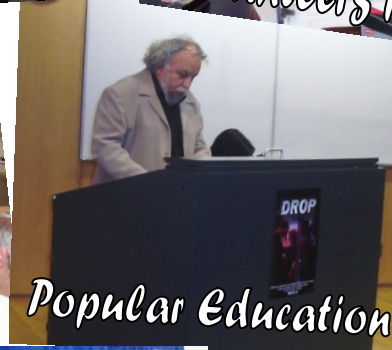


FCJ Refugee Centre
208 Oakwood Ave
Toronto, Ontario
M6E 2V4
Phone:
(416) 469-9754
Fax:
(416) 469-2670

Website:
www.fcjrefugeecentre.org

E-mail:
fcjrefugeecentre@on.aibn.com

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2009



Walking with uprooted people

Board of Directors

Lois Anne Bordowitz
FCJ, President
Elizabeth McIsaac,
Vice-President.
Edward Hyland,
Secretary and
Treasurer
Patricia Binchy FCJ,
Director
Patricia Cruz,
Director
Clara Mupa,
Director
Alejandra Priego,
Director
Carlos Sebastian,
Director
Maureen Silcoff,
Director

Staff

Loly Rico
Tatiana Ibarra
Doina Oncel
Leslie Lane
Carmen Cespedes
Ntombikayise Khoza
Carolina Teves
Giovanni Rico
Francisco Rico-
Martinez

Volunteers

More than 30
volunteers served at
the FCJ Refugee
Centre in 2009.
Many thanks to our
volunteers pro bono
and co-op students
who assisted us over
the past year.



CO-DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

2009 was a very tough year for our organization and for the people that we serve, yet we continue strongly in our commitment to walk with uprooted people. The global financial situation that has touched everyone on earth, has especially affected the poorest of the poor and organizations like ours, which has made walking with them even harder.

Our institutional revenues had a huge drop but every month a miracle seemed to happen, congregations of religious women and men came to our rescue to cover our daily operations and the Law Foundation of Ontario gave us good news for 2010. Our already reduced resources were stretched to the limit to cope with the 20% increase in the demand for our services. Our staff responded showing an admirable solidarity to uprooted people. Our volunteers, pro-bono law students and placement students were just amazing. In November we were able to hire extra staff thanks to the "Investing in Neighbourhoods" program from Toronto Employment and Social Services.

As well as the painful growing process described above, we witnessed changes in the immigration and refugee processes that continue moving away from the concept of human protection to reducing immigration possibilities almost entirely to (temporary) work-related opportunities.

Two factors impacted us the most in terms of refugees. First, by changing the rules of the safe third country agreement between United States and Canada, and the imposition of visas for citizens of Mexico and the Czech Republic, the Minister of Immigration managed to reduce the intake of refugee claimant cases by at least 30%. Second, the Minister's political interference in the refugee determination process has caused the rate of acceptance to drop almost 40% (the lowest in Canadian history) and it continues to go down. Many of these refused people are staying in Canada without status and continue to come to our open door for help.

Moreover, the government has accepted more than double the number of temporary workers than permanent residents over the last year. Many temporary workers are forced to become non-status because their contracts are not honoured (due to change of economic conditions or employer abuse) and then they come to our door for help on how to gain status. In truth there are not that many open doors for them.

It is easy to predict a reduction of refugee claimants but we have to be ready for a serious increase of our work with the issues of non-status people, applications and procedures... the needs of uprooted people are as always illuminating our path. Please continue helping us to keep our door open to anyone who find themselves in need.

PROGRAM UPDATES

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

Transitional Housing Support

We provide an integrated service to the women who come to our centre: temporary housing, orientation, Ontario Works appointments, help/referral for subsidized housing, legal aid and referrals for legal representation, medicals, enrolment in English as a Second Language, classes for adults, enrolment in school for the children and different community development programs.

In 2009, we had 40 residents, including 8 children from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mexico, Colombia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Japan, El Salvador, Guyana, Afghanistan, Congo, Kenya, St. Vincent, Haiti, North Korea, and Moldova.

"I am very grateful for the FCJ Refugee Centre because when I came to Canada I was alone, I felt lost in this big city with no family or friends, no place to go. The weather and a new language scared me a lot, but at the FCJ, I found not just a bed where to rest; I found the home that I left back in my country; I found a new family who helped me in my new life..."

Membere came to Canada in 2009, and she is one of our residents. She is attending ESL classes and gaining Canadian experience through volunteer work.

Community Economic Development Project



This weekly program lets residents learn to make clay wares and jewelry, sell their handiwork at crafts venues or start their own small businesses. The coordinator of this program is Lyda Moreno, who came as a refugee.

She ran her own business in her native Colombia and is now starting one in Canada.

Cultural and Recreational Fieldtrips

We continue to offer day trips for our residents and their children to enjoy cultural, educational and recreational activities around the city. Recent outings have included the Royal Ontario Museum, a performance of the play *Body & Soul* at the Tarragon Theatre, and tours of local public libraries. Our women and children residents participate in a field trip each summer to Sanctuary North (pictured left).



This gives them an opportunity to explore life outside the city. This exercise builds community among our women residents.

Second Harvest

Every Thursday we receive fresh produce and prepared meals from Second Harvest. This food goes directly to our residents who coordinate the distribution according to the number and needs of the women and children living in our houses.

Community Kitchen Program



In March, our Community Kitchen group launched the new kitchen at 208 Oakwood, funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, allowing us to double the number of women who enjoy this monthly group.

20 participants learned healthy recipes, built friendships and even started their own catering businesses. This year, groups have prepared menus from Burundi, Eritrea, Haiti, Mexico and Nigeria.

Training Programs



Through 2009, we have had several workshops oriented toward our residents. The first series of workshops centered on employment: preparation of a resume, employment search and interview skills. The second series featured information sessions about domestic violence: how to prevent, to identify, and to eliminate the violence.

Christmas Party

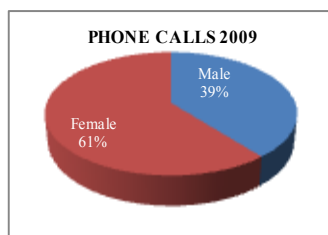
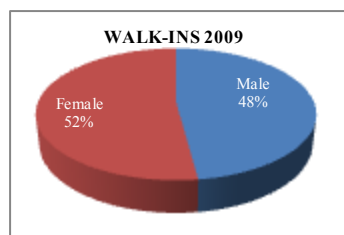
Every year, we have a Christmas party. Thanks to the generous donations of CP24/CHUM Christmas Wish, the Body Shop, Dufferin Mall, and Jack's Bakery we were able to provide toys for the children of our past and current residents, provide gift bags for our residents and enjoy a delicious dinner. The Christmas party builds an atmosphere of family, friendship, love, and warmth.

PROGRAM UPDATES

REFUGEE PROTECTION

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

In 2009, more than 5,000 persons relied on our settlement and integration services, including around 2,000 children or young people from newborns to 19 years of age. This more than tripled the 1,894 cases served three years ago. Almost 3,000 files were opened.



Staff and volunteers responded to more than 6,000 phone calls and 1800 walk-ins. A significant percentage of our services are focused on women.

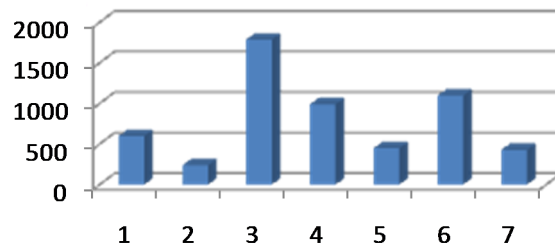
POPULAR EDUCATION



Workshops: We offered 125 educational workshops (on 39 immigration and refugee topics) involving 75 agencies and over 4,500 workers and refugees.

Media: We have become a reference source for TV, radio and print media. The focus was mostly on three issues: 1) The issue of reduced access to the refugee system by imposition of visas to Mexicans and people from Czech Republic, 2) The lack of alternatives for regularization of non-status people, which is an issue not close to being resolved, and 3) Increasing public awareness about trafficking of persons in Canada and the remarkable lack of interest from the government.

SERVICES RENDERED 2009



1. Legal Aid and Lawyer
2. Others
3. Applications
4. Translation/ Interpretation
5. Refugee Process
6. Orientation
7. Settlement services (OW, ESL, Volunteer)

Country Research: Honduras

In light of a 300% increase in clients from Honduras in 2009, FCJ Refugee Centre completed a fact-finding trip to that country in late March. Our research, which fills a void of information about the local political, judicial, human rights and social conditions, is based on extensive interviews with government officials, non-government organizations and human rights advocates. The final report is published on our website.

ACTIVITIES 2009

Public Events/Meetings	20
Workshops	125
Conferences	6
Website	Over 2000 monthly hits in our website

Media coverage included CBC, CTV and TVO for television; the Toronto Star, Metro, Ottawa Citizen, CanWest, Cottage Life, El Popular and Correo Canadiense for newspapers; and CBC, Radio Canada and Voces Latinas for radio.

We promote awareness about general refugee issues in Canadian society through our publication *Refugee Update*. There are 3 issues per year, available through subscription and single copy sales. Past issues are posted on the website.

DONORS

A special thank you to the Religious Congregations who supported us during the year:

- The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
- Scarboro Missions.
- The Basilian Fathers.
- Sisters of Charity, Halifax
- Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Our Lady's Missionaries
- The Redemptorists
- Sisters of Social Service
- Congregation of Sisters of the Holy Names Jesus and Mary.

Organizations and Companies:

- ABBA Quebec Resources
- J.P. Bickell Foundation
- F.K. Morrow Foundation
- The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation
- Northwood Neighbourhood Services
- D&R Renovations
- The Law Foundation of Ont.
- Alternative Spring Break of University of Michigan
- South Etobicoke Community Legal Services
- Roman Catholic Episcopal Diocese of Toronto.

Individuals:

- Kathryn J. Camfield
- Juan Carranza
- Joy and Paul Connelly
- Michael Creal
- Adela Crossley
- Fred and Ursula Franklin
- John Gardiner
- Jacinta Gevos
- Nicole Laviolette
- Roland Luo
- Geraldine Sadoway
- Waikwa Wanyoike



Through Canada Helps we received donations from 30 individuals. Canada Helps can be accessed directly on line or through our website.

FCJ Refugee Centre's work is made possible by the generous support of foundations, businesses, religious congregations and churches, government agencies, community groups, and individuals. The FCJ Refugee Centre is grateful for all our donors. We wish to thank and acknowledge you, including those who wish to remain anonymous, for joining us in our journey to improve the lives of newly arrived immigrants and their families.

We have student placements from: Seneca College, George Brown College, University of Toronto, and York University. Thanks to the students from the University of Michigan.



Youth video earns \$5,000 donation for FCJ

In May, we were thrilled when students from Dante Alighieri Catholic School presented us with a \$5,000 cheque as part of YPI, the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, of the Toskan Casale Foundation. To win this Ontario-wide award, and to earn a donation for their chosen charity, four members of the grade 10 class visited our office and houses to produce a five-minute video and presentation about the Centre for review by YPI judges. Our heartfelt thanks to these young leaders for their creative support!

Audited Financial Report for Year 2009

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

		2009	2008
Revenues			
The Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus Contribution	\$	50,000	38,000
Donations		106,437	18,014
Grants		118,448	213,356
The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant		99,893	12,807
Rental Income		59,699	55,726
Other		10,611	16,340
		445,088	354,243
Expenses			
Administration		41,643	73,956
Communications		6,945	8,447
Occupancy		21,454	23,106
Household -Oakwood		15,144	14,588
Dufferin		11,957	13,215
Dovercourt		11,210	15,376
Capital assets- HPI Small capital project grant		21,483	-
Capital assets- Ontario Trillium Foundation grant		99,893	12,807
Salaries and benefits		195,126	188,388
Refugee Support		8,836	6,445
Support group activities		2,467	4,357
Automobile		3,547	5,633
Manuals and production		2,706	6,120
		442,411	372,438
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year		2,677	-18,195
Net assets (deficiency)- at beginning of year		-1,971	16,224
Net assets (deficiency)- at end of year	\$	706	-\$1,971

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

FUTURE PLANS 2010

- ▶ We continue to visit the detention centre once a week. One staff member goes to the detention centre and provides our services to those who need help.
- ▶ We are creating spaces to share and to learn about Canada: the Sanctuary North trip, garage sale, street party, Christmas party, etc...
- ▶ Counselling: We assist our residents with emotional counselling once a week.
- ▶ We are working to raise awareness of trafficking issues. Trafficking is becoming an increasing problem in today's society due to the **social, economic and political framework** of our times. Our work in this area includes movie viewing, presentations, discussions, etc.
- ▶ We continue assisting our clients with ESL classes. In 2009, we served about 25 clients without status with basic ESL classes. Due to the necessity in this area we are trying to keep providing this service.
- ▶ We are working on the reactivation of Coalition of Shelter Providers for Refugee Claimants. This group will meet in order to share ideas, to implement new initiatives, and to reflect about changes in immigration policy.



FUTURE PROGRAMS 2010

Sharing Skills and Resources with the Settlement Community.

The constant increase in the number of workshops is due to our increased profile as a peer education alternative training organization. We expect a greater number of educational activities for 2010 because we have received funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario to more broadly implement the provincial program in the current year and in 2011.



On line

Our website has been re-designed and updated. We are working to create videos of our workshops and presentations, plus podcasts to provide information on settlement and integration issues. *Refugee Update* will also be on-line in the near future.



Legal Protection and Integration Program for Uprooted People.

Our goals are to provide a variety of ongoing legal information and educational resources for refugee claimants and non-status persons and refugee and immigration front-line workers; to offer hands-on experience and internships to *pro bono* law students and to students from community worker programs and post secondary schools, as well as mentoring opportunities for international lawyers, create educational handouts and to conduct research on a variety of immigration and refugee processes.