

FCJ Refugee Centre Annual Report 2006

FCJ Refugee Centre celebrates 15 years

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.

Mandate

The FCJ Refugee Centre has a mandate to:

- Provide shelter and basic life necessities such as food, clothing and transportation for women and children.
- Provide to refugees and other uprooted people education, counselling and other support services, including interpretation services, referrals to legal assistance, employment training, programs on Canadian culture and life, and other educational workshops.
- Assist refugees and other uprooted people to adjust to Canadian society.

Message from our Co-Directors

During 2006 we celebrated 15 years of walking with uprooted people. From our humble beginnings of two rooms, we have grown to four houses with many programs. See inside for details of our celebrations and our programs.

The reduction in the number of refugee claimants coming into Canada continued in 2006, due mainly to the Safe Third Country Agreement and the interception of migrants initiatives implemented by Ottawa overseas. There has also been a reduction in the number of Board Members of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) who are in charge of deciding on refugee claims. This shortage of almost 50% is creating an increase in the backlog of cases before the IRB even though we have an actual reduction in the number of refugee claimants.

However, even under these circumstances, our numbers continue to grow and the houses and services were used to full capacity, but impact of the above mentioned policies on the lives of refugees and refugee advocates are very tangible and sad. The people that managed to come

to Canada to make a refugee claim are in limbo for longer periods of time. Family reunification with their relatives left behind is becoming even longer than before. The number of non-status people living in Canada who are trying to regularize themselves has also increased. Due to the increase in the length of time for each case to be processed and the increase of non-status people, community-based organizations like ours are having to invest more resources in each case. Thanks be to God our number of volunteers and the level of resources received to implement our mandate continues to grow. All of the above and more were possible also thanks the commitment of all the people that help us to open our door even wider every year to welcome more strangers to Canada.

Francisco Rico-Martinez and Loly Rico, Co-Directors



Greetings from the City on the occasion of our 15th Anniversary Street Party. Pictured from left to right:

Caesar Palacio (City Councillor), Francisco Rico-Martinez (Co-Director), Loly Rico (Co-Director), Patricia Binchy FCJ (Provincial), Lois Anne Bordowitz FCJ (Communications), Joe Mihevc (City Councillor)

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS 2006

We are proud to inform you that during 2006, the following organizational highlights were achieved!

- Provided shelter and basic life necessities to 40 women and 10 children.
- Delivered over 50 workshops involving more than 250 agencies and over 1,000 participants/refugees.
- Responded to 2,933 phones for help about the immigration and refugee process.
- Dealt with almost 1,000 individual cases through at least one appointment, from which close to 300 files have been opened for different immigration and refugee procedures.
- 1,517 newcomers relied on the Centre's settlement and integration services, up from 1,062 in 2005!

Staff receive awards



**Francisco and Loly receive
YMCA Peace Medallion**

To top off our 15th Anniversary year, three of our staff were recognized for their commitment to uprooted people. On November 21, 2006, Co-Directors Francisco Rico-Martinez and Loly Rico were honoured with the YMCA Peace Medallion to recognize the impact they make as one unit, and the harmony and power their togetherness brings to the cause of peace and justice and their work with uprooted people.

On November 26, 2006, Lois Anne Bordowitz, FCJ received the Amino Malko award from the Canadian Centre for the Victims of Torture (CCVT). The Amino Malko Award is named after a refugee woman who was among the first staff of the Centre and who died from cancer and is awarded to a woman with refugee experience who has made significant contributions in policy, advocacy and settlement service for newcomers.

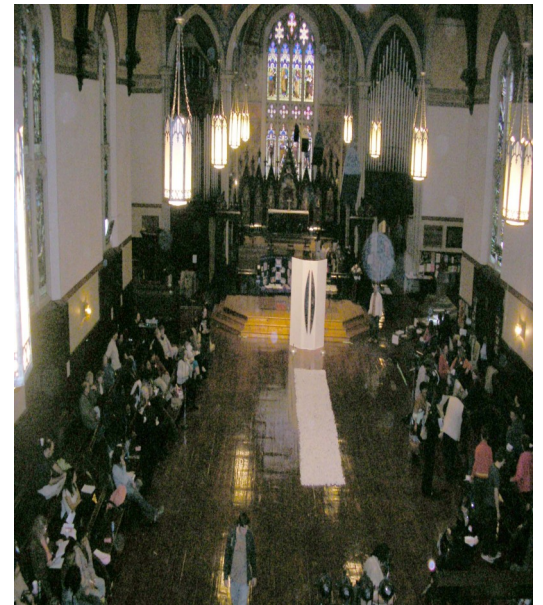


**Lois Anne with the
Amino Malko award**

Gender and Migration Conference

The year 2006, marked the FCJ Refugee Centre's 15th year of walking with uprooted people. We celebrated this momentous occasion with a year-long celebration and by holding three major events—a street party, a gender and migration conference and a Christmas dinner-dance party.

At the centerpiece of our year-long celebration we organized a day-long panel-style conference on "Gender and Migration" focusing on three different gender-specific themes including Gender and Status, Gender and Trafficking, Gender and Enforcement. The conference was held on September 26 at the Church of the Holy Trinity and was a huge success! Over 100 people attended including government representatives, professionals from refugee-serving NGOs, lawyers, workers from community legal clinics and of course refugees themselves.



Gender Conference in Church of the Holy Trinity

Volunteers

We continue to see increased involvement in our organization by volunteer pro-bono law students and full-time lawyers. Requests from Law students as well as Social Work students who want to complete their student placements at FCJ Refugee Centre continue to rise. In 2006, we had 9 student placements including 6 Law and 3 Social Work students. A positive outcome achieved has been the organization's increased capacity to provide legal and counseling services to uprooted people.

Our deepest appreciation to all of the volunteers and student placements who gave so generously of their time, talents and energy to make our work possible.



Street Party/Christmas Dinner and Dance



Columbian Folk Dance

Our first anniversary event was a street party on May 27. Residents and past residents had tables set up on the street to sell their food wares from countries like El Salvador, Nigeria, Eritrea, Colombia, etc. There was a piñata for the children, live music, and dances from Colombia and Korea. We were blessed with a beautiful warm day and many friends, colleagues, local residents and current and former clients who came to help us celebrate. Official greetings were received from the City of Toronto and the Federal Government and presented by our City Counselor, Cesar Palacio and Member of Parliament, Mario Silva.

Our third event was held in December with a Christmas dinner with over 200 people attending! We served a traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings, raffle tickets were sold and beautiful hand-made arts and crafts donated by the artisans were won by several of our residents. We also danced to the beat of an excellent Latin band. A good time, food and company were enjoyed by all!



Enjoying the Dinner Dance



Everybody loves to dance



Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patricia Binchy, FCJ, President
 Lois Anne Bordowitz, FCJ, Officer
 Ann McGill, FCJ, Officer
 Shirley Majeau, FCJ, Officer
 Bonnie Moser, FCJ, Secretary/Treasurer
 Paula Mullen, FCJ, Officer
 Imelda Toomey, FCJ, Officer

ADVISORY BOARD

Patricia Binchy, FCJ
 Lois Anne Bordowitz, FCJ
 Steve Foster, Judge
 Edward Hyland, Lawyer
 Shirley Majeau, FCJ
 Alejandra Priego, St. Joseph's Health Centre
 Maureen Silcoff, Lawyer
 Loly Rico, Co-Director
 Francisco Rico Martinez, Co-Director

Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge our supporters....

On behalf of all of us at the FCJ Refugee Centre and the over 1,500 individuals who rely on our settlement and integration services, thank you for joining us in our journey to improve the lives of newly arrived immigrants and their families.

Our organizational supporters....

Basilian Fathers

Canadian Autoworkers (CAW), Social Justice Fund

Canadian Union of Public Employees' (CUPE), Local 4400

Catherine Donnelly Foundation

Catholic Charities

CHUM Christmas Wish

City of Toronto's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI)

City of Toronto's Heart Health Partnership

Conventual Franciscan Centre

Daly Foundation

Dominican Friars

Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ)

F.K. Morrow Foundation

Green Shield Canada Foundation

Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Local 353

Jackman Foundation

John C. and Sally Horsfall Eaton Foundation

Maytree Foundation

Ministry of the Attorney General

Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA)

Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)

School Sisters of Notre Dame, (SSND)

Sisters of Charity of Halifax, Charity Alive Fund

Sisters of Service

Sisters of Saint Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie

*United Way of Greater Toronto's, Building Effective Organizations:
Capacity Assessment, Planning and Assistance Program*

Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada

Our in-kind supporters...

Furniture Bank

Second Harvest

Sleep Country

St. John's Bakery

Program Highlights

REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

- ◆ Positive decisions were received through several successful refugee hearings including women from Mexico, Eritrea, Colombia and the Dominican Republic.
- ◆ The rate of acceptance for applications based on Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds and Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA) continues to grow.
- ◆ The houses were fully occupied with new women from all over the world: Eritrea, Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Hungary, Zimbabwe and Uganda. Unfortunately, we continue to have to advocate for faster processing times for women to be reunited with their children.



Women participate in the Community Kitchen

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

- ◆ Over the summer, residents went camping to Sanctuary North where they spent 3 days relaxing and building community.
- ◆ Starting a new Expressive Arts and Recreational Summer Program for the children of current and past residents to take part in expressive arts activities, gardening and recreational play.
- ◆ Starting and sustaining a Community Kitchen that provides a place for immigrant and refugee women to learn healthy cooking skills, make new friends, share their experiences and troubles, practice English and become part of their new communities.
- ◆ Shelter residents took part in multi-cultural field trips to a variety of ethnic communities like China Town, Little Italy and Little India. These outings provided opportunities for the women and children to learn and experience the multi-cultural landscape of Canadian Society and the City of Toronto where they have chosen to live.
- ◆ Through the Women's Program economic development initiatives, residents are working with clay and learning how to start a small business to sell their wares.



Women working on a banner for International Women's Day

POPULAR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

- ◆ Designed and delivered 82 educational workshops and trained 1,386 participants including refugee claimants, persons without status and service providers working with these communities including: agencies, shelters, community centres, labour unions and social services.

REFUGEE UPDATE

In 2006, three issues of the Refugee Update were produced.

Financial Statements 2006

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET DEFICIENCY		
For the year ended December 31, 2006		
	2006	2005
Revenues:		
Contribution — The Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus	\$53,470	\$9,470
Donations	\$19,887	\$14,071
Grants	\$155,551	\$145,335
Rental Income	\$61,030	\$61,275
Other	\$6,530	\$3,846
Total Revenues	\$296,468	\$233,997
Expenditures		
Administration	\$48,032	\$45,429
Communications	\$8,255	\$6,195
Household: - Oakwood Office	\$21,003	\$16,648
- Oakwood	\$20,176	\$20,110
- Dufferin	\$11,780	\$9,781
- Dovercourt	\$24,294	\$10,090
Salaries and benefits	\$170,738	\$154,351
Refugee support	\$4,563	\$8,954
Support group activities	\$10,105	\$2,553
Automobile	\$4,686	-
Manuals and production	\$3,271	\$3,943
Total Expenditures	\$326,903	\$278,054
Subsidy from Federal Corporation (FCJ)		
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures for the year	(\$30,435)	(\$44,047)
Net assets — at beginning of the year	(\$177,338)	(\$133,281)
Net assets — at the end of the year — forgiven by FCJ Sisters at June 1, 2007 meeting.	(\$207,773)	(\$177,338)

Business Name

Primary Business Address

Your Address Line 2

Your Address Line 3

Your Address Line 4

