



MISSION AND MANDATE

FCJ Refugee Centre helps uprooted people overcome the challenges of rebuilding their lives in Canadian society. With an open door approach, the Centre offers an integrated model of refugee protection, settlement services and education, including shelter for women and their children.

The FCJ Refugee Centre has a mandate to assist refugees and other uprooted people in re-establishing their lives and integrating into Canadian society by:

- Offering inclusive and timely counselling and support, including interpretation, referral to legal assistance, employment training, programs on Canadian culture and life, and other educational workshops.
- Providing temporary shelter for women and children
- Collaborating with relevant organizations to deliver popular education about the protection of the human rights and dignity of uprooted people.

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FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

WALKING WITH UPROOTED PEOPLE

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS



*Loly Rico and Francisco Rico-Martinez
Co-directors FCJ Refugee Centre*

Despite many challenges during 2010, we were steadfast in our commitment to walk with uprooted people, supporting them to overcome the many new hurdles in their path.

The declining number of refugee claimants continued during 2010. It went from over 32,000 in 2009 to just over 22,000 in 2010. This decrease is due to the new visa requirements that were imposed by CIC on people coming from Mexico and the Czech Republic, as well

as changes made to the U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement in July 2009. This meant that there was a reduction in people from countries such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Iraq and Zimbabwe coming through the United States.

Another significant event that took place in 2010 was the imposition of the refugee reform. In June of last year, Parliament adopted significant changes to the refugee determination processes. Although this reform is aimed at making the process quicker, in fact it will deny claimants the right to have their stories unfold in a timely and compassionate way. We need to steady ourselves in preparation for the true impacts of this reform, once it is implemented at the end of this year.

In the summer, close to 500 Tamil refugee claimants arrived on the West Coast. This led to the tabling of Bill C-49, a bill that was presented as being anti-smuggling. However, the fact is that most of the provisions of the bill only serve to punish refugees. Legal experts strongly condemned the bill as contrary to the Charter and international law, as some refugee claimants would be detained for a year without review.

The biggest impact of these events was the widespread change in the national narrative surrounding immigrants and refugees. It seems that there has been an abandonment of Canada's long history of acceptance of newcomers, and instead an increase in xenophobic attitudes. In spite of this, there was growing concern among Canadians about the exploitation faced by Temporary Foreign workers, spurred on by the numerous reports of abuse that happened last year.

Despite the overall decline in refugee claimants, we remain busy with more cases related to Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds, Sponsorship, and other types of immigration issues. With the continuous support of our volunteers, community members, placement students and staff, the FCJ Refugee Centre will always keep its doors open, turning no one away.

Loly Rico

Francisco Rico

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

Voices of our residents

"When I came to Canada I did not know where to go and then I was given the address to the Refugee Centre on Oakwood Ave, in Toronto. When I got to the Office I was so welcomed by all the staff. I lived in the house for nine months; during that time I was a volunteer for the Centre. Every time I have fear and remember my past experience I can always have Loly's attention and she always has an ear for every concern. Thanks to all of you, for the support you gave me. Now that I was accepted as a Convention refugee I started a new life". Annetta Profitt.



Annetta Profitt and Loly Rico

Summer Camp



Play, laugh, travel, do arts and crafts, including making your very own piñata. This is what happened at FCJ Centre's summer camp, Camp Peace, which was

run by student Ronnie Wong. The Children were involved in a wide variety of activities focused at all times in promoting social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development; among some of the activities we offered to the children during the 6 week program were arts and crafts, where the kids had the opportunity to explore their creativity; they also had field trips to different playscapes around the area, swimming pools, a picnic to High Park. Thanks to the generosity of the management of the CN Tower and the Ontario Science Center, we were given an affordable rate for the residents and their children so that they could enjoy these well-known landmarks.



Counselling

A very 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 the FCJ Centre 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.

Job Search Workshop

A job-finding club run by the Skills for Change organization was offered for the clients and residents of the FCJ Refugee Centre. The workshop teaches attendees interview skills, resume building, workers rights, etc. During the months of July and August, FCJ Refugee Centre along with Skills for Change offered to the residents of our houses and also to the clients of our organization, a program focus on helping people to become successful in the Canadian job market, by providing workshops related to job search, resume writing, cover letters, as well as interview skills, networking, apprenticeships and training programs.

Colour it Up

This program started in September, teaching women how to eat and cook in a healthy way, whilst dealing with a tight budget. The program was held at the FCJ Centre weekly by two RNs working for Public Health Canada, along with FCJ Centre staff.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES



Sima at the art exhibition

Sparkles of art at FCJ Refugee Centre

This past 9th of October, the FCJ Refugee Centre organized and sponsored a lively fund-raising event that took place at Artscape Wychwood Barns. About 100 people came to the event that was sprinkled with foods from five different parts of the world. While the audience and visitors enjoyed their tasty snacks, a broad array of artists presented their acts. Visual arts were also exhibited, and these included paintings by Sima and Juanis, masks by Paco Lundi, jewelry by Angelica Torres, rag dolls by Monica Latorre and photographs by Alejandra Gelis.

A successful street party

Live world music and multi-cultural entertainment were some of the presentations that the community enjoyed during the Street Party. A lot of clients, friends, and neighbours came with their families to celebrate the summer. Through the day we had activities for children including workshops and piñatas, arts and crafts for sale and multicultural foods and crafts for sale.



Community members at Street Party



Craft Group

It is a weekly program that lets residents learn how to make jewelry and sell it. Angelica Torres joined the group and now she owns her own small business.

Second Harvest

During 2010 the Centre continued receiving food from Second Harvest. Around 6 volunteers help each Thursday distributing food to residents.



Helping with the food

Donations for Garage sale

The sidewalk sale of 2010 was part of the fund raising initiatives to keep up the work. We sell as much as we can but before we do, we sort out what we can keep for the women and children who are new in Canada and awaiting decisions on their status or what can be used in any of the houses that offer shelter to women and children who are refugee claimants.



Opening gifts at Christmas

Once more FCJ Refugee Centre celebrated Christmas by giving children new gifts. This is possible thanks to the generous donations of CP24/CHUM Christmas Wish.



Volunteers receiving donations

REFUGEE PROTECTION AND POPULAR EDUCATION

Legal protection program

This year we have had several increases that have been surprising, such as the number of PIFs compared to last year, which increased by 37 %. We had anticipated a decrease in PIFs due to the actions taken by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. On the other hand, we have had a surprising decrease in PRRA's, as we saw 20% less PRRA's this year in the first quarter.

As expected, the number of Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds cases increased, by 23%. At the same time, there has been a puzzling decrease in Schedule 1. We believe this is due to the lack of knowledge of services at the very beginning and more clients becoming aware of our services the longer they are in Canada. All the other services have remained on par with the last year, neither increasing or decreasing. The office in general has seemed busier this year, since current cases require more time and resources than the numbers may suggest.

Service	2009	2010
Refugee Process Orientation	31	14
Schedule 1	18	10
Lawyer Appointments	31	22
Legal Aid	15	24
PIF	46	63
PRRA	102	82
H&C	74	91
Work Permits	62	43
Sponsorships	78	68
Judicial Review	42	46

Anti-trafficking training program



With generous support from the Canadian Women's Foundation and a dynamic advisory committee, FCJ Refugee Centre has developed and is currently delivering the 'Anti-Trafficking Network and Service Provider Training' to organizations across the GTA and Ontario.

Sharing Skills and Resources with the Settlement Community



With the support of the Law Foundation, the Centre has trained 2,652 persons, through over 600 hours of training, in 82 workshops, 10 different cities, involving over 50 organizations that are related to refugee and immigrants.

Research, networking and communication

➡ FCJ Refugee Centre did country conditions research in El Salvador, Mexico and Colombia to form expert opinions for refugee claimants in order to help them in their cases and to have more of an impact on the rate of acceptance of those particular countries.

➡ FCJ re-established the Coalition of Service Providers. Through 2010 the Centre coordinated the meetings, addressing systemic issues that newly arrived refugee claimants face in Canada including lack of resources, marginalization, and discrimination.

➡ FCJ joined the exhibition called Fragments at Nuit Blanche. Hundreds of memories floated at Lamport Stadium. Thousands of people witnessed past experiences of refugees and victims of human rights violations.

➡ FCJ Refugee Centre has reinforced communication through media, publications, social network, and on-line information, by creating promotional material and promoting its new website. Page loads have increased almost by 5000 hits last year. This had been created by our constant updating of the content, the increase in the number of workshops that we have been able to provide, as well as, our capacity to provide them provincially.

Website Statistics		
	In 2010	In 2009
Page loads	41,652	36,140
Unique Visitors	12,584	12,532
First Time Visitor	9,412	9,048
Returning Visitors	3,172	3,484

DONORS

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

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

Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
Our Lady's Missionaries
Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul
The Basilian Fathers
The Redemptorists
The Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ)
School Sisters of Notre Dame of Ontario
Sisters of Social Service

Organizations, Foundations and Companies:

ABBA Quebec Resources
Canadian Women's Foundation
CHUM Christmas Foundation
George Lunan Foundation
Home Depot Canada Foundation
Law Foundation of Ontario
Quest Alternative Senior School
R. Catholic Episcopal Diocese of Toronto
St. Andrew's Society of Toronto
University of Michigan Alternative Spring Break Program
Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada
Trinity-St. Paul United Church Public Witness Circle
Trinity-St. Paul United Church Alternative Giving Program

Individuals:

Alex Neve	L. Krukowski
Andre A. Gelinas	L.N. Reusch
Doretta Wilson	Marilyn Galati
Edward Hyland	Mrs. Roger La Mora
Elizabeth Melsaac	Nancy & Scott Sheriff
Heather Neufeld	Neva Vehovec
Holly Kreidler-Phaneuf	Pat Parisi
Ivonne Rayon	Silvani De Oliveira-
JoAnn Jenkins	& Stephen Tulli
Joseph Gunn	Victoria Price

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



Through the eyes of FCJ's volunteers

"Experience is the best way to learn, and what better way of understanding the reality than to be part of all the volunteer programs. My allocation as volunteer in FCJ Refugee Centre was an experience that has contributed to my personal development, and to creating a major growth of social service, therefore; that will not be the first time that I will volunteer. I admire the arduous work of the personnel of FCJ Refugee Centre and its volunteers since they have the concept of social service understood."

Volunteer: Yolanda George



FCJ Refugee Centre team.

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	2010	2009
Revenues		
Donations		
Individual donation	\$ 2,780	\$ 12,310
Religious organizations (note 4)	94,937	120,520
Foundations (note 5)	154,795	167,829
Corporations	11,500	12,500
Government grants	67,374	33,565
Rent	63,726	59,699
Other	14,045	38,664
	409,157	445,087
Expenses		
Legal program	101,781	47,479
Popular education	76,032	39,640
Settlement program	145,725	111,010
Administration	67,965	122,846
Equipment purchases and building improvements (note 5)	-	121,435
	391,503	442,410
Excess of revenues over expenses for the year	17,654	2,677
Net assets (deficiency) – at beginning of year	706	(1,971)
Net assets – at end of year	18,360	706