

SUMMER NEWSLETTER



FUNDRAISING EVENT: "HUMAN TRAFFICKING: OPEN YOUR EYES TO EXPLOITATION IN CANADA"

Human Trafficking has become one of the leading topics for discussion in communities around Toronto. To continue the conversation and bring awareness to the community FCJ Refugee Centre along with the National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto Section is hosting a fundraising event: "Human Trafficking: Open your eyes to exploitation in Canada".

The event will feature a movie screening followed by panel discussion. The movie stars Rachel Weisz in the awards winning movie

"THE WHISTLEBLOWER".

Date: October 22nd, 2014

Time: 6:30pm

Location: North York Library, 5120 Yonge Street, Toronto M2N 5N9 (the Burgundy Room in the Concourse level next to Mel Lastman Square)

Ticket price: \$ 10.00

Please register to save a spot. Spaces are limited

Registration

Eventbrite: <http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/human-trafficking-the-whistleblower>

By email: varka@fcjrefugeecentre.org

UPCOMING DOCUMENTS

Short documentary on the trip and report about the situation of refugees in Bulgaria

FALL EVENTS

- Human trafficking fundraising movie screening
- Ride for Refugees
- Community/volunteers recognition BBQ

SERVICES

- Ready Tours for refugee claimants
- Dancing classes
- Workshops
- Medical and mental health clinic on weekends
- English classes every Saturday.
- Youth Network : Join the group, learn and have fun. Meetings every Wednesday at 4:00 pm at FCJ Refugee

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE STAFF

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| Loly Rico | Francisco Rico |
| Co-Director | Co-Director |
| Philip Ackerman | |
| Resource Development and Youth Coordinator | |
| Carolina Teves | |
| Popular Education and Communication Coordinator | |
| Giovanni Rico | |
| Advocacy and Volunteer Coordinator | |
| Tanya Aberman | |
| Research and Project Coordinator | |
| Varka Kalaydzhieva | |
| Anti-Human Trafficking Project Coordinator | |
| Kanishka Basnayake | |
| Bookkeeper | |
| Treisy Rivera | |
| Intake and Case Management | |
| Le'Va Browne | |
| Reception | |
| Noelia Delgado | |
| Transitional Housing Worker | |
| Xavier Brown | |
| Office Administrator | |

FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE CONTACT INFORMATION

Location: 208 Oakwood Ave.
Toronto, ON M6E 2V4

Website: www.fcjrefugeecentre.org

E-mail: info@fcjrefugeecentre.org

Tel.: 416-469-9754

Fax: 416-469-2670

Summer's special moments



Golden Jubilee of Lois Anne Bordowitz, FCJ. Lois Anne has been part of the FCJ Refugee Centre since the organization started to operate as a project.



Some action during the food distribution: boxes flying



Learning to Roller Skate



Celebrating birthdays



Getting ready for the parade



Playing games



Same shirt, same style!



A sunny day on the beach

Settlement program



We delivered 8 life skills workshops in the summer to our residents and clients. The attendance at these workshops varied from 8 to 14 per session for a total of 72 clients. At the end of the first series of workshops we provided certificates as a recognition of attendance.

We are already planning our second round of workshops for this fall. Some of the topics we will provide to participants are related to nutrition, budgeting, all about credit, conflict resolution, self-esteem and landlords and tenants rights.

We also organized 4 trips with our residents and they were very happy to get exposed to new places in Toronto such as High Park and Harbourfront.

During this summer Antonela Cicko worked with us in the settlement area, providing support to our residents in many of the fieldtrips.



Working at FCJ has been an amazing experience! I now have a better understanding of the refugee process and how current laws profoundly shape the lives of refugee claimants.

In my position as a transitional housing worker, I have had the amazing opportunity to work with some of the residents at our three houses.

Their stories and struggles have helped me to understand the refugee experience from a gendered perspective. More importantly, I have learned that you cannot help others if you do not first understand one's position of privilege. FCJ is more than workplace – it is a community made up of compassionate people who truly enjoy reaching out to people in need.

Antonela Cicko



Regarding our transitional houses we managed to organize our summer cleaning days in each of the houses as well as to schedule regular meetings with the residents to address their living concerns as well as to discuss the improvement of their homes; also we have enjoy movie days with popcorn and ice cream at the houses with the residents.

We are also in the early stages of the development of our clothing bank. This program is currently being used by the transitional house residents by appointment only, however it is planned to be open to other clients of the Centre in the near future. We also continue receiving the support of Second Harvest once a week.

Settlement program

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CLINIC

After celebrating the second anniversary of the opening of the FCJ Refugee Centre's Primary Health Care Clinic, we are proud to say that our clinic is receiving a trial period of funding from the Inner City Health Associates (ICHA). As a result of this funding, a new physician and a nurse practitioner will be joining our team and our clinic hours will also be increasing in the fall! Thank you ICHA for allowing us to continue to serve the most vulnerable populations!



Our Primary Health Care team currently includes our primary physician, Dr. Jim Sugiyama, three volunteer doctors and one nurse practitioner. Currently, our Primary Health Care Clinic is open every other Saturday, with the exception of long weekends, from 10:00am to 2:00pm. If you want to book an appointment with our Primary Health Care team, please contact us: (416) 469-9754 or info@fcjrefugeecentre.org.

MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

Our previous counsellor, Ms. Salma Jaffer has finished her placement with us and will be pursuing other opportunities. As a result, we are happy to welcome our new counsellor, Blanca Martinez.

Once a previous volunteer with the FCJ Refugee Centre, Blanca is a psychologist with extensive experience in running women's support groups. We look forward to her joining our holistic wellness program!

Our Mental Health Clinic is accessible every Saturday from 10:00am to 2:00pm. The therapeutic counselling is offered in a holistic and client-centered approach to improve the mental health and well-being of the individuals. If you want to book an appointment with Blanca, please contact us at (416) 469-9754.



SATURAYS 10:00-2:00 PM
MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

FCJ offers therapeutic counseling in a holistic and client-centered approach. Our goal is to improve the emotional distress and well-being of the individuals. We support individuals coming for short or long term counseling as a process of healing and recovery.
COUNSELLING IS A FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES

Settlement program

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

After a very successful first semester at Uprooted U, preparations are underway for the second semester.

Visiting professors and mentors are being recruited and students have begun filling their applications.

The semester will run from September 30th until Dec 16.

If you have any questions, or if you are interested in applying, please contact: uprootedu@fcjrefugeecentre.org

Francois Régis Dushimiyimana is part of the first group that was attending the first round of sessions during this summer.



Francois Régis Dushimiyimana

As a newcomer refugee you face a lot of obstacles, leaving everything behind to come to a new country, being new to the system and mostly being alone. But one of the biggest obstacles is access to education.

I was very fortunate to be part of the Uprooted U program. I never thought that I would ever sit in a class and learn again. But being part of Uprooted U made me feel like I was in school again, sitting in class and learning again; having classmates and lots of homework and essays to write.

Settlement program

ENJOYING NATURE

Eighteen youth, a six-hour car ride, a few too many burnt marshmallows and an all-around good time...

This year marked our third year travelling to Sanctuary North with the FCJ Youth Network, for a three-day camping trip. The cloudy weather and delays on the way up were quickly forgotten with the beautiful scenery and hip-hop sing-a-longs.

As always the magic of Sanctuary North bonded the group, forging new friendships and strengthening our community. Many of the youth referred to the trip as an “activity of survival” – battling spiders, mosquitoes and unseasonably cold weather. Despite this harsh reconnection with nature, members of the group really cherished their time on this trip.

They particularly loved swimming with the fish, making a camp fire, and enjoying peaceful community meals together. The whole trip was infused with an amazing energy and enthusiasm... and we're already looking forward to next year.



My name is Xavon, I am a summer student here at FCJ Refugee Centre and I participate in the FCJ Youth Network.

The time I have spent here in the office has been a wonderful experience for me. The reason being, I have not only enhanced my work experience but I felt I have grown as a person. This is because of FCJ's unique work environment; it is not stifling like many of the places I have worked before; it gives you room to breathe, room to define yourself within the workplace.

I also liked how everyone had lunch together; I think it builds a comradery within the workplace bringing us closer together. While working here, I mainly dealt with the youth, planning youth group activities and co-hosting these activities.

It has helped me build my communication skills, problem solving skills, and my ability to co-ordinate within a team. It has been a wonderful experience.

Xavon Charles

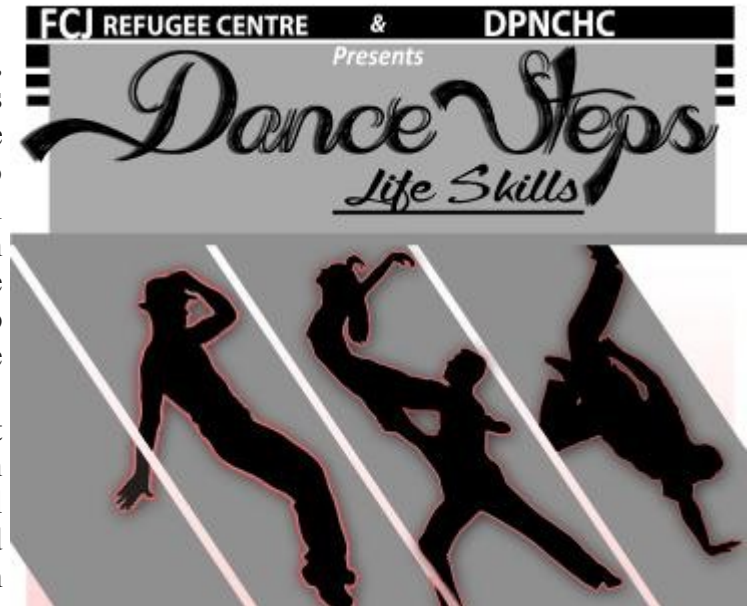


Settlement program

DANCE STEPS, LIFE SKILLS

Under-resourced and at-risk newcomer youth, including youth with precarious immigration status will be provided with a one-year interactive dance program, where youth will have the opportunity to express themselves artistically, share cultural practices such as traditional dances, and learn creative dance forms from emerging artists in the Toronto area. This program will enable the youth to learn social networking skills in a positive space, the skills needed to become

leaders in their communities, and importantly, assist them in realizing their potential as they claim membership in the community. This program will run on a weekly basis, where the youth are provided with a space to learn various cultural practices from each other and learn Canadian dance forms from professional artists.



What: Dance Steps, Life Skills
Where: Davenport Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre
 1900 Davenport Road, TO, ON
When: Tuesdays from 6pm to 7:30pm
Cost: Free! (Tokens available after class)
Who: Youth between the ages of 15 and

RIDE WITH US...

This fall, FCJ Refugee Centre is participating in the Ride for Refuge, a non-competitive

bicycling fundraiser with locations across Canada and the United States. We're riding with hundreds of other charitable partners like us who care for the displaced, vulnerable and the exploited.

HOW TO JOIN A TEAM FOR FCJ REFUGEE CENTRE

If you would like to ride with us and have no team to join, please contact us directly by email/phone and we'll connect you to our main team or help you find another.

- Visit rideforrefuge.org and choose your country
- Click the REGISTER TO RIDE button to the right of the RIDE Logo
- Select the LOCATION you'll be riding in and continue
- Click to accept the WAIVER FORM and continue
- Click JOIN A TEAM (or register individually if you wish and join a team later)

Once you've registered, you can begin recruiting team members and raising funds immediately! Your team will show up on our PARTNER PAGE at rideforrefuge.org/partner/fcjrefugeecentre

Settlement program



THE YOUTH ACTION GATHERING 2014 TOOK PLACE IN TORONTO

The FCJ Youth Network were in charge of hosting 100 youth from all over Canada, with the collaboration of the Canadian Council for Refugees for the Youth Action Gathering 2014. The event took place at the Steel Workers Hall from August 21 to August 23.

Youth had the opportunity to bring up really important issues that they are facing in their communities. Every day we had 3 workshops where we discussed different important topics for youths such as education, stereotypes and the use of art to tell our stories.

Access to Education is one of the biggest issues that youth face due to their status in Canada. The YAG was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Immigration help and refugee protection

The last four months have seen the program meet a lot of hurdles. The constant changes and new regulations have created a lot of confusion and frustration with the clients we serve. Due to the changes we have seen an increase in other types of applications.

We are seeing more international students, more foreign workers and an increase in services for clients with no status either in the sponsorship applications or in humanitarian applications. Citizenship and Immigration Canada overhauled the foreign students program without any warning to applicants, therefore we had a lot of clients who were eligible to change their status within Canada and found themselves unable to continue their status in Canada.

We then had the over haul of the foreign worker program which resulted in applications being submitted for a labour market opinion and being returned although submitted before the changes,

because without warning they temporarily stopped receiving applications.

Clients were left with higher thresholds to meet and applications being 4 times as expensive, making employers less likely to continue.

The biggest hurdle we have had to deal with was the change of dependency age from under 22 to under 19. We have seen first hand how families have been separated as their applications were not processed in time to be able to apply for their older children.

There has been some good news as this summer we have had the highest number of student placement and volunteers to the point that we had several days where the office was so crowded that we had to keep a waiting list for new incoming volunteers. Although the government seems to close the doors, the community support is outstanding and a good tool to use to continue helping to walk with uprooted people.

IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT SERVICES PROVIDED FROM JANUARY TO JULY 2014

Month	Information	H & C	PR	RAD	Sponsorship	PIF/BOC	PRRA	Deportation Procedures	Family Reunification	Work Permit	Visa Extension	Student Visa	Legal Aid	Other services
Jan	136	29	11	1	19	5		4	2	7	4	1	7	58
FEB	100		10		32	1	2	6	8	2	2	3	2	32
MAR	109	17	7	1	16	6	1	7	4	9	3		3	61
APR	82	4	6	1	20	3	5	2	2	6	10	2	6	40
MAY	104	18	7	3	29	6		3	3	14	4	1	7	53
JUN	126	23	7		21	3	5	4	2	6	4	3	4	54
JUL	117	30	19	1	17		2	3		6	5		7	38
Total of services	774	121	67	7	154	24	15	56	21	104	50	10	36	336

Popular Education

BREAKING BARRIERS, GAINING ACCESS PROJECT.

This project aims to pilot a new initiative stemming from our existing work in popular education and our long history serving non-status and precarious migrant populations.

We are updating our past trainings, and making them accessible for anyone who provides services in Toronto (as it affects precarious migrants). Through this initiative we are targeting new audiences with its materials, (including library workers, city support staff and shelter workers), while concurrently expanding on our existing participant base (settlement workers, community workers, settlement workers in schools, etc.). We also plan to implement new training strategies and approaches to make the project more accessible and supportive for different learning styles and needs.

WORKSHOPS PROVIDED FROM JANUARY TO AUGUST 2014

MONTH	WORKSHOPS	PARTICIPANTS
JANUARY	5	100
FEBRUARY	5	450
MARCH	2	115
APRIL	6	221
MAY	6	136
JUNE	4	78
JULY	6	80
AUGUST	4	45
TOTAL	38	1225

Many of the workshops provided during the first period of 2014 were focused on Health Care alternatives.

We produced workshops for the residents of our transitional houses and clients thanks to the support of Catherin Donan.

One of the most significant aspects during the implementation of these informative sessions was the strengthening of our Primary Health Care Clinic and Mental Health Clinic, with the participation of many volunteers, including internationally trained medical professionals.



These medical professionals were able to work with a volunteer physician, to support diverse clients in different capacities and learn about the Canadian healthcare system.

Popular Education

Workshops topics

IMMIGRATION

- Changes in Immigration & Refugee Policies, Procedures & Programmes
- Overview of the regulations on the refugee process: timelines and eligibility
- Guidelines on how to fill out the Refugee Forms
- Refugee Hearing Preparation and Ready Tour program for refugee claimants
- Access to the Refugee Appeal Division
- Voluntary Return Program: how it works.
- Pre Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA): procedure, interview and application
- Humanitarian and Compassionate application (H&C): establishment, hardship, stages, etc.
- Parents and grandparents super-visa
- Sponsorship processes and a decreased age of dependency
- Sponsorship breakdown
- Conditional Permanent Residence for sponsored spouses and partners
- Temporary foreign worker Program: challenges and opportunities
- Work permit extension tips



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- General overview of human Trafficking in Canada
- Services for survivors of Human Trafficking
- Victim Awareness: stages of the trafficking process
- Canada's Protection for survivors of HT
- International and Domestic HT



HEALTH IMPACTS

- Refugee Health Cuts: consequences and alternatives
- Mental Health in Newcomers
- Model of accessible health services: holistic approach
- Immigrants and refugee youth: coping with post trauma



FCJ Refugee Centre
Oakwood Avenue Toronto, ON
416-469-9754

SERVICES TO VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

- Access without fear: facilitating space for non-status populations
- Barriers to Citizenship for Newcomers to Canada
- Going to Canada: What newcomers to Canada can expect
- Invisibility of non-status and precarious migrant youth and women
- Violence against women and immigration processes
- Underserved communities
- Series of Life Skills workshops: right to work and study, school system in Canada, transportation, health care, and housing; landlord/tenant's rights, getting familiar with a new city, etc.



READY TOUR

After the launching of the Ready Tour on the World Refugee Day, the participation of refugee claimants in this program is increasing.

Since we started the program in May we have coordinated 10 visits to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) with 118 participants. The country of origin of participants were Slovakia, Nigeria, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Ghana, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Iran, Congo, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Syria, Uzbekistan, Colombia, Jamaica, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Croatia, Egypt, St Lucia, Pakistan, Dominican Republic, Uganda, Croatia.

READY Tour is now hosted by the Coalition of Service Providers for Refugee Claimants in Southern Ontario and the Canadian Red Cross First Contact program, in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.



Popular Education

TORONTO COUNTER HUMAN TRAFFICKING NETWORK



FCJ Refugee Centre along with the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network is continuing the important work in addressing human trafficking issues in the City of Toronto.

To that end we organized three roundtables

which brought together multifaceted stakeholders to initiate a dialog for cooperation because no organization or agency can address human trafficking alone.

The Series of Roundtables were made possible with financial support of the City of Toronto. The first roundtable took place on 28th and 29th of October, 2013. The second roundtable was hosted on February 20th, 2014 and the third one took place May 15th, 2014. The events had the following objectives:

- Establish and foster relations between multi-sector stakeholders;
- Develop model for response and collect promising practices in delivering services and protection to trafficked persons corresponding to the particularities of Toronto area;
- Initiate policy development at City and Provincial level.

With the financial support of the City of Toronto we are continuing our work on the human trafficking response model and its promotion in community agencies in the City. The project will run until the end of 2015. You can visit our BlogSpot for more information about the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network and our latest events: <http://torontocounterhumantraffickingnet.wordpress.com/>



Popular Education

MENTORING INITIATIVE

The Immigration and Refugee Mentoring Initiative provides practical work preparation for individuals who are on the path to gain sustainable employment or fulfill their career objectives.

We continue working in this area with volunteers who are having difficulty obtaining Canadian experience for various reasons. Individuals interested in the program will gain hands-on experience and transferable skills in a variety of areas including: legal support, social services, communications, etc.

Some of the participants in this program share their experiences:



Anyeli Estrada

Volunteering at FCJ is being part of a very unique and special “family”; it’s not just helping others, it’s making a difference, it’s being part of a life time experience.

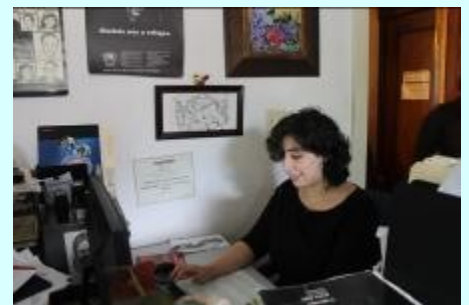
I have been assisting with the bookkeeping. My mentor Kanishka has been teaching me how interesting and difficult accounting can be. One of the projects I participated in was the creation of spread sheets where information and data is recalled continuously. I also learned that multitasking is a very important skill because you have the opportunity to do and assist in every area that requires your help. In general, volunteering at FCJ has been one of the best experiences I have ever had and I hope I can continue giving something of myself for the well being of others.

Miguel Maiquez

I have been involved with the FCJ Refugee Centre helping with the social media channels and Internet campaigns, and also with the development of the FCJ website.

I like to think that my background and experience as a journalist is contributing to the great work that everyone is doing here, in order to create a solid and strong online community of people that care about refugees and uprooted newcomers, and that are willing to walk with them through this hard part of their lives.

I see our digital community as an extension of the Centre’s physical place, where everybody is also welcomed and heard, another room in this house where we can start conversations, share information, promote our programs and initiatives, and ask for support when we need it.



Laura Armenio

Even though I have not volunteered with FCJ Refugee Centre for very long, it has already become an invaluable part of my life. Employees and volunteers at FCJ have managed to create a wonderful, lively and friendly environment that motivates me to work at my very best. The staff’s willingness to always provide a dependable helping hand has given me the opportunity to flourish within a very fast-paced and stimulating environment while not being discouraged to ask questions and learn more. I consider myself very lucky to be part of the important work that FCJ does on a daily basis to genuinely support refugees during their difficult transitions. Thank you FCJ Refugee Centre for this incredible chance to be part of something that makes significant differences in the lives of people from around the globe.

Popular Education

COALITION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

During the first period of the year we have coordinated 3 meetings with the Coalition of Service Providers. Some of the presenters we had through the year were Dr. Meb Rashid, Crossroads Clinic Women's College Hospital, Jane Withey, CLEO; Francesca Fionda and Gil Shochat from Global News ISSAC Sunil: International Organization for Migration, etc. Some of the main issues faced by the Coalition are related to unaccompanied minors, Temporary Health program, housing, negative decisions, timelines, etc.

WEBSITE VISITS

Fifteen months after the launching of our website, the number of visitors are going up. During the last period of the year we did some changes in the homepage. Now the videos are available at the front page and also we can register participants in the events we are organizing directly through our website. The reorganization of the categories is our next project.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-15

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	Page Views	Unique Visits	First Time Visits
Total	1,675	1,410	1,253
Average	187	157	140

