



Embracing Diversity

Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women

WINDSOR WOMEN CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF SERVICE



Executive Director, Padmini Raju, accepting plaque from MP Brian Masse



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Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women has proudly served the Windsor-Essex community for twenty-five years. We celebrated this magnificent event with friends, family and community supporters at our annual banquet held October 5th, 2007.

With Joyce Zuk as our Master of Ceremony, the evening started with an overture by the Vincent Massey Secondary School Band, singing of the National Anthem by Lauryn Brown-Gordon, with ASL interpreting by Joerawer S. Mann and a moment of reflection by Manjit Mann. Entertainment throughout the evening included a beautiful dance entitled "*Manglacharan*" performed

by Priya Sengupta, a moving production of Stephanie Lyanga's original play "*A Women's Strength*" and a spectacular traditional Rwandese dance performed by Karla, Kayla & Kevin Kalisa and Beatrice Rutayisire.

The "*Women of Achievement Award*" was posthumously presented to Professor Rose Voyvodic in recognition for her years of devotion and pursuit of social justice. Irma Piccinin, a steadfast volunteer for countless causes, was also respectfully presented with the "*Volunteer of the Year Award*." Community Awards were given to our numerous community partners as a token of our appreciation for their continued support and their

unwavering contributions to "embracing diversity."

Our esteemed guest speaker, Akua Benjamin delivered a thought-provoking speech regarding racism, sexism and poverty. It was a true honour to hear her speak; her life-long commitment to women issues and civil rights rang out loud and clear.

Overall, the evening was a remarkable night packed full of entertainment and special acknowledgement and appreciation to our community partners. We are grateful for your ongoing support and look forward to the next twenty-five years!

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Community Partners,
Happy New Year! 2007 has been a memorable year for WWWWIW. After many attempts we moved to a new location, 500 Ouellette Ave, 3rd floor. This location is very accessible to our clients. They have responded positively to our move and

continue to attend our programs. We had an open house on November 23 and all our community partners responded by coming to the event.

In October 2007 the organization suddenly lost an employee who had worked over twelve years in our child care. Swarna

Jayman was a loving and caring woman who took pride in working for our organization and had seen our childcare grow over the years. We all miss her and our prayers are with the family.

Padmini Raju
Executive Director.

EAS TACKLES SELF ESTEEM

By Sandra McLean
EAS Project Coordinator/Mentorship

A lack of self-esteem is a common obstacle that many immigrants face, even though many are well-educated. Of the immigrants with which the Employment Assistance Services department at Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women assist, 76 percent have at least a college diploma, 40 percent have a university degree and 19 percent have a master's degree or higher. Seventy four percent speak English and at least one other language proficiently. Yet a large percentage are unable to secure employment in their field.

Recently the EAS Department decided to address underlying challenges that our clients often encounter during the job searching process. The erosion of self esteem is a common problem that many new Canadians face. And therefore it was a practical decision for the EAS department to deliver a workshop titled "Yes I Can - A self Esteem Guide for Newcomers."

"Self-esteem" is in part a consequence of individuals comparing themselves with others and making positive or negative self-evaluations."

Immigration-related difficulties and excessive social stresses are the reasons some immigrants are vulnerable and develop poor self esteem which can also lead to mental illness. By maintaining healthy boundaries newcomers can avoid some of the pitfalls that are often associated with relocation such as loneliness and isolation. Some of the obvious pressures that most immigrants are faced with are organizational, communication and financial barriers that can also contribute to the development of poor self esteem and the onset of mental illness.

According to a study by the Faculty of Medicine Health Sciences in St. John's Newfoundland the immigrant's understanding of mental health is often difficult to comprehend. Moving to Canada challenges the immigrant's perception of mental illness. But the identification of

mental illness also provides them with a diagnosis of the ailment that they are experiencing.

Steps to developing healthy boundaries:

- Gain access to social support systems
- Develop a resource library of community agencies and organizations
- Secure suitable employment
- Develop networks outside of your community
- Increase your understanding of Canadian culture
- Continue to perform some of your own cultural and religious practices

The "Yes I Can" workshop is one in a series of professional development workshops that will be available to EAS clients in 2008. To obtain a copy of the "Yes I Can" handbook that was developed by Cassandra Richardson and Sandra McLean, please contact the program coordinator.

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OPEN HOUSE, NOVEMBER 2007 - A PICTORIAL PRESENTATION



HELP FOR INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED TEACHERS

In a highly competitive job market, *Teach in Ontario* is pleased to offer a number of services to help Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs). Specially trained consultants provide personal support to assist IETs through the certification and employment preparation process.

Our six-week Employment Preparation course provides an overview of education in Ontario and an orientation to Ontario classrooms.

Upon completion of this course, *Teach in Ontario* provides additional services including two weeks of guided practice in an Ontario classroom, the personal support of an experienced educator for a six-month period and help preparing for the supply teacher role through a two-day workshop. If you want to bring your education and experience as an internationally educated teacher to Ontario's classroom, please contact a consultant at 519-973-5588.



AN UPDATE FROM TEACH IN ONTARIO

Wow, we can't believe that a New Year has arrived! Here's what's been happening with *Teach in Ontario* over the last few months along with some up-and-coming events:

Classroom Immersion Orientation – *Teach in Ontario* participants attended a one-day seminar to prepare for a two-week classroom placement. Through discussions and case studies, participants obtained valuable information to ensure a successful placement. Key topics included roles and responsibilities, building effective relationships and cross-cultural communication. Participants eagerly await their placements in the upcoming months.

Professional Development Series – A commitment to ongoing professional learning is one of the key standards of practice for the teaching profession. To support our cli-

ents' learning initiatives, we proudly kicked off "Moving Forward," a series of collaborative professional development activities.

Our first event, held December 13th, featured three guest speakers with topics on Resume Writing, PM Benchmarking and the Role of the Parent. We were very grateful to our guest speakers, for their outstanding and informative presentations.

TOEFL/IELT Preparation Classes –



Presentation,
Professional Development Series

Commencing in the New Year, we are pleased to offer **TOEFL/IELT Preparation Classes**. Within a warm and supportive learning environment, eligible *Teach in Ontario* participants will learn tips and strategies and partake in guided practice to help successfully prepare for the TOEFL and ILETS language proficiency tests.

Employer Engagement Presentations – Employers will be invited to presentations that highlight the challenges internationally educated teachers face when applying for employment in Ontario's publicly funded schools. These presentations will also highlight the value that IETs bring to the classroom, the school and the school community. If you would like more information about these workshops, please [email](mailto:teachinfo@www.wiw.org) us at teachinfo@www.wiw.org

By Kelly Todd
TIO—Professional Coaching Coordinator

"To support our clients' learning initiatives, we proudly kicked off "Moving Forward," a series of collaborative professional development activities."

INVESTING IN WOMEN'S FUTURE

It has been a wonderful and rewarding experience to meet and work with Refugee and Immigrant women and their families. The women I have met in this program have taught me to look at the future like a rainbow. They have also given me strength and given a light to see my problem as little problems. These women are strong, patient and willing to try and forget the past and move ahead as long as there is something or someone that can enhance their success.

Our program has received a good response from the Community. We see this by the increase enrollment in our session and the full attendance of our Clients during the Sessions.

By Scholastica Lyanga,
Life Skills Project Coordinator



W5 Volunteers

On behalf Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women, Board Of Directors, Executive Director and all the Staff, I would like to thank all our past and present volunteers for their dedication and commitment to helping our organization better serve our clients.

THANK YOU, WE
APPRECIATE YOU AND WISH YOU
A
FRUITFUL 2008.

Scholastica Lyanga,
Volunteer Coordinator

EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY

By Jocelyn C. Javier

I remember how life was growing up. I grew up knowing two worlds: the world I lived in inside my house and the world outside of it. At home, I was a Filipino. At school and elsewhere, I was a Canadian. I never once thought that I could combine them to become a Filipino-Canadian. I was fine with the notion that I should assimilate with whichever group I was with. Yet when I did that, I felt as if a part of me died. Not until recently did I think to embrace the two cultures and share them with the people

around me. I suppose I was ashamed of being either or.

Now that I got older, I learned to be proud of the cultures I grew up with. I share as much of my heritage as I can when I visit different people and places. I learned that it proves essential that I embrace the cultures I know in order to embrace the cultures of the people around. In Canada, our Canadian culture IS the prime example of the embracement of diversity. We learn to accept each other and show love to one another. We become better rounded people when we embrace

the cultures of our friends and neighbors. We belong to a country where we strive on culture and diversity. Seeing diversity and such a mosaic of people in our beautiful country makes me proud to be Canadian.



UPDATE FROM LINC

There have been new developments in the LINC program recently.

A new flyer was created which emphasizes the types of classes we offer, the requirements and eye-catching images of our center and classes.

From the TESL Conference we found many books and resources suitable for the students in all levels. Also some audio materials were included so the students can follow along by listening to what is being presented. A new computer software program was also purchased, "Euro-Talk." This enables students to listen to what is being said on the screen and also talk along with the program. This is very educational; it focuses on im-

portant vocabulary words which are vital for the students. It also makes them more user-friendly with computers functions.

Another big event which occurred was the LINC Graduation. Many students were promoted into a higher level and the rest were given a certificate of achievement for their best efforts. A potluck lunch also proceeded afterwards.

In addition, our LINC 4 students had a writing contest on the topic, "Dreams". Awards and reading of the stories were presented at the Graduation.

Our most recent developments are the new LINC classes which opened up. The first one is Listen-



ing and Speaking for lower levels (Literacy 1, 2 and 3) and the other one is Reading, Writing and Pronunciation for the higher levels (LINC 1-4). We have hired a new staff member to conduct these classes and they will be held from 9am-12pm (Literacy) and 4-7pm. (LINC).

Introducing Two New LINC Classes:

- **Listening and Speaking**
- **Reading, Writing and Pronunciation**

PARENT'S CORNER—BUILDING STUDENTS READING SKILLS



Early literacy and the development of strong skills in reading are fundamental to a young child's ongoing learning and academic development. Parents play an important role in their children's learning.

To assist parents, the Ministry of Education has published an excellent resource entitled, (*"Helping your child learn to read - A parent's guide."*) The guide includes tips for parents to encourage young children to read and to love reading. Suggested strategies include:

- Talk to your child
- Make reading fun
- Read everyday
- Set an example
- Talk about books
- Listen to your child read
- Show that you value your child's efforts

If English is not your child's first language, this guide can still be of help. It is important to read to your child in his or her first language. Having a strong grasp of the first language will make it easier for your child to learn English.

The guide is available on-line at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/earlyreading/index.html>

IN LOVING MEMORY: SAYING GOODBYE TO A DEAR FRIEND

By Patricia Aguiluz,
Childminding Supervisor

Mrs. Swarna Yajaman worked as a childcare assistant in our centre for nearly 13 years. She passed away suddenly on October 13, 2007.

Swarna loved to be with children. It was her true passion and devotion to care for little ones. Swarna became an experienced LINC child-minder with many years in the program, she really enjoyed coming to work everyday and to be in the childcare.

I remember the first time I met her eight years ago. She was preparing beautiful material to work Arts and Craft activities with the children. She did everything with enthusiasm; I can say that this was the call in her life, to care for and protect children the way she did in our centre.

When the staff at W5 had to say goodbye to Swarna, our hearts were broken. The day we heard of her passing, we felt such deep sorrow for losing a dear friend, co-worker and sister. Though, we know that until the last day of her life she did what she loved to do, coming to the W5 childcare and working with the children. That made her life brighter, successful and full of achievements.

Dear Swarna, we'll miss you. I myself miss our lunches together and our chats trying to make the world a better place to live. I miss all our everyday routines with the children and when you asked me to sing so many songs at circle time so you could learn the lyrics.

Goodbye dear friend and thank you for sharing your life with all of us at W5. We'll miss you always.



"...this was her call in her life, to care for and protect children..."

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