MOSAIC Job Corps is a ‘Family Affair’

by Kate Bernhard

"I was an auto mechanic in Hong Kong. We left because of what is going to happen to Hong Kong in 1997. China offers no freedom. Canada gives me freedom - and my family," Tak replies happily while Vincent gurgles away smuggled safely in his father’s arms.

For many of the 44 Job Corps graduates, enlisting the services of Vancouver’s Multilingual Orientation Services Association for Immigrant Communities (MOSAIC) Employment Programs was their first step to a secure future in Canada. August 8, 1989, was their graduation.

"For many of our grads, Job Corps is access to their first job ever in Canada. Our trainees come from a variety of different countries including: China, Poland, Nicaragua and El Salvador. When they first came to us, many of these immigrants were what the government calls ‘severely employment disadvantaged.’ One trainee has found employment as an auto mechanic, another as a nurse’s aide, and yet another as a photo finisher. We also have graduates working as apartment managers, cafeteria helpers, and much more. So this is really a time of celebration for everyone; the grads and their families," explains MOSAIC Programs Job Corps coordinator May Lui.

Graduate Roberto Ama, his wife and two sons immigrated to Canada 18 months ago from El Salvador.

In El Salvador Roberto worked as a mechanic for Nissan. He and his family left the country because of problems with the army.

"The army would confuse me with my brother-in-law, who was known to the army as a guerrilla. This mix up created problems for my family. It became dangerous for us to stay in El Salvador. We come to Canada, all together as landed immigrants," Roberto explained.

He could not speak English when he arrived here, and with the help of the MOSAIC Job Corps program not only did Roberto learn English, but he also managed to land a job at Nissan as a mechanic.

"Yes, I have a happier family. We feel safe in Canada," Roberto said.

And since Dad has found a job, all are more at ease. The boys are adjusting to Canadian life. They both attend Capitol Hill Elementary but "...miss friends in El Salvador, the beaches and nice weather."

For Job Corps grad Tak Ching Kong, his wife Ophelia and their 2 1/2 month old son Vincent, Canada is a definite change from their former home in Hong Kong, where the threat of a communist government gets closer every day. The Kong family arrived here eight months ago, as independent immigrants, which means they supported their first months in Canada with money they had saved.

But Tak now supports his new family with paycheques he earns from Midas Brake & Muffler shop, where he works as a mechanic, thanks to the MOSAIC Job Corps program.

Ophelia, Tak and Vincent Kong
English Classes in Jeopardy

by Vera Radio

For immigrants new to this country, English or French is vital. In B.C. you need English to get about by bus, to buy groceries and household items, to bank, to speak to your neighbours, to read your child’s report card, and to do all the things that constitute daily life.

Approximately 25,000 adults in B.C. are participating in part-time English classes. These classes are offered by the Vancouver School Board, Burnaby School Board, King Edward Campus, Douglas College and other school boards and colleges across the province. The Canadian government reimburses the provinces 50% of the direct instructional costs under the Citizenship and Language Training Instruction (CILT) agreement. Under the Language Textbook agreement 100% of the cost of printed material used for teaching English is reimbursed to the provinces. The award winning newspaper for newcomers to B.C., the Westcoast Reader, claims funding under this agreement.

Both CILT and Language Textbook agreements are being terminated by the federal government as of April, 1990. This seriously jeopardizes the provision of English language classes in B.C.. Think of the impact upon 25,000 immigrants who will no longer receive the assistance to cope with their daily needs. English is critical to their effective integration in the province. Without these English classes, we will no doubt see more racism and social problems. We need more English classes, not less.

If you are concerned, write to your Member of Parliament and to the Honourable Gerry Weiner, Minister of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

• Vera Radio is the Executive Director of Mosaic

MOSAIC presents Vancouver's Second Annual

Night of 100 Dinners

by Marion Boithorst

Last year’s participants in Vancouver’s first annual Night of 100 Dinners raised $8000 for MOSAIC programs: counselling, orientation, interpretation and 911 Emergency services.

Oh - the taste of success is so sweet, never mind yucky and entertaining! So.....the much anticipated second annual Night of 100 Dinners will be held Saturday, October 14. We’re looking for people with appetites and aprons that will help us once again - taste success!

There are many ways you can participate in this major FUNDraising event: be a host or a guest, tell your friends and family, or volunteer to help. We need 100 individuals, restaurants, or organizations to host dinner parties for 5 or more guests. Hosts plan, prepare and serve dinners, and receive a tax receipt for the costs of their dinners. Each host will also receive an attractive, full-length commemorative apron. Guests contribute to MOSAIC in return for their dinners. A portion of the dinner price is tax-deductible. Dinner prices range from $15 - $100 and will be held in private homes and restaurants.

FUN is a key ingredient for all participants. Unlock your imagination and picture yourself at one of the 100 Dinners. What sights and smells entice your senses? Tastebuds quiver happily with the first flavorful bite of your fabulous meal. Is it hot or cold, mild or spicy, unusual or a familiar favourite? Look around you.

Who and what do you see? Are your friends sharing this evening with you, have you just met a local politician or celebrity? Perhaps you are at a theme dinner, wearing a costume, or in an elegant restaurant, dressed in your best bib and Tucker. Positively everyone is having a wonderful time...

Last year, hundreds of guests gathered in private homes and restaurants throughout Vancouver. Feasting on a multitude of international cuisines, prepared by the city’s finest renowned and unrenowned chefs, guests ate, drank, and were merry. At the end of the evening there were happy people, contented tummies, new friends.

So, go mark your calendar for October 14th, then pick up the phone and call Marion at 254-9626 for further details on MOSAIC’s second annual Night of 100 Dinners.

The Vancouver MOSAIC is a non-profit newsletter published four times a year by MOSAIC, the Multilingual Orientation Services Association for Immigrant Communities. Although the Vancouver MOSAIC is distributed for free, donations to help cover production and mailing costs will be gratefully accepted. Organizations and individuals will be put on our mailing list upon request. Submissions are welcome and will be reviewed before publication. We are not responsible for returning submissions. Views expressed in the Vancouver MOSAIC are not necessarily those of MOSAIC. The Vancouver MOSAIC material may be reproduced with acknowledgement. Send submissions to Newsletter Editor MOSAIC, 2nd Floor, 1720 Grant Street, Vancouver, B.C., V5L 2Y7, 254-9626 (phone) 254-2321 (fax).

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MOSAIC HONOURS VANCOUVER'S JCCA at AGM

Over 30 British Columbians receive MOSAIC Human Rights Award

by Nancy Knickerbocker

After Japan attacked Pearl Harbour in 1941, the Canadian Government for fear of national security used the War Measures Act to evacuate Japanese Canadian men, women and children. They were arrested and shipped like cattle to Hasting Yard (now the PNE Agridome) where they had to sleep in metal bunks. Families were then dispatched to small towns around British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Some were deported back to war torn Japan.

In 1949 they were finally permitted to return to the west coast, but all personal property including houses, land, businesses, cars, etc. had been sold. Even family photo albums had been destroyed.

A generation later the redress movement was born.

"The decision to ask for redress came out of a lot of thinking, movement and talking into the present form. If you lose something you either give up, because you feel it is out of your control, or you claim what is lost. The Japanese Canadian community went through the two extremes before coming to the decision to fight for redress," explains Tatsuo Kage, Redress Coordinator for the Western Region.

In the process, their cause sparked a debate on one of the most important questions facing any nation: just what are the rights of citizens? The Japanese Canadians stood up for us all - regardless of our ancestry - and claimed equal respect for our rights as Canadians and for our dignity as human beings. By their example, Japanese Canadians have shown the way to a new, more engaged, model of citizenship and a heightened awareness of human rights.

This year, MOSAIC is proud to announce that more than 30 British Columbians are receiving the 8th Annual Human Rights award. They are the dedicated members of the Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association (JCCA) Redress Committee.

The committee members come from a broad cross section of the local Japanese Canadian community.

This JCCA Vancouver chapter assisted their provincial and national counterparts, and the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC), by fundraising and organizing all local events related to the struggle for redress.

Together they helped achieve one of the most significant human rights milestones in Canadian history. The members of the Vancouver Redress Committee also helped teach us all a hidden chapter in our history; the story of the internment is the story of Vancouver.

It all began here, sparked by a few bigoted politicians who used the war as an excuse to uproot 22,000 Canadians from their west coast homes.

The Human Rights Award will be presented to the JCCA at the MOSAIC Annual General Meeting. The AGM will be held Thursday, September 21, 1989, 7:30 p.m., at the Robson Square Media Centre, 800 Robson Street, Vancouver.

- Nancy Knickerbocker is freelance journalist and a member of MOSAIC’s board.

Thanks!

Thanks to MOSAIC Staff for your support in this year’s United Way Internal Campaign. Together we raised $1194, a 26% increase from 1988. Also, the staff prize draw brought some interesting results. Vera received crystallized wisdom from Ursela, John will cast Alan’s face in plaster, Tammy won a sailing lesson from Michael, John got a cool pool lesson at ‘Joe’s’ courtesy of Elizabeth and Maro landed a big fish.
Letitia Ionita finds success in Canada

by Pam Coots

"My name is "Letitia Ionita," I have come here to fill out an application for the women's training program in office automation." These were the first words that introduced us to Letitia.

Upon reviewing the application we found out that Letitia was born in Bristiara, Romania in 1951. She attended university there and received a Baccalaureate degree in accounting.

After university, she worked as an accountant at the Institute of Fruit and Vegetables in Bucharest, Romania.

She then continued her education at the Central Institute of Computer Science receiving a Certificate in Computer Programming.

In 1978 she was promoted to Principal Accountant at the same institute. In 1980 she became a computer programmer for the Ministry of Agriculture, where she established programs for accounting procedures. Letitia also worked for the National Centre for Wine and Spirits productions.

During this time the political conditions in Romania worsened. In 1985 Letitia, her husband and family fled the country to Paris, France. Since she spoke fluent French she was able to work sporadically and continue her education in accounting, mathematical business law at Ecole Prince, de Esquenuph Computable.

While living in France, Letitia and her husband decided to apply for immigration to Canada. They were successful in achieving this goal and arrived here in Vancouver on October 17, 1986.

Because of this move, a whole new set of problems occurred for her and her family. Not being fluent in English was a new and frustrating situation, so much so that in 1987 she enrolled herself in the intensive five month English Language Training course at KEC. She received an Intermediate Level Certificate.

During this five month period she had heard about the MOSAIC Women's Training Program in office automation. After struggling without luck with job search, she came to MOSAIC in September 1988 and filled out an

application form. Her application was processed and later we called her for an English test.

This was another frustrating and difficult time for Letitia. Thinking that after receiving the Intermediate Level certificate she had adequate English language skills for MOSAIC's Lower Advance Women's Training Program, she went ahead and took the test. Her scores however reflected that she was not yet there. She was rejected.

Life was beginning to look grey for Letitia. However, being tenacious, she started volunteering to do anything that was needed to be done in the employement section. She was able to practice her typing and use her English skills. She then learned that an Intermediate Level Women's Training Program was starting at MOSAIC and she applied.

The rest they say, is history. She took off like a shot. It was wonderful to watch this woman grow once again to the professional woman she was in her home country. She took like a duck to water; especially in the self-marketing aspect of the program, which would be scary to most of us with English as a first language.

Letitia was really successful. She believed in herself and what she was capable of doing. She learned two accounting packages for the computer, ACC-PAC & Lotus 1-2-3. She improved her typing and learned Word Perfect 5.0 and how to word process properly and efficiently.

Where is she now?

She is currently doing her training placement at Homestake Minerals Develop, located in Vancouver, with an excellent chance of being hired after the training.

What did people see about her that made her successful? Self confidence, a willingness to learn, feeling comfortable with explaining the course in English, being able to ask and answer questions well and, of course, knowledge in computer accounting.

- Pam Coots is a Program Coordinator of MOSAIC Women's Training Program (Intermediate Level)

- MOSAIC Annual General Meeting, Thursday, September 21, 1989, 7 p.m. Robson Media Centre. Entertainment and refreshments will follow the Human Rights Award presentation and a brief business meeting. Don't miss out! Everyone is welcome!

- MOSAIC presents the Second Annual Night of 100 Dinners. An Invitation to dine.....just for the taste of it! Saturday, October 14, 1989 For further info call Marion at 254-9626

- MOSAIC Employment Programs Open information sessions on all MOSAIC Employment Programs held every Friday at 3 p.m. Assistance in filling out applications is available at that time. For further information call 254-0244.

- Immigrant Women: Do you want to work? What are you good at? Register your skill & hourly rate with our computerized JOB SKILLS DIRECTORY. Phone 731-9108 after 4 pm. VANCOUVER SOCIETY ON IMMIGRANT WOMEN

- Heritage Canada's 16th National Diversitas Conference, Hotel Vancouver, October 26-27, 1989. Diversitas: A conference about diverse peoples creating diverse places. Diversitas will address the topic of understanding and planning for ethnic diversity in the built environment of our towns and cities. You are invited to come and speak directly to leading Canadian thinkers who understand multiculturalism from the inside. To receive a complete conference programme write DIVERSITAS, Heritage Canada, 306 Metcalfe Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 1S2 or phone 1-800-267-6670.

- IN VISIBLE COLOURS International Women of Colour & Third World Women Film and Video Festival and Symposium Nov. 15-19, 1989

4  Vancouver's MOSAIC Fall 1989
Did you know about Komagata Maru?......

On May 23, 1914 the steamer Komagata Maru arrived in Vancouver. Aboard were 376 British subjects (340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus) who wished to immigrate to Canada. The Immigration Department refused to allow the passengers to leave the ship, and it lay at anchor in Burrard Inlet for two months. The men were confined to the ship suffering from hunger, thirst and humiliation while they awaited the decision of the immigration department. On July 23, the Komagata Maru was ordered to leave with all but 22 passengers under the escort of HMCS Rainbow, a cruiser of the Canadian Navy. When the steamer reached India, many of the men were killed by the British police.

The Komagata Maru today is a symbol of challenge, pride, honour, determination and injustice for the Indo-Canadian and Sikh community across Canada and the U.S.A. This injustice occurred seventy-five years ago, and the Indo-Canadian community has suffered discrimination and humiliation since due to Canada's immigration policy of exclusion. Since then positive steps have been taken in promoting multiculturalism and the Charter of Human Rights in Canada. Organizations in Victoria, Abbotsford, and Paldi played a major role in assisting the passengers in 1914.

On July 23, 1989, a historic gathering was held at Canada Place, Pier A, to honour the plight of Komagata Maru. A permanent monument was unveiled. Directly west of this site the ship was moored for two months in 1914.
Refugee Backlog

P E O P L E in WAITING

by Ellen Saenger

While Canada's much debated new refugee determination process has hummed along in high gear since its birth January 1, 1989, movement to clear the huge backlog of 85,000 claimants from the previously paralysed system is just barely accelerating now.

Even the July opening of the Canada Immigration Centres (CICs) offices set up to deal with the backlog in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, didn't spell an immediate end to the waiting game for the left over claimants.

The government has earmarked $180 million to deal with the backlog it hopes to clear within two years. Approximately 5,500 of the total backlog is in B.C. Rick Bremmer, manager of the backlog program for the B.C./Yukon regions, estimates 50% will be rejected.

Bremmer says most of his budget will be used to pay for removaless. He estimates the first deportations or landings of refugee claimants in B.C won't happen before fall, three-quarters of a year after the new system took effect. Some of the people, confused and anxious, have been here, waiting, since May 1986. That was the most recent time the government cleared a 28,000-strong backlog with an administrative review that rejected only about 4,000. The Immigration Ministry rebuffs complaints of their foot-dragging in dealing with the backlog, saying time was needed to set guidelines, rent offices and train staff.

Liberal Immigration Critic Sergio Marchi and several prominent immigration lawyers have denounced the current backlog program as a waste of money. Why deport these people, they ask, when Canada needs immigrants. Refugee lawyer Ian Clague said most of the backlog will end up in Canada anyway, whether they are immediately accepted or whether they return to their country with a letter to visa officials asking them to consider the claimant's experience in Canada while processing a request for immigration.

But Immigration Minister Barbara McDougall has refused the idea of an amnesty, saying it would be unfair to genuine refugees and to Canadians. It seems the Minister feels caught between a rock and a hard place. If she doesn't go through with the get-tough motions in dealing with the backlog, she fears a likely increase in bogus claimants - undermining the new system - who hope to be accepted under future amnesties. And, if she finally ends the anxiety of those in limbo by simply clearing the backlog by accepting all but the criminal elements and those unable to settle in Canada, she perhaps fears wide-spread public anger at perceived queue-jumpers.

With much attention now focused on the workings of the new refugee determination system, it is important to remember also the human drama behind the backlog statistics. To consider itself still worthy of the United Nation's Nasen medal awarded to Canada in 1986, Canada must clear that backlog quickly and fairly.

- Ellen Saenger is a Vancouver based Journalist

Wanted: Legal Aid for Refugees

Inland refugee claimants may now be eligible for designated counsel, according to a decision made by an inquiry panel. Legal Aid Lawyer Darrel Larson successfully argued before an adjudicator and a Refugee Board member that Lech Borowski, a ship jumper from Poland, was entitled to designated legal counsel and that not providing such counsel was a violation of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Under the new refugee laws, the Minister of Immigration pays for legal counsel for the first stage of refugee determination hearings for port-of entry claimants, but not for inland claimants.

The decision of this tribunal does not mean that inland claimants will automatically receive a lawyer. Each claimant must argue that he/she is eligible in light of the decision made in the Borowski case. Copies of the decision are available at MOSAIC and Legal Services Society.

This decision is a step in the right direction. However, B.C. is one of the few places in the country where lawyers are not made available to claimants at the second stage hearing before the Convention Refugee Determination Division. This is the full hearing which determines whether in fact someone is a bona fide refugee.

Legal counsel is also not being provided for claimants in the backlog, many of whom are too destitute to afford a lawyer on their own.

With the processing of the backlog now fully underway, the need for lawyers has never been greater. Counsel willing to assist claimants on a pro bono basis are urged to contact Mark Benton or Alison Sawyer at Legal Services. Lawyers interested in representing claimants who are employed - for a fee they can afford - are encouraged to contact bilingual counsellors working with refugees at MOSAIC and other organizations.
by Imelda Suzara

Women of colour from Canada, the Third World and many countries have contributed significantly to the development of cinema. Their recognition as film & video makers of vision and diversity is small - so small as to seem invisible.

‘In Visible Colours’ is a celebration of these visions.

To give presence and to celebrate the works of these "invisible" directors, writers and producers, the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), with Women in Focus Arts & Media Centre, and the Vancouver Society on Immigrant Women, will be organizing a film/video festival and symposium, ‘In Visible Colours’, November 15-19. Documentary, animation, experimental and narrative - all forms will be shown at the Robson Square Media Centre and the Vancouver East Cinema. An accompanying two-day symposium addressing the practical issues in film/video making, production, distribution, and economics, will be held at Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre. Panels will examine ‘Independent Black Cinema,’ ‘Old and New World Asia,’ ‘Native Filmmaking - Reclaiming Our Images,’ ‘New Latin Cinema,’ and many other topics.

"Many films/videos have been considered. Those that have been selected allow for geographical representation and (needed to be) dynamic, interesting, and of a certain quality. Their work needed to show certain themes important to women: relationships, work, sexuality, gender and violence," said organizers Lorraine Chan of the NFB and Zainub Verjee of Women in Focus (WIF).

Viewers can expect to see material from Asia, Africa Latin America, North America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

"A recurring theme in works of women coming from the Third World," Verjee observes, "is that of land and agricultural development." Added Chan, "It’s also the struggle to survive within their world, a struggle for colonialism and a question of identity. You could say that what makes this festival, the different parts of it coming together, is that there’s a certain commonality of experience for people who have undergone imperialism or colonialism."

Self determination - political, social, economic cultural and spiritual - is the context of the festival’s themes and its aim is to further analyze race, class, sexuality and gender.

Showcasing a broad selection of documentary, animation, experimental and narrative works, the program will include such titles as ‘Who Will Cast the First Stone?’, ‘A Displace View,’ ‘Dreaming Rivers,’ ‘Far from War,’ and ‘Ori.’

Workshops and forums will bring together Canadian and international film/video makers to address critical concerns of production, distribution, training, financing and aesthetics.

As well, anticipating perhaps that acceptance of cultural racial differences may not come that easily for some, an anti-racism school program for Vancouver secondary school students will be offered. This will offer students special screenings and hands-on workshops with the artists.

For further information, please contact the International Women of Colour and Third World Women Film/Video Festival and Symposium at 685-1137. Volunteers are also needed!
MOSAIC’s

SMILE of the Day

...Is none other than Margarita Campos, MOSAIC Employment Programs Information Officer.

The 29-year-old single mother has been working at MOSAIC Employment Programs since January 1989. Originally from Honduras, Margarita finished the MOSAIC Women’s Training Program in December 1988.

And she is leaving us August 31. Margarita has found a full time job as a Receptionist/Secretary for the Public Legal Education Society in downtown Vancouver.

During her short stay at MOSAIC, Margarita has taught us all that life can be easier with a smile.

Thank you, Margarita, from us all. Your presence will be greatly missed (especially by Employment Program staff and mostly, Elizabeth). Your shoes will be difficult to fill, unless we find another bubbly person that fits size seven.

Best of luck to you, and that is from our hearts.

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The Night of 100 Dinners

An invitation to dine.

Join us just for the taste of it.

Join us for the social event of the year.

Join us Saturday, October 14, 1989.

MOSAIC presents Vancouver’s Second Annual Night of 100 Dinners, a tasteful evening hosted by Vancouver’s famous and not so famous chefs. Join us by dining at a restaurant, or come to one (or two) of our many dinner parties. Or, join the fun by hosting one of your own parties. Dinners range from $15 to $100. Contributions support MOSAIC, an agency which helps newcomers adapt to Canadian society.

For Information call 254-9626

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MOSAIC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes! I will support services for refugees and immigrants through the purchase of a MOSAIC MEMBERSHIP.

Individual $10 or more ______ Professional/Corporate Gp. $100 or more ______

Professional Individual $25 or more ______ Other ______________________________

Date ________________________________

Name ________________________________

Address __________________________________ Postal Code ____________

City __________________________________

Phone (home) __________________________ (business) _______________________

Amount enclosed __________________________

Would you like to volunteer? ________________________________

What language do you speak? ________________________________

Tax receipts will be issued for amounts over the basic $10 Membership. Registered tax no. 051 8886 09 27

MOSAIC 2nd floor 1720 Grant Street Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2Y7 254-9626

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MOSAIC AGM 1989

Human Rights Award Entertainment Refreshments Brief business meeting

Don’t miss out!

7 p.m. Thursday, September 21

Robson Media Centre

Vancouver, B.C.

For info call 254-9626