

# M O S A I C



## Summer 2002



## Change: Opportunity or Uncertainty?

by Eyob Naizghi, Executive Director

Virtually every culture or society has a tradition or a belief that expresses the positive aspects associated with change. Some see change as the spice of life that ushers in revitalization. Attached to this belief, however, is the expectation that change be introduced in a clear and orderly manner assuming that decisions affecting change are well-informed.

British Columbians were *expecting* some change to occur with a new government in power. Nobody argued against change itself. The social service sector even saw the prospect of change as a positive one, and was optimistic that it would finally gain the opportunity to be acknowledged as the third sector that promotes societal well being.

When the inevitable changes did take place, many more issues than expected arose. The most common issues communities have with the new changes are in regards to how these changes are being communicated and who is being consulted in order to ensure that the decision-making process is well-informed.

A friend summed it up best: there simply are too many changes. It is difficult to manage changes with the constant preoccupation of 'what if' in mind because there are simply too many 'ifs' to consider. The greatest problems are the fear of the social and economic implications these changes will have, and the short time period over which they are being introduced.

Many of the changes already in place are impacting virtually every sector of the population and, more specifically, our own organization and the communities we serve. And yet more changes are expected to come. Our role as individuals and as an organization is to manage these changes before they manage us as well as the communities we are tied to. Our sustainability is measured by how connected we remain to the communities we serve. Our relevance to these communities depends on our ability to stay up-to-date with their most pressing issues

and concerns. Moreover, our organization's significance depends on its social capital—the commitment of its staff, volunteers and governing board. Fortunately, we lack none of these elements.

As we reflect on past adjustments to change and ponder what challenges the future holds, one thing remains constant—the fact that we must continue to support our communities as we go through this period of transition. MOSAIC must continue to play its civic role in society, for the well-being of the people we work with and for the sake of our democratic process.

As you read the articles in this newsletter you will become more aware of both our own and the challenges of the communities' we support. The strong voice of these communities resonates loudly and clearly through the many success stories included in this issue. While future challenges are a reality, the strength and resilience of immigrants and refugees, as echoed in the following pages, are just as real. These are stories experienced by real people engaged in real, new-life struggles. Their words reverberate with empowerment, and continue to be the principle motivation for those of us involved with this special organization.

### Contents

Change: Opportunity or Uncertainty? .....	1
An Interview with Jessie .....	2
New Challenges .....	3
Building Blocks Receives Award .....	4
From Challenges to Success .....	5
It's a Jungle Out There .....	6
"How High is the Bar?" .....	7
Substandard Housing Issues .....	8
Letter in Support of a Private Members' Bill .....	9
Multicultural Victim Services Program .....	10
Letters to MOSAIC's Language Centre .....	12
Update! New Partnerships .....	13
Key Words for Health and Medical Care .....	14
AGM Pictorial .....	14
Symposium 2002 - Violence against Women .....	16

# An Interview with Jessie

by Louise Garvin  
ESL Instructor

This interview took place the afternoon of Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at the MOSAIC Language Centre. It was a cold spring day. Even the building seemed chilled to the bone...that is, until the halls filled with the warm hearts and colourful personalities of the English Language Centre. Jessie Li, a recent graduate of the ELSA program, spoke to me of her time as a student at our school.

When she lived in China, Jessie worked as a professional in the computer field and eventually shifted to insurance sales. Her husband worked as a computer programmer in China and has recently found work in his field in Vancouver. When her family first arrived in Canada, Jessie found that the language barrier was to be her greatest hurdle. "I was very dependent on my husband. I wouldn't go outside because I was afraid to speak English. I would always send my husband out to do things for me. Also my son felt a little shy at his first daycare. He was always a little scared when I left him."

After being in Canada for over a year Jessie started ESL classes at MOSAIC. She found them helpful for several reasons: in learning the language and also culturally and socially. She found this was an incredible opportunity to meet people from around the world and from cultures very different from her own. "In class I made friends from Afghanistan, Turkey and, of course, some people from China. Now we phone each other and e-mail. At first we were just friends in the class and now we are really good friends...it's really very good."

Jessie has learned a lot about the world at MOSAIC, including Canadian culture. She recalls how awkward and strange she felt watching American movies with scenes of public affection while living in China. She always wondered whether she would feel strange and uncomfortable if she encountered the same public displays in Canada. Jessie feels that, through discussions about cultural differences in class with other students, she has come to accept diverse behaviours and practices, although she still cannot fully understand them.

Daycare was another positive experience that helped Jessie and her family with their transition into a new culture. "My son felt a little shy and scared at his first daycare. When he came to MOSAIC at first he was a little scared. The teachers

made him feel more comfortable so that I could study English. Everyday he loved daycare more." At the beginning of January of 2002, the MOSAIC Language Centre started a Family Place and a Parents' Group. Jessie joined with her son. She says that these classes helped her: "Now I know how to teach children, how to play with them and how to communicate better with them. Now I feel I can help my son to grow better."

Now that their time at the Language Centre is over, Jessie's son is attending pre-school at Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House and Jessie is planning to attend more English classes in the fall. Jessie's parting comments revealed her greatest achievement accomplished through studying at MOSAIC: "Confidence—the kind and comfortable school environment helped to give me confidence. Now I don't wait for my husband to speak for me. I am out in the community enjoying Vancouver and meeting new friends. I love it here!"

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*MOSAIC Language Centre's 'English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) Program' is funded through the Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.*

## **Did you have a chance to visit our website?**

Everything you ever wanted to know regarding services provided by MOSAIC is posted at  
**[www.mosaicbc.com](http://www.mosaicbc.com)**

## **Are you curious about our interpretation and translation services?**

For a comprehensive description of our services, practices, policies and languages, visit us at  
**[www.mosaic-trans.com](http://www.mosaic-trans.com)**

# New Challenges A Reflection

by Victor Porter  
Manager of Community Outreach Programs

Immigrants and refugees arriving in British Columbia have always faced compounded challenges. Settling and integrating into a new society is never an easy task. They must learn a new language, understand the demands of the local labour market, and achieve recognition for skills, work experience and credentials gained abroad. These are just a few of the pressures and daily struggles families from diverse immigrant and refugee communities deal with.

With hard work, tenacity, creativity and support provided by agencies like MOSAIC, immigrants and refugees are able to successfully confront enormous challenges and integrate into Canadian society successfully, thereby enhancing the radiant diversity of our social fabric.

However, the aforementioned challenges are now heightened by a recent series of measures taken by the provincial government. The current cuts and changes to legislation affect vast sectors of the population, and immigrants and refugees feel the impact in a very specific way.

Every immigrant and refugee that arrives in British Columbia may be considered a 'new worker'—the \$6.00 per hour minimum wage for new workers is a sure way of immediately placing newcomers below the poverty line.

Professional and skilled immigrants often need to take courses to attain accreditation for their respective trades and professions—the imminent increase in tuition fees will therefore become an additional barrier for newcomers. Many will, instead, enter the work force in an occupation that uses very little of their knowledge and pays low wages. The impact of this pattern affects the community greatly through the under-utilization of skills and poor fiscal contribution.

For those already living in poverty, cuts in Income Assistance rates mean surviving in a labyrinth of isolation and exclusion, facing doors that slam shut one after the other.

Newcomer immigrants and refugees must now embark on a settlement journey in a more difficult environment. As an agency that serves immigrants and refugees we are also impacted by our clients' challenges.

Our strategy has been and will continue to be one that strengthens our clients' resilience and promotes the vitality of networks of support and solidarity.

This vision is the driving force behind the Community Development Initiatives, the Looking Ahead Project, the exploration of Organizational Change Through Exposure and the newly developed Voluntary Sector Initiative Project that will promote the establishment of a British Columbia Network of Associations for Internationally Trained Professionals.

The experience and the dynamic diversity of the communities we work with reminds all of us that while legislation and legislators may come and go, newcomers stay, enduring challenges to enrich the social capital of our country.

The following are only a few of the many changes, some anticipated, that have a direct impact on communities:

- Services for immigrants and refugees are perceived to be 'add-ons' rather than essential
- Reduction to Income Assistance provided to families and individuals
- Eligibility for childcare subsidies has been adjusted (higher cut-off in income level)
- Three-week waiting period (referred to as Work Search Period) before the assessment for eligibility for Income Assistance
- First job minimum wage reduced to \$6.00 per hour
- Changes in spirit and policy regarding affordable housing for low-income families
- Legal Services Society has eliminated the poverty law that primarily covers representation in cases related to WCB, CPP, Disability Benefits, Income Assistance and Employment Insurance and the Immigration Clinic and has reduced tariffs by 10% across the board. Family law coverage is also significantly reduced
- Multicultural School Support Workers are either reduced in numbers (Vancouver) or eliminated altogether (Burnaby) by School Boards
- Changes to the Residential Tenancy Act are anticipated and the Vancouver Residential Tenancy office has been closed
- The anticipated change that will impact the operation of the Human Rights Commission—the Hate Crime Unit is eliminated
- Changes within the Ministry of the Attorney General in regard to the policy on 'Violence Against Women in Relationships'
- Anticipated passing of the US/Canada agreement related to third country asylum seekers coming to Canada through the US

# Building Blocks receives *Public Service Award*

by Ninu Kang  
Director of Family Programs

MOSAIC's Building Blocks Program received the Public Service Award in the category of Partnership for exemplifying excellence in aiding and sustaining the work of the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and community partners.

Modeled after a successful US program (Hawaii Healthy Beginnings (1985)), Building Blocks Vancouver is an early intervention service for young mothers and their infants considered to be at high risk of abuse and neglect. The program consists of home visitors who provide in-home and community support to young mothers from the Vietnamese, Latin American and First Nations communities in East Vancouver. Home visitors Huong Thi Le and Maritza Andino are from the same cultural backgrounds as the women they help, so they may act as role models and connect isolated young mothers to community support systems. The program also includes a nurse, Andrea Findlay, and a social worker, Linda Pearson. Their roles are to consult with and assist the home visitors and to educate and inform the young mothers themselves.

Using the same approach, Hawaii Healthy Beginnings was able to reduce child abuse and neglect by 99% within the program's own population. The Vancouver model has been in place for three years now, and initial research shows a success rate of over 90%.



## **YES, I'LL SUPPORT MOSAIC**

Charitable Reg. No. 13017-8130-RR001

Here is my donation of  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check if you do not wish a portion of your donation to be applied to membership  
(Membership fees: Individual - \$10 Professional Individual - \$25 or Group/Organization - \$100)

*My cheque to MOSAIC is enclosed*

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*Make cheques payable to: MOSAIC 1720 Grant Street, 2nd Floor, Vancouver BC V5L 2Y7 Tel: (604) 254-9626*

All donations of \$10 or more will receive a receipt for income tax purposes. Other donations will receive a receipt only upon request.

# From challenges to success through resilience...

## Personal stories collected by Employment Programs staff

Peter Harnisch - Co-ordinator, Maureen Mochuk - Marketer, Bao Van Vu - Instructor/Counsellor  
and Fiona Lee - Instructor/Counsellor and Marketer

*Many clients who come to MOSAIC's Employment Programs are struggling to find work and need help with their job search. These people face many obstacles, but through hard work these hurdles are conquerable. The following reflect such success stories...*

**Yuri P.** immigrated to Canada from Russia over a year ago. He obtained his Master's degree in Russia and his Ph.D. in Germany. Upon arrival in Vancouver, he found it very difficult to find employment in the field of organic chemistry. He approached *Case Management Services* in March of 2001 for support and employment guidance. Following the advice of a counsellor, coupled with working very hard to reach his goal, Yuri successfully found a job. The following is the letter of appreciation that Yuri sent to MOSAIC.

*Dear MOSAIC;*

*I am pleased to inform you that I found a job as a Research Scientist with a company in Edmonton, Alberta, a position [that] is very specific to my background in organic synthesis in medicinal chemistry. Since arriving in Vancouver over one year ago I have sought guidance and support from MOSAIC staff on many occasions, and thanks to the advice I found this job opportunity on the Workopolis website. I also appreciate MOSAIC having sponsored the credential evaluation of my Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry (Russia). I can't overstress that having my education evaluated was of great importance in the decision of the company to hire me. Once again, thank you for your assistance. MOSAIC is great!*

**Alicia A.** started the *Workways* program in January of 2001. At that time both Alicia and her husband were unemployed and needed government assistance to support their family. Even though Alicia had owned and operated a bakery in her home country she was unable to find a job in Vancouver. She believed her beginner's English language skills and lack of Canadian work experience and references were among the reasons for her unsuccessful job search. Throughout the *Workways* program Alicia participated fully and was focused on success (even during the difficult transit strike in 2001!). She secured a practicum placement as a busser at The Hart House in Burnaby and refused to let the bus strike be an excuse to stay home. Alicia completed her practicum and began an on-call position at The Hart House. With new skills

and certificates from *Workways*, Alicia started looking for an additional job. As a skilled and motivated worker Alicia soon had her pick from a number of job offers. She accepted a fulltime counterperson position at Moonpennies Coffee & Fine Foods and is still working there today, giving her customers excellent service as well as her winning smile!

**Quan H.**, an energetic and optimistic student, participated in the *Career Connections* program. She has a very friendly and outgoing personality and anyone who meets her cannot help but like her. She had had experience as a Traffic Coordinator in China and was interested in looking for similar work in Canada. Quan was able to get a job interview for this type of position but said that it became apparent during the interview that she lacked Canadian experience. She left thinking that this had impaired her interview. However, MOSAIC staff encouraged her to keep doing follow-ups and to send the interviewer a letter of thanks. Quan followed the advice and, by the end of the program, she had received a phone call telling her that she got the job and would start in February. It was very uplifting to see her obtain a job in her field and area of work experience. Quan also said that her new employer informed her that she was offered the job because she expressed such great interest and showed her enthusiasm with follow-up phone calls and correspondence.

**Jackie B.** came to Canada in May of 2001. He initially sought to use his electrical engineering skills and experience but, by the second week of the *New Start* program, Jackie learned that he was not able to work as an engineer or tradesperson since Canadian employers did not recognize his foreign qualifications. In addition, his vocabulary was limited and he struggled with English pronunciation. He became discouraged by his inability to articulate his skills, attributes and previous job duties or have them recognized by Canadian employers. Fortunately, Jackie soon acquired a position as a volunteer electronics repairperson—this allowed him to demonstrate his skills and to receive encouragement. Subsequently, Jackie began working as a labourer for a Vancouver food manufacturer. He is currently working and is also waiting for the processing of his Canadian citizenship to be completed, so that he may join the Canadian Armed Forces and return to his field of expertise.

# It's a jungle out there...

by Barbara Nodzykowski  
Bilingual Counsellor

Recent changes to both the Income Assistance Law and the Labour Law by the BC government have profoundly affected the underprivileged, the disadvantaged and the working poor, many of them being our clients—newcomers to Canada.

In many cases their assets (if they have any at all) disappear during the first year of life in Canada. Up until the recent changes assistance was available to help them take their first steps. Getting this protection seems to be even more difficult now.

In an attempt to give an accurate portrayal of how these changes impacted our clients, MOSAIC Settlement Services developed a survey questionnaire to identify the most common problems experienced by the clients. The survey was designed to aid our discussions with the Ministry of Human Resources and to provide us with input from our clients to better inform the government before possible future changes are made.

Early results paint a grim picture. From April 24 to June 7, 2002, Eighty-eight clients/families affected by these changes were documented. Fifty-seven of these clients were single parents. Six were on Disability Benefits. Two seniors were denied Income Assistance benefits altogether. Fifteen clients had their cheques reduced (by \$45, \$97 and even as high as \$150). The sad reality is that the highest reduction so far affects single mothers, seven of them lost their daycare subsidies. One single mother lost her daycare subsidy *and* her transportation subsidy, practically cutting her off from her ESL classes and possible job search opportunities. Several clients were withheld cheques pending their meeting with financial assistance workers. One of these clients was on Disability Benefits and unable to make a trip to the office. Another, a single mother, also had difficulty attending the meeting. Yet another client was asked to meet with a training consultant but was unable to talk to him/her because the consultant failed to respond to either her calls or the calls of a MOSAIC bilingual counsellor.

Some clients who had applied for crisis grants were uncertain whether their requests would be met. Others, mostly employable couples or singles, were simply cut off or had their cheques withheld, leaving them unable to pay for necessities for some period of time.

Many employable clients have experienced problems with work plans and job search because they do not believe they are able to compete for jobs given their limited language skills or because of age or appearance. All clients expressed anxiety and fear of what the future held for them. Many simply could not believe that the reduction is the result of the new regulations rather than a mistake of some sort.

*Our* job, an extremely challenging one, is to explain to them the new reality. Even with the best intentions, how can we assure a mother of two that her children will be as well-fed as before when her Income Assistance payments have been reduced by \$51, and she has lost the \$100 exemption from the Family Maintenance Program? How can a family with two children survive on \$325.58 a month for food, clothing, etc.?

At least three refugee families felt they were dealt with very harshly. Problems with documentation or with eligibility concerns, left these families (all of which included children) with no more than one month assistance.

As one of the single mothers said, "I am feeding my children first. Then I drink a little glass of milk if there is any left over."

Yet another of our clients, a single mother of two (ages 5 and 13) and a student of our *Workways* program, was affected drastically by the cuts to the support portion of the assistance she received and, later, by an eviction notice. In July she will face the reduction to the shelter portion of her cheque. She says that she is desperately trying to find subsidized housing and any type of job. The reality is that we cannot do much except help her write letters to co-ops and BC Housing. There is nothing we can do about the reduced assistance.

We find ourselves repeating the same question again and again—why? Why, in one of the most plentiful countries in the world, are the poorest and most vulnerable people legislated into even deeper poverty?

# “How High is the Bar?”

## An interactive response to new regulations

by Solomon Wong  
MOSAIC Board Member

‘How High is the Bar?’ was a public forum co-organized by MOSAIC, SUCCESS, the Canadian Bar Association (BC Branch) and the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies & Service Agencies of BC. The February 16, 2002, forum was organized in response to major changes in federal regulations in the new *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

Participating in the forum were over 150 attendees, a panel of experts on immigration and refugee legal issues and co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, Paul Forseth and Mobina Jaffer. Participants also experienced hands-on workshops on specific issues such as refugee concerns, family classes, skilled workers and women’s issues.

The forum, a co-operative venture between these organizations, yielded the following statements:

- Retroactivity of new rules to existing applicants is unfair and should not be implemented.
- The language requirement of 80 points passing mark is too high.
- Applications should not be required to be submitted at place of habitual residence.
- The requirement of 15 years of education for skilled workers is too high.
- Single applicants should not be penalized.
- Regulations should be subject to thorough race and gender analyses.
- The principle of ‘the best interest of the child’ must be clearly defined and applied in a manner that is consistent with race and gender perspectives.
- Income should not be the only concern for a sponsorship application.
- The requirement for work experience unfairly discriminates against women.
- The Refugee Appeal Division should allow for new evidence.
- Protected persons with Conventional Refugee status in Canada should be granted automatic permanent residence by operation of law.
- The Pre-removal Risk Assessment should allow 30 days for submissions.



As the new act is implemented, continued work is needed to ensure the new rules do not adversely affect current and future MOSAIC clients. The success of the forum sets the stage for future joint ventures between MOSAIC and other organizations serving immigrants and refugees in the Greater Vancouver region.

# Substandard Housing Issues

## A Survey

by Sherman Chan  
Director of Settlement Services

A survey on the extent of substandard housing issues affecting immigrants and refugees in the Lower Mainland was completed by MOSAIC in conjunction with Kwantlen University College. Through discussions that included clients and service providers, the study identified the severity of substandard housing problems faced by newcomers in the Lower Mainland.

The housing standards that reflect societal expectations are based on several broad categories: suitability, adequacy, affordability and a healthy surrounding community. Inappropriate housing standards are defined as follows:

- Suitability: overcrowding, inadequacy of space given number of potential occupants
- Adequacy: poor living conditions and poor sanitation as well as irregular and/or inadequate maintenance of electricity, plumbing, heat, roof, floor, appliances, etc.
- Affordability: the household spends more than 30% of its income on shelter. (Note that consideration is given to the difference between a single person choosing to use more than 50% of his income on rent and a family of five spending more than 50% of their total income on rent.)
- Houses or dwellings put on the market for demolition, redevelopment or conversion
- Imminent notice of eviction
- Healthy community: social problems associated with the surrounding community (may include drug or alcohol addicts living in or close to the building)
- Isolation from local conveniences such as public transportation and social support networks
- High level of crime exists within and/or close to the housing complex

The following indicators are problems specific to immigrants and refugees:

- Those sponsored by their families or sponsorship agreement holders face some sort of sponsorship breakdown
- Immigrant or refugee women and children in abusive situations

The report identified immigrants as the second highest group at risk of homelessness in the Lower Mainland. Various research projects illustrate how a combination of factors can work against immigrants and refugees trying to access housing.

Primary barriers include:

- Skin colour (race)
- Ethnicity/culture/religion
- Gender

Secondary barriers include:

- Level of income
- Source of income
- Lack of knowledge of the housing system
- Language/accent
- Household type and size
- Lack of knowledge of institutions and culture
- Lack of experience with the dominant institutions and culture

As a result of such barriers immigrants and refugees have more difficulties seeking housing than their non-immigrant and non-refugee counterparts.

This survey has generated 13 recommendations to deal with the substandard housing problems of immigrants and refugees in the Lower Mainland. To find out more please visit MOSAIC's website at:

### What's New?

For more details  
on the housing Survey,  
and many other issues  
visit MOSAIC's website at:

[http://www.mosaicbc.com/whats\\_new.html](http://www.mosaicbc.com/whats_new.html)



# Letter in support of a Private Members' Bill on Housing and Homelessness

May 16, 2002

Dear Ms. Bradshaw,

I was delighted to hear that Bill C-416 will be coming before Parliament for discussion but disappointed to learn that it is a non-voteable bill, given the importance of the topic. I am the past president and a board member for a non-profit settlement agency for immigrants and refugees in Vancouver—MOSAIC—and I have just received a draft of a study on the extent of substandard housing problems faced by immigrants and refugees in BC's Lower Mainland. It was prepared for the Regional Homelessness Research Committee by Dr. Parveen Mattu and is the result of a joint partnership between MOSAIC and Kwantlen University College. It spells out the problems resulting from a very low stock of affordable rental housing, problems that will only be aggravated by the upcoming reduction in BC Benefits. The research findings indicate that, even when illegal secondary suites are taken into account, the need for subsidized housing is much higher than the supply.

As expected, the findings show that those most vulnerable to homelessness are immigrants and refugees, singles and people fleeing abusive relationships.

The report suggested that a co-ordinated approach is necessary between the non-profit co-op sector, the government and the private sector in increasing the stock of affordable housing. It also suggested that more spacious accommodation to house larger and extended families is necessary for some immigrants (this issue has been of ongoing concern to MOSAIC for some time now).

It is essential that a federal housing strategy be formulated to include more funding than is presently allotted and stronger enforcement of minimum housing standards. Commercial rents in Vancouver and district are too expensive for many newcomers and those in the lower income bracket to pay. In BC, many have to dip far into their food budget in order to pay their rent. This leads to a shameful and increasing necessity for food bank use (I find this fact repugnant, considering the wealth and bounty that exists in this country) and malnourishment amongst children. I recently heard the Superintendent of the Burnaby School District state that many

students' inadequate diets are causing the most serious of educational problems in the district—a despicable situation contributed to by the federal government through its neglect of affordable housing programs. As usual, the tragic result of such minimal social programs is that it is the children who end up suffering most.

Thank you for your attention to these comments. I hope they will strengthen you in your resolve to improve this situation and redirect the Liberal Party's priorities to investing in the well-being of the people. I believe there has been research that shows beyond the shadow of a doubt that health depends on decent housing and, therefore, even our health system would reap the benefits!

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Briemberg

Past President of MOSAIC's Board of Directors

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*C-416 is a Private Members' Bill put forward by Libby Davies, MP for Vancouver East.*

*At the time of writing this letter, the Hon. Claudette Bradshaw, MP for the Province of New Brunswick, was the Minister of Labour and Secretary of State and also Minister for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women. Hon. Claudette Bradshaw was also the Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness.*

An anonymous donor with a big heart for children and families has donated \$20,000 through the BC Technology Foundation in support of our Family Support Programs.

**MOSAIC**  
is very thankful for this  
donation!

# Multicultural Victim Services Program

by Ninu Kang  
Director of Family Programs

MOSAIC's Multicultural Victim Services Program was initiated in February of 2001. The Ministry of Public Safety along with the Solicitor General within the Policing and Community Safety Branch fund this specialized victim services program committed to supporting immigrants and refugees with limited English language skills.

Victims who do not speak English or who come from foreign cultures face multiple barriers in accessing justice. Multicultural victims of crime not only suffer physically and emotionally, but they must cope with the lack of services in their own language within the justice system and the community.

MOSAIC's Multicultural Victim Services Program offers language and culturally appropriate services to victims of crime and trauma by providing emotional support along with crisis intervention. Information on the legal system is made available to victims. Safety planning is an option for those who may not wish to involve the police or the justice system. Support and advocacy offered to immigrant and refugee victims and people of colour help to break down barriers in accessing the justice system. Support is also provided through court orientations and some accompaniments to court, police stations, appointments with lawyers and legal aid offices. All efforts are made to connect victims to other services as well, within MOSAIC and in the community, in order to make them feel less distanced from obtaining justice.

Anyone can be a victim of a crime. We know, however, that most victims are women and most crimes occur in their own homes. When we think about the word 'home' we often think of a safe place to go and rest. But this is not always the case. Even though this program is open to all victims of crime, the majority of clients are women who have experienced abuse. Staff members possess a particular sensitivity and understanding of the dynamics of violence against women, especially in the context of specific and unique immigrant and refugee issues.

## **Who is a victim of crime?**

You can be a victim of crime, for example, if you were threatened, insulted or verbally attacked during an argument with a partner/family member/stranger/boss. Or, if you feel frightened by a partner's behavior (for example reckless

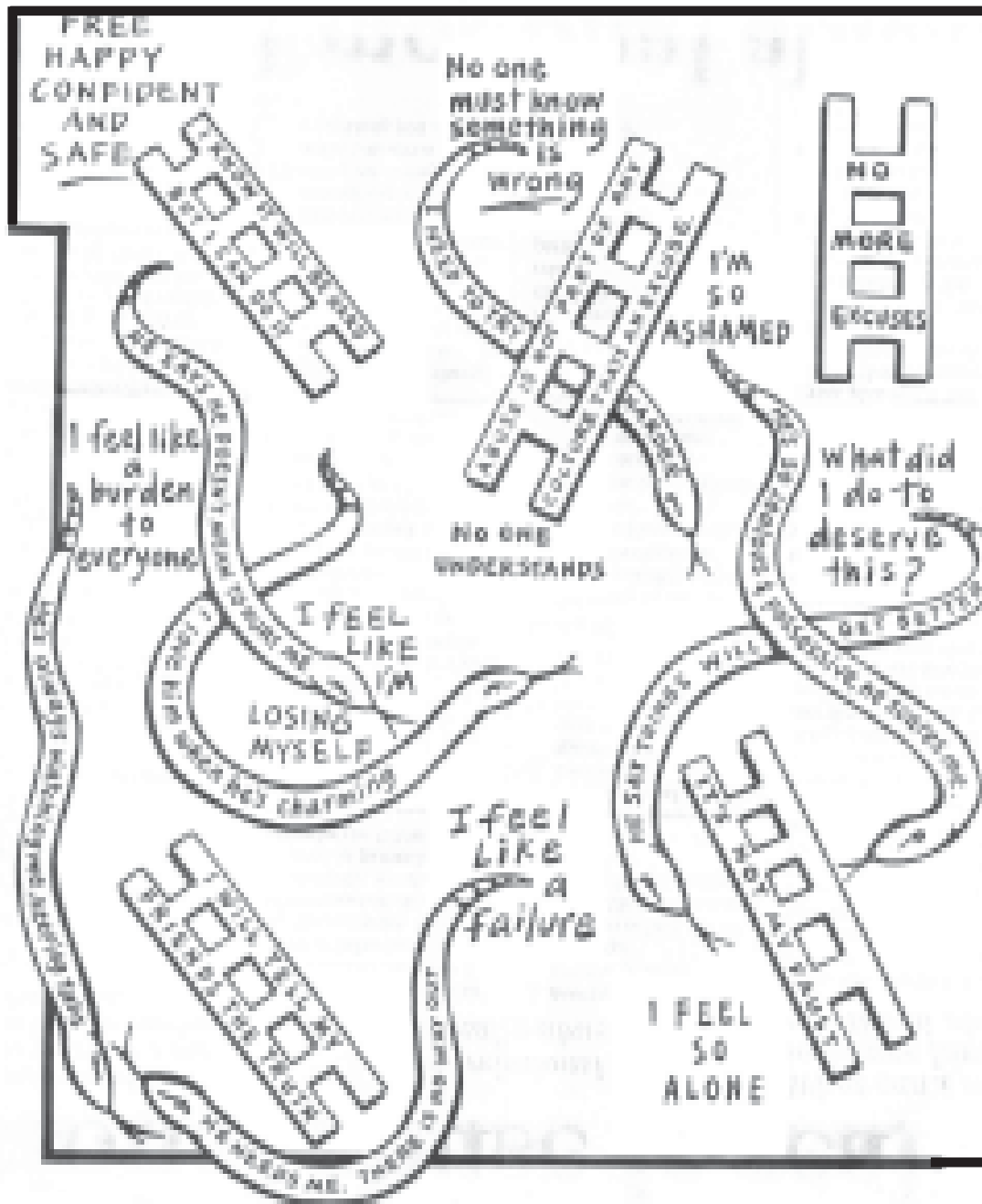
driving or use of drugs and alcohol). Or, if you have been physically hurt by your partner (hit, kicked, knocked down or hurt with a weapon). Or, if you have been prevented from, or you are afraid your partner will react badly, to your getting a job, taking English classes, going to school, etc. Or, if you have to justify all your purchases and personal financial decisions, or have been forced to engage in sexual intercourse when or in ways that make you uncomfortable by your partner, co-worker or boss.

Victims of crime also experience the following threats: being told that your children will be taken away/that you will never be able to see your children again/that your children will be put into a foster home/that you will lose custody of your children. Many immigrant women also say that they have been threatened that their immigration or sponsorship status will be taken away from them.

MOSAIC Multicultural Victim Services Program helps reduce the ongoing effects of crime and trauma. The program makes the appropriate referrals for crime victims and advocates for them in accessing additional emotional, financial, legal, housing, emergency shelter or medical support after the crime has occurred. Bilingual counsellors, legal advocates, family support workers in MOSAIC's Settlement and Family Programs, Employment Programs and English Language Services (ELSA) provide aid and input to the program.

Providing essential services to newcomers to Canada since 1976, MOSAIC values the contributions of members and volunteers.

*Diversity is our wealth!*



*This was a community arts project completed through the participation of Allison, Ana, Elvira, June, Katherine, Lydia and Maria from South East Health, Australia. Illustrations: Fran Lowe Design and production: Wendy Farley and Jenny White*

### **Abuse: A Game of Power and Control**

The game of *Snakes and Ladders* can be likened to an abusive relationship—it can reflect what abused persons are living with everyday when they stay with someone who is hurting them emotionally, spiritually and/or physically.

The snakes represent factors that keep us trapped in an abusive relationship, whether it be at home, in the workplace or in an abusive family or community.

The ladders symbolize positive support—needed in order to escape a negative relationship.

Remember that abuse is not a game. Whatever you do, don't ignore the problem—it won't just go away by itself!

# Letters to MOSAIC's Language Centre

*The Family Program at MOSAIC's Language Centre exemplifies the fact that the Canadian government and our own MOSAIC staff are both concerned with the needs of new immigrants. This program made me realize and appreciate the emphasis and importance placed on the education of children in Canada—this thought really warms my heart.*

*Truthfully, my first months in Canada were very depressing. My family and I did not know how to adapt to our new environment. We had no jobs and no friends. We often wondered why we even came to Canada. But after joining this program I really felt that Canada is a good place for our children to grow up in. I also realized that we must make an effort to adapt more quickly to our new home.*

*Now I feel this country is the best place to be living, and that we should remain here forever. The Family Program made me realize that the Canadian government is very caring towards new immigrants. The program helped me make new friends and learn how to communicate better with my child. The program provided an opportunity for us adults to exchange ideas with other parents and for our children to meet new playmates.*

*I now have a clearer understanding and more positive perspective of my goals for my future life in Canada. Thanks again to MOSAIC for making such a good opportunity available to me.*

*Jenna Hui Hong*

*Dear Teachers;*

*Thank you so much! Without your help, I can never imagine that I can graduate so fast!*

*As you know, as a new immigrant who doesn't know English, I have lost many opportunities in Canada because of that. I was pretty upset before I came to MOSAIC. However, now I have found my confidence back since I can handle the basic English. I know this is not enough in Canada, so I am going to keep studying in regular schools.*

*I have studied at MOSAIC for two years. During that time, I did improve my listening skill and speaking skill very much. I didn't dare to talk to an English speaker before because we cannot understand each other at all. Now my pronunciation is still bad, but at least they can get the main idea, and I am surprised that I can usually understand them! The things I learn from you are so useful, they will help me a lot in my life!*

*Once again, thank you very much! I will never forget you!!!*

*Yours,*

*Jian Hua Dong*

*Parents and children participate in 'Circle Time' at Queen Elizabeth Park. MOSAIC Language Centre's Family Program is funded through the United Way's Success by Six Program.*



# UPDATE!

## New Partnerships and Initiatives

### BC Network of Associations for Internationally Trained Professionals

In July 2002, MOSAIC will enter a partnership with the Immigrant Services Society of BC and the Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society to deliver a two-year project funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The main objectives of this project are:

- To develop community capacity within ethno-cultural communities in BC.
- To facilitate the establishment of associations and networks of internationally trained professionals.
- To facilitate the recognition of foreign credentials, and to inform government policy, by connecting ethnocultural communities with regulatory bodies and the government.

Along with our partners, MOSAIC looks forward to working with the community to address some of the barriers to obtaining meaningful employment for skilled immigrants.

### RCMP Cultural Diversity Policy Framework Development: Sectoral Engagement Project

The RCMP and the federal government, through the Voluntary Sector Initiative, have approved our proposed 'RCMP Cultural Diversity Policy Framework Development: Immigrant and Refugee Sectoral Engagement Project'. This initiative will provide information and recommendations on improving knowledge of cultural diversity to RCMP National Headquarters as well as regional detachments. Strategies will also be advocated for forming partnerships with the immigrant, refugee and visible minority women service sector to encourage policy development and implement culturally appropriate practices.

This one-year endeavor will include creating a National Steering Committee, a survey, key informant interviews, literature reviews, regional consultations (in Montreal, Halifax, Regina and Vancouver) and compiling a Cultural Diversity Policy Framework, among other activities.

### *Membership has its benefits...*

Join MOSAIC and share news and exciting developments.  
As a member you will receive our newsletter and be entitled to vote  
at the Annual General Meeting.

To support MOSAIC's programs and advocacy work,  
fill out the form on page 4 of this newsletter and become a member today!

**Memberships are annual from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.**

If you were a member last year, it's time to fill out your renewal form.

For more details please contact Sandra at 604-254-9626.

# Key Words for Health and Medical Care

by Jiri Adler, Director  
and Chava Glouberman, Manager  
Language Services Department

The *Key Words for Health and Medical Care*, a guide to health and medical terms, is designed for volunteer interpreters and people with English as an additional language. It is also a useful tool for healthcare professionals working with non-English speaking clients or patients. The booklet contains over 500 terms, organized by area of health services. It was first published in 1983 with funds provided by the Health Promotion Contribution Program, Health and Welfare Canada. The original project covered 15 languages: Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, French, German, Hungarian, Greek, Hindi, Punjabi, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian.

The guide was originally produced by volunteers because not enough funds were available to pay professional translators. In 1989 we decided to have the old versions and all new booklets translated by professional translators and proofread by health care professionals.

The first editions' success led to the publication of a second edition in 1985. Funding for the development of new language combinations is generated from sales of existing stock.

We have been receiving enthusiastic reviews and suggestions for the translation of the booklets into additional languages. In response, additional booklets in the Czech/Serbo-Croatian and Somali/Swahili languages have been added to the existing list. We are currently producing an English/Arabic/Persian booklet as well. However, publishing software and language limitations must be considered when producing a new language combination.

For more information and ordering instructions please visit:

[http://www.mosaicbc.com/whats\\_new\\_bilingual.html](http://www.mosaicbc.com/whats_new_bilingual.html)



## AGM pictorial...



*Harriet Nabani: Recipient of MOSAIC's Human Rights Award 2001*

## MOSAIC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: September 26, 2002  
Place: Van Dusen Gardens'  
Floral Hall, 5251 Oak St.

Registration: 5:30 p.m.  
Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Contact Sandra at 604-254-9626  
for more information



MOSAIC's Board of Directors 2001, from left to right:  
 D. Blanco-Sarlay,  
 E. Naizghi (ED),  
 M. Prasad, E. Clague,  
 S. Wong, B.C. Best,  
 J. Burton,  
 E. Briemberg,  
 A. Policzer, C. Brown,  
 S. Emery, C. Cheng,  
 L. Perinbam,  
 and J. Francis.  
 Missing: A. Quinn,  
 E. Honsberger  
 and M. Khan



*Lori Winter and Elizabeth Briemberg making presentations at the Volunteers' Recognition Awards 2001.*

# Symposium 2002

## Violence Against Women

by Ninu Kang  
Director of Family Programs

May 12, 2002, marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tabling of the 'Report on Violence in the Family: Wife Battering' in the Canadian House of Commons. Ten years before that, the first sexual assault centres, women's centres and transition houses were established in Canada through the dedication, hard work and vision of women and men working in their communities to keep women safe.

MOSAIC participated in a symposium held in Vancouver on May 13 and 14 that received international attendance in recognition of this important anniversary. Over 400 people attended the symposium to celebrate the gains made by women's organizations, justice, health and other professionals over the years to end violence in the lives of women and children. Women's centres, immigrant organizations, men's treatment programs, law enforcement, judiciary, government, training institutes, colleges, universities and family violence research centres had the opportunity to discuss 'how far we have



*Linda Markowsky (McLeod), Margaret Mitchell, Rosemary Brown, Raminder Dosanjh, Rose Charlie, were among those honoured at the special ceremony.*

come...and how far do we still have to go' to end violence in the family. A ceremony was held to honour some of the activists who have worked tirelessly over the years to end violence in the lives of women and children. They are among the many people who were acknowledged by their peers and community for pioneering in the field of anti-violence work.



*Panel presenters: Elzbie Jazwinski, President of BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses, Shashi Assanand, ED of the Vancouver/Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society, Gail Edinger, Regional Coordinator of Community Coordination for Women's Safety, Ninu Kang, Director of MOSAIC's Family Programs.*