Vision & Mission

MO SaIC’s vision is of a Canada that welcomes and empowers immigrants, refugees and newcomers.

MO SaIC empowers immigrants, refugees and newcomers through leadership and innovation in service delivery, community-building and advocacy.

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Economic turmoil has made the past year a challenging one for MOSAIC, as well as for those we serve. Immigrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to a financial downturn, as existing difficulties in obtaining employment are amplified by a shrinking job market. Given this significant impact on those who are already susceptible, I am pleased and proud to report that MOSAIC was able not only to maintain, but to expand its services at a time when they were needed most.

There is no doubt that immigrants and refugees face a number of obstacles to obtaining employment in Canada. The unemployment rate for immigrants and refugees is nearly double that of those born in Canada. The average wage earned by immigrants and refugees is about a third less than non-immigrant workers, notwithstanding that the “point system” results in immigrants having a significantly higher rate of post-secondary education than those born in Canada. A recent study by professor Philip Oreopoulos of the University of British Columbia revealed that merely having a “distinct foreign-sounding name may be a significant disadvantage” in obtaining employment.

These shameful findings are an affront to the values of equality and social justice Canadians hold dear. Our society has created obstacles to immigrants and refugees reaching their full potential in Canada. These already formidable barriers only grow higher as employment opportunities decline in difficult economic times.

MOSAIC dedicates significant resources and programs to eliminating these obstacles, both by empowering immigrants and refugees and by reaching out to employers. Despite the widespread effects of the recession, MOSAIC has been able to maintain all of its key programs; in fact MOSAIC has expanded the scope of its services by opening a new office in Burnaby.

Our success in maintaining and expanding programs resulted from a combination of hard work, sacrifice and commitment by many people. Our executive director Eyob Naizghi and all of the staff at MOSAIC again worked tirelessly to continue to provide excellent programs and services on what seems to be an impossibly insufficient budget. Of course, MOSAIC could not deliver the quality and scope of services it does without the work of our dedicated volunteers, whose contributions to the community never cease to amaze. Our funders showed incredible leadership and foresight this past year. Their continued support is a powerful testament to the importance and efficacy of MOSAIC’s work.

Looking ahead, there are other reasons to be optimistic about the future of MOSAIC. We have recently concluded a process to restate MOSAIC’s vision, mission, value principles and strategic goals. The remarkable part of that process was how quickly a diverse group of MOSAIC staff, board members, funders, clients and members of the community reached a consensus about what MOSAIC is, what it can be in the future and how best we can all work together to reach our goals.

It is a privilege to be part of an organization that thrives in the face of serious challenges such as those faced this past year, and which consistently provides so much benefit to the community.
In the past year MOSAIC has been a place of activity and strategic change. Despite looming economic challenges, we welcomed managed growth to meet changing client needs; opened a multiservice office in the heart of a newcomer growth area (Burnaby); formed diverse and cross-sector partnerships benefitting family and children, youth and seniors programming; and responded proactively to the issue of staff retention and recruitment. As we continue to manage change under a difficult socio-economic reality, we will reflect on the organization’s capacity for sustainability.

Though some may question the value of immigration during a period of economic uncertainty the fact remains: newcomers are part of the national source of economic revitalization and recovery. Canada needs people to work and pay taxes and, according to census data, immigrants make up the younger and better-educated portion of an aging population. This is the right time to retool our “human capital” strategy and make a conscious investment in immigrants and refugees.

To this end MOSAIC has worked relentlessly and collaborated with many partners in the past year to proactively meet the modern-day challenges faced by our clients. We have started working more closely with local employers to inform them of the added value of hiring immigrants; expanded our service hours to improve accessibility; trained our settlement workers on employment-related services; provided mentoring through our volunteer connection programs; partnered with Vancity on an Immigrant Loan program; conducted research on housing and multi-barrier clients in partnership with academia; and launched our Step Ahead program, which helps multi-barrier clients become self-sustaining. As a new year begins, these measures will evolve to reflect the changing needs of our clients. And as Vancouver welcomes the world during the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, MOSAIC will continue to focus on what matters most – the people we serve.

Of course, nothing could have been accomplished without the hard work and dedication of our employees – each shone brightly. Special thanks to Sue Trevor for managing our finances and the challenges of space expansion; Sherman Chan for his efforts in building relationships for new initiatives; Kelly Pollack, whose presence will be missed; Jiri Adler for heading our new website’s development and design; Ninu Kang for taking a lead on our journey for accreditation; Larry Chan and Nina Miller for “stepping up to the plate” at the right time and their help in finding Kelly’s replacement, Joan Andersen, who we welcome; and Sandra Chua for keeping myself and the board organized.

I’d like to thank and acknowledge our board members for their expertise and the leadership of board president Brook Greenberg, our community partners for their continued support and all our funders for helping us support the community.

This brings me to the heart of the matter, the reason we continue to do what we do and seek out ways to do it better: the communities and individuals we work with and serve, who confide in us their adversities and share with us their successes. These are the people that make each and every one of us at MOSAIC wake up in the morning with the energy, resolve, drive and dedication to make a real difference in their lives – we know by doing so, we’re improving the legacy of Canada as a whole.
The current recession has led to some speculation about whether Canada should tighten the immigration tap. While there is a perception among some that too many immigrants arriving in tough times will only strain Canada’s resources and swell welfare rolls and unemployment lines, the truth is immigration has a benefit – in good times and bad.

According to experts, most skilled immigrants with professional designations – who make up 55 per cent of all 250,000 newcomers to Canada each year – are unlikely to go on social assistance. In fact, studies have shown newcomers are risk-takers with ambitions and skills who would rather exist on the margins than be on welfare.

The idea that immigrants take jobs from Canadians in a recession is also a myth. There is always a chronic shortage of medical practitioners, for example, and the hiring of immigrants would not have an impact on Canadians seeking these jobs. Also important to note is the time lag between training a person and filling a job. As such, it would take someone five years to be certified as, say, an MRI operator.

In fact, the changes made by government last year to the immigration system were designed to provide the country with the flexibility to weather the storm. We must bring in immigrants whose skills are needed immediately in order to respond quickly to economic changes. To react to the faltering Canadian economy with a knee-jerk reduction of immigration now wouldn’t make sense.

Perhaps a bigger concern is how to keep a disillusioned pool of skilled talent arriving in economic tough times from leaving. A 2006 Statistics Canada report on brain drain between 1981 and 1996 found that skilled immigrants who came to Canada during a recession were 50 percent more likely to leave the country for better opportunities elsewhere.

So how do we convince newcomers to stay when times are tough?

Besides welcoming them with open arms, we must keep the services that help them feel more settled and more able to take control of their own lives in a new country open and running. Failing to provide immigrant services when we do, in fact, depend on newcomers to keep our country thriving just doesn’t add up – especially when it comes to dollars and cents.

—Noa Glouberman, editor
Focusing on the positives in a recession

My last article for the newsletter in 2006/07 focused on a booming economy and how employers were actively seeking out immigrants to fill current and future labour shortages. Although there have been some significant labour market changes since then, there are some things that have remained constant.

Skilled labour shortages will continue to impact BC as the workforce ages and the number of new births in Canada declines. According to a report in 2008 from the Ministry of Housing and Social Development, there are “an estimated 1.1 million job openings in the 10 years leading up to 2015” with only 652,000 students in the kindergarten to grade 12 school system. This leaves a labour gap of 460,000.

Another constant is MOSAIC’s ongoing advocacy of supportive work environments and promoting the benefits of hiring immigrants who possess relevant skills, language abilities and knowledge of international business practices, contributions that give employers the competitive edge in today’s global market.

What has changed since 2006/07 is the economy! With the daily media attention focused on more bad news, it’s hard to ignore the downturn. Many people have been left without jobs, particularly those working in resource based industries that rely heavily on the US economy or consumer driven product purchasing which impacts manufacturing and retail.

But there are still jobs to be found. Many job seekers ignore the hidden job market. These are jobs that are not advertised in the newspaper or on internet job searching sites and many of these jobs are with small businesses which represent 98 percent of all employers in BC. MOSAIC Employment Programs has a history of developing strong partnerships with small businesses and continues to focus on building new ones to ensure continued access to a wide variety of employment opportunities.

It is definitely a difficult time to be job searching but MOSAIC Employment Programs staff can offer the tools and support while providing a positive and encouraging environment.

—Caroline Poole, Employment Programs

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Job obstacles: Be sure all the paperwork is done – the volume is BIG at BECP. Timing is very important in this program.

Recession or not: The economy can be bad now, but not bad forever. Even if it’s not the best time to find a job, it can be a very good time to get more prepared and skilled for future opportunities. MOSAIC’s programs help clients become more qualified, and this is not only good for the clients but for the whole country.
In any business relationship one party must work to meet the needs of another. Surprisingly some vendors refuse to believe they’re the one expected to serve and excel in assisting their clients before they can receive a paycheque.

Normally an unsatisfied client can look for another vendor but Canada is “unfortunate” to have one of the wealthiest economies in the world, meaning our market is generally stable and sluggish. Here, an industry may be represented by companies that feel comfortable covering a region without interfering with the interests of others in the sector. Lack of competition makes vendors feel safe and unmotivated to change and improve. What is the point of getting better if everyone else is equally bad?

This situation opens opportunities for entrepreneurs who are more inventive and responsive to client needs that don’t fit the interests of bigger vendors. These are usually immigrants from countries with developing economies where competition is tenser and coming out a winner is a matter of survival.

In such endeavours business owners seek nonstandard solutions, act proactively and think outside the box to attract and retain clients. They are used to commitment and work hard on an ongoing basis.

Working with many suppliers and contractors in Vancouver I see the vast majority of companies owned/operated by immigrants are very involved in achieving customer satisfaction and strive to offer the most relevant products/services. The contribution to the market made by immigrants is crucial. With little exception, they set the bar high following simple rules of running a fair business. Being competitive and flexible they do things faster for a reasonable price and offer “all-included” solutions without unexpected catches or extra charges. Their approach is more creative in the way they use their limited resources to execute a task. They express their care for quality to win the niches neglected by bigger companies. They are trusted. And, eventually, all these ingredients create a positive and long-lasting effect.

—Roman Guramishvili, Operations

Healthy competition

Roman Guramishvili, administrator, Operations

Immigration info: Born in Samara, in the Russian Federation; arrived in Canada 2008

First contact: At the airport we were met by a social worker who listed a number of organizations offering help to new immigrants to settle in Vancouver. Our first place was not far from a MOSAIC office and, as it turned out, it was the right place to go.

Daily duties: Facilities management, renovations, purchasing and supplies, safety and security, printing and publications, insurance.

Work perks: Firstly, it may contradict with common sense, but the reality is that you spend more time with co-workers than with your family. That is why I am very happy to be surrounded by

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The success of MOSAIC Language Services rests squarely on the shoulders of 300 contractors and ten staff members – most of whom are immigrants to Canada.

The countries of origin of our workforce span the globe – from the Americas in the west to Japan and Korea in the east, from Canada in the north to South Africa and Argentina in the south. The evolution of communications makes it possible to work with translators from as far off as Australia. The languages spoken collectively – over 80 in total – range from Afrikaans to Vietnamese.

Our professional links with contractors go back 20 years. From the inception of MOSAIC to 1989, translation and interpretation services were provided, at first, by bilingual counsellors and, later, countless volunteers, who also hailed from all over the world.

In 1989 the City of Vancouver granted MOSAIC $30,000 to support the provision of affordable translation services. When the funding stopped two years later, Translation Services began targeting the corporate and government sectors while preserving affordable translation services for newcomers. Similarly, Interpretation Services was born from the need for a viable operation capable of providing a service desperately needed by newcomers.

The first major service agreement with the Ministry of Social Services and Housing was signed in October 1990. The transition from volunteer bilingual speakers to professional interpreters accelerated as Interpretation Services secured larger contracts that required quality service and professional support.

MOSAIC took one more step toward professionalism in 1994 when it adopted the Ministry of Attorney General’s fee schedule and professional accreditation guidelines.

We still work with a small number of professional contractors who joined us in 1989, mainly in the Vietnamese, Czech, and Russian languages, and 53 percent of our workforce has collaborated with us for over a decade. And financial records dating from March 1993 show our revenues have increased 400 percent!

The numbers speak for themselves. MOSAIC has succeeded in implementing a fee-for-service enterprise in a non-profit setting, a service based on the solid pillars of talent, workmanship, vigour, dedication, loyalty and the expertise of professional translators and interpreters. The vision and management of this

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very nice people. Secondly, I can apply my previous professional knowledge and experience. And last but not least, working for an organization that helps immigrants and refugees is especially important for me because I understand that, to a certain extent, I am contributing to the successful settlement of immigrants like me in Canada.

Job obstacles: To make my work less hectic and, in a way, more boring. But seriously speaking, coping with such a wide range of issues is challenging and stressful. That is why I am trying to make all these processes more systematic and predictable.

Recession or not: Despite their competitiveness, immigrants and refugees unfortunately are more at risk to suffer from a weak economy. In this respect, MOSAIC’s programs and services are especially important as they guide newcomers through adaptation and settlement in Canada, show them windows of opportunity and empower people to not to give up and find their right place in Canadian society.

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Miriam Jurigova, legal advocate, Legal Advocacy Program

Immigration info: Bratislava, Slovakia (former Czechoslovakia; mother is Czech, father is Slovak); arrived in Canada at age two

First contact: Knew of MOSAIC from previous frontline legal work.

Daily duties: Program management, frontline advocacy, assisting low-income newcomers with non-tariff immigration and poverty law.

Work perks: The diversity of people, the congenial employees (that all love food like me!) and my clients – I feel extremely privileged to be trusted with their life stories.

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Employment essay

Hi everybody! I am very glad to have the opportunity to share my special feelings at this moment. At MOSAIC I met many good teachers and made some good friends. I would like to say “Thank You” to all of you, thank you for your patience, thank you for your kindness and thank you for your assistance.

When I joined the Labour Market Focus class I had only been in Canada one month. I was very excited that I was returning to school, for it was many years ago I last had this experience. I was anxious to know everything about this beautiful country. But at the same time I was also afraid I couldn’t keep up with my class. My teacher and classmates encouraged me a lot and I did appreciate their help.

The LMF class gave me a lot of knowledge of the Canadian workplace. For example, I learned the topic of “Law and Workplace.” I think it was very useful because it explained our legal rights and responsibilities in the workplace. I learned how to communicate with managers and co-workers, even in some awkward topics.

In addition, the LMF class also taught me many skills in finding a job. It taught me how to write a résumé and cover letter, which I had never done before, especially in English. I got training in interview skills, telephone skills and so on. Although these skills are too hard to master for newcomers, I should say it connected us to the Canadian workplace and we learned about how to act when we wanted to find a job. We got great benefit from this class.

During the program, we also had computer classes, which provided lots of information on finding a job and upgrading our computer skills. With the improvement of this knowledge I am getting more confident than before.

I will finish my ELSA program now but I don’t want to leave the school or leave my class because I think I have many things left to study. In the immediate future I would like to study the geography, the history and the culture of Canada. I also want to take some professional training courses in university; after that I can return to my career.

I had been working as an engineer for many years in China. If I have the opportunity I would look forward to return to my engineering career in Canada. I know it will be very hard for an immigrant but I will do my best to achieve this goal.

Finally I want to tell you: I got a job yesterday, 30 minutes before ending my last class! Although this is an entry level job I think it’s a wonderful start of my new life in Vancouver.

—Echo Shen, student
New programs, new places, new according to 2006’s *Literature Review of Active Aging* report, B.C. has one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada. By 2031, 24 percent of our population will be over 65. B.C. is also an attractive place for seniors who are relocating. In total, immigrants made up 36 percent of the total senior population in 2001.

Still, many immigrant seniors are not living actively in B.C. due in most part to a language barrier (most prevalent among low-income seniors), leaving them isolated with a lack of social support and almost no community participation.

Last year MOSAIC received funding from the United Way to launch the Active Aging Internet Club for immigrant seniors. The club provides a safe and friendly environment for immigrant seniors to learn computer use, practice English and make friends.

As technology advances seniors must stay updated along with the outside world. Communicating with friends and family members around the world through e-mail can help break their isolation and generate a sense of achievement. As the Internet becomes more language-friendly seniors can use it to find information and read news in their native tongue.

Through the Active Aging Internet Club many seniors are empowered and enhance their self-worth; training makes them feel comfortable using a computer at home or other community facilities. A group of participants who graduated from the program last month decided to come back to volunteer as computer mentors or provide language support for other seniors.

Successful aging is more than simply a matter of health. It comprises what people actually do and their satisfaction with life. Active engagement with life is one of the key elements to successful aging. Rather than becoming a burden to society, an aging B.C. population can be a valuable human asset when seniors keep using their talents to contribute to our community through volunteering. Older people are a treasure and precious capital for our country and our culture.

—Daisy Au, Micro-Loans Programs

**Job obstacles:** The need for a program like this one always exceeds whatever resources we have. If we increase our resources the vacuum just sucks them up. There is never enough money, never enough staff and we are never without clients who have extremely difficult lives. Some lives are so incredibly difficult, and helping them is just skimming the surface of attempting to alleviate some of their suffering. My coping mechanisms include being in love with and living with a chef … need I say more?

**Recession or not:** A legal system isn’t fair and just unless all members of society have access to it. A program like ours helps fill part of the void.
I’m very impressed with the work MOSAIC employees do. As community outreach co-ordinator, I may be biased – but for a good reason. While others meet to discuss how to help immigrants and refugees or talk about their concerns regarding a lack of services for newcomers, our organization takes action. A recent example: the case of temporary foreign workers.

When large numbers of temporary foreign workers started contacting us for information and advice, our settlement workers identified them as a group facing many challenges and vulnerable to exploitation. We knew we had to take action. Besides raising the issue at various levels, we soon opened the doors to our new Drop-in Centre for temporary foreign workers.

With funding from the City of Vancouver, the centre provides a safe place for temporary foreign workers to meet, make friends, learn about their rights and responsibilities and express their concerns and get information and advice. Those who use the centre support each other and learn basic workplace ESL terminology.

Temporary foreign workers are very important to our economy. Some Canadian employers rely on them to address labour market shortages as they contribute their skills, experience and education to many of our country’s workplaces, pay taxes and EI premiums and contribute to the Canada Pension Plan. But because many don’t remain in Canada after their employment period ends, they generally don’t receive basic EI payments.

To this end, the Drop-in Centre also works to connect temporary foreign workers with other MOSAIC services to obtain legal information and advice, register their children in schools, apply for health care and learn their labour rights and responsibilities. We work hard to let them know MOSAIC is always there for them.

It’s important to remember that we don’t work alone on issues like this one. Part of our action plan is to engage in dialogue and discussion with other groups and agencies interested in, or working with, temporary foreign workers at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

—Saleem Spindari, Outreach Programs

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Temp work

In the last few months we’ve seen a shift in families migrating to Canada under federal/provincial Skilled Worker and Nominee programs. In addition the concept of Labour Market Opinion has become a tool to allow temporary workers to work in Canada in non-traditional fields.

MOSAIC’s Building Blocks Program is directly affected by today’s realities. Since February the shortage of skilled workers has opened new doors for some of our clients who are mothers, allowing them to work in jobs considered non-traditional for women.

At the Hastings Race Track, for example, work starts at 4 a.m. The women clean the stables, walk the horses and do other related tasks. This labour-intensive work – usually performed by men – is now a source of employment for young women who have chosen to come to Canada along with their husbands.

In many cases, the economic situation in these women’s home countries has pushed them to turn to “cheap labour” here in Vancouver. Further, temporary workers pay taxes and employment insurance but receive no social benefits. Nevertheless, the opportunity to live in this city combined with the prospect of learning a new language while getting acquainted with Canadian

society is what really counts when the decision to become a temporary worker has to be made.

—Gloria del Carmen Diaz,
Building Blocks Vancouver

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small enterprise is for the most part left in the capable hands of newcomers to Canada.

The Language Services department, including its contractors, offers a small example of the faith that MOSAIC places in immigrants and the opportunities the agency is willing to provide people “without Canadian work experience” to show they are valuable contributors to our economy and society – truly a win-win situation.

—Chava Glouberman, Language Services

Visit www.mosaic-trans.com for more on Language Services

Job obstacles: After five years our clients consider us friends and part of their family but, as professionals, we can’t reciprocate those feelings. It’s very hard. The relationship we develop with parents and children is a genuine bonding and suddenly you tell them they have graduated from the program. But then we get more new babies and know that they need us just as much.

Recession or not: It’s more important than ever to offer our family, settlement, employment, translations and refugee services. Recession or not, babies are being born, families are migrating and people are in need of jobs. Agencies like MOSAIC are doing very noble work to sustain the community.
“It’s not just about building a playground, it’s about building community,” said Ian Hill, volunteer CEO of Let Them Be Kids (LTBK). Thanks to his organization’s community development model, coaching and financial assistance the east-side community near 11th Avenue and Commercial Drive was able to plan, fundraise and develop a playground in under 14 weeks.

MOSAIC had long wished for a playground behind its child-care centre. In 2004, we collaborated on a city proposal with My Own Back Yard (MOBY) asking to turn three empty spaces under the SkyTrain into a community garden, playground and green walkway leading from 12th to 10th avenues. We won approval for the plan and created the community garden. After that, however, development ground to a halt.

In September 2008, when MOSAIC’s child-care licensing officer told us to install a playground or potentially have our licence revoked, we asked MOBY to resume the playground committee meetings and called upon the city for help. Four months later city planner Sandy James was assigned to help us out. After a seminar led by Ian the LTBK CEO asked Sandy to recommend a worthy community in need of a playground; she filled him in on the crime-ridden, garbage-filled lots next to our busy multicultural child-care centre and the ball started rolling.

Ian coached the playground committee during weekly meetings by telephone, even flying out from Ontario several times. In spite of our doubts and obstacles, he remained positive: “When you have a group of sincere, committed people working together toward a worthy cause, then you will always achieve your goal.”

The LTBK model is about building bridges – bringing the community together to build a playground is a powerful experience. Ian explained that “shared experience will form a strong, positive association serving to create a more involved, harmonious, community working together afterward.”

Ian encouraged us to be as inclusive as possible, involving local community groups and businesses in our project like the Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver, Evergreen, Kensington Cedar Cottage Visions Group, Britannia Latino Youth Group, Frontier College and Commercial Drive Business Improvement Association. He also urged us to name the park in honour of a fallen hero. We chose Sergeant Larry Young, an East Vancouver police

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officer killed in the line of duty in 1987. While a few committee members had reservations due to some community animosity toward the police, Ian explained that it was a great opportunity to repair a damaged relationship.

On June 6, 2009, magic happened. Approximately 200 volunteers came out to build and celebrate around a common purpose. The street was filled with neighbours, MOSAIC employees and clients, community organization members, city staff and police officers, working shoulder-to-shoulder to build a playground and beautify the area.

One MOSAIC student, a Karen refugee from Burma, who volunteered for a full day, was asked if he needed a break. “No, I’m not tired of this,” he replied. “This is good for my spirit.” It seemed all hearts were bursting with joy when at 3 p.m. children raced through the paper chain to be first on the new playground.

And the legacy lives on. The process helped me make many meaningful connections with the people in this neighbourhood – friends I can call upon to help support our clients and programs in different ways. The pharmacist I sat beside during registration has offered to speak to our students about Pharmacare; the Business Improvement Association wants to help MOSAIC fundraise; and a local company has offered supplies for our child-care programs – just to name a few.

When I look out at the back of building today I don’t see a derelict lot... nor do I see a simple playground. I see the miracle of committed people working together. I see hope for the future.

—Nina Miller, English Language Centres

Work perks: I work with the most amazing team of teachers and support staff in partnership with the North Shore Multicultural Society, which has its own strong and dedicated team of settlement workers to draw on as needed. Our clients – immigrants overcoming the challenges of settling in a new country and learning a new language and culture – bring laughter and new friendships into the classrooms. They share their cultures while absorbing this new country of opportunity that is Canada.

Job obstacles: Not enough time and changing technology!

Recession or not: Immigrants are Canada’s hope for the future. Most bring experience, skills, determination and strong family values. Some get here having left everything they hold dear behind. It is extremely difficult to settle in a new country. It is even more difficult in a weak economy. A weak economy is usually short term but our immigrants are here for the long term. What could be more important than maintaining the programs that help give immigrants the support they need when they need it?
Accreditation action

At MOSAIC immigrants and refugees remain the focus of our services, our primary purpose and our central pillar. To support our growth and improvement we’ve decided to begin the process of accreditation, which includes a continuous review of services to clients, systems of accountability and planning processes, as well as ensuring policies and procedures are kept current. Think of it as taking the things that – through research and feedback from clients and service providers – have been identified as best practices and using them to establish standards we can all work toward. In our organization’s ongoing journey toward excellence, accreditation is one vehicle to take us there.

As we work to assist newcomers integrating into Canadian society, accreditation sets standards that will help us remain focused and clear about the kind of support and services our clients need in order to achieve their goals, contribute to the community and ultimately improve Canada as a multicultural and diverse country.

MOSAIC’s accreditation process will be guided by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Since 1966 this non-profit organization has maintained and monitored best practice standards through research and community consultations. We are confident CARF’s approach – featuring client-first consultation and program-based review – will move us forward to excellence and help us remain a leader in the community.

“Being CARFed” will be a positive and validating learning and growing experience; we are certainly eager to help develop and maintain standards of excellence in the services we provide. In return, we can expect those we help to continue touching us with their strength and courage and enhance and enrich Canadian society as a whole.

—John Dube, Accreditation

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**Multicultural moms**

A mother who participates in one of MOSAIC’s multicultural family group programs said it better than we ever could: “When I arrived in Vancouver with my two children, I was looking for places where my children and I could feel that we have a place to go and feel part of society. I am very thankful to be part of the family groups.”

It was for this exact reason we created the Multicultural Parent Child Time and Latin American Family programs for immigrant families from different communities with children under five – to help newcomer parents and their children break the cycle of isolation that too often comes part and parcel with arriving in a new country.

The mother went on to add: “I have learned new ways to raise my family. Through the information provided to us, I connected with other programs like Parent Connector Training. Now I can see how attending different trainings has made me more knowledgeable about the Canadian society. I feel more confident to face any future challenges as a single mother with two children. The families that I meet every week have given me a sense of having a new large family in my new home.”

This type of feedback bolsters our belief that participants in these programs not only benefit from various activities (developed by groups, including Parenting Education) and information on community resources, but also gives them a sense of community support, a chance to socialize and make friends and an opportunity for kids to gain preschool readiness.

We continue to invite recent immigrant and refugees to take advantage of our family programs, which are provided as valuable services to the community, whom we’re always proud to serve. Any mothers who may benefit from any of our programs may be referred to us.

—Alba Nury Correa, Family Programs

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**Job obstacles:** Not being able to provide an interpreter for the dates and times requested is frustrating, but I try not to stress out and do my best to resolve these challenges or go to my co-workers for help.

**Recession or not:** There are so many immigrants out there that need our help and advice, especially in our department as there are so many that struggle with the English language and need an interpreter to attend appointments with them.
“I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to MOSAIC for their support and help and for giving us a space to meet and rehearse.” With these words, Serwan Yamolky, a renowned Iraqi maestro, oud player and poet, opened an evening of Middle Eastern music and poetry, during which he signed copies of his latest collection of poems, Love of a Different Kind. The event saw musicians from multiple ethnicities join Serwan to entertain the guests. The night was a great success – a truly Canadian affair blended with wonderful Arabic music.

What impressed me most was the recognition MOSAIC received during the Iraqi Canadian Centre for Arts and Culture-organized event – the result of hard work and effort by our staff. To me, this shows the impact we make on people’s lives, whether they’re temporary foreign workers, refugee claimants, refugees, permanent residents or naturalized citizens. No matter where these cultural gatherings are held – Burnaby, Coquitlam, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Surrey or Vancouver – our organization’s programs and services are appreciated by immigrant and refugee communities across the Lower Mainland.

The smiles on the faces of our clients after reuniting with loved ones; the confidence gained and relief felt after contacting our staff; the jobs obtained after receiving support and guidance; the ability to talk to someone in one’s own language and gain answers to burning questions; the availability of a place to meet freely and plan community events – these are just some of the many ways MOSAIC connects with and impacts its clients.

We’ve always been there for our clients and responded to the needs of the communities we serve – this has formed a strong and wonderful bond between MOSAIC and newcomers to the Lower Mainland, a relationship that’s not typical between clients and service providers. MOSAIC’s relationship with its clients is the true definition of “love of a different kind.”

—Saleem Spindari, Outreach Programs
Become a Friend of MOSAIC

A multi-ethnic community enriches our economy, experience and lives. Together with our involved and supportive friends, we can provide a place where immigrants and refugees can transform challenges into opportunities and fully contribute their knowledge, skills and unlimited potential to our vibrant multi-ethnic communities.

Memberships are annual from April 1 to March 31. For more details, please contact Sandra.

mosaic@mosaicbc.com
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MOSAIC
Awards
and
Recognitions

Dr. Kes Chetty Education Award
Odette Moukolo
Sin Rocham

Human Rights Award
Shashi Assanand

Britannia Bursary Award
Divia Mattoo
Berny Siu

Employer Recognition Award
To be announced
at the 2009 Annual General Meeting

MOSAIC recognizes the 250 volunteers who donated their time and energy this year to help deliver services to immigrants, refugees and newcomers.

Thank you for your important contributions!
Employment and English Language Programs

English Language Centres

Some highlights from a very successful year for MOSAIC’s English Language Centres:

• English Language Services for Adults (ELSA): We offered 42 different classes on a continuous basis from pre-literacy to level 5 and served 1,645 students from over 19 countries at three different locations, 99 percent of whom reported feeling welcome in our Language Centre and 95 percent of whom said their English improved as a result of our services.

• New location for ELSA 4 and 5: In May 2008 we opened a new site dedicated to our higher-level language training classes and Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment service. Beautifully designed by former MOSAIC board member and architect Adam Policzer, the centre is located on the corner of Broadway and Commercial in the same building as MOSAIC Employment Programs.

• Teacher-Training Videos: In partnership with VCC and UBC we participated in the production of Teacher-Training Videos posted on an open-source website hosted by BC Campus. Our own instructors were taped to demonstrate effective teaching methods at different ELSA levels.

Thank you to all Language Centre instructors, child-care workers, co-ordinators and support staff, who are so passionately devoted to serving the needs of our clients, and to former director Kelly Pollack for her strong support and excellent leadership.

—Nina Miller, manager

Employment Programs

Despite the downturn in the economy, this report focuses on growth. In April – due to MOSAIC’s history of expertise and success – we were asked to submit a proposal to fulfill an identified service gap in the Burnaby area. This project coincided perfectly with MOSAIC’s new location on Kingsway near Edmonds, including three staff members and establishing our presence in the community. In February iACT hired a fourth counsellor and delivered services in the new location – an instant success with information sessions consistently overbooked. MOSAIC BCEP added two employees to match increasing referrals to its program. Similarly, ArriveBC added two counsellors to increase its service capacity. In total, eight new staff members were hired this past year.

In April and September MOSAIC continued its involvement in organizing the successful Connections to Employment Job Fair. The month of May welcomed the delivery of job search workshops in Spanish to BCEP clients. Our largest funder, Service Canada, transferred two of our agreements to the Ministry of Housing and Social Development as part of the Labour Market Development Agreement in February. The most significant event of 2008/09 was the departure of our director, Kelly Pollack, who had been with MOSAIC for 12 years and was instrumental in the consistent
growth of Employment Programs and established MOSAIC as a leader in the sector.

A year ago we reported serving approximately 2,500 clients. Today we serve over 7,500 clients with even greater expectations for the upcoming year.

—Larry Chan, acting director

Family Programs

The Family Programs department assisted over 2,500 clients and their families through programs focusing on parenting skills, domestic violence and youth issues. As demand for new and creative programs increases we’ve launched new initiatives like the Connecting Fathers program and Legal Education and Preventing Violence (LEAPV) for the South Asian community.

Immigrant and refugee men gather in MOSAIC’s community room each Thursday to enhance their parenting skills through Connecting Fathers. Participants coach each other to create individual parenting plans, a process that teaches them additional skills to help them in their settlement and integration. Some of the men have been successful in finding employment through the informal network.

LEAPV successfully completed its first year of radio programming – a series of live shows on partner RedFM that bring together anti-violence workers to discuss violence against women. Listeners were able to phone in and speak to both host and guests. Over 80 percent of the South Asian community listens to RedFM. We are now in the process of producing a number of TV shows on the same topic for future airing.

A number of families graduated from our Building Blocks program after five years of service and we continue to experience demand for the service. To address the needs of waiting clients we offered drop-in support groups through which they can meet with the nurse and other workers to have their immediate questions answered and gain support. All other programs continue to provide family support to clients as our communities struggle with the stressors of job loss and financial instability.

A great big thank you to the Family Programs staff for its day-to-day commitment and dedication to improving the lives of immigrant and refugee families.

—Ninu Kang, director

Language Services

This was a relatively good year for the department – we exceeded our projected budgets for both “sub-departments” (Translations and Interpretations). We still have our ongoing challenges, one of them being the fact that interpreting and translations are still quite often seen as an auxiliary service and are paid as such. Every government institution is trying to cut costs and, though the quality of services is slowly becoming an issue, the bottom line is quite often the decisive factor.

There is, however, a bigger challenge we are facing now – namely, and to no surprise, the economy. We are seeing some decline in the business-related part of our business for several months now. While that’s been offset by our public sector-related translations, which mostly refers to the government, it is certainly a trend that we must be cognizant of.

In order to help immigrants and refugees as much as possible, we have utilized our Translations Fund, which assists people with limited financial resources. Over the years we have subsidized 950 people for nearly $47,000.00. We intend to continue this practice because we realize that newcomers to Canada are quite often the first victims of these difficult economic times.

Overall, the past year has been a good one, thanks to the employees of Language Services; if it were not for their selfless and dedicated efforts, we would not enjoy this success. Needless to say we are determined to improve our services in the future, providing the quality and service for which we are known to all.

—Jiri Adler, director
Settlement Services

The past year (2008/09) was a major service expansion year for Settlement Services. A number of consortia, programs and research and development projects were initiated to serve immigrants, refugees and newcomers in the Lower Mainland:

- As the lead organization providing information and support services in Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster along with the Immigrant Services Society of BC, SUCCESS, Progressive Intercultural Community Society and Multicultural Helping House Society and co-location partners Fraserside Community Services and CCM Centre, our consortium has served more than 19,000 individual clients.

- We partnered with the Burnaby School District and Early Childhood Development organizations to pilot a Newcomers’ Centre for Children and Families in Burnaby, which began servicing clients directly in June 2009.

- Our new Active Aging: Internet Club for immigrants over 55 in Burnaby has helped participating seniors learn about computers and socialize with others.

- We collaborated with UBC’s School of Social Work to implement a FreeRunning demonstration project for older refugee youth and young adults in Vancouver as part of our Volunteer Programs delivery, which also includes the Cultural Connections and Workplace Connections programs.

- Since its inception, our StepAhead pilot project, in collaboration with the Immigrant Services Society of BC, SUCCESS, DIVERSECity and Burnaby Family Life Institute, has served 128 Lower Mainland families facing multiple barriers.

- Our unique Micro-Loans Program with Vancity is currently being duplicated with the help of a Surrey settlement organization.

- The Lead Advocacy Program, whose services are constantly in demand, has updated our new web-based public legal education materials in immigration, family and poverty law.

- Our Community Outreach Program continues to provide support and drop-in services to temporary foreign workers, as well as do important community development work with the Afghani community.

—Sherman Chan, director

Recognitions

Sixty-five and counting

Collectively, Celia Brookfield, Nina Miller and Jiri Adler have spent 65 years at MOSAIC. This year’s newsletter wouldn’t be complete without a small tribute to three such dedicated employees; perhaps some insight can even be gained into the secret behind their success.

Celia, an Employment Programs instructor/counsellor, began working at MOSAIC 25 years ago within the organization’s first official employment program: the federally funded MOSAIC Youth Job Corps Program. Working on the second floor of 45 East 6th Avenue, in the heart of an industrial area, Celia remembers the “marble shop next door.”

Today the picture looks much different. Her department has evolved from one employment program to six offered at three sites by over 40 staff members. Besides assisting program participants in reaching their goals, Celia says “working with immigrants, both as clients and fellow staff members, and working for an organization that treats its clients and staff in a respectful and ethical manner” is a critical factor behind her longevity.

As for Nina, 20 years have taken her from an ESL instructor to a much different role as English Language Centres manager.
“When I started at MOSAIC we were teaching out of a warehouse on Quebec and East 5th Avenue,” she recalls. “It was very grass roots with little formal structure. Now we’ve have grown to over 40 classes in three centres.”

Nina partly attributes her long career to the many relationships she’s formed. “I used to love teaching because of the direct relationship with clients and the gratification of being able to respond to their needs and watch their growth,” she says. “Now, in a managerial position, I enjoy supporting my staff in their work with our clients.”

With 20 years of service under his belt, Jiri has watched the organization grow “at least 500 percent.” Now director of Language Services, he says, “I used to know every employee. Now, to be honest, I experience some problems recognizing our staff – and it’s not just my age. We really have so many new staff that it is hard to keep track.”

Joking aside, Jiri says he looks forward to seeing MOSAIC continue to grow in the coming years. “Hopefully we will keep going in the same direction – helping those who need it most even more efficiently, with great professionalism and compassion at the same time.”

It’s clear there are certain things about MOSAIC that make it hard to leave. Nina, who has quite literally “grown up” with MOSAIC, says she’ll be happy in the organization “as long as I am learning and growing.” For Celia, going to work each morning means seeing and collaborating with “the many great friends I have made over the years.” And Jiri? “Well, after 20 years – what can I say?” he asks. “MOSAIC is a part of my life.”

—Noa Glouberman, editor

Miriam Jurigova nominated for YWCA Vancouver 2009 Non-profit and Public Service Awards

A leader and role model in the area of poverty law, Miriam has been a legal advocate with MOSAIC for the past four years. A source of inspiration for others, Miriam is a team player and strives to achieve the very best for her clients and her colleagues. Also a great mentor, Miriam provides guidance to many frontline workers, students and advocates who contact her for advice, and has worked collaboratively with other agencies to address important issues.
A special thank you!

MOSAIC gratefully acknowledges the commitment and support of the following funders, who have made significant financial contributions during the past year. Your support has enabled MOSAIC to maintain quality service and program delivery to our communities.

- BC Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch
- City of Vancouver – Community Grants
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- Law Foundation of BC
- Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Ministry of Housing and Social Development
- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- United Way of the Lower Mainland
- Urban Systems Foundation
- Vancity Savings Credit Union
- Vancouver Foundation
- Windows of Opportunity Coalition

Thank you also to those individuals and organizations who supported MOSAIC through their memberships and generous donations over the past year.
2008/2009 financial report

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

MOSAIC funds

Each year, MOSAIC’s Board of Directors sets aside funds to provide assistance to immigrant and refugee communities.

- *Keywords for Health and Medical Care* is produced in various languages through the Multi-Lingual Guide Fund.
- Scholarships for immigrants and refugees are provided through the Dr. Kes Chetty MOSAIC Scholarship Fund and the Britannia Secondary School Bursary Fund.
- Individuals or groups without financial resources to access translation services are assisted — upon referral by MOSAIC staff — by the Translation Access Fund.

As per MOSAIC’s Strategic Plan, certain funds are only accessible with Board approval; this helps safeguard MOSAIC’s financial sustainability and ability to provide services to its communities. Unrestricted net assets are maintained for contingency purposes.
2008/2009 MOSAIC staff members

Employment Programs
Al-Seragi, Khalid
Arechavala, Alberto
Bernini, Rosa-Maria
Bindi De Oliveira, Lara M.
Brookfield, Celia
Button, Brett
Chan, Larry
Cronsilver, Randy
Dalton, Ashleigh S.
Dassiuk, Lynda
Etminan, Soraya
Forghani-Ashrafi, Sousan
Garcia, Alvaro H.
Hajar, Sheldon
Han, Leezu
Harnisch, Peter Paul
Hill, Bao-Van
Ho, Gina
Jost, Pamela Park
Karmali, Shirin
Khalaf-Sepahi, Hana
Kuk, Kitty S.L.
Law, Catherine
Mala, Jana
Mann, Gurinder
McCarthy, Josefin T
Nelsen, Vinh SG
Nie, Julia (Meng Xi)
Olaechea, Juan
Pole, Caroline
Potekhina, Ekaterina
Qin, Georgiana
Ragoovanand, Linda
Sceki-Ivkovic, Tanja
Sharma, Nishi N.S.
Sim, Ismat
Singh, Rumani
So, Candice
Strayski, Elizabeth
Takawira, Amanda T
Tsang, Dennis
Vysotskaya, Mariya
Wong, Judy
Wong, Mayvan

English Language Centres
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Bokic, Vesna
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Castillo, Hilda Perez
Chan, Ivy Ching
Cheng, Sabina
Chow, Wanda M.
Dahlberg, Debra A
Dziurka, Marzena
Entwistle, Susan
Everaars, Wesley
Fahmi, Patricia
Ferguson, Georgia
Fox, Nicholas
Francis, Sarah
Frankel, Naomi
Garvin, Louise
Grayer, Elizabeth C.O.
Greenwood, Anne F
Haynes, Alannah
James, Lewis R
Janousek, Mark E.
Jones, Lucinda Mae
Kalmakoff, Jane D.
Kaminska, Aldona
Kyte, Lorraine
Lebar, Tanya
Lesku, Patricia G.
Levy, Hadas
Li, Baoxiang (Robert)
Lima, Adriana M.
Low, Jennifer
Lubaib, Hussain
McIsaac, Chantelle
Madsen, Violeta
Mao, Qian
Marilley-Bodner, Pat
McLellan, Kristeen P.J.
Mickiewicz, Halina
Mikolajczyk, Celina D.
Miller, Nina
Mottahed, Fakhereh
Moutskapas, Ifi
Muzur, Jelka
Navabi, Myrna I. (Cubrt)
Parkinson, Lori A
Parry, Steven J
Pawlak, Danuta
Peabody, Barbara
Peymani, Kamelia
Pirjaber, Maryam
Potter-Mael, Gerhild Ursula
Radie-Rad, Nadia
Reimer, Dorcas
Robertson, Susan J.
Robles, Mantess
Sangwais, Geraldine
Sengara, Kim
Shucard, Jeffrey
Simpson, Lynn
Smales, Marjorie R
Sparovec, Joe L.
Spiratos, Alexandra
Terrel, Lisa M.
Tessmer, Julie A
Tran, Theresa
Tremills, Susan C.
Van der Pol, Astrid
Vanon, Karen E.
Yang, Ping
Zhang, Rona
Zhou, Julie

Family Programs
Andino, Maritza
Barmi, Ammandeeep K
Bassingthwaite, Tasha
Bhagi, Rachna
Chen, Joanna (Qiuling)
Comesana, Guillemo
Contreras, Carmen
Cordoba Soto, Olga Maria
Correa, Alba-Nury
Diaz, Gloria del Carmen
Dube, John J.
Flora, Perminder
Flores, Ana C.
Hirose, Setsuko
Hoang, Mai
Kang, Ae-Jung (Jenny)
Kang, Ninu
Kim, Junghwa
Lam, Angelo
Luong, The Binh
Mohamud, Xalima
Nguyen, Thi Hai
Nguyen, Ngoc Dung
Nguyen, Truc Thi Thanh
Osman, Abshira
Phan, Hoa T.H.
Sarkar, Jennifer S.
Saville, Disha
Tang, Kim
Tran, Chung
Tran, Le Trinh
Truong, Huong
Wang, Qi Zhi (Wyatt)
Zaldana, Morena

Language Services
Adler, Jiri
Chan, Joyce
Ferris, Bessy
Glowberman, Chava
Ho, Phung
Hsu, Elven
Krzman, Tatjana

Molaligine, Mignote
Naito, Rei
Nikraftar, Bita

Settlement Services
Ahmad, Mustafa
Aldosky, Veen
Alluri, Fe
Au, Daisy S.L.
Bhatia, Bhupinder G.
Bukiriro, Gidion
Chan, Siu Man
Dang, Lam
De La Paz, Gerardo
Garanmayeh, Mina
Greenidge, Janice R.
Hendizadeh, Sedigh
Jurigova, Miriam
Kago, Amal H
Kitengie Mbu, Ariane
Larrivee, Marc S.
Linklater, Naomi L.
Lung, Flora
McGaw, Trilby
Mohammadi, Partow
Park, Jinok
Qin, Xiaomei
Ramirez, Sadia
Rao, Nosheen
Sands, Astarte
Spindar, Saleem
Tse, Sau Ying
Woo, Sung Sook
Wu, Barbie I-Huei
Xu, Xiao Dong (Susan)

Operations
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Chua, Sandra
Dung, Peter
Dutt, Sashi
Forghani-Ashrafi, Sousan
Guramishvili, Roman
Jiang, Jodi
Kiyooka, Kiyoshi
Lam, Sandy
Linnyk, Iryna
McFarlane, Gary
Naizghi, Eyob
Rudenko, Alla
Sanchez-Blasco, Marta
Suaan, Sukhjit
Trevor, Susan
Yung, Susan
Zhao, Xuxian (Daniel)
2008/2009 MOSAIC Board

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Brook Greenberg
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Executive Director
Eyob Naizghi
Operations/comptroller
Sue Trevor, CA

Employment and English Language Programs
Kelly Pollack/Joan Andersen

Family Programs
Ninu Kang

Language Services
Jiri Adler

Settlement Services
Sherman Chan

Welcome Joan Andersen
– MOSAIC’s new director,
Employment Programs and Language Centres.

The daughter of an immigrant, Joan’s background in industrial relations has supported the many roles she’s played at CBC, including executive producer of national TV news-gathering, regional director of radio for B.C. and chair of the National Radio Training Council.

Not only does Joan have experience in management, programming, training, organizational development, outreach, stakeholder relations and special projects, she’s also volunteered for such worthy causes as Literacy BC (treasurer), Vancouver Public Library (board chair) and UNESCO World City of Literature (advisory board). We’re excited to take advantage of Joan’s experience and knowledge and utilize her skills to the fullest extent possible.