Together we build and enrich our community

NEWSLETTER
Annual Report 2011-12

INSIDE
President’s Message 1
Executive Director’s Message 2

DISCOVERY
iAct 4
Client Advisory Committee 6
Discovering the Strength Within 8
I Am From Byrne Creek 10
The Other Side of the Fence 12
Discoveries 13
Endless Opportunities 14
Sharing the Love 16
MOSAIC AGM 2012 18
Festival MOSAIC 19
The First Year 20
Working for Women 21
Learning the Ropes 22

ANNUAL REPORT
Employment & Language Programs 24
Family Programs 25
Interpretation & Translation Services 25
Settlement Services 26
Financial Report & Funds 27
Board Members & Directors 27
Staff Recognition 28
Awards & Recognitions 30
A Special Thank You 30
Wellness at Work 31
Our Valued Sponsors 32
Vision & Mission

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

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

Credits & Thanks

Editorial Committee
Christian Saint Cyr
Jason Green
Jiri Adler
Julia Khan-Anselmo
Ninu Kang
Sherman Chan

Contributing Writers
Dorla Harris
Jason Green
Jiri Adler
Joan Andersen
Maria Escolan
Mark Batt
Miriam Dell’Orto
Ninu Kang
Patricia H. Otero Barwell
Zaid Azaizeh

Editor
Noa Glouberman

Layout & Design
Chava Glouberman
Elven Hsu

Photography
Juan Ikaegea
Peter Dung

Profiles
Catherine Law
Elven Hsu
Hung (Bruce) Nguyen
Hussain Luaibi
Janice Greenidge
Setsuko Hirose

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On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank MOSAIC’s many partners for another successful year in addressing the issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society, and in empowering immigrant and refugee communities.

This has been a pivotal year for the organization. Last fall, following our Annual General Meeting, board and management came together for a special retreat to identify our priorities for the year and determine how to maximize MOSAIC’s impact in the community. One of the key directions coming out of those discussions was the need to more fully engage our public- and private-sector partners, and expand and deepen those external relationships. We thereby continue to work with such partners, leveraging not only financial support and other resources but also their expertise in how best to achieve our vision and mission.

We have also been actively working with policy-makers to ensure the needs of our constituents are expressed and recognized, particularly as changes are implemented in regard to program-delivery models. As further changes loom, we commit to engage with policy-makers at all levels as well as our broad stakeholder base and the public in order to ensure the best outcomes for our clients’ settlement and integration.

In this context, this past year was one of transition as we entered into a competitive bidding process to continue to deliver several of our programs, with particular regard to Employment Programs. I am very pleased to report that we were successful in navigating through this process; through innovation and partnership, we were able to maintain a high level of services to our 60,000 annual clients. Over the past four decades, MOSAIC has, in fact, served over 1 million clients, who collectively speak 72 languages.

Another current priority has been securing new space; we continue to work with key stakeholders and the City of Vancouver to explore opportunities that will ensure MOSAIC will be optimally situated to deliver on its promise to constituents. We hope to provide further updates in the coming months.

None of this would be possible were it not for our dedicated staff of 250, volunteers who offer us more than 10,000 hours of their time each year and, in particular, the leadership of our Executive Director, Eyob Naizghi. You are truly an inspiring group of individuals that’s making a real difference in the lives of so many people in our community. On behalf of the board, I thank each of you for your invaluable individual and collective contributions.

Canada’s 14th prime minister and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Lester B. Pearson, said: “Whether we live together in confidence and cohesion; with more faith and pride in ourselves and less self-doubt and hesitation; strong in the conviction that the destiny of Canada is to unite, not divide; sharing in co-operation, not in separation or in conflict; respecting our past and welcoming our future.” I think this sentiment sums up well the objectives behind MOSAIC: our commitment to bringing people together to build a cohesive and welcoming community. On behalf of the board, I’m proud to re-affirm this vision and our commitment to empowering immigrants and refugees to bridge economic, cultural and language barriers to integration.
MOSAIC had a busy year in 2011-12, beginning with prep work for the new Employment Program of BC (EPBC) bid, as well as bids for settlement programs and English-language training for adults. Despite feeling at times like we were “walking on eggshells,” we remained optimistic – confident in the quality of our services and the relationships we formed in order to enter these competitive processes. Happily, in addition to expanding our settlement and English-language programs, we emerged successful in nine of 13 EPBC bids, taking the lead for northeast Vancouver (a hub for immigrants and refugees) and becoming the only immigrant-serving organization in B.C. to hold an EPBC contract with the Ministry of Social Development.

Significant growth occurred within the organization this year, from the number of programs offered (up 28 per cent) to our staffing level (more than 17 per cent increase) to our geographic reach (30 per cent expansion). Partnerships between MOSAIC and other public/private service providers tripled in 2011-12. Though collaboration is key to meeting the diverse needs of clients in different locations, it comes with its own set of challenges. From program management to grappling with limited resources, expansion in this area is a complex matter and having the courage to be innovative and accommodating in relationship building is paramount.

Tremendous growth was also seen in volunteer numbers. By ramping up volunteer recruitment, retention and involvement, MOSAIC saw its pool increase by 50 per cent to nearly 400 active volunteers. As Zaid Azaizeh observes in his article, The Other Side of the Fence (page 12), our volunteers deserve a special thank you; as staff, we couldn’t accomplish our work so well without you!

The MOSAIC planning process of continuous learning analysis meetings, coupled with management and board planning retreats, allowed us to focus on aspects of the organization that require improvement for the sake of client services. The type of data we opted to collect fed into a quality analysis and encouraged healthy dialogue among staff crossing departmental boundaries. Kudos to all staff members, past and present, for their contribution. I’m delighted by the strides we’ve made through better communication and information sharing, with the end result being better access for our clients to a continuum of MOSAIC services.

Thanks to recommendations by our Client Advisory Committee – a dedicated group of former clients that’s become instrumental in improving the quality of our services – and staff, we undertook several new initiatives this year. Among the policies successfully implemented: the revival of a staff-recognition program. I’d like to once again congratulate the 75 employees who were celebrated for their years of service.

MOSAIC also played a key role in creating awareness and sharing information regarding the impact of service gaps on newcomers. In collaboration with our community partners, we informed policy-makers of the potential effect that the new EPBC could have on client service delivery. While the influence we have on decision-making is difficult to measure, I’d like to acknowledge the willingness of policy-makers to engage with and learn directly from service providers. We will continue our work to ensure policies are informed from the bottom up.
Last year saw much change – something we expect to see even more of in the years to come due in large part to changes to the Immigration Act and the repatriation of managing settlement dollars from the provincial to the federal government. With many of these changes directly impacting newcomers, we must fully inform ourselves in order to engage policy-makers. As leaders in the areas of diversity and social inclusion, we must remain aware of the “social connectedness” of communities. According to the Vancouver Foundation’s *Our Community* report (summer 2011), there is more work to be done in the area of social inclusion and engagement (among a host of other social and economic needs). As one participant in the report said, we must participate actively in building “social pathways to connect” communities.

I’d like to conclude by thanking the Board of Directors for its support and its diligence in fiduciary responsibility over the past year; management for its demonstrated leadership to staff and in the community; and, last but not least, our partners and funders for their continuous support to fulfill our mission of “empowering immigrants” to enrich their new communities. Thank you.
Stanislava Paneva, who immigrated to Vancouver seven years ago from Bulgaria, expected to face some difficulties during her settlement in Canada. But, despite 17 years of experience teaching biology and chemistry in her home country, the obstacles she encountered in her quest to find work turned out to be more daunting than she’d imagined.

At first, Stanislava worked part time and temporarily here and there, but couldn’t find a steady job. That’s when she was accepted into iACT – one of MOSAIC Employment Programs’ longest-running services. For nearly 13 years iACT, which ceased service on March 31, provided newcomers throughout Metro Vancouver with the training and upgrading needed to gain employment in Canada. According to program co-ordinator Lynda Dassiuk, feedback was “very positive,” with many iACT participants saying the program had literally “changed their lives.”

In Stanislava’s case, iACT paid her tuition and provided some money for her to live on while she completed a special education assistant program. Stanislava considers herself “very lucky” to have been accepted into the program. She says she’s grateful to have discovered MOSAIC, and that iACT is “the best thing I have had here in Canada.”

After graduating last December, Stanislava started working on call for the North Vancouver Board of Education. “I love my job,” she says. “It’s very rewarding when I see that I can make positive changes in people’s lives.”

Along the way, Stanislava discovered her passion for poetry. She says she woke up one morning and felt the urge to express herself in writing – in English! Her poems are dedicated to women, the environment, spirituality and love. She’s currently working on publishing her first book, and says she now feels Canada is her home.
Employment program called “the best thing” in Canada during the emotional roller-coaster of job searching. It’s motivating to hear that my encouragement and guidance made their ride less bumpy.

One challenge of being a case manager under the new Employment Program of BC is managing a high case load while ensuring adequate and relevant job-search support services are provided to each and every client. Being resourceful, keeping an upbeat attitude and being “present” with the client is what I remind myself all the time.

I love Canada, it sounds like saying “Om.” Here is my second home. It wasn’t an option to moan and complain. It was a choice, which made me free from restraints.

I love the people and nature, the wave’s sound, and all the things my eyes can capture, the healthy lifestyle and jogging people, all the cuisines and everything which makes me giggle.

I like to see a compassion, and caring nature in all my surroundings, it’s not a closure.

I brought my courage, and endless love, I am a hummer in velvet glove.

I would like to give back to society. It gives me a sense of entirety.

– Stanislava Paneva

“I was able to upgrade my computer skills and get back to work.”

“It was an amazing experience; you changed my life. I finished my education and got my certificate. Thank you!”

“I am a much better person now after participating in this program. Exploring the right opportunities and changing my career was the right thing to do. Thanks iACT!”

“The best services I have gotten since I immigrated to Canada.”

(Continued from page 4) during the emotional roller-coaster of job searching. It’s motivating to hear that my encouragement and guidance made their ride less bumpy.

One challenge of being a case manager under the new Employment Program of BC is managing a high case load while ensuring adequate and relevant job-search support services are provided to each and every client. Being resourceful, keeping an upbeat attitude and being “present” with the client is what I remind myself all the time.
In September 2009, a multidisciplinary and multicultural team composed of people from different walks of life was invited to participate in the formation of the MOSAIC Client Advisory Committee. It was a pioneering initiative created to enhance MOSAIC’s inclusion of clients in dialogues concerning improvements in service delivery.

By embracing the International CARF Quality Standards Model, committee members review processes and make recommendations to the senior management team. We profoundly believe demanding high standards of quality contributes to the achievement of organizational and client success.

During its three years of operation, the committee has shown a steady and growing understanding of CARF Quality Standards, which has allowed it to effectively collaborate with MOSAIC in compliance with best practices. In fact, by reviewing processes, assisting with client surveys and analyzing data related to client services, committee members have identified relevant recommendations, which were fully implemented or are currently in the process of implementation.

Certainly, the committee’s positive impact on service processes and MOSAIC’s commitment to quality client service have been evidenced. The committee will continue evolving and helping MOSAIC to be accountable in maintaining quality standards and to enthusiastically provoke new insights and directions oriented to improve client services.

This year the Client Advisory Committee held its first retreat, where members actively went through several reports and formulated the 2012 Work Plan. This event was also an excellent opportunity to thank former and current committee members for their valuable support and tireless dedication. Moreover, our special gratitude to John Dubé, Manager, Planning and Development, for his relevant input and crucial guidance.

As a newcomer and former client of MOSAIC and former member and current chair of the committee, I identify with every client who faces the process of settlement and integration into Canadian society. I arrived in Canada in 2009 following my husband’s return to Vancouver, and shortly thereafter approached MOSAIC, which supported me in getting familiar with life in Canada.

On a personal level, I can assert that the experience of being part of the committee has expanded my knowledge about world-class standards practices. Moreover, I have gained the invaluable experience of effectively functioning in a multicultural and diversified organization.
Introspectively, when I think of all the personal stories of people I’ve met as a former MOSAIC client and, later, at work, in college and at volunteer activities, I conclude that all newcomers have something in common: the same intense experience of having to re-learn and adapt to a new life in a new country. Inevitably, this sometimes harsh experience becomes softer when you have a gentle friend like MOSAIC in your path.

I invite you to visit us at www.mosaicbc.com/clients/advisory-committee and contact us for further information.
Discovering the Within

By Dorla Harris, Coordinator, FreeRuning Programs

Despite many obstacles, Ali Reza Daneshvarshahrodiand never gave up. “People should discover themselves. If you do not work to discover yourself you will miss out on your character and talent. If you do not think you have anything left to discover within, then look to [the] world around you and apply these outside discoveries to your inner self.”

Daneshvarshahrodiand was seven years old when he and his family fled Iran. The next 11 years were spent living as refugees in Turkey. Iranian refugees in Turkey are denied schooling, employment, safe housing and adequate food and are vulnerable to violence. During these years several family members, including Daneshvarshahrodiand, developed health problems such as fibromyalgia, rheumatism and arthritis. In December 2008, he and his family arrived in Vancouver.

Asked about his journey toward self-discovery, Daneshvarshahrodiand had this to say: “I discovered strength, patience and how to be a good judge of character. We spent many years living in bad conditions in Turkey and I met both good and bad people. This time taught me patience and how to recognize good or bad character in others.”

As far as how these discoveries have shaped how Daneshvarshahrodiand sees himself (and how others see him): “In my young age, I feel much older. I see other students around me drinking, smoking drugs and spending money. I don’t do those things, because they will take me off my path. I make sure that I am proper with everyone, whether it is young people or older people.”

“I think people see me as an inspiration. I have a good effect on people. When I share my life experiences, they tell me how hearing my story helps them to appreciate what opportunities they have.”

He says these discoveries will help him to continually move forward: “Having strength, being patient and being a good judge of character will help me to remain on the right track; they will prevent me from making the wrong decisions. If I encounter more obstacles in my life, I know that I can overcome them. I don’t let sorrow become my friend.”
STRENGTH

In 2012, Daneshvarshahrodian graduated as valedictorian from the adult education program at Vancouver Community College. His valedictory speech earned him the honour of speaking on a second occasion regarding how education cuts to adult learning courses may impact immigrant and refugee students. This second speech was recorded by and broadcast on CBC Radio. His story is a hard one to tell, but he tells it selflessly, as it helps others to discover their inner strength to strive forward.

(Continued from page 8)

Since working at MOSAIC, my greatest discovery about myself is that I have patience – although my dear sisters would laugh sarcastically at this statement! With my colleagues, I see the enthusiasm and tireless energy they put into client service. There is pride in the work that’s being done. With clients, I continue to discover their resiliency and resourcefulness, and this guides me in how I work with them.

I really appreciate the opportunity to maintain genuine relationships with people of diverse cultures and races. My multicultural experiences in the U.K. were more limited. Globally, we have work to do. Embracing multiculturalism takes time and genuine belief in equality, before we can move from tolerance to acceptance.
I am from Byrne Creek. I am from biology and art teachers, blood and paint, organs and brushes. I am from my French teacher, who taught me to speak to the world in a different tongue, and my social studies teacher, who taught me to see the world through a different lens. I am from my math teacher, who lets me know that caring is more important than numbers. I am from a variety of business classes, tough lessons about the real world, but made manageable with care. I am from my English teacher, who makes me a better writer and a better human. I am from Mr. Davies, a teacher who passes on knowledge with great passion. I am from Ms. Moxon, who says, “Fake it till you make it.” I am from Ms. Tirling, who brought dance and happiness into my life. I am from Ms. Hodgson, Mr. Best, Mr. Leung and Ms. O’Hare. I am from every teacher who gave me a fact, a thing, an idea, an emotion, a lesson, a memory. I am from Iran, a country with scorching-hot deserts, a rich history, colourful gardens, of roses covered with unforgiving thorns. I am from the Pearl of the Orient Seas, where the sun rises from the west, vanishes before the clock strikes – to thick puffs of gray. I am from Kinshasa: big city, large population, huge family. I am simply from a quiet neighbourhood nearby. I am from Shanghai, China, where my precious childhood memories remain. I am from Burnaby, B.C., with its temperamental weather and slush: urban centre, heritage site, earth covered in pavement and green trees. I am from the memory of coming to Canada, and never forgetting the turning of a page to a brand-new life.

Byrne Creek Secondary, along with Burnaby South, is involved in Paving a Way for Success (PAWS) – a program where students learn about budgeting, finances, employment and community resources. MOSAIC supports the employment component in PAWS by assessing the students’ job readiness and job-search skills, providing one-on-one or group counselling to help students achieve their career goals, and helping with résumé building, interview skills and connecting them with employers.

Students in Denise Ferreira’s English class wrote this poem about what it means to be from Byrne Creek. It was part of an acceptance speech for an award presented to Byrne Creek by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development in Philadelphia on March 25, 2012.
who gave me value.
I am from “let’s get started” at the beginning of all things new.
I am from dancing and drawing, sound and silence, swishing feet and pencils.
I am from the unnoticed coloured banners, the bars of safety, where I see countless new faces daily.
I am from words shouted out in excitement, in a language that can only be understood by us.
I am from competing in track, winning districts in basketball, losing that one soccer game; even there, I felt accomplished and proud.
I am from stay focused, explode from the start, and it’s important to learn from our mistakes.
I am from green garbage bins, a greener earth, a brighter future.
I am from the silent books that speak of experience and memory.
I am from the bolted red and blue squares, the zoo of a hall, the noise of the Atrium, and the spinning seats of the white room.
I am from the pictures taken in and out of these halls, the howls of laughter, and from the last note of the melody they call Grade 12.
I am a part of an ongoing journey.
I am from shaping my future, one step at a time.
I am from the “we,” eager to learn.
I am from friendship, solidarity and intelligence.
I am from a second home, where I can put talent and passion into my work.
I am from thankfulness, a place that tells me I have someone on my side, always.
I am from a stepping stone, where they tell me I can do anything.
I am from learning about life, society, opportunity, hope, the values that cannot be taught in a classroom, but are.
I am from Byrne Creek.
The Other Side of the Fence

A lifelong volunteer benefits from his career mentors

By Zaid Azaizeh, Mentee, Workplace Connections

Two weeks after arriving in Vancouver in December 2009, I headed to MOSAIC to explore some career-related services. I was soon enrolled in the Workplace Connections program, where I was matched with a volunteer career mentor. I was so impressed with the program that I signed up for a similar one with another organization – so I had two mentors!

I used to volunteer before moving to Canada from the United Arab Emirates, and continue to volunteer as much as possible as it allows me to make positive contributions to society. However, it was only after I joined Workplace Connections that I discovered how it feels to be on the other side of the fence – when it is me who is benefiting from the volunteer. The sincere support I felt from my mentors and the fact that they were volunteering of their own will and without expectations made me more committed to the program and to advancing my career. Their energy was inspiring and their contributions were building bricks in my journey.

A few months after my mentorship program ended, I was fortunate to find a job. Approximately a year-and-a-half later, I got in touch with my mentors again. When they heard that I was progressing with my career, I felt their exhilaration that their efforts led to positive outcomes and that they were proud. I also discovered that I was proud, too, that my success was their success and that it is a positive feedback cycle that reciprocates on sincere support, goodwill and doing well.

This experience made me realize how much respect and appreciation I have for volunteers – and, with that, I would like to extend a humble message of appreciation to everyone who volunteers through the following quotes:

- “Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”
- “Volunteers do not get paid. Not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.”
- “Those who can, do. But those who can do more, volunteer.”
- “No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another.”

Elven Hsu, Desktop Publisher, Translation Services

Born in Hsinchu, Taiwan; arrived in Canada in 1992

After I arrived in Canada I was able to do some volunteer work for a social services agency; the experience let me help other new immigrants in similar situations and also build my job skills, increase my social network, learn about the work environment in Canada and give back to the community.

An outstanding volunteer award and recognition from the agency and Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration were just icing on the cake for my volunteer experience at that time.

In 2008, after working as an executive assistant to the president of a major Chinese newspaper in Vancouver, I felt it’s time to change my career path. I found this position through the Internet; I decided to give it a

(Continued on page 13)
Discoveries

When it comes to community interpreting, the difference is in the details

By Jiri Adler, Director, Interpretation and Translation Services

While there are many similarities between the Czech Republic and Canada, cultural differences exist. When I arrived from what was then known as Czechoslovakia, I noticed a significant difference related to the word “socialist.” Back home, our leaders were serious about this word and ruled – quite proudly – with an iron fist.

I knew Canada wasn’t a socialist country (hence my decision to immigrate), but certain aspects beyond its natural beauty pleasantly surprised me. Besides being a communist country and, thus, isolated to a degree, the Czechoslovakia I knew some 30-odd years ago was like most “socialist” European countries, quite uniform in its ethnic composition. Surprisingly, people weren’t rushing our borders to live in our “people’s paradise.” The result: if a Czech moved from one village to another, s/he would forever be the “stranger from that other village.”

For me it was even worse; I was born and raised in Prague, so trying to move to a smaller city or a village would have made me “that guy from Prague with the funny accent.” As such, I was amazed by the level of acceptance that awaited me in Vancouver; while there always was (and still is) that question – “What an interesting accent you have; where are you from?” – it stems from genuine interest, not distaste.

This is also reflected in my profession. Back home I worked as a conference/simultaneous interpreter, sitting in a booth at conferences and movie festivals with my headset on or interpreting at some high-level business or government meeting. There was no need for community interpreting thanks to the aforementioned uniformity of our society.

My first job in Canada was as a nurse’s aide in an extended care hospital. Our residents spoke a slew of languages, necessitating staff to function as informal interpreters. This was much different than the interpreting I knew. I found myself awfully close to real human problems, and began to realize that, inevitably, this haphazard approach would end up with someone dead or in serious trouble. Thankfully, I wasn’t alone; Canadian courts were beginning to see they couldn’t function properly without professional interpreters, as was the healthcare system.

My personal discovery was about the impact interpreting has on people’s lives. When you’re sitting in a booth interpreting movies or a scientific conference, you try really hard to do your job well. And, if you misinterpret a word or phrase (even at a scientific conference), it’s not the end of the world. As a community interpreter, however, you could be the reason someone is deported, sent to jail or, worst of all, ends up dead. I have a lot of respect for good community interpreters and am proud to be part of a team that provides this service to those who need it.

By working as a desktop publisher at MOSAIC, I get to learn something new every day. Keeping my skills sharp and updated always make me happy and fulfilled. And, of course, being able to unleash my wild ideas to design something every now and then makes the job even more interesting!

Confucius’ words pretty much capture my experience so far: “Find a job you like and you will never work a day in your life.” I am glad that I decided to make a career change four years ago.
MOSAIC and the Brooke Forbes Legacy Fund give youth a chance

Thanks to a partnership between MOSAIC and the Brooke Forbes Legacy Fund, which provides minority youth a chance to participate in radio production, Satvir Sahota has been working with RedFM, a South Asian station, on its “live on location” events.

“I didn’t know the endless opportunities that working with radio production had to offer,” says Sahota, who, like many young people, has had difficulty finding meaningful employment as he attempts to raise money for his post-secondary education.

As a participant in one of MOSAIC’s youth programs, Sahota was selected by the Brooke Forbes Legacy Fund thanks to his dedicated volunteerism at youth conferences, summer camps and sports-related activities. His passion for basketball and working with youth have also led him to coaching, where he’s become a role model on and off the court.

Through his experience at the station, Sahota has gained new skills, confidence and ideas about possible career opportunities – an advantage, since it can be difficult to be clear about one’s career path. He says that his love for working with youth may lead him to consider a career as a teacher and a coach in a high school.

“I didn’t know much about the workings of radio production and I feel so lucky to be given the opportunity through the legacy fund to work at RedFM,” he says, adding that, without this experience he would not have had the confidence to apply for a job at the station. “I want to learn as much as I can and I am hoping that I will get to work on different projects, which will give me a wide range of skills to use in my future.”

Hussain Luaibi, ELSA/ESL instructor, English Language Centre

Born in Baghdad; arrived in Canada in 2006

I started working for MOSAIC in January 2009. Before joining MOSAIC I was a client seeking its services. I was given all the information I needed to explore the labour market and settlement in B.C. MOSAIC helped me a lot – so, I decided to work for it.

Among the things I enjoy most about working at MOSAIC: the professional and friendly atmosphere created by the teachers and managers alike. Among the challenges: creating an effective learning atmosphere and making learning English an unforgettable experience.

For me, working at MOSAIC has meant that my horizon in the field of teaching English has expanded remarkably. It’s also made me very flexible and enabled me to work on

(Continued on page 15)
Satvir Sahota has been working with RedFM, a South Asian station, on its “live on location” events.

(Continued from page 14)

harder tasks in the sphere of teaching. Living in Canada has shown me that giving people the chance to work hard is halfway toward success.
“My son has enjoyed the group so much. Even though he doesn’t go to daycare or preschool, he has still developed social and physical skills very well. He knows how to play co-operatively, to share and to protect younger children. Furthermore, he can print his name, read all letters, recognize shapes and colours and so much more. I am very eager to hang out at the program as it is time for me to learn, to share experiences and to make friends with other parents. The parents and I always say that our group is our resource. Most of us have problems with the language barrier. Before, whenever we encountered difficult concerns, we didn’t know where and who we could ask for help. From the program, we know how to get financial support such as applying for LAC, BC housing, childcare subsidy or welfare. We know other programs and can be recommended to ESL classes and citizenship class, which are extremely important to us. Sometimes, the group is visited by a librarian, a public coastal health nurse or a community kitchen. All parents and children are given very useful knowledge. Furthermore, we can freely talk in our language to share our experiences and issues; we also learn some new parenting skills to have more confidence in raising our children. We have opportunities to discover Canadian culture through special events like Halloween, Christmas, Mother’s Day or Father’s Day. Moreover, we can preserve our own culture, such as celebrating Lunar Moon and Lunar New Year. Supporting the group means you’re helping us to feel more confident and to join the Canadian society faster.”

~ Family Initiatives Program (CAPC) participant
“My three-and-a-half-year-old daughter and I have been able to reach out and benefit from the community more than ever imagined. My daughter has the opportunity to make new friends and learn things like basic communication, arts and crafts and fun enjoyed with others. These skills will help her get ready for school and also be a more involved individual in our community. I feel like the community is woven together with the love and care we have for one another that create a memorable experience for both my daughter and myself.”

~ Parent and Child Time Program participant

“Before I joined this program, as a recent immigrant to this welcoming country, I was in the middle of several critical transitions in my life. I had recently become a brand-new parent of a wonderful girl when I was in the process of graduating from my program at university. As I was unemployed at this point, and my wife had just found a job, I was taking care of my little daughter full time while I was trying to conduct a job search in a country with very different rules. As you can imagine, my whole social environment had been transformed and this, combined with the lack of support from direct family and friends in similar circumstances (immigrant, unemployed, married and with kids), made these changes almost overwhelming at some point. When I joined the program, I was hoping for a little support especially on parenting skills. To my pleasant surprise, I found not only that but a whole set of tools that helped me to cope with many circumstances that I encountered in my daily life.”

~ Connecting Fathers Program participant
YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

MOSAIC’s 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, September 27, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Andrew Petter
President & Vice Chancellor, Simon Fraser University

Floral Hall, VanDusen Gardens
Located at Oak & West 37th Avenue
On October 19, 2012, in the Historic Theatre at The Cultch, Festival MOSAIC 2012 presents a thrilling multi-cultural, multi-discipline celebration of music and dance, showcasing the very best in B.C. global sights and sounds, including:

- Celso Machado
- Carumba
- Wesley Hardisty
- Pentatonics
- Kokoma African Heritage Ensemble
- Luciterra
- Cris Derksen

Festival MOSAIC 2012 is co-hosted by Fred Lee and Cal Koat and welcomes an audience of B.C.’s corporate and philanthropic leaders as well as members of the MOSAIC community. Guests will also enjoy a food, beverage and dessert reception, and silent auction.

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North Burnaby Learning Centre celebrates success

By Mark Batt, Manager, Burnaby Learning Centres

The MOSAIC-lead consortium that delivers ELSA classes out of the Burnaby Heights at 4181 Hastings Street, works not only in cooperation with ISSofBC, Douglas College and Klein & Associates, but also with Burnaby Family Life Association, which delivers the Child Minding program.

Success at the North Burnaby Learning Centre can be measured in several ways: from the number of clients served to the quality of the programs delivered to the high standards set by our instructors and administration. Feedback from clients also provides a good gauge, especially when it yields responses about what can be done to enhance our English-language programs.

One particularly outstanding achievement in North Burnaby has been the application of Smart Board technology in the mobile computer lab. Many literacy students feel apprehensive toward technology, their trepidation further heightened by the challenges of learning English. But, with a little ingenuity from instructors and support from MOSAIC’s longstanding literacy expert, Donna Bowler, we’ve successfully placed technology in the classroom along with pedagogical techniques to produce a confident and ever-improving group of literacy students, many of whom are now in the Level 1 class.

Another milestone in Burnaby was the July 30 opening of a second location – the Brentwood Learning Centre at Willingdon and Halifax. Along with child minding, Smart Board technology and several new instructors, the centre will provide a library for client use.

The first year was exciting, the second year looks to be even more so and we are all looking forward to working with our community partners in continuing to develop and enhance the ELSA program in Burnaby.

Success can be measured in several ways: from the number of clients served to the quality of the programs delivered to the high standards set by our instructors and administration.

(Continued on page 21)
With many people since arriving in Canada.

In this country, I find people are very friendly and always smile; it seems they can easily put down the burden, head for their favourite choices and enjoy life. Even though I see a lot of busy people grasping a lot of work, Canadians seem to be well-balanced and know how to entertain themselves with camping, ice games and more. We have come to one of the best places to live on earth, but we gradually discover for ourselves that we have to give up some of our own customs and expectations to adapt and transform to a new life. Anyway, what gain does not cost you something?

By María Escolán, Project Coordinator, Engaging Young People to Prevent Violence

On June 26, 2012, Canada’s Minister for Status of Women Rona Ambrose visited Vancouver to announce her support for our new, two-year project focusing on the prevention of violence against women on post-secondary campuses and in their lives.

In partnership with Langara College, the project will engage post-secondary students, campus faculty and staff, as well as community workers in the fields of violence prevention and youth work, to create a collaborative community approach to violence prevention.

With additional emphasis on the experiences of immigrant women and the structural barriers they face, the project aims to enhance opportunities for post-secondary campus communities to actively prevent violence against women, and increase safety strategies on campus and in their lives. We look forward to working on this project with our community partners and supporters.

From left to right: David Ross, President of Langara College; Karimah Es Sabar, President of MOSAIC Board; Maria Escolan, Project Coordinator; Indira Prahst, Chair, Sociology & Anthropology, Langara College; Setsuko Hirose, Coordinator of Multicultural Victim Services Program, MOSAIC, and Supervisor of this new MOSAIC project; Rona Ambrose, Minister Status of Women Canada; Ninu Kang, Director of Family Programs, MOSAIC; Eyob Naizghi, Executive Director, MOSAIC
Gaining insight into Canadian workplace culture

Learning the Ropes

Like so many young Canadians, Megan Sohrabi’s working life in this country began with an entry-level job in the service sector. The difference, however, was that Sohrabi had already succeeded as a draftsperson and radio producer in her native Iran.

A star student with a master’s degree in educational technology from Allameh Tabatabai University in Tehran and a certificate in radio and television production, Sohrabi produced educational content for the airwaves over a 20-year period, earning several promotions and many awards, including best radio producer and editor three years in a row. Her move to Canada was prompted by a desire to further develop her skills, both personally and professionally. In her own words: “I wanted to experience a new way of life and many different cultures.” It didn’t hurt that her brother was already working in Vancouver as an engineer; based on his experience, Sohrabi thought similar career success would be hers, too.

She landed in Vancouver on August 28, 2011, and started applying for jobs at local radio stations. Soon, however, differences in workplace culture between Canada and her homeland began to emerge. In Iran, for example, the job-search process is less formal; Sohrabi had never needed a résumé or cover letter before. And, although friendly and personable, she saw that a different set of soft skills was required: “I made friends easily here but I lacked the confidence to talk to employers because I didn’t know how things worked in a Canadian office.”

On her brother’s advice, Sohrabi went to MOSAIC and enrolled in English for the Workplace (EFW), a unique ELSA English language course that includes classroom and online instruction. She learned English the way it’s used in the Canadian workplace, improving her language skills and acquiring the interpersonal skills needed to work in this country. EFW also allowed her to work as part of a team, participating in meetings, making presentations, producing business communication pieces and “learning the ropes” of local workplace culture – those unspoken rules and assumed soft skills so highly prized by Canadian employers.

Sohrabi says she likes the way EFW classes allow participants to practise “talking about themselves and their abilities while teachers help them to be more confident.” The course also made her realize what her next step should be: to get Canadian work experience, no matter what or how. In her case, a frontline job in the service industry has given her the opportunity to perfect the art of “small talk,” improve her listening and speaking skills and even network with co-workers.
Gaining insight into Canadian workplace culture

MOSAIC and EFW also helped her connect to the new WorkBC suite of services, including targeted employment assistance through job-skill workshops, résumé and cover-letter editing and participation in an unpaid internship program that landed her an interview with design and engineering firm Buckland & Taylor Ltd. Although the placement was ultimately not a good fit, Sohrabi noticed a real improvement in her interviewing skills. By applying the strategies she’d learned at MOSAIC, she says she felt comfortable and confident talking with her interviewers.

Though she admits that unemployment can be discouraging at times, Sohrabi believes that opportunities exist everywhere. Her experience with the EFW program and MOSAIC has given her the insight into Canadian workplace culture she needs in order to achieve professional success in Canada.

My personal and professional experiences provide me with some insights and skill sets on how we must treat one another so we can, indeed, succeed and prosper, hopefully “in our chosen places.” We must treat each other with respect, care and dignity so we can continue these journeys. I strive to open my heart and clear my head, so I can listen with both.

(Continued from page 22)

Jeniffer Dodds, ESL teacher, talking to a client at the 2012 Brentwood Fair
EMPLOYMENT & LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

It was a watershed year for MOSAIC Employment Programs. 2011-12 marked the end of several longstanding employment services and the beginning of the new Employment Program of BC.

Programs in their last year of service were: iACT which provided funding for training; the BC Employment Program, which helped Income Assistance (IA) recipients; and Case Management Services, New Start, Career Connections and Direct to Work, which provided newcomers with one-on-one counselling and workshops to improve their job-search skills. Two Resource Centres where clients could use computers and other resources to look for work were also closed; these services were delivered from two locations in Vancouver and one in Burnaby.

In their last year, the aforementioned programs provided one-on-one employment counselling to more than 1,200 newcomers, workshops for almost 300 participants and Resource Centre services for 7,000 visitors. Training and living allowances were funded for 192 clients and 310 IA recipients received job-search and employability training and counselling.

In addition to these programs, MOSAIC offered the Skills Connect Program for Immigrants in Vancouver, Burnaby and North Vancouver to 508 newcomers. This program helps recent immigrants qualify for and obtain work in their field. MOSAIC also provided the Job Options BC Program in Vancouver and Burnaby to 131 participants. Job Options is a combination of workshops, training and work experience that is particularly helpful for immigrants seeking their first job in Canada.

While several employment programs were ending, MOSAIC was planning to launch new employment services under the Employment Program of BC module. We were the only immigrant-serving organization to secure a contract to establish a WorkBC Employment Services Centre (ESC), located at Broadway and Commercial Drive in Vancouver and operated in partnership with the BC Centre for Ability, Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House, Kiwassa Neighbourhood House and the Vancouver Eastside Education Enrichment Society.

MOSAIC, along with three other organizations, formed the Fraser Works Co-op, winning the ESC contract for New Westminster and a subcontract for a Burnaby centre. MOSAIC is also contracted by Back in Motion to provide employment services primarily for immigrants in employment centres in Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Langley and Richmond and by the YWCA in Vancouver South and Vancouver Westside.

It was an extraordinary year for MOSAIC’s Employment Programs. It’s a credit to the expertise, experience and adaptability of our staff that excellent service continued to be delivered to clients in the midst of large-scale change.

The highlight of the year for MOSAIC’s Language Programs was the opening of the North Burnaby Learning Centre at 4181 Hastings. The centre offers ELSA classes from Literacy to Level 5 in collaboration with Klein and Associates, ISSofBC and The Training Group at Douglas College. Free child care is provided by the Burnaby Family Life Institute.

For the first time, through an agreement with the North Shore Neighbourhood House, MOSAIC offered child care to students at the North Shore Language Centre; child care was also offered to students of Douglas College’s new Learning Centre in Surrey. MOSAIC provides licensed child care to students at its Vancouver Language Centres.

2011-12 saw the launch of MOSAIC Works, a new language training service for employers that provides customized training to improve communications on the job. MOSAIC’s English for the Workplace Program pioneered a new model, which combines classroom and online training to maximize students’ learning experience and better equip them for work in a Canadian context. In collaboration with Camosun College, MOSAIC also began developing a new curriculum for immigrants working in the construction sector, to help them improve their ability to fit in and get ahead in construction trades.

Finally, MOSAIC installed Smart Board technology in all its classrooms, giving students and teachers access to a vast array of tools and resources from the Internet, databases and Language Center files. MOSAIC’s excellent and devoted staff provided English-language instruction to 1,931 newcomers in 2011-12.

—Joan Andersen, Director
FAMILY PROGRAMS

MOSAIC Family Programs provides services that enhance parenting, address domestic violence and empower youth. Building Blocks Vancouver workers visit first-time parents to provide education, support and resources. Our Family Initiatives Program (CAPC) and Connecting Fathers Program operate in group settings to help parents enhance their skills and raise healthy children. Violence Prevention programs help women and men develop healthy relationships and learn about the impact of violence. Youth programs provide opportunities to develop mentorship and leadership skills while tackling serious issues faced by immigrant, refugee and newcomer youth.

In addition, we’ve had continued success with the following projects, which address emerging needs within the community:

- The Empowerment Through Access: Legal Education and Preventing Violence (ETA:LEAPV) project, funded by the Ontario Law Foundation, continues to provide legal information and education to immigrant women across B.C.
- Engaging Young People to Prevent Violence against Women on Post-Secondary Campuses, funded by the Status of Women, is a project in partnership with Langara College that will engage students, faculty and staff at various post-secondary institutions and community workers on the topic of campus safety.
- Voyages: Healing and Moving Forward, funded by the Department of Justice Canada, was a one-day conference in partnership with Acting Together: Community University Research Alliance (CURA). The conference focused on themes of youth victimization and violence prevention and provided information and resources for youth.

Our staff members continuously strive to improve the quality of service to clients and the community. I thank them for their commitment and dedication.

—Ninu Kang, Director

INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION SERVICES

In 2011-12, our department maintained its trend of meeting budget projections. While certain aspects of our services slowed down (e.g. our provision of simultaneous interpreting services), other offerings picked up. We were successful in our contract-bidding activities, the results of which will have a positive impact on our next fiscal year. Our simultaneous interpreting activities are back on the rise. Translation Services completed a multitude of multilingual translations to all levels of government and businesses, garnering commendations for its professional work on numerous occasions.

Our devoted and highly skilled staff is the driving force behind our continuous success. We have numerous “repeat customers” and it’s clear that our highly professional, efficient and reliable services are the key to the well being of our enterprise.

Equal access to services guaranteed by our laws, is predicated on, among other things, overcoming the language barrier. We realize that we cannot do it alone; thus, we serve as board members for professional associations like the community interpreting organization Critical Link International. We have also continued to co-operate with academic institutions – yet another endeavour that helps bring issues related to client equal access and education for interpreters to the forefront.

The Translation Fund, which helps people with limited financial resources, continues to provide vital access to our services.

Our determination to improve upon our success remains intact; we will continue to provide the quality service for which we are so well known.

—Jiri Adler, Director
2011-12 was a year for public dialogue, program startup and sustaining our commitment to serve immigrants, refugees and newcomers. Here are some of the highlights:

We partnered with REACH Multicultural Family Centre, YMCA of Greater Vancouver, the Jewish Family Service Agency and, through the Federation des Francophones de la Colombie Britannique, with the Centre for Integration, College Educacentre and La Boussole to implement the BC Settlement and Integration Program.

- We initiated a dynamic seniors program for immigrants over 55 in Burnaby, and extended the program in Vancouver.

- Our Volunteer Resources Program is vibrant, with wonderful volunteers and mentors providing newcomers with workplace and cultural connections.

- Our Legal Advocacy Program has worked with the Justice Education Society to implement a public legal education information project for new immigrants. The advocacy service demand related to poverty law and immigration matters were consistently high this year, particularly in relation to the impact of changes to immigration law and regulations.

- Our Community Outreach Program continued to provide support and drop-in services to temporary foreign workers, and do community development work within the Afghani and Arabic communities. Working with Access Pro Bono, we are also providing a legal clinic for temporary foreign workers.

- Our unique Micro-Loans Program with Vancity was successfully replicated with DIVERSECity in Surrey.

- We continued to serve as a lead agency in providing specialized services to vulnerable refugee and immigrant families throughout the Lower Mainland through initiatives like our Step Ahead pilot project for multi-barri ered families. The Step Ahead project is recognized by Citizenship and Immigration Canada as one of the best practices in settlement services in the country.

- We partnered with Burnaby School District and early childhood development organizations to implement a newcomers’ centre for children and families in Burnaby, which was honoured with a United Way Community Spirit Award.

- We collaborated with the UBC School of Social Work to implement a FreeRunning demonstration project for older refugee youth and young adults in Vancouver.

- Our Can You Dig It project, which gives newcomers a plot of land in a city-owned community garden, continues to bloom. The concept is in perfect alignment with our Green Settlement and Healthy Living initiatives, which aim to inspire new Canadians to make healthy choices, learn about environmental sustainability and gain a sense of community belonging, involvement and contribution.

—Sherman Chan, Director

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<th>Number of Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
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Each year, MOSAIC’s Board of Directors sets aside funds to provide assistance to immigrant and refugee communities, such as:

- keywords of common medical terms are 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; and
- individuals without the financial resources to access translation services are assisted, upon referral by MOSAIC staff, through the Translation Access Fund.

As per the MOSAIC Strategic Plan, certain funds are only accessible with the board’s approval, in order to safeguard MOSAIC’s financial sustainability and its ability to provide services to its communities. Unrestricted net assets are maintained for contingency purposes.
Staff Recognition:

5 to 9 years
Barbara Peabody
Brett Button
Catherine Law
Chantelle MacIsaac
Chung Tran
Daisy Au
Gina Ho
Guillermo Comesana
Hoa Phan
Iryna Linnyk
Janice Greenidge
Khalid Al-Seragi
Kitty Kuk
Lam Dang
Lorraine Kyte
Lynn Simpson
Mai Hoang
Marzena Dziurka
Michelle Park
Mina Geranmayeh
Miriam Dell’Orto
Patricia Marilley-Bodner
Rona Zhang
Saleem Spindari
Shirin Karmali
Sue Trevor
Tanya Lebar
Tess Robles
Violeta Madsen
Wesley Everaars

10 to 14 years
Caroline Poole
Dennis Tsang
Dzung Nguyen
Gerardo Da La Paz
Huong Truong
Ivy Chan
Jelka Muzur
Jennifer Low
Judy Wong
Louise Garvin
Mayvan Wong
Mehjabeen Ali
Peter Dung
Sabina Cheng
Sandra Chua
Sandy Lam
Setsuko Hirose
Sherman Chan
Soraya Etminan
Sousan Forghani-Ashrafi
Theresa Tran

15 to 19 years
Barbie Wu
Bessy Ferris
Chava Glouberman
Eyob Naizghi
Gary McFarlane
Kiyo Kiyooka
Larry Chan
Mustafa Ahmad
Perminder Flora
Rosi Bernini
Sashi Dutt
Sedi Hendizadeh
Susan Yung
Tanja Krzman
Vesna Bokic

28
2012 Anniversaries

20 to 24 years

Ifi Moutsokapas
Jiri Adler
Kim Ton
Nina Miller
Ninu Kang
Phung Ho

Over 25 years

Celia Brookfield
Awards & Recognitions
2010-11

Human Rights Award

Norma-Jean McLaren

Dr. Kes Chetty Education Award
Ana Cristina Mateescu
Tigist Dubus Tesfamariam

Britannia Bursary Award
Shurooq Khan
Mariana Ruiz Esparza Medina

Employer Recognition Award

MOSAIC recognizes the 400 volunteers who donated their time and energy this year to help deliver services to immigrants, refugees and newcomers.

Thank you for your important contributions!

THANK YOU!

The support of our funders is essential to MOSAIC’s ability to deliver quality services and programs to our communities. MOSAIC gratefully acknowledges the commitment and support of the following funders who have made significant financial contributions during the past year:

- BC Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch
- City of Vancouver – Community Grants
- Coast Capital Savings Credit Union
- Justice Canada
- Law Foundation of BC
- Ministry of Attorney General
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Ontario Law Foundation
- 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 the many individuals, organizations and corporations/businesses who supported MOSAIC through their memberships, generous donations and relationships over the past year.

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Wellness at Work

Revived committee’s members share their passion for healthy living

By Miriam Dell’Orto, Chairperson, Workplace Wellness Committee

Inactive for several years, MOSAIC’s Workplace Wellness Committee resurfaced in 2011 to infuse our organization’s hallways with well-being. Committed to helping others understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, our members enjoy sharing their passion for wellness with others, designing activities to benefit all staff.

Some of the activities we have recommended and/or organized in the past year include yoga, Zumba (a form of dance-based fitness), a Sun Run team (MOSAIC’s first), mental health awareness training and the first-ever employee recognition event. Our seasonal newsletter has featured health advice, recipes and occupational health and safety tips. Members also contribute stories about the activities they enjoy most, like water aerobics and gardening.

As fall approaches, we will continue to publish newsletters, bring in speakers and introduce new health-related activities to MOSAIC. We are working to develop a “lunch and learn” series, where employees will be able to participate in wellness activities over the noon hour. We look forward to another year of influencing positive and healthy behaviours among MOSAIC’s employees.

The current Wellness Committee members are, from left to right: Juliana Thais De Souza; Julia Khan-Anselmo; Huong Truong; Gary McFarlane; John Dube; Miriam Dell’Orto (Chairperson); Ritu Jhamb; Sandra Chua

Missing: Sue Trevor; Theresa Tran; Iryna Linnyk; Janice Rosalyn Greenidge
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June Francis, Festival Committee co-chair, with Safeway’s Public Affairs Manager Mary D’Astolfo and Mike Nash, vice president of Retail Operations

MOSAIC Board President Karimah Es Sabar with Norma Sebestyen, Merck’s Director of External Affairs

Simon Pimstone, President & CEO of Xenon Pharmaceuticals, with Eyob Naizghi and Kanya Adam, Festival Committee co-chair

Aly Jetha, President of The Education & Diversity Foundation, right, and Gary Fowler, president of Oznoz Entertainment, left, with MOSAIC Executive Director Eyob Naizghi

Margaret Wong, Sales Promotion and Sponsorship Coordinator of Citytv/Omni, with Eyob Naizghi and Sue Trevor

Shane Strachan of Morneau Shepell with Eyob Naizghi and Sue Trevor

Agnes Wong of Ming Pao Newspapers Ltd., with Eyob Naizghi and Sherman Chan
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Harry D’Astolfo and Mike Nash, Vice

Sponsors Vancouver, and Eyob Naizghi

Fred Lee, MC

Cal Koat, Artistic Director

Jennifer Spry, Vancouver East Cultural

Centre Rental Coordinator, with Eyob

Naizghi

Alan Chan of AJ Graphics with

Sue Trevor and Eyob Naizghi

Eyob Naizghi and Sue Trevor with Neil Achtem of Automation

One Business Systems

From left: Harry Sadhra, Regional Chief Operating Officer,

RBC, with Eyob Naizghi, MOSAIC Executive Director;
joining them are Carmen Ryujin and Ian Isbister of RBC
Become a friend of MOSAIC

Our 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 and free (from April 1 to March 31).

Donations are welcome.

For more details, please contact Sandra at 604 254 9626 or visit www.mosaicbc.com