



WORKING SKILLS CENTRE

Empowering immigrants to create their own futures

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

A review of activities from the 2006-2007 fiscal year



For more information

www.workingskillscentre.com

President's Report

Amanda L. Thomson

2006-2007 was particularly active for the Working Skills Centre (WSC) Board; three major achievements were:

Building the internal capacity of WSC

- ✓ Implementing recommendations from the Capacity Assessment completed in August 2006;
- ✓ Completing a long but successful search for a new Executive Director; and,
- ✓ Creating new financial reporting systems to allow Directors to make more informed decisions.

Expanding the Board's capacity and governance

- ✓ Recruiting new Board members with a broad cross section of expertise;
- ✓ Board members attending and sharing information from governance workshops; and,
- ✓ Producing a detailed **Director's Manual** clarifying responsibilities, liabilities, job descriptions and committee mandates.

Developing a shared long term vision

Leveraging the combined talents of the Board and staff members, WSC undertook a number of joint learning sessions, consulting with stakeholders and researching our external environment. Then, under the expert guidance of Fred Simons (MAS), we completed an action planning process, initiating nine work groups. I refer you to WSC Future Directions for the achievements to date and next steps in this exciting process.

Executive Director's Report

Honey Crossley

This year has been characterized by challenges and changes. It has been a year marked by a constant search for better ways to do business and ways to improve the perceived value of services WSC delivers to immigrants. Building on our strengths, we have transformed WSC's programming, operations and management as part of a fundamental revitalization. WSC's primary focus is meeting the needs of immigrant women while recognizing requirements to be flexible and open to change, constantly discovering new ways of doing things in order to flourish.

To achieve our goals and support our strategic directions, WSC needs adequate financial resources. In 2006-07 WSC successfully increased funding from all sectors; in 2007-08 we will strive to diversify our funding base and become more self-reliant by developing our original business, Direct Marketing, and enhancing the Skills Training programs to meet current Labour Market needs.

As the newcomer to WSC, I may be credited with moving WSC forward by bringing a new perspective from my private sector business experience so that we are poised for achieving our mandate. But, I suffer no illusions about who really drives the work we do; the true drivers of growth and success are the staff and Board members whose warmth, expertise and personal experiences, dedication to clients, and day-to-day discipline, set WSC apart from other community-based training organizations. I refer you to the Program Reports for information on our achievements.

Treasurer's Report

Financial information has been extracted from the audited financial statement as of March 31, 2007 (David Burkes, C.A.)

ASSETS & LIABILITIES	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			REVENUE		
Accounts Receivable	\$ 39,003	21,192	Government Contributions	\$ 769,273	\$ 543,250
Grant Contributions Receivable	131,823	202,769	Sales and Services	164,820	159,257
GST Receivable	13,793	29,686	Material Resource Recoveries	142,118	131,427
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	<u>19,177</u>	<u>20,098</u>	Donations and Fundraising	16,858	21,425
	203,796	273,745	United Way (Note 7)	-	<u>28,429</u>
EQUIPMENT	<u>85,951</u>	<u>33,297</u>		<u>1,093,069</u>	<u>883,788</u>
	\$ 289,747	\$ 307,042	EXPENSES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES			Capital Expenditures	16,342	140,863
Bank Indebtedness	\$ 25,289	\$ 68,033	Salaries	623,576	395,538
Accounts Payable/Accrued Liabilities	17,682	36,687	Employee Benefits	48,082	34,396
Loan Payable	<u>38,404</u>	-	Occupancy Costs	197,580	202,759
	<u>81,375</u>	<u>104,720</u>	Outreach and Marketing	16,477	8,473
RESTRICTED CONTINGENCIES	16,636	16,636	Bad Debts (Recovery)	4,768	(1,292)
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>191,736</u>	<u>185,686</u>	Bank Charges	6,833	2,824
	<u>208,372</u>	<u>202,322</u>	Client Materials	20,667	16,952
FINANCIAL POSITION	\$ 289,747	\$ 307,042	Equip Lease / Maintenance	30,299	26,286
			Insurance	13,767	12,875
			Office Supplies	18,496	7,177
			Professional Fees	19,964	11,666
			Fundraising Expenses	-	6,959
			I.T. Costs	1,851	2,150
			Program Resource Materials	19,110	36,078
			Telephone	10,329	7,622
			Travel and Participant TTC	<u>10,832</u>	<u>7,590</u>
				<u>1,058,973</u>	<u>918,916</u>
			NET AMORTIZATION	<u>(28,046)</u>	<u>(10,930)</u>
			NET EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)		
			REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 6,050	\$ (46,058)

A copy of the complete 2006-2007 Audited Financial Statement is available by contacting:

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Program Reports

Working Skills Centre (WSC) offers three bridge-to-work opportunities for immigrants, primarily women, in the Greater Toronto Area. WSC also provides settlement counseling and information services, internships for young immigrants, and placements for community college students. In addition, WSC conducts research, attends community meetings, participates in government consultations, and works with partners in the community to ensure that immigrants are provided with a continuum of services as they move from settlement to full integration into Canadian society. Reports from the various programs are presented by the Managers:

Direct Marketing *Manager: Vathana Senthilrajh*

Direct Marketing Services was the first business established by WSC and now operates as a Social Purpose Enterprise (SPE). When government funding related to the program's training component was terminated in 1998, WSC redesigned the initiative. Recently assistance from Trillium Foundation helped WSC to outline a solid business plan for this venture.

Although revenue was still substantial in 2006-2007 with over 50 customers continuing to use the services, this industry is facing major challenges related to new technology, customers moving to electronic methods of distributing newsletters and other promotional materials, and the U.S.–Canada currency exchange rate.

Recognizing the value of the SPE, the Board of Directors has stuck a committee to explore additional business options which will enhance the future of Direct Marketing Services.

Skills Training *Manager: Rafath Ali-Khan*

Many immigrants need to upgrade language and technical skills to successfully enter the job market. Skills Training is central to WSC services.

Just over 700 immigrants attended information sessions in 2006-2007. 140 students completed the preparation program, with 64 continuing on to further studies. In addition, 70 students graduated from Computerized Accounting, 34 from Computerized Office Administration and 27 from the Direct Mail Certificate Program.

Although a fee-for-service business, tuition is based on a sliding scale according to a client's ability to pay, plus cost recovery related to books and materials. **Women only** training is offered during the day at 350 Queens Quay; evening and weekend programs and services at satellite locations are open to the general public.

Over 70% of graduates are either gainfully employed, in co-op placements or internships, or in further training in their chosen field.

WSC has formalized the Diploma Programs and is in the final stages of registering as a Private Career College with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Two Programs will have Ministry approval:

- ◆ Computerized Office Administration; and,
- ◆ Computerized Accounting

Diploma Programs for Computerized Administration for Medical Receptionists and Direct Marketing are under development.

World Service Cargo *Manager: Christina Chu*

Following a long standing tradition of providing useful tools for immigrant women who need Canadian work experience, WSC opened World Service Cargo, a practice firm, in December 2005. This virtual company operates at our downtown location creating work experience for individuals who are job ready in their chosen careers and have work experience from their home countries. To replicate a typical Canadian company, the practice firm has seven departments:

Logistics	Marketing
Information Technology	Accounting
Warehousing	HR and Admin

Clients report that this is a perfect model to help them re-establish their careers in Canada. Being involved in practical work projects while looking for employment increases their confidence and understanding of the Canadian workplace.

In 2006, World Service Cargo welcomed a 2nd sponsor, providing the firm with a new product line in fine jewellery. With this product we were able to record sales of \$430,000 (virtue money) at a real trade fair in Quebec City. We thank both Barbara Elias, and our continuing sponsor KTS Logistics, for their support of this exciting and successful venture.

Special Initiatives *Manager: Honey Crossley*

WSC is constantly identifying community needs and establishing programs to fill these gaps. Also, changes in funding cause the organization to look for ways to maintain its capacity so that services can be delivered in a timely and effective way.

Newcomer Settlement Program (Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration) and Enhanced Language Training (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) provided settlement services and sector specific language instruction for newcomers. WSC is working with seven other agencies as part of the Settlement Services Access Group to ensure that clients have the support they need.

Training for the Future, funded in part by Status of Women Canada, explores ways to encourage immigrant women to enter training sooner in their settlement process and how needed skills training can be funded. TFP Advisory Group which has significant private sector involvement and the Immigrant Women's Work Group support this work.

Multicultural Youth Internships, a partnership with COSTI, and Canadian Summer Jobs, under HRSDC, allowed WSC to hire interns and summer students respectively, providing work experience and enhancing our capacity.

History and Mandate

Working Skills Centre (WSC) was established in 1978 and incorporated as a charitable organization on May 1, 1980. Originally mandated to serve immigrant women from Spanish and Portuguese speaking communities, the organization quickly expanded to serve immigrant women from any country of origin. The Letters Patent were revised in 2005 to expand the mandate to serve individuals, primarily immigrants, who are unemployed or underemployed, and to assist them to obtain skills needed to become self-sufficient.

While mandated to serve a broader clientele throughout the Greater Toronto Area, the Mission Statement reflects the emphasis on programs for immigrant women:

Working Skills Centre (WSC) is a community-based, enterprising, non-profit organization that supports immigrant women. Through services, training, and business activities we recognize and promote the skills, capacity and wisdom of our diverse community. Our purpose is to encourage economic self-sufficiency and the successful integration of immigrant women into Canadian society.

Future Directions

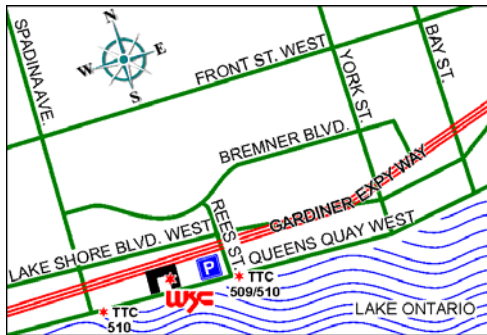
WSC undertook a strategic planning exercise in May, 2007. Nine action committees were struck to examine: Mandate, Marketing, Partnerships, Location, Employer of Choice, Organizational Effectiveness, Diversifying Funding, Curriculum and Program Development, and Labour Market Information. Resulting committee work has produced outcomes essential to move WSC into broadened markets:

- ✓ Re-branding our marketing materials,
- ✓ Improving organizational effectiveness,
- ✓ Tailoring our services and delivery models to labour market information,
- ✓ Developing partnership guidelines, and
- ✓ Building practices to become the employer of choice.

WSC has established ways to involve graduates more in planning and implementing services and identified two new sectors for skills training which have good job prospects. Work has also started with the Rotary Club of Toronto, corporations and foundations to diversify the funding base and ensure organizational capacity in the future. To complete the action planning process we will clarify our mandate, seek partnerships to strengthen the continuum of services to immigrant and women, and choose the best locations to capitalize on ever changing markets.

Location and Contact Information

Working Skills Centre (WSC), located just one block east of Spadina, is easily accessible by TTC from the 590 or 510 street cars. The agency has established a business environment which provides immigrants with Canadian workplace experience at WSC Skills Training Programs (Suite 204), the World Service Cargo – Practice Firm (Suite 204A) and the Direct Marketing Services (Suite 108).



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Website: www.workingskillscentre.com

2006-2007 Directors

President:	Amanda L. Thomson
Past-President:	Lynne Hindle
Treasurer:	Lorna Semple
Secretary:	Alyssa Brierley
Members at Large:	Komal Bhasin Serge LeVert-Chaisson Pulsara Kulaweera Rumana Khalifa

Acknowledgements

Working Skills Centre (WSC) would like to acknowledge our 2006-2007 funders and partners. Special thanks to our committed Direct Marketing customers and all employers who played an instrumental role by providing Canadian work experience for our trainees and graduates.

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Heritage Canada
- Industry Canada
- Service Canada
- Status of Women Canada
- Employment Ontario (MTCU)
- Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- City of Toronto
- Maytree Foundation

- AWIC Community and Social Services
- COSTI
- JobStart
- Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre
- Scadding Court
- Settlement Services Access Group
- Toronto Health & Safety Legal Clinic
- Toronto District School Board
- York Catholic District School Board
- Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council

All donations are recognized with an official receipt; WSC's charitable number is: 10822-1946-RR0001