



WORKING SKILLS CENTRE

Exciting **NEW** location!



Suite 208 opened on
September 1st, 2009



Suite 703 opened on
September 8th, 2009



Academy of Computer &
Employment Skills will re-open
September 28th, 2009

Working Skills Centre, World Service Cargo and Academy of Computer & Employment Skills moved from the Queens Quay location, to a new more convenient location at Yonge-Eglinton (within walking distance from the Eglinton Subway station).

WSC
55 Eglinton Ave. East
SUITES # 208, 703

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

A review of activities from the 2008-2009 fiscal year

for more information
www.workingskillscentre.com

President's Report, *Amanda L. Thomson*

This 30th anniversary year was a notable one for WSC that brought both wonderful highpoints and major challenges.

Our 30th Anniversary Gala, **A Celebration of Immigrant Women's Journeys** was a superlative start to the year. Over 200 attendees joined us at the St. Lawrence Hall to celebrate the significant achievements of WSC and its staff in their role of assisting so many of Toronto's immigrant women to gain meaningful employment. Highlighting the very moving journeys of past students, as well as some prominent members of Toronto society including Oliver Chow, MP, Maryam Sanati (Editor of Chatelaine Magazine), Madam Justice Wailan Low, and Marvi Yap and Anna Maramba (AV Communications), the stories were complemented by stellar international entertainment from Anahit, Eve Egoyan, and Nandita Dias, all of whom also share the experience of coming to a new country and having to establish their places as artists. The evening, which was hosted by CBC personality Suhana Meharchand, was capped off by a very successful auction.

This was a milestone event with significant corporate sponsorship, notably RBC Bank of Canada, Wells Fargo Foothill, Asset Engineering, Xerox Canada, Women's Leadership Initiative at Miller Thomson, and East West Resources. The truly impressive success of the Gala would not have been possible without the enormous effort of so many people including, foremost, our Executive Director, Honey Crossley and the gala committee with Honorary Chair, Jan Wong, a prominent journalist, and Susan LeRoy, a former WSC President. The event raised over \$25,000 to launch the WSC Scholarship and Bursary Fund to assist potential students; to date this fund has assisted 17 women who would otherwise not have been able to attend our career college.

Later, in March 2009, hearty WSC staff, Board members, family members and friends participated in the St. Patrick's Day Achilles Walk and raised a further \$5,270.00 for the WSC Bursary Fund. Recently, in August 2009, WSC was honoured as a Maxwell House "Brew Gooder" and received a \$10,000 award which will be added to the fund.

This was also a challenging year for WSC as we continued to grapple with the financial realities we've been facing since government cutbacks earlier in the decade. We came to the realization that our present student base and pricing structure are really not sufficient to cover our bottom line indefinitely. Through good luck and determination, several things fell into place to transform WSC; we found a new location that not only offered significantly less expensive rent, but offered a much more accessible site for our clients and we determined to undertake an evolving program model more closely tied to changing labour market requirements. Our work in the later area is ongoing and will be embodied in our November 2009 Strategic Planning. We have been fortunate in receiving support for this critical step from an organization called Endeavour which donated consulting services to assist us.

One very difficult decision this year was to close an integral part of the organization, WSC Direct Marketing. Despite its rich and successful history, the demand for training and the job opportunities for graduates in this field have diminished. To ensure our programs meet our mandate of preparing immigrants for employment in the present and future market place, a decision was made that we would not continue this program in 2010. A wonderful follow-up to this however is that the two staff members (former WSC students) who were operating the program are establishing **Connect Fulfillment & Mailing Services**, a company that will continue to serve former customers, but will be independent of WSC.

The Board of Directors of WSC has undergone an injection of new, young, energetic members that have the skill base to carry the important transformation of WSC forward as we build a more sustainable future. At the same time Lynne Hindle, an invaluable board member and former President, will be sorely missed for the unparalleled commitment, acumen and wise counsel that she has contributed in the last 10 years. Finally I wish to thank our Executive Director and the WSC staff for their tireless dedication to help our clients become successfully employed and self-sufficient.

Treasurer's Report (Financial information has been extracted from the audited financial statement as of March 31, 2009 (David Burkes, C.A.))

ASSETS & LIABILITIES	2008	2009	STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	2008	2009
CURRENT ASSETS			REVENUE		
Cash	\$ --	\$ 90,956	Government/Foundation Contributions	\$ 680,160	\$ 783,414
Accounts Receivable	69,755	43,337	WSC Direct Marketing	118,329	165,772
Grant Contributions Receivable	107,102	--	Skills Training Programs	211,666	207,540
GST Receivable	5,727	10,767	Donations & Other Income	<u>33,946</u>	<u>70,309</u>
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	<u>21,695</u>	<u>21,342</u>		<u>1,044,101</u>	<u>1,227,035</u>
	204,279	166,402	EXPENSES		
Equipment	<u>69,793</u>	<u>152,773</u>	Capital Expenditures	16,410	72,071
	<u>\$ 274,072</u>	<u>\$ 319,175</u>	Salaries	656,147	641,511
CURRENT LIABILITIES			Employee Benefits	59,549	63,343
Bank Indebtedness	\$ 60,314	\$ --	Occupancy Costs	196,388	230,097
A/P & Accrued Liabilities	66,376	75,428	Outreach/ Marketing	20,486	20,721
Deferred Revenue & Contributions	15,837	25,302	Bad Debts	1,679	2,230
Deferred Operating Grant	--	15,621	Bank Charges & Interest	10,257	7,721
Loan Payable	12,344	--	DM Materials & Delivery	20,709	18,773
Deferred Contribution for Computers		<u>90,112</u>	Equipment Donation	--	18,100
	<u>\$ 154,871</u>	<u>\$ 206,463</u>	Equipment Leasing/Maintenance	28,138	28,359
			Insurance	14,067	13,797
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>119,201</u>	<u>112,712</u>	Office Supplies	8,123	20,972
			Professional Fees	7,711	19,109
FINANCIAL POSITION	<u>\$274,072</u>	<u>\$319,175</u>	Fundraising Expenses (30 th Anniversary Gala)	--	21,405
			Program Resource Materials	21,917	29,848
			Telephone	10,992	9,331
			Travel & Participant TTC	<u>4,812</u>	<u>9,004</u>
				<u>\$ 1,077,385</u>	<u>\$ 1,226,392</u>
			Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue		
			over Expenses from Operations	(33,284)	643
			Amortization	(16,158)	(7,132)
			Transfer of Restricted Contingencies	16,636	--
			NET EXPENSES OVER REVENUE	<u>\$ (32,806)</u>	<u>\$ (6,489)</u>

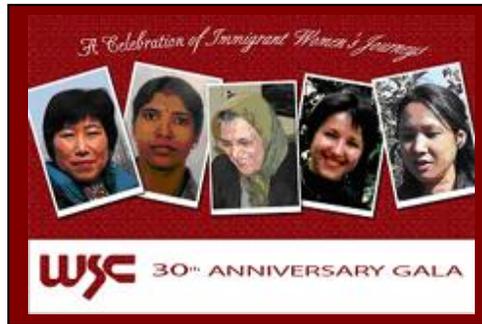
A copy of the complete 2008-2009 Audited Financial Statement is available by contacting:

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2008-2009 Activity Report

Honey Crossley, Executive Director

2008-2009 was an exciting year as Working Skills Centre (WSC) celebrated 30 years of service to the community. On **Tuesday October 28**, at the **St. Lawrence Hall**, WSC hosted a memorable 30th anniversary celebration The Gala, “**A Celebration of Immigrant Women’s Journeys**” included entertainment, live and silent auctions, food and wine from around the world, and a digital and photos exhibit displaying immigrant women’s achievements. The Photos from Home project had created 12 storyboards based on our graduate’s experiences and success in Canada.



During this fiscal year, WSC continued to provide services along the “Track to Employment” including settlement information and counseling, English for the Workplace programs, skills training, both certificate and diploma programs, and bridge-to-work initiatives.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

With funds from the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP), Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), settlement workers at WSC provided information and referral services to over 4,000 clients, with nearly 1,000 attending ½ day information sessions. In 2008, the program added a new direction to include a focus on employment related counseling which fit well with WSC’s mandate to assist immigrants, primarily women, to access skills training, job search support and Canadian work experience. Group sessions including “Understanding the Canadian Workplace” and Cross Cultural Communication” were attended by over 600 clients.

FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

Funded by a one-time Sector Development Grant from NSP, a series of 10 modules were developed and tested with clients from WSC and other settlement agencies. In March 2009, a train the trainer session was held to disseminate this information to 25 other agencies. Social & Enterprise Development Innovations (SEDI) is a formal partner in this venture.

DIVERSITY FORUM

WSC received a second grant from the Ontario Community Builders Fund, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. In partnership with the Toronto Training Board and Working Women’s Community Centre, WSC is planning a Forum called “**Diversity: Strategies for the Changing Workforce**” which will be held in October 2009 at Metro Hall. Guest speakers and participants will explore four major themes relevant to Canada’s dynamic work environment: Expectations in the Labour Market, Strategies for an Inclusive workplace, New Technologies & Leveraging the strengths of multi-generations, and Benefits of Workplace Diversity. The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, David Onley and the Honourable Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will welcome 100 representatives of business, industry, social services, and job seekers who are immigrants to dialogue on ways to create flexible, productive work environments in Toronto.

VITAL IDEAS (Toronto Community Foundation)

WSC is one of three charitable, non-profit multi-service community agencies to also be designated as a private career college. Together with Learning Enrichment Foundation and Mothercraft, WSC is working to establish a charitable career college associate group. This work is funded by a grant from the Toronto Community Foundation.

WSC COMMUNITY NETWORK STRATEGY

A one-year Job Creation Partnership project was made possible through Employment Ontario to help participants to gain meaningful work experience while assessing the effectiveness of the Practice Firm and launching Academy of Computer & Employment Skills. Five positions were created for EI recipients: HR/Volunteer Coordinator, IT Officer, Communications Officer, Marketing Officer, and Practice Firm Researcher. All of the individuals completed their placements at WSC and 75% are now working in their fields.

ACADEMY OF COMPUTER & EMPLOYMENT SKILLS (A.C.E.S.)

In June 2008, the business license for the **Academy of Computer & Employment Skills (A.C.E.S.)** was granted and the launch of the Academy took place in September 2008. A significant grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation was received in June 2008 and all computer equipment was updated and the computer labs and classrooms refurbished in preparation for the opening of the career college. This new equipment was moved to the college’s new location at 55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 703 in September, 2009.

Diploma Programs were approved by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities in March, 2008 in conjunction with WSC being registered as a private career college. The application process was long and many negotiations took place to ensure that WSC retained its ability to serve immigrants in a way that was flexible and reflected newcomer needs.

Computerized Accounting and Computerized Office Administration, both contain modules designed specifically to assist immigrants to succeed in the Canadian workplace. In this way the programs is distinct from programs at other career or community colleges which focus almost entirely on the technical skills. 116 clients attended 21-week programs and earned Diplomas in 2008-2009.

New curriculum has been tested and three new Diploma programs are expected to be approved in 2009: Supply Chain Clerk, Medical Receptionist, and General Office Clerk. The existing diploma programs have been revised to more closely match employer expectations, so that Computerized Office Administration is now an Administrative Assistant with Desktop Publishing diploma and Computerized Accounting includes a new module on Financial Management.

WORLD SERVICE CARGO (a practice firm)

World Service Cargo is a virtual logistics company creating Canadian work for individuals who are job ready in their chosen careers and have experience from their home countries. From 685 applicants 86 candidates were selected and participated in this intervention (2008-2009) and reported 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. WSC has received an extension for this project’s funding from Employment Ontario through April 2010. This program provides a full suite of employment readiness services to immigrants.

ACES Suite #703

Academy of Computer & Employment Skills (A.C.E.S.) offers Diplomas in Computerized Office Administration and Accounting. These community-based learning opportunities are approved as vocational programs under the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005 by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. WSC also offers a host of modular certificate training part-time, evenings and weekend.



WSC Suite #208

World Service Cargo provides internationally trained, skilled immigrants with an opportunity to practice their skills in a simulated work environment and obtain Canadian work experience in Accounting, Supply Chain, IT, Sales and Marketing, SAP, HR and Admin.

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO Funded in part by the government of Canada

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.

Location and Contact Information

Working Skills Centre (WSC), located just one block east of the Yonge-Eglinton subway station, easily accessible by TTC; it is a busy neighbourhood with an international flavor and a multitude of everyday services. The agency has established a business environment which provides immigrants with Canadian workplace experience at WSC Skills Training Programs (Suite 703) and the World Service Cargo – Practice Firm (Suite 208). The Academy of Computer & Employment Skills (Suite 703) provides diploma programs approved by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities under the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005.

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2008-2009 Directors

President: Amanda L. Thomson
Vice-President: Wei Wu
Past-President: Lynne Hindle
Treasurer: Ron Foreman
Secretary: Alyssa Brierley
Members at Large: Shamima Adam
Pulsara (Kulaweera) Batra
Georgina Bencsik
Celia Fernandes
Diana Fridlyand
Aana Mehta
Jacqueline Mundangepfupfu
Matt Rempel
Lorna Semple (on leave of absence)



Acknowledgements Working Skills Centre (WSC) would like to acknowledge our 2008-2009 funders and partners.

- City of Toronto
- Cultural Human Resource Council
- Industry Canada
- Service Canada, Canada Summer Jobs Strategy
- 215 individuals who attended the 30th Anniversary Gala and 82 individuals who supported "TEAM WSC!" at the Achilles Race in March 2008
- Gala Sponsors:
 - RBC Royal Bank of Canada
 - Asset Engineering Corporation
 - East West Resources
 - Nesbitt Burns
 - Milton Toyota
 - The Pigott Family
 - The Crossley Family
 - Women's Leadership Initiative, Miller Thomson
 - Wells Fargo Foothill
 - Xerox Canada
 - TD Financial
- Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities
- Employment Ontario (MTCU)
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Service Deliver Partners
 - ACCES
 - Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council
 - COSTI Immigrant Services
 - Humber College
 - JobStart
 - Newcomer Women's Services of Toronto
 - PIVOTAL Integrated HR Solutions
 - Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre
 - Scadding Court
 - SEDI (Social and Enterprise Development Innovations)
 - Toronto Health & Safety Legal Clinic
 - Toronto District School Board
 - YWCA

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