



Mennonite
new life
centre

Walking Together with Newcomers

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

MENNONITE NEW LIFE CENTRE

After twenty five years of walking with newcomers, the Mennonite New Life Centre took a pause to review and refresh our vision and mission statements. In September 2009, the Board approved the following statements as a guide to future work:

Mission

The Mennonite New Life Centre's mission is to facilitate newcomer settlement and integration through holistic services and community engagement, carried out within a gender justice and anti-oppression framework.

Vision

The Mennonite New Life Centre envisions a society in which all people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds participate fully in all aspects of Canadian life. We will model an approach that brings together community engagement and community services, working together with newcomers to reduce insecurity and reach integration, strengthen voices and increase social equality.

Throughout 2009, our work was shaped by the guiding values which inform our vision and mission statements.

COMMUNITY BUILDING



More than just another service agency, the Mennonite New Life Centre strives to be a place of welcome, friendship and community. In order to effectively build community, we need to be present to newcomers in the neighbourhoods where they live and work. In 2009, we opened a new office in North York, drawing closer to the Latin American community concentrated in that part of Toronto. Our North York office now houses active settlement, employment and community mental health programs, supported by an Outreach Coordinator and HR/Finance Manager, hired to strengthen organizational capacity across our three sites.

PARTICIPATION & VOICE

The Mennonite New Life Centre believes that newcomers must be able to exercise their skills and their voices. In 2009, we conducted a participatory action research project, to talk to newcomers about employment barriers they were experiencing, and to formulate policy and program recommendations to improve access to fair and meaningful employment. Newcomer research participants gave priority to a combination of employer incentives and legislative change, calling for increased internship opportunities for newcomers and the return of employment equity legislation in Ontario. Recommendations were shared through a research report, journalistic articles published in our advocacy magazine *New Voices*, and a workshop delivered at the OCASI Conference. Follow up work planned for 2010 will include a public forum and municipal engagement campaign, to draw public and political attention to newcomer employment concerns and proposals in the context of upcoming municipal elections.



EQUITY & INTEGRATION



Our commitment to employment equity and full integration for newcomers necessarily begins at home. In an effort to support newcomers in securing that all important first job in Canada, the Mennonite New Life Centre launched a one year internship program for internationally trained professionals, with four part time positions in the areas of mental health, refugee settlement and office administration. At the same time, the Mennonite New Life Centre built a wide network of partnerships in the settlement and mental health sectors to support a successful grant application for a Bridge Training Program for Internationally Trained Psychologists and Allied Mental Health Professionals. Currently in the development phase, with classes scheduled to begin in September 2010, this program will offer academic bridge training, occupation specific language classes and a supervised work placement to assist internationally trained mental health professionals in transferring their skills and experience to the Canadian context.

STRATEGIC PLAN

As our government funders moved to results based management, the Mennonite New Life Centre worked with a consulting firm to carry out a summer program review and fall strategic planning process, learning to articulate our organizational vision and work within the language and tools of a logic model. Board, staff and volunteers participated in building a three year strategic plan organized around the following strategic directions:

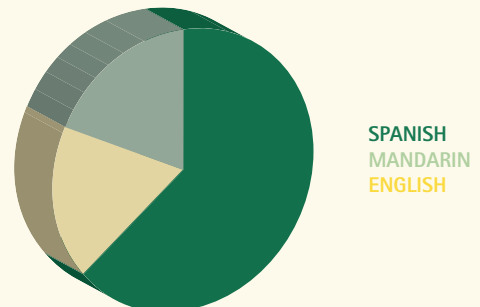
- Strong Programs and Partnerships for Full Integration
- Community Engagement for Social Justice and Social Change
- Organizational Capacity Building

We look forward to living out our new vision statement as we work to move forward with these three strategic directions for the period January 2010 to December 2012.



OUR NUMBERS

As we continue to grow, develop new programs, and strengthen our connection to newcomer communities, we draw more and more newcomers to the Mennonite New Life Centre. In 2009, our settlement workers registered a total of 7031 client visits. 64% of our clients were served in Spanish, 18% in Mandarin, and 18% in English. The top three countries of origin were: Colombia (30%), China (19%) and Mexico (16%). Newcomers from China also account for some 90% of our LINC student population. In 2008, the Mennonite New Life Centre offered language classes to 369 students.



Board of Directors

The 2009 Board of Directors, together with their affiliation:

Alfredo Barahona	Community
Herb Buckwalter, Vice-chair	At Large
Monica Chung	Markham Chinese Mennonite Church
Helen Griebeling	Mississauga Mennonite Church
Julia He	Community
Moses Moini	Mennonite Central Committee
Miriam Reesor	Markham Area Mennonite Churches
Debra Simpson, Chair	At Large
Munni Subhani	Community
Robert Tiessen, Treasurer	At Large
Marshall Warkentin	Toronto United Mennonite Church
Miriam Wiebe, Secretary	Toronto New Life Mennonite Church
Mohan Doss	Community Advisor

2009 was a year of renewing our vision and planning for the future. It was also a year of partnering with newcomers in building community and working for programs and policy changes that would enable newcomers to more fully contribute their ideas and skills to Canada. As we look to the future, we strive to be a presence and a voice for an ever more inclusive society.

Many thanks to our program participants, volunteers, donors and supporters for walking with us throughout 2009. We look forward to "living the vision" together in 2010.



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Audited Financials (Summary)

	2009	2008
Revenue		
Grants	1,780,244	1,471,150
Donations	50,849	29,201
Other income	15,051	30,650
Interest	1,355	2,864
	1,847,499	1,533,865
Expenses		
Staff	1,230,485	993,478
Office	418,831	331,466
Program	130,764	100,872
Other	37,145	56,799
	1,817,225	1,482,615
Excess of revenues over expenses before the following	30,274	51,250
Transfer to Program Reserve Fund	-27,100	-27,000
Transfer to Mental Health Internship Program		-22,140
Transfer from Program Reserve for renovation project	7,000	-
Excess of revenue over expenses	10,174	\$2,110

Complete audited financial statements may be requested by calling 416-699-4527.

Finances

Funding for our budget of \$1.85 million comes from a wide variety of contributors. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, through its ISAP and LINC programs, is our primary contributor and funded the opening of our North York office in 2009. Other funding is obtained from the Newcomer Settlement Program of the provincial government, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the local supporting Mennonite churches, other church groups and interested individuals. In 2009, we secured approximately \$28,000 for job creation from the City of Toronto's Investing in Neighbourhoods Fund, allowing us to bolster the strength of our community mental health program. We also received a \$50,000 grant from the Metcalf Foundation, together with a number of smaller grants and donations, to support our Newcomer Skills at Work Project. We finished the financial year with a small surplus.