Mission Statement

Women’s Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre of Durham (WMRCC) is a non-profit, charitable and community based women’s organization working from an integrated feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppression framework.

All women regardless of race, cultural and social identity, sexual orientation, religion, class, age, and ability have equal access to our programs and services.

New Program

WMRCC of Durham is pleased to announce “Women’s Economic Advancement and Leadership Skills” (Project WEALS). WMRCC of Durham received a two-year grant from the Status of Women Canada to implement this initiative. This project started in January 2009 and is to be completed in 2011.

On March 8th, 2009, the Honourable Bev Oda, Minister of International Cooperation and Member of Parliament for Durham announced the grant on behalf of Honourable Helena Guergis, Minister of State, Status of Women. Minister Oda announced the federal government’s support for the WMRCC of Durham’s Project WEALS which aims to empower immigrant women who are survivors of family violence to rebuild their economic security.

“Our Government is responding to the needs of women on a wide range of issues by developing supportive policies and measures to address critical challenges, and by providing the resources to help deal with them”, said Minister Guergis. We will continue to create the conditions for women’s success, and our support for Project WEALS with its goal of empowering immigrant women who have experienced violence, is an effective way of doing so” she added.

“The unfortunate reality is that whether through socio-cultural isolation, language barriers or other reasons, immigrant women can be particularly vulnerable to domestic violence and economic insecurity,” said Minister Oda. “With greater skills in financial management and leadership, these women will move towards economic self-sufficiency. Project WEALS seeks to empower them to break free of the cycle of violence and rebuild their lives and those of their families” she added.
Message from the Chair

It’s always important to have an attitude of thankfulness. On behalf of Women’s Multicultural Resource and Counseling Centre of Durham (WMRCC of Durham), I would like to thank you for your generous support to our “Quest for a New Home Fundraising 60’s Gala” raising funds to move to a more accessible location. Your commitment to helping in our community is sincerely appreciated.

Each year WMRCC of Durham continues to advance its mission to provide individual and group counseling, referrals, public education, workshops, training and supportive services primarily to women from diverse cultural, racial and religious backgrounds, immigrant, refugee women and children in Durham Region on issues of settlement, violence and abuse. Through our programs such as crisis intervention, accompaniment to various institutions, skills development and training, youth counseling, public education and awareness campaign we have seen many lives changed for the better.

In particular these programs have enjoyed great success in the past year with goals achieved such as providing counseling and support to over 700 women and youths managing their personal lives, weekly youth settlement programs engaging in higher education and women’s’ economic leadership and empowerment thus creating safer and more supportive environment in which they and their children can thrive.

Why I am so excited about this is because of all the lives that will continue to be touched as we continue to support our members in most need of services. Many survivors say that “The support provided by WMRCC made a different at a very crucial time in their life.” or “the counseling saved my life”. I believe WMRCC of Durham in its effort to support the building a healthier community will go above and beyond to assist residents in Durham and the surrounding areas.

However, we are not doing this by ourselves. We know that none of what has been accomplished could have happened without you, our partners and friends in the region. Your role in this is tremendously important; you are like the engine that pulls the train. Without the engine, we are not going anywhere. And what takes place in the future depends on the continuing power of your support and others who believe in WMRCC of Durham’s vision of a safer and healthier place to live and grow for women and children.

The goal of WMRCC of Durham is to continue to make a difference in the lives of women and children in the community. With the help of donations from supporters such as you we will continue to see improvements as we continue to address the most pressing social issues of the day, that is violence against women and children, homelessness, poverty, elder abuse, settlement and integration to name a few. As our efforts have evolved, we have built expertise in tackling these challenges both through direct services and advocacy. Our approach is unique, using culturally sensitive counseling and support to helping ensure the dignity of people who are in the most difficult of circumstances, be it the hardship of poverty or the trauma of violence. As community peers have sought WMRCC of Durham’s expertise to develop stronger, safer, and healthier community’s services using some of our most effective approaches and culturally sensitive strategies.

WMRCC of Durham is an important force for change, helping women and children most affected by the clouds of migration, violation and conflict both from aboard and within their personal lives. With your ongoing support, we can continue this important work to assist in creating a more empowered life for all members of our community.

Thank you for believing in future possibilities.

Marilyn Oladimeji
Chair of the Board
Greetings from the Executive Director

Happy summer to you all; I hope that everyone is enjoying the beautiful weather, despite those rainy days. I am glad that we are now seeing some hot and sunny days.

As usual; the centre has been very busy with many programs and activities: Youth Host Program, Project WEALS, and Mentorship Program including one on one counselling sessions.

Due to several pressures and pressing priorities, this issue of our newsletter is coming to you rather belatedly. Recall that in May this year, we had a successful fundraising gala. To all who attended the WMRCC Gala Dinner, On behalf of the Board, and the staff, I would like to sincerely thank you all for your contribution to the success of the 2009 Gala Dinner. By purchasing a table or a ticket, you helped us to raise a substantial amount of money, making this year’s gala event the most successful yet. These funds will enable us to relocate to a new environment that will be wheelchair accessible and to continue to provide this much needed support for marginalized groups and their families in the community. Although we have not reached yet our goal every dollar counts.

Your personal support, coupled with the generosity of other community-spirited people, sponsors and donors, made a big difference and we are extremely grateful to you all. Keep in mind that this event would not have been possible without the many amazing sponsors and donors who so generously and freely gave items of donation; this year. A great big thank you! I will like to thank DJ John Fitzgerald, Zahras School of Belly Dancing and Youth Troopers for Global Awareness for entertaining the audience, our guest speaker, Marisol, and our MC for the night, Charmaine Mills. The buzz out there, are that people had a great time networking while helping WMRCC accomplish their goals. Kudos goes out to our board chair and all directors, fundraising committee, volunteers, and staff for doing such a fantastic job in marketing and selling tickets.

A special thank you to Mayor Ryan of City of Pickering and the members of the “Mayor’s Gala” for picking our agency to receive the sum of $10,000 from the 2009 Mayor’s Gala. We sincerely appreciate Mayor’s generosity and support to the agency.

I extend my congratulations to the Elementary Teachers Fed. of Ontario, Lions Club of Pickering, Ontario Power Generation, Rotary Club of Pickering and VERIDIAN Connections who were recognized for their on going financial support to the agency.

We trust that you had a highly enjoyable evening and we thank you and your guests for joining us at the Gala event. It will all be happening again next year so we look forward to another memorable night. Rest assured that next year’s event will be equally exciting and even better, with respect to projected participation and attendance.

Meanwhile, I hope we would count on your continued support in 2010. Every dollar raised is responsibly used in our community development initiatives. We invite you to get involved! Have a safe and happy summer!

In Solidarity,

Esther Enyolu
Executive Director
News from Youth Host Program

The aim of the Youth Host Program is to help newcomer and immigrant youth within the Durham School Boards and in their community to integrate through friendship. Newcomer youth are matched with volunteer youth in their high schools. The Youth Host Program has been very successful in the high schools that they are in as the workers work closely with the coordinator and guidance counselors to implement the program. There is an ongoing orientation and training for volunteers and newcomers in the program. 40 youth have been matched in the program.

The Youth in the Host Program participates in a weekly conversation circles, youth volunteers have been trained to lead the conversation circles. The Youth Host Program also has different events and activities in Durham. Through these activities and events, the youth have been exposed to new experiences, greater knowledge of resources and services in their community and the opportunity to make new friends. The Youth Host Program also creates an opportunity for the volunteers to gain community hours. There was an excursion trip to the CN tower, Eaton Centre, Ryerson University tour and a Greater Toronto Area Youth Host dodge ball tournament, to some of the Host participants it is their first time going out of Durham to Toronto.

English as second language teacher, Josie Raponi said in her evaluation of the program that, “Making new acquaintances is often very difficult for new students and through the Youth Host Program, our ELL students have been able to make friends, and that helped them to alleviate some of the anxieties that usually accompany tremendous change in one’s life as a newcomer. Having a volunteer mentor in their own school has enabled the students to have someone their own age with who to discuss school and teenage issues with. I believe that the Youth Host Program has helped these students to feel a genuine sense of belonging in the schools”.

Our summer program includes fun activities, trips, workshops and university/college tours and a volunteer appreciation Barbeque. We are looking forward to the fall school year as we move the program into new schools.

Youth Host Coordinator
Genevieve Solomon

Youth Host Workers
Emily Clarke
Mathura Thiagarajah

Testimony from Participants

The Youth Host Program has created such a great opportunity for me to make new friends and get out into the community. As a volunteer, this program has provided great services and information to help me to get out into the community. At first I was a little apprehensive as to how this would work to get to know a brand new person, and what they would be like. It turns out that we had a lot in common; we share the same interest in books, and plan to participate in the summer programs and activities. We enjoyed the trips to the CN Tower, Ryerson University, the Eaton Centre. I would recommend this program to anyone who wants to make new friends, learn from other cultures and also share with others what you know about Canada.
- Volunteer Youth

I really liked the program because I made new friends and I had fun doing different activities with them. I am happy to be part of the program.
- Newcomer Youth
News from Project WEALS

The Federal Government of Canada through the Status of Women Canada, is supporting the Women’s Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre of Durham in the agency’s mission to reach out to immigrant women and women from diverse cultural, racial and religious backgrounds including youth and children who are experiencing abuse or are survivors of violence and abuse within Durham Region. The goal of WMRCC of Durham’s Women’s Economic Advancement and Leadership Skills Project (Project WEALS) is to break down systemic barriers faced by women who are survivors of violence or other forms of abuse.

In brief Project WEALS, through a series of workshops, covers four main topics which include:
- personal growth and life skills training
- leadership skills
- career workshop
- financial management and budgeting
- one-on-one business mentorship and counseling

By supporting this initiative, Women’s Economic Advancement and Leadership Skills Project (Project WEALS), the Government of Canada is enabling WMRCC of Durham to address critical issues for immigrant and women from diverse racial, cultural and religious backgrounds who are survivors of violence in Durham Region. Providing culturally sensitive, supportive programs and services geared toward women’s economic advancement is a social intervention and response to community needs. Through this specialized outreach, we are helping this vulnerable group of women escape the scourge of family violence, and gain the skills and confidence they need to lead fulfilling, lives free from violence, abuse and eliminating poverty.

Project WEALS began in January 2009. Project WEALS workshops are held on Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m and day workshops will be starting in September 2009.

Marcia Doyley
Project Coordinator

Testimony from Participants

I got a lot of good information from this program. Before I was depressed a lot; I have no family or relative here and I felt I’m alone. As I attend these workshops my self-esteem and self-confidence and English language skills have improved.
Thank you all.

The programs were terrific and really helped me realize my true potential. It has definitely empowered me in so many ways. The workshops were encouraging, positive, informative and educational. I am completing the workshops with a new attitude and a new outlook on life. It has changed me and made me a more creative and an even more positive individual than I was before.

November is Woman Abuse Awareness Campaign and this year WMRCC of Durham will be having a series of community events. We hope you will join us in one or all of these events. Program flyer is coming soon.
Community Events and Partnerships

Black History Month:

There were many events organized in the month of February 2009 in celebration of Black History Month in Durham Region. WMRCC of Durham Youth Host Program partnered with the Town of Ajax to bring these events in Durham communities.

International Women’s Day Event (IWD)

On March 8th, 2009, there was a big IWD event in Durham, women in Durham Region joined in solidarity with women globally to celebrate women and women’s achievements. WMRCC of Durham in partnership with the Denise House, Bethesda House, Herizon House, Durham YWCA, Y’s WISH Shelter, Luke’s Place, DC/UOIT Women’s Centre, Durham Rape Crisis Centre, Amnesty Internation, The Canadian Cancer Society, Durham Region Public Health, The Distress Centre and the Town of Ajax organized the event. Over 200 women, 50 children and few men attended. Over 17 community agencies and businesses set-up an information booth at the event. We would like to thank and appreciate all women and young women who helped to organize this event. Thanks for a job well done. The event would not have been successful without your efforts.

In addition, our Executive Director was a guest speaker at the IWD event organized by the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario the same month.
Donors for WMRCC Gala

Thanks to all the Donors listed below who contributed to WMRCC of Durham Fundraising Gala Event on Saturday May 16th, 2009. The Gala was a success due to your generous contributions.

Corporate Table Sponsors
- Durham Progress Women’s Club
- Durham Regional Police Services
- Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario
- Herizon House
- Scotia Bank
- UOIT, Faculty of Criminology, Justice and Policy Studies
- VERIDIAN Connections

Items Donors
- Dickson Printing
- Lori King
- Chudi Asidiarya
- John Fitzgerald
- Modern Touch Salon & Spa, Pickering Town Center
- Akrilix Nails, Pickering Town Center
- Famous Players Pickering 8, Pickering Town Center
- The Body Shop, Pickering Town Center
- Laura Secord, Pickering Town Center
- Women’s Fitness Club of Canada
- East Side Mario’s Restaurant
- The Bay, Pickering Town Center
- Evelyn Smith
- Lush, Pickering Town Center
- The Management of Pickering Town Center
- HMV, Pickering Town Center

Our heartfelt appreciation to our facility donors:
- Kinsmen Heritage Centre
- Pickering Public Library and City of Pickering
- Town of Ajax

Special Acknowledgement:
WMRCC of Durham would like to appreciate the Medias that covered different events and programs the agency held. Thank you for helping make our agency viable in the community.
- Metroland Durham Region Media Group
- Rogers Communications
- SNAP Newspaper
- The Durham College Newspaper (the Durham Chronicle)
- Viva Magazine
Special thanks to all our 2009 donors:

**Donors $20 - $99.00**
- Clara and Leslie Siklos
- Mr. & Mrs. Chiodo
- Eva Reti and David Hakkaku
- Joyce Marshall
- Renee Munroe
- S.T. Worden Primary School, Courtice

**Supporters $500.00 - $999.00**
- Investors Group
- John Howard Society
- St. Martins Anglican Church

**Friends $100.00 - $499.00**
- IBM Employees’ Charitable fund
- Jerry Dyal

**Advocates $1,000.00 - $2,499.00**
- Ontario Power Generation
- Rotary Club of Pickering
- VERIDIAN Connections

**Matrons $2,500 - $4,999.00**
- RBC Foundations

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**ANNOUNCEMENT: ADOPT A FAMILY AT CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

WMRCC of Durham is looking for individuals and families, corporations who are willing to make a difference in the lives of women and children by adopting them during the holiday period. If you are willing to support us in this program kindly contact us. This program has transformed some family's lives during the holidays and WMRCC of Durham sincerely appreciates the support of our past sponsors.
WMRCC of Durham Wish List

- New office location- we are looking for a new office space. Please spread the word around.
- Furniture for the new place
- Playroom set
- Holiday items for women
- Food Vouchers

ANNOUNCEMENT: WMRCC of Durham Annual General Meeting

Please join us on Monday, October 26th, 2009 at 6:30p.m.
Victorian Gardens, 570 Westney Road South
Suite 15-A, Ajax (at Westney & Bayly)
Our theme this year is “New Beginnings: Herstories and the launching of our new website.

Cost is $20.00
Refreshments will be provided.

Please RSVP your attendance by calling June Prashad, Admin. Assistant at (905) 427-7849 or june.prashad@wmrccdurham.com
Special Thanks and Appreciation to our funders

Citizenship and Immigration Canada  Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Status of Women Canada  Condition féminine Canada

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