

Women at the Centre Winter 2006 Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hello! My name is Samantha Singh. I was elected by the Board of Directors as its President in September, 2005. This is my third year as a member of the Board. In that time I have participated on the Access and Program Evaluation Committees and was Chair of the Fundraising Committee.

Volunteering with Scarborough Women's Centre has enriched my life so much. As a lawyer, I consider myself an educated person. However, my participation with the Centre has taught me things that I could never learn in a textbook. I have learned the value of a caring, supportive and accessible place for women – something that I took for granted in the past. I've also learned so much from the women of the Centre. They are women of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds who come together to make better lives for themselves and their children. Each and every one of us, whether a volunteer, staff or user of the Centre, brings a wealth of experience which she can share.

Scarborough Women's Centre is dedicated to providing women with the information, education and support they need to reach emotional and economic independence.

I'm proud to be a part of this agency, and a part of such a strong community.

I look forward to meeting you and hearing what you think of the Centre. See you at our annual Spring Tea!

Samantha Singh
Board President



OUR WEBSITE IS NEW AND IMPROVED!

This past summer, a Summer Experience Program grant from the Ministry of Citizenship made it possible for us to hire a student to update our website. Jennifer Mohan has previously been a placement student at the Centre, and has a good grasp of our programs and services. She met with staff, volunteers and participants to get their feedback about how to make the website more useful and user-friendly. We're thrilled with the results!

Next time you visit, you'll notice that we have detailed information about each of our programs, services and volunteer opportunities. There is also more information about community resources for women.

There's even a button that will take you directly to CanadaHelps.org to make an online donation!

We hope that you will be happy with the results of the update, and its fresh new look. Please visit www.scarboroughwomenscentre.ca. Your comments are welcome!

You are invited to our wonderful Spring Tea. Good company, silent auction, and an interesting speaker.

Bring a friend!
Check out our website for details.

May 2006, 1 - 4 pm





WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

At our Annual General Meeting in September 2005, we enjoyed an opportunity to reflect on the Centre's progress. The membership elected four new Board members:

♥ Yvette Bailey is Administrative Assistant in the development office of an international non profit organization. She has a BA in English; diploma in Public Communications; and a certificate in Fundraising for Non-profits. Yvette has held progressive public administration positions since 1991 – including international development, arts, government, pharmaceutical industries, both here and in Guyana. She has volunteered with the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

♥ Sunita Kossta has a Masters of Education in Adult Education, and an Honours BA in Psychology. Employment experience includes progressive education sector positions since 1987. She is currently employed as an Education Liaison Officer for the federal government; and is a part time Professor of Psychology at a community college. Sunita previously volunteered at the Centre as a mentor.

♥ Jessica Shields has 13 years progressive marketing experience, specializing in communications, strategic relationships and media relations. She has a Certificate in E-business Management and a BA in

Political Science, and is working on her certificate in holistic health.

♥ Nadine Spencer has an Honours BA in Political Science. She is currently Vice-President of Marketing/Business Development Manager of the international antiques business she co-founded. Her volunteer experiences include Junior League; ESL tutoring; and Big Sisters.

Our thanks and appreciation to retiring Board members:

♥ Sheryl Dyke has been a volunteer at the Centre for seven years, the last two as President, and sat on the Human Resources, Strategic Planning, & Fundraising Committees. One of her many contributions was the organizing of a successful golf tournament fundraiser.

♥ Darlene Watman has been a valued friend of the Centre for 20 years. She joined the Board 3 years ago and has served as Vice President, Chair of the Program Evaluation Committee, and ESS Program Advisory Group member.

♥ Shirley Kandappu also joined the Board 3 years ago, after serving on the Board of SWAN Shelter, and the ESS Program Advisory Group. She has been associated with the Centre for 10 years. The last two years have been very busy for Shirley in the role of Treasurer.

♥ Julie Sagara has been involved with the Centre for 10 years. She originally sat on the Board from 1995 to 2001, and joined us again for this past year. Julie has sat on the Fundraising and Strategic Planning Committees. She is taking on a new volunteer role as President of an ethno-specific service agency, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration.

♥ Terry Taosheng Liu has resigned from the Board after two years in order to begin a maternity leave on the birth of her son. Terry also sat on the Strategic Planning Committee. She has been helpful in our fundraising outreach to the corporate world.



HONOURING OUR RESOURCEFULNESS

People seek counseling to talk about their feelings and thoughts or to find some solutions to problems that they experience. Traditionally therapists would tell clients what to do or not to do and offer solutions to their problems. This has changed in the last 30 years and new ideas have emerged, providing new perspectives on therapeutic relationships. According to these new therapeutic approaches, it is essential to shift therapists' focus from solving problems for clients to discovering what clients have that could support them to take a new position in relation to their problems.

I am in the process of integrating this new perspective and would like to introduce it to you. I hope, by the end of this article, you will be able to acknowledge your resources that may have been overlooked by the dominance of problems in your lives.

What comes to your mind when you think of resourcefulness? Let's see how the dictionary defines it. It says resourcefulness is the "capability to deal with a situation or meet difficulties".

I would like you to imagine a difficult situation you have been in and then pay attention to ways in which you were able to deal with it. I believe some ways of dealing with that particular situation have come from your internal resources and some have come from your external support. I call that a sign of your resourcefulness. Let me explain what I mean by internal resources and external support.

Internal resources mean your life experience, self knowledge, wisdom and skills or qualities that you have developed in your life. These internal and external resources are the outcome of your social interactions with your family members, friends, co-workers, and community in general. Resourcefulness includes the capacities, qualities, skills, wisdom, and knowledge that circulate among family members and your networks.

You weren't born with these resources. They don't come naturally to you. They are constructed through your social interactions with others. The more interactions we have with others, the more we learn about others and ourselves. Some interactions might bring out or mirror our best and some might not. That is how we learn about our limits and resources. Knowing our limits might help to invest our energy and time in our resources more, and knowing our resources and abilities might help us in expanding our resourcefulness.

Sometimes our ability to see those resources gets diminished under the shadow of problems. Although we have the knowledge and skills, we aren't able to use it at times of facing adversities or difficulties.

When you seek therapy, my primary duty as a counsellor is through my

therapeutic conversation with you to probe the capacities, skills, knowledge that you possess through your life experience that may be overshadowed by the problem(s). By asking you a series of questions, we both begin to look for a glimpse of those overshadowed abilities, knowledge, and resources. My hopes are to identify and have appreciation for those capacities and knowledge, to support you to pay more attention to those resources and incorporate them in your everyday life, to ultimately connect you to the richer side of yourself, which might disentangle the problem(s).

I wish you well in your journey towards resourcefulness.

Tahereh Barati, Case Manager/Counsellor



WHAT'S ALL THE HYPE?

Why is volunteering so important? There are many reasons why people give time to Scarborough Women's Centre (SWC). "It is a great way to get connected with others in the community", said one volunteer. Another felt that it presents opportunities to learn about community resources and expand skills & abilities that will assist with future employment. Or it could simply be wanting to make a positive difference in women's lives.

Whatever the reason, volunteer support is vital to programs & services offered at SWC. Can you

imagine having Direct Services without volunteers? Who would provide 1-on-1 mentoring or resource information and referrals? Without our Board and Committee members overseeing our direction and helping us evaluate our programs for improved services, we'd be lost. With dedicated direct or in-direct service volunteers, SWC is able to provide a high quality of service to the community.

Currently we are introducing two new roles; Outreach volunteers who will assist in promoting who we are & what we do, and Friendly Helpers who will assist in spreading the word about our Educational Workshops through preparation of mail outs!

SWC offers information, education, & support to vulnerable women in Scarborough. Our dynamic volunteers play a big part in helping us help women. Together, we make a difference...

If you've been inspired to volunteer with Scarborough Women's Centre, please call me to get more information on how you can start making a difference!

Lata Patel, Coordinator of Volunteers



WOMEN AT THE CENTRE is a publication of Scarborough Women's Centre.

Letters and suggestions are very welcome.

Please forward to
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Acknowledgements & Appreciation

August 2005 – December 2005

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SWC thanks the following **Individuals** for their **generosity**: **Donations: Up to \$99:** Mo Davies; Carol Denman; Jeanette Thompson; Mary Kainer; Brenda Chalmers; Lisa Casonato; Rita Oster; Maria Metherall; Hulda Mullings; Penni Stuart; Yvette Bailey; J. Savage; Cecilia Lee. **\$100 - \$249:** Louise Choi; Julie Sagara; Evelyn Hill **\$250+:** Michelle Gravelle; Lynda Kosowan

SWC gratefully acknowledges our **Corporate, Group and Service Club** supporters:

Donations: Up to \$2,499: Cardinal Newman C.H.S; CHUM-CITY Charitable Fondation; Linda Lundstrom; McKenzie Financial Charitable Foundation; Malvern Cricket and Social Club; Teva Novopharm; Spine Institute; OPG Employees; Scarborough Full Gospel Assembly Church; Unique Mobile Wash Inc; Zellers Inc **\$5,000+:** George Weston Ltd. **\$10,000:** Green Shields Benefits Ltd.

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SUPPORT THE CENTRE!!

Make a donation, become a member, or volunteer

Name: _____ Address _____

Apt. # _____ City/Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

I would like to be a member of the Centre. _____ Please send an information package. _____

My donation of: \$35. _____ \$50. _____ \$200. _____ \$500. _____ Other _____

Enclosed is my cheque for \$ _____ payable to Scarborough Women's Centre.

Visa Card _____ Expiry Date: _____ Signature: _____

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Yes, you may acknowledge my donation in your newsletter and website. Please keep me informed of Centre activities.