

THE MAYTREE FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2000

The Maytree Foundation is a Canadian charitable foundation established in 1982. Maytree believes that there are three fundamental sets of issues that threaten political and social stability: wealth disparities between and within nations; mass migration of people because of war, oppression and environmental disasters; and the degradation of the environment. Since our resources are limited compared to the magnitude of these issues, we have chosen to focus our energy on the reduction of poverty in Canada.

We view society's toleration of poverty as a fundamental threat to stability both in the world at large and in Canada in particular. Systemic poverty is an unjustifiable burden to millions of people, and bears paralyzing costs to society. It perpetuates a vicious cycle by limiting opportunity and repressing the human spirit. The correlation between poverty and most serious social problems is a stunning indictment of society's continuing toleration of poverty.

Maytree believes that poverty can be reduced through

initiatives that create opportunities for people to break the poverty cycle. We also believe that progressive social policies can play a significant role in alleviating poverty and supporting the common good. Recognizing that newcomers, and especially refugees, are among the most vulnerable groups in society and frequently face real barriers to full social participation, since 1988 Maytree has focused significant energy and resources on serving this community.

With the increasing concentration of Canada's population in its larger cities, efforts to reduce poverty must be focused on these urban communities. Maytree therefore supports a variety of urban-based initiatives to encourage the growth of healthy and inclusive communities.

The Maytree Foundation looks for ways to maximize the impact of its work. It focuses on empowering individuals, funding innovative ideas, supporting effective leaders and finding ways to achieve change and enhance the public good.

Message from the Chairman

From its beginning, The Maytree Foundation has been keenly interested in what works. Given the small resources available to us when we started the Foundation, we had to seek out ideas that achieved their purposes strategically and effectively – a strategy that we have never abandoned.

This approach led us to develop a leadership program for immigrants and refugees. The first program operated in 1999-2000, and we learned a great deal from it. That learning has been incorporated into the 2000-2001 program. We anticipate that the participants will return to their agencies and work relationships with new skills for their own use and to pass on to their colleagues.

We are always looking for ways to share what we and our partners have learned. We do this by convening groups to share experiences. The Caledon Institute of Social Policy does it through publications, including the Community Stories and Real Leaders series.

Looking for what works is another way of saying that

we are interested in solutions to the problems in the world today, and we want to concentrate our resources on implementing effective solutions. Our resources are greater now than when we started almost twenty years ago, but the approach remains pretty much the same: we want to support things that work.

One of the things we do that we believe has worked very well is the Refugee and Immigrant Program. Since she was hired in 1998, Ratna Omidvar has helped to build the program into a significant private foundation investment in refugees and immigrants. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Ratna Omidvar to the position of Executive Director of the Foundation. We are also very pleased to report that in recognition of his contributions to social policy development, Ken Battle, President of Caledon Institute of Social Policy was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2000.

Caledon Institute of Social Policy

The Caledon Institute of Social Policy plays a key and unique role in the ongoing reform of Canadian social and tax policy. With its capacity to write about complex issues in clear and accessible language, Caledon has been instrumental in stimulating public discourse on social programs. Caledon's popular *real leaders*, *community stories*, *crime prevention*, and *communities and schools* series provide a national voice for community leaders and innovative community-based solutions to tough social problems. The *refugee and immigrant* series provides analysis of public policies hindering the settlement and integration of newcomers, and proposes practical policy alternatives.

Caledon's analyses over the years on partial deindexation and its proposals on tax reform influenced the 2000 federal Budget. Caledon advocated a national fund for early childhood development and drew up a model federal-provincial agreement. Caledon advanced its extensive program on labour market issues and community economic development; wrote a proposal for a National Personal Supports Fund to increase the supply and quality of disability-related goods and services; and advocated improvements to disability-related tax measures that were reflected in the 2000 Budget and subsequent Economic Statement.

Caledon has established itself as a major presence on the international front. Caledon's President served on the

Canadian delegation accompanying the Prime Minister to a conference in Berlin hosted by Chancellor Schröder on "Progressive Governance for the 21st Century," attended by President Clinton and 15 other heads of government. Caledon undertook a comparison of child benefit reform in Australia, Canada, the UK and the US, and staged successful seminars for officials and experts in London and Ottawa, which led to visits to Canada from UK government officials and MPs from the Select Social Security Committee.

Caledon is a Canadian partner in a study of Russia's income security system, and is the Canadian lead on the international social policy monitor sponsored by Germany's Bertelsmann Foundation. Caledon delivered papers at the International Social Security Association conference in Helsinki and the International Partnership Conference in Edinburgh. Delegations from the UK, Japan, Russia and the Ukraine visited Caledon.

Caledon's pioneering work on the social dimension of sustainable development led to Sherri Torjman, Vice President being asked to participate on the Advisory Panel to the Commissioner on the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Office of the Auditor General.

Ken Battle, President

Roots of Empathy

Today's kids receive a daily exposure to violence and aggression in the news, on TV and in video games. Roots of Empathy (ROE) is built on the premise that society's harsh tone needs to be actively countered in the classroom. Because the current focus on scholastic basics leaves little opportunity for teaching inclusion, respect or caring, ROE was established in 1996 as a classroom-based program to encourage children to be more caring and responsive to each other.

The Maytree Foundation supported the development and piloting of this new classroom-based program dedicated to building the parenting capacity of the next generation and the development of empathy in children. Since that time, the program has grown rapidly. In 1999, 20 classrooms benefited from the program in Toronto; by 2000 this number had climbed to 54 classrooms, reaching 1350 students in kindergarten through grade eight.

In 2000, recognizing the potential of this program for replication, ROE director Mary Gordon and training

supervisor Heather McFarlane were seconded from the Toronto District School Board to the Maytree Foundation with the objective of launching the program on the national and international scene. Essential work for launching the program on a broader scale, such as the development of a sound business plan and the completion of curriculum, including training and promotional videos was undertaken. In addition, the program was launched in North Bay, the Niagara Region, Vancouver and Charlottetown.

In October of 2000, ROE was launched as a stand-alone, not-for-profit organization with charitable status pending. Its goals are to develop program models that can be replicated across Ontario, Canada, and eventually the United States and internationally.

Mary Gordon, Director

Refugee and Immigrant Program

The objective of Maytree's Refugee and Immigrant Program is to facilitate the social participation and contribution of newcomers by investing in new ideas and solutions designed to improve and accelerate newcomer settlement. These solutions may be embedded in changes in policies or in improvements in programs. To be truly lasting, such changes often require shifts in attitudes and behaviours in individuals, communities, and in the institutions that are a central part of our society.

We are encouraged by the positive results of some of this work. A small grant to Woodgreen Community Services resulted in a new program that will significantly increase the opportunities for foreign-trained nurses to practice their professions in Canada. Along with our community partners, we were delighted at the long-sought repeal of the \$975 Right of Landing Fee on refugees and the reduction of the waiting period for undocumented Somali and Afghan refugees seeking landing. Our work in supporting leaders is demonstrating a new way of creating lasting impact.

At the same time, there is much that we still have to learn. After three years of investing primarily in ideas that contribute to change, we have begun to appreciate the need to invest in building the capacity of communities, so that they are better able to take their ideas forward. In 2000, we initiated a capacity-building program, which holds great promise for building vibrant, sustainable communities.

Whatever progress we have made is tempered by the

reality that our work is far from complete. Convention refugees still wait long years before they can start a normal and productive existence as landed immigrants. Convention refugee students are still not able to obtain government loans to pursue post-secondary education. And many immigrants are wasting their skills, education and experience in jobs for which they are overqualified. Further, recent reports demonstrating the strong correlation between poverty and race point to a disturbing trend of concern to all who are committed to equality.

Strategies to combat these problems must address both their social context and their actual causes. We know that it is important for the Foundation to continue to engage in educating the public, so that myths and stereotypes about refugees are erased. In the area of access to employment, there is fortunately little need for public education - by and large, Canadians already deplore the wasted talents of skilled immigrants unable to access their occupations. The solutions are more complex (at least technically), however, in that they centre on the problem of jurisdiction. We do believe that a forward-looking program that aggressively seeks practical solutions and does not hesitate to take risks in doing so will lead to new approaches and ideas.

In everything we do we are reminded by immigrants and refugees themselves of their commitment to their new country and their will to succeed. By supporting the realization of their hopes and dreams, we are helping newcomers to build a better and stronger Canada.

Ratna Omidvar, Executive Director

Refugee and Immigrant Program Activities

Our granting program continues to be the primary expression of our commitment to refugees and immigrants. However, where appropriate the Foundation also engages directly in mission-related activities.

Civic Participation: Civic participation is possibly the most meaningful benchmark of settlement. It is through participation in the democratic structures and processes of this society that newcomers begin to make a proactive investment in society and begin to claim their role in shaping it. The *Making Our Voices Count* project seeks to increase the civic participation of newcomer communities by increasing the numbers, vitality, credibility and influence of newcomer voices at public agencies, boards and commissions. It also seeks to help these institutions to actively embrace the input of newcomer stakeholders. At this time the project is focused on civic participation opportunities within the public education system. The project completed a planning phase in 2000, with additional funding support of \$30,000 from the Walter and

Duncan Gordon Foundation and \$5,000 from the Toronto Community Foundation. Partnerships have been confirmed with the Toronto District School Board, the Peel District School Board, People For Education, Tropicana Community Services and South Asian Family Support Services. Pilot project sites have been confirmed at West Mississauga, Malton and Scarborough.

Leaders for Change: The Maytree Foundation offers an innovative leadership training opportunity for emerging leaders from newcomer communities. The objective of the *Leaders for Change* program is to build on the strengths and capacities of immigrants and refugees as potential leaders of social change in our society. Participants demonstrate their growth as leaders by developing and implementing self-directed action plans. In its second year of operation the program is currently working with 14 leaders over 12 months. *Leaders for Change* is offered in collaboration with Concordia University's Institute in Management and Community Development.

Public Awareness

Public Discourse

In 2000, The Maytree Foundation launched a Public Discourse program to bring people together to engage in substantive dialogue and debate on important public issues. By putting forward and exchanging new ideas, by bringing new stakeholders to the table, and by developing new leadership in the process, we hope to enhance the public discourse. In 2000, the Foundation hosted the following discussions:

Economic Migrants or Refugees? Trends in Global Migration

This public forum explored the impact of trends in global migration and their impact on Canada's refugee and immigration policies.

Brain Drain, Brain Gain

This public forum focused on the movement of people across national borders, and the potential benefits and losses associated with it.

Towards a Greater Toronto Charter: Implications for Immigrant Settlement

In keeping with our belief that urban issues require urban solutions, this daylong conference explored the theme of improved settlement for immigrants and refugees through greater local autonomy.

Access to Professions and Trades

The Foundation regularly convenes stakeholders around various aspects of the issue. Of note in 2000 were:

- a workshop examining the potential of the Agreement on Internal Trade for solutions that can be applied to the issue of Access to Professions and Trades; and
- a series of discussions with Ontario's occupational regulatory bodies to discuss common challenges and approaches in the licensure and accreditation of foreign-trained immigrants.

Publications

The Maytree Foundation publishes refugee and immigration policy papers in partnership with the Caledon Institute of Social Policy. The purpose of this continuing series is to highlight public policy issues that negatively affect refugees and immigrants to Canada and to propose practical policy alternatives. In 2000 the following papers were published.

Equal Access to Student Loans for Refugees **by Andrew Brouwer**

Federal law and provincial regulations exclude Convention refugees from public student loan programs until they have been granted permanent resident status. This paper discusses the need to level the playing field by giving Convention refugees equal opportunity to apply for student loans and proposes legislative amendments that would accomplish that goal.

The New Immigration Act: More Questions Than Answers **by Andrew Brouwer**

Bill C-31, the proposed *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (reintroduced as Bill C-11 in February, 2001), fails to live up to democratic principles and human rights norms. This commentary outlines a number of positive measures contained in the bill, but demonstrates that the impact of these positive measures is counteracted by a series of regressive changes. Overall the bill would seriously erode the rights of both permanent residents and refugees, and put enormous power into the hands of civil servants, without necessary safeguards.

Refugees in Limbo and Canada's International Obligations **by Guy Goodwin-Gill and Judith Kumin**

Convention refugees lacking satisfactory identity documents from their countries of origin face significant delays and barriers to landing in Canada, and are denied travel documents by Canadian authorities until they are landed. This paper assesses Canada's practice with respect to undocumented Convention refugees in the light of Canada's obligations to provide identity and travel documents to refugees under Articles 25, 27 and 28 of the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. The authors propose four options that would allow Canada to fulfil these obligations.

In addition, we published proceedings from the forums *Economic Migrants or Refugees? Trends in Global Migration and Brain Drain, Brain Gain*, and produced a *Brief to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration regarding Bill C-31, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

All of these documents are available at www.maytree.com.

Grants

The Maytree Foundation funds projects that match at least one of the following priorities of the Refugee and Immigrant Program:

- supporting employment and the promotion of fair recognition of the skills, education and experience that immigrants and refugees bring to Canada;
- accelerating the landing and settlement process for Convention refugees;
- building the voice and capacity of immigrants and refugees and the agencies that serve them.

DIRECT SERVICE GRANTS

To support development of new or improved delivery of services to immigrants and refugees.

Afghan Women's Counselling and Integration Community Support Organization and Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Toronto.

- \$25,229 of a total grant of \$151,872 to develop linkages between the Afghan community and existing employment and training resources in Toronto.

African Community Services of Peel, Mississauga.

- \$20,000 of a total grant of \$30,000 to assist young Convention refugees in limbo to maintain their attachment to post-secondary education.

Arab Community Centre of Toronto, Toronto.

- \$32,726 of a total grant of \$87,268 to assist Convention refugees in limbo and facilitate their landing process.

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Toronto.

- \$50,000 of a total grant of \$150,000 to develop and implement counseling strategies that facilitate the settlement and landing of Convention refugees in limbo.

Canadian Multilingual Literacy Centre, Toronto.

- \$22,500 to support a strategy to link unemployed immigrants to employment by utilizing existing skills training and employment resources.

Homeworkers Association, UNITE and Development Education Centre, Toronto.

- \$43,200 of a total grant of \$146,000 to implement a training and mentoring project by and for low-waged immigrant women.

JobStart, Toronto.

- \$47,206 of a total grant of \$94,412 to implement a mentoring program for foreign-trained professionals in the information technology industry.

Microskills Community Development Centre, Toronto.

- \$45,000 of a total grant of \$90,000 to launch an information technology training program for immigrant and racial minority women.

Midaynta and Somaliland Women's Organization, Toronto and **Canadian Islamic Trust Foundation**, Mississauga.

- \$62,524 to address barriers to landing and integration faced by undocumented Somali refugees.

New Canadians' Centre of the Windsor-Essex County Family YMCA, Windsor.

- \$44,507 of a total grant of \$59,107 to develop and implement a labour market access strategy for foreign-trained tradespeople.

Ontario Foreign-Trained Teachers Association, Local Agencies Serving Immigrants and Jewish Family Services, Ottawa.

- \$28,023 of a total grant of \$164,780 to prepare and support the placement of foreign-trained teachers into the Ontario school system.

Settlement and Integration Services Organization and Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre, Hamilton.

- \$32,000 of a total grant of \$177,000 to support the development of a mentoring program for immigrants and refugees in Hamilton. The program will be developed in partnership with local employers and professional associations.

St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto.

- \$50,000 of a total grant of \$165,000 for the design and implementation of a mentoring project to match immigrants and refugees with mentors at the hospital.

Vigil Toronto and Anglican Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto.

- \$4,766 of a total grant of \$49,765 to provide services to individuals whose refugee claims have been rejected by the Immigration and Refugee Board, but who may be at risk if returned to their country of origin.

World Skills Centre and Jewish Family Services, Ottawa.

- \$32,933 of total grant of \$178,395 to build strategic links with employers and to implement a program of workshops, co-op placements, and mentoring for foreign-trained information technology professionals.

PUBLIC EDUCATION GRANTS

To promote awareness of issues facing immigrants and refugees .

Citizens for Public Justice and Public Justice Resource Centre, Toronto.

- \$41,600 of a total grant of \$104,100 to carry out an educational program regarding the long delays experienced by many Convention refugees in obtaining permanent resident status.

Inter-Church Committee for Refugees and the Anglican Church of Canada, Toronto.

- \$12,000 to assist in education and outreach about refugee rights with church congregations, inter-faith groups, and the general public.

Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS) and University of Toronto, Toronto.

- \$4,460 towards hosting a workshop entitled "Search for solutions: Improving access to trades and professions for the foreign-trained" and for the development of the "Strangers Become Us" curriculum.

Romero House, Toronto.

- \$2,170 of a total grant of \$18,170 to develop, evaluate, disseminate and take action on strategic interventions to prevent homelessness in the local refugee community.

White Pine Pictures in collaboration with Vision TV, Toronto.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 for the development of teacher guides for "A Scattering of Seeds: The Creation of Canada" – a celebration of the contributions of immigrants.

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS

To strengthen the capacity of agencies serving immigrants and refugees.

Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre, Toronto.

- \$15,040 of a total grant of \$18,800 to explore and develop appropriate employment options for foreign-trained health-care workers.

Afghan Association of Ontario, Toronto.

- \$7,966 of a total grant of \$9,957 to support the agency's board development program.

African Community Services of Peel, Mississauga.

- \$5,600 of a total grant of \$7,000 to enable the agency to develop and maintain a website.

Arab Community Centre of Toronto, Toronto.

- \$7,916 of a total grant of \$9,895 to coordinate services among agencies in Toronto serving Arabic-speaking immigrants and refugees.

Canadian Council for Refugees, Montréal.

- \$20,000 of a total grant of \$152,550 to enable the Council's member delegates – many of whom are refugees themselves – to become effective spokespersons.

Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples, Toronto.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 as a contribution towards the Centre's planning study for a new facility.

Coalition for Access to Professional Engineering and Skills for Change, Toronto.

- \$10,883 of a total grant of \$39,929 to work in collaboration with the Professional Engineers of Ontario and develop an arm's-length appeals process and a new associate status for qualified newcomer engineers.

Institute in Management and Community Development, Concordia University, Montréal.

- \$33,700 to provide training, facilitation and learning supports to *Leaders for Change*, a leadership development program for immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area.

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, South Asian Family Support Services and the Community and Social Planning Council of Toronto, Toronto.

- \$35,100 of a total grant of \$173,330 to build a community coalition of foreign-trained doctors.

FCJ Hamilton House Refugee Project, Toronto.

- \$5,000 of a total grant of \$50,000 to train staff from settlement, housing, and other relevant agencies regarding the inland refugee determination process and to disseminate the program through training.

JobStart, Toronto.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 to assist JobStart in developing a long-term plan and building the base for a newcomer alumni association.

London Cross Cultural Learner Centre, London.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 to implement an organizational audit and change project involving staff, volunteers, board and community members.

Parkdale Community Legal Services, Toronto.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 to assist immigrant low-income workers to learn more about employment standards and their health and safety rights in the workplace.

Rexdale Women's Centre, Toronto.

- \$8,000 of a total grant of \$10,000 to support revision of the agency's personnel policy manual.

Romero House, Toronto.

- \$31,000 of a total grant of \$35,000 for a program to mobilize support and goodwill for refugees in the local community.

Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, Toronto.

- \$7,880 of a total grant of \$9,850 to support the training and development of volunteers.

Woodgreen Community Centre, Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care and Kababayan Community Centre, Toronto.

- \$3,500 of a total grant of \$20,000 to develop an approach for linking the skills of foreign-trained nurses with employment opportunities in long term care.

Working Women Community Centre and COSTI, Toronto.

- \$20,000 of a total grant of \$160,795 to develop and implement a program to improve career opportunities for young Portuguese-Canadian women.

OTHER GRANTS

Caledon Institute of Social Policy, Ottawa.

- \$700,000 to support Caledon's work in social policy research and analysis which seeks to inform and influence public and expert opinion, and to foster public discussion on poverty and social policy.

Roots of Empathy, Toronto.

- \$69,422 to support the development and piloting of a classroom-based program dedicated to building the parenting capacity and developing empathy in children.

CODE

- \$25,000 to increase literacy among children in Ethiopia through the distribution of reading materials and training of teachers.

Amounts listed reflect payments made in the fiscal year ending November 30, 2000. Amounts awarded may differ from actual payments due to the nature of multi-year agreements.

Education Access Program for Convention Refugee Students in Limbo

The Maytree Foundation provided scholarships worth a total of \$102,011 for 16 Convention refugee students who are pursuing post-secondary studies in Toronto and Ottawa in 2000. The students meet within their respective cities on a regular basis. The Foundation offers support and direction to individual students as required. A highlight of this year's program was a gathering in Ottawa where the students made a presentation to Member of Parliament John Godfrey, and explored our nation's capital.

Over the course of the year, seven students have received their landing papers. We are grateful to the Laidlaw Foundation for their financial donation of \$25,000 to this program.

The program grounds our interest in Convention refugees and landing issues. Along with the students and our community partners, we are actively engaged in promoting policy change alternatives that would allow for fair access to student loans by Convention refugees.

The Maytree Foundation

The Maytree Foundation is a private, Canadian charitable foundation established in 1982. The Foundation is committed to reducing poverty and inequality in Canada and to building strong civic communities. The Foundation seeks to accomplish its objectives by identifying, supporting and funding ideas, leaders, and leading organizations that have the capacity to make change and advance the common good.

The Maytree Foundation

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Dan Burns
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