

COSTI IMMIGRANT SERVICES LAUNCHES BOOK PUBLICATION

COSTI – A HISTORY IN PROGRESS

Toronto – April 3, 2007 – COSTI Immigrant Services is pleased to announce the launch of **COSTI – A History in Progress**, a book publication of the organization’s history chronicling more than 50 years of service to the community.

COSTI’s evolution into one of Canada’s largest community-based multicultural organizations can be seen as a mirror image of Canada’s own evolutionary course. As Canada changed over the years, so too did COSTI, with each successive wave of immigration. “COSTI embraces the ideals of this country”, says author Adriana Suppa. “In researching, interviewing and documenting the struggles of newcomers, I have gained a greater respect and appreciation for the organization and its clients. The services COSTI provides are invaluable.”

The book tells the story of the many challenges and successes experienced by newly arrived immigrants to Ontario over the last 55 years. It also describes the tireless and selfless efforts of many volunteers and staff, whose roles were pivotal to the success of the organization. It is broken down by themes such as the founding of COSTI; the establishment of a Women’s Centre; a Refugee Reception Centre; and the organization’s involvement with the United Way, the Toronto Chinese Community Services Association, and the African Canadian Social Development Council. The book also documents the more recent obstacles faced by internationally trained professionals and tradespeople.

Elie Mfuamba, a former resident at the COSTI Reception Centre, fondly recalls his family’s first days at the Centre. “We came without anything, we knew nothing about Canada,” says Elie, now a French Supply Teacher. “We received a lot of help and information about how to live and work in Ontario. COSTI was our ‘first family’ in Canada – they gave us everything.” Assisting newcomers with the process of integration, of understanding, and of communication – these continue to be the fundamental objectives of COSTI Immigrant Services.

“A strong nation is built one person at a time. Citizens become committed to their country when they feel that their country is working for them,” says Mario Calla. Keeping immigrants separate and apart from the mainstream weakens the social and economic development of the whole community. Newly-arrived Canadians require assistance in determining where they can perform best in their adopted society and how to get there. That’s where COSTI comes in.

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Background Information

Adriana Suppa is the Communications Advisor for the Law Foundation of Ontario, a grant-making organization dedicated to promoting access to justice. She is also a freelance writer and has worked and written for several publications. Adriana has been a key volunteer with COSTI for over 10 years in the areas of community development and fundraising. In addition to her work with COSTI, Adriana sits on the Board of the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition.

COSTI Immigrant Services is a community-based multicultural agency providing employment, educational, and social services to new Canadians and individuals in need of assistance. Since 1952, COSTI has been helping those in need, assisting newcomer professionals and tradespersons and all individuals looking for employment, providing hope to refugee families, protecting women and children, strengthening families, combating racism and discrimination, and assisting all those who function at a disadvantage in society. With a staff of over 300 people, speaking more than 63 languages, COSTI strives to ensure that all individuals, regardless of language, cultural, or financial barriers, are given the opportunity to use their existing skills, learn new ones, and participate in all aspects of Canadian life. COSTI presently provides support to over 49,000 individuals annually.