



# The AMSSA Insider

Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC

**October 2004**

## **HOT TOPICS**

### **THE MULTICULTURAL HEALTH FAIR: Access to Culturally Competent Health Care**

On February 17, 2005 AMSSA's Multicultural Health Committee will be hosting the *Multicultural Health Fair* at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. Promoting "Access to Culturally Competent Health Care," this one day event will bring together health organizations, health care providers and multicultural and immigrant settlement service agencies from the Lower Mainland. It will provide these agencies with the chance to network, present their organizations, and introduce their multicultural health programs, and an agency forum will also be held to discuss and bring awareness to access barriers and service gaps in BC's health care system. The Multicultural Health Fair's primary objectives include:

- ☑ enabling Health Organizations and Community Service Agencies to meet one another and establish linkages to inform and promote current and future health care initiatives;
- ☑ giving health organizations an opportunity to demonstrate to immigrant-serving agencies and culturally diverse groups the cross-cultural programs and any special health related programs they offer for immigrants and refugees which promote access to their health services.
- ☑ launching the implementation of a strategy for a future partnership/networking framework between government, health and community organizations that would address gaps and limitations in services
- ☑ establishing a Lower Mainland steering group on health access to carry work forward following the Multicultural Health Fair.

**New Multicultural Health Fair Coordinator**  
**Ms. Betty So** has come aboard as the Multicultural Health Fair Project Coordinator. A native of Vancouver, she completed her BA in Asian Studies at UBC and a Marketing Communications degree at BCIT. Her extensive project experience includes a variety of events, in addition to strategic marketing and

communications plans which have been applied to corporate as well as non-for-profit organizations. Much of Betty's experience in the non-for-profit sector comes from her position as Event Coordinator at the Chinese Cultural Center of Greater Vancouver. Her project management, problem solving and leadership skills along with her marketing and communications knowledge will enable her to undertake this exciting new position.

## **SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS**

### **AMSSA MEMBERSHIP FORUM**

Member Agency representatives met at AMSSA's annual Membership Forum held this past September 10<sup>th</sup> at the Vancouver Museum to provide supportive feedback, and to reflect on change and future challenges. The outcome of the meeting saw a focus on core service provision, advocacy promotion, membership clarity, the development of a funding plan, and the need for agency change in response to funding cuts. It was also recognized that the sector needs to build a case for the value of multicultural and immigrant services, and for AMSSA as an organization and the importance of a collective voice. **Jean McRae** and **Lynn Moran** would like to once again extend their appreciation for all those Member Agency representatives who attended, and for their constructive participation.

### **RIIM**

The *Vancouver Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis* (RIIM) has actively responded to AMSSA's suggestions for improving the accessibility of research outcomes to community agencies. In addition to RIIM's editorial assistance with the upcoming *Cultures West*, RIIM is developing new approaches to disseminate research on immigration, settlement and integration, and multiculturalism. UBC Geography **Professor Dan Hiebert** (RIIM co-chair) has met with AMSSA and several of our Member Agencies and has devoted a student research grant to develop research outcome categories, and research summaries, to specifically meet the needs of not-for-profit staff and volunteers. This project will allow service agencies to identify and cite research outcomes for funding proposals, service development, and external communications. AMSSA thanks **Professor Hiebert** and RIIM for their community collaboration.

## BC SETTLEMENT SERVICE RFP's

In the midst of the RFP process, AMSSA Member Agencies wait in anticipation and prepare for RFP outcomes. AMSSA continues to support its Members during this process, providing updates and dedicating extensive discussion to the subject at IICC Regional Meetings.

## WHAT'S UP AT AMSSA?

### THE 2004 AMSSA AGM

This past September 10th AMSSA held its 27th Annual General Meeting at the Joyce Whalley Learning Centre at the Vancouver Museum. Bringing together AMSSA Member Agency representatives, Board Members, Board nominees, staff, volunteers and many special guests, the event was a stirring reunion that allowed for a smooth order of business as well as an opportunity to gather together and look back at the previous year's collaborative efforts, and to look forward to new challenges ahead. Many special guests attended, including the Khan family. The Opening Prayer was given by **The Traditional Mothers Society**, where First Nations' song and dance got the AGM to a lively start. President **Jean McRae** and Executive Director **Lynn Moran** set the tone with their affirmative remarks, which were followed by the financial report and Board Member Elections. In addition, AGM keynote speaker, **Dr. Najat Al-Refai**, gave an enlightening speech concerning the many roadblocks encountered by foreign professionals immigrating to Canada, and the current steps being taken by networks like BCITP Net and AIMED BC to present their issues to government and extend public awareness. The AGM concluded with the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual AMSSA Riasat Ali Khan Diversity Award, which was awarded to **Mr. Ken McAteer**.



A post-award photo: Award winner Ken McAteer, the Khan family, John Halani, Nick Noorani and Jean McRae.

## 2004 BOARD ELECTIONS

The following nominees were elected at this year's Board Elections at the 2004 AMSSA AGM:

### ***Elected Regional Representatives***

Region 1: Northwest/Northern Central

**Jane Dickson** – nominated by TDMS (3<sup>rd</sup> term)

Region 2: Mid-Central

**Lakvinder Jhaj** – nominated by PDMS (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

**John Dumesnil** – nominated by KIS (1<sup>st</sup> term)

Region 3: Vancouver Island

**Terre Flower** – nominated by CVIMS (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

**Jean McRae** – nominated by ICA (3<sup>rd</sup> term)

Region 4/5: Fraser Valley/Lower Mainland

**Godwin Eni** – nominated by VMS (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

### ***Elected Individual Directors at Large***

**James Gill** (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

**Emese Szucs** (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

**Elyssa Lockhart** (1<sup>st</sup> term)

**Cheryl Sacht-Ward** (1<sup>st</sup> term)

## ACHIEVING EQUAL ACCESS IN HEALTH CARE

AMSSA's Multicultural Health Committee is moving into high gear with the *Achieving Equal Access in Health Care* project. Leading the project is Angela Sasso, Project Coordinator, supported by an advisory committee, the HAPAC, consisting of 14 individuals representing immigrant service organizations, diversity services, health services and the National Health Care Interpreter Services Project (SAPHC). Research will be conducted through focus group meetings held in 8 BC communities that will inform the development of a community delivery model for interpreter services in the British Columbia regions of Vancouver Island, the North, the Okanagan, and the Kootenays.

## BC IMMIGRATION PLAN

The BC Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) is in the process of developing an overall plan for provincial roles in immigration. The MCAWS Deputy Minister, Gerry Armstrong, consulted with AMSSA and several of our Member Agencies for the development of the plan. On September 10, AMSSA staff and members sat down with MCAWS staff, community colleges, researchers, professional bodies, private sector organizations, and municipal officials from around BC to review and provide guidance for the draft plan. AMSSA played a leading role in advising MCAWS that

strategies and services must address immigrants and communities in holistic ways, not allowing economic considerations to overshadow other settlement and multiculturalism.

### **UPCOMING FALL EDITION OF CULTURES WEST**

In collaboration with RIIM, the new edition of Cultures West will be making its debut October 12<sup>th</sup>. Copies can be ordered from the AMSSA office by phone at 604 718-2784 / 1-800-355-5560 or viewed on AMSSA's web-site at [www.amssa.org](http://www.amssa.org)

### **THE ANTI-RACISM DIRECTORY**

Under the guidance of consultant Norma Jean McLaren, work is under way in the development of an Internet-based directory of anti-racism and multiculturalism expertise in communities throughout BC. Working on the project in collaboration are AMSSA Program Director, Tim Welsh, Coordinator Evelyn Silan, Portal 80 Web Developer Tim Lewis, and SFU Geography student-researchers Nicolina Lamhauge and John Paul Catungal.

### **'RACISM SUCKS' YOUTH PROJECT**

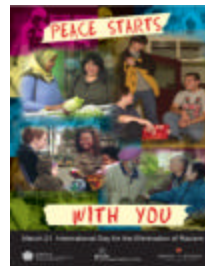
The youth anti-racism campaign will be reaching out to more BC youth, making inroads into the communities of Nelson, Kitimat, Port Hardy, Fort St. John, Nanaimo, Cranbrook, Surrey, Vancouver, Maple Ridge, and Merritt. Visit [www.RacismSucks.ca](http://www.RacismSucks.ca) to view AMSSA's newly developed youth anti-racism resource package.

### **☆☆☆NOT TO BE MISSED!☆☆☆**

### **2005 MULTIFAITH CALENDAR AVAILABLE**

AMSSA's Multifaith Calendar is going so fast that soon we'll be able to see **Bernard Bouska** at his desk from behind the calendar boxes!! Calendars can be purchased by order form or by contacting the AMSSA office by phone at 604 718-2784, fax at 604 298-0747 or e-mail at [amssa@amssa.org](mailto:amssa@amssa.org).

**\*\*CELEBRITY STATUS: AMSSA's "Peace Starts ....With You" Poster on *Da Vinci's Inquest***  
Don't miss this coming season of *Da Vinci's Inquest* Tuesday nights at 9pm on CBC to have a view of AMSSA's "Peace Starts....With You" poster hanging up in the mayor's office!!



### **CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES ANNUAL CONSULATION**

Hosted by AMSSA Member Agency the *Inter Cultural Association* of Greater Victoria, this year's CCR fall consultation of the Canadian Council for Refugees will be bringing together over 300 people in Victoria from across Canada and beyond, from November 18-20<sup>th</sup>, to attend workshops and discuss issues fundamental to immigrants and refugees in Canada. Workshops will address the Darfur crisis, Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison, family reunification, professionalization of settlement work, and the impact of new immigration law on children. Participants include refugees, immigrants, representatives of NGOs, government, UNHCR, academics and international guests. Special registration rates for refugees, youth and low income are available, along with group rates and one day registration. AMSSA is supporting the Inter Cultural Association of Greater Vancouver, and their community partners, to organize the event, and is promoting participation by AMSSA members throughout BC. For an event pamphlet and registration visit the CCR web site at [www.web.net/~ccr/meetings](http://www.web.net/~ccr/meetings)