

Kensington-Bellwoods

Community Legal Services

489 College Street, Suite 205 Toronto, ON M6G 1A5 Phone: 416-924-4244 Fax: 416-924-5904 website: www.kbcls.org



Annual Report 2010 - 2011

Staff

Lawyers

Nina Hall
Emma van Leusden
Toni Schweitzer
Lee Tenenhouse

Community Legal Workers

Barbara Hurd
Mindy Lopes
Isabella Meltz

Support Staff

Laura Mulder
Rosa Tavares

Board of Directors

Hilary Cook
John Greco
Anthony Guindon
Lisa James
Kevin Lee
Dan McIntyre
Gary Newhouse
Judith Parker
Zachary Tucker-Abramson

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services is committed to providing legal assistance to low income persons in the area bounded by Ossington/Strachan Avenue, Yonge Street, Bloor Street and Lake Ontario. This includes providing summary advice, representation and assistance, as well as referral on non-legal matters of concern to clients; community outreach; community organizing; community education; and organizing law reform activities aimed at improving the legal and economic status of low income persons in Ontario.

Our goal is to work towards the elimination of poverty in our society, and to ensure equality before the law. To that end we are committed to working with other individuals and groups who share that goal, and to community organizing to bring about changes in the law that would improve the legal and economic status of low income people in Ontario.

Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services is committed to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, national origin, political or religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family relationship and/or disability.

The Year in Review

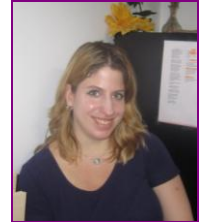
KBCLS announced the opening of a weekly **MANDARIN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION SERVICE** in August. We received funding from Legal Aid Ontario's Interpretation Fund for a one year pilot project. Clients can drop in on Tuesday mornings from 9-12 and speak to Fei, our interpreter. Fei will also be providing assistance in ongoing cases. We have distributed 4,000 KBCLS flyers in Mandarin in our catchment area. We have been advocating for language access funding for a decade and are very happy to take this first step.



Annie Yektaeian has been articling at KBCLS since December 2010. Annie will complete her articles next month. She has been a wonderful asset to the clinic; we will miss her and wish her success in her future endeavours.



A sincere welcome to our newest staff member. In February, Laura Mulder joined our team as part-time support staff, sharing the position with Rosa Tavares. Laura has a wealth of experience and has made clients feel very welcome at the clinic. Laura is in the process of setting up a Facebook page for the clinic.



LEGAL AID ONTARIO

has invested \$1 million in language access services for clinics across the province. Kensington-Bellwoods has a new telephone access service and clients can drop-in and speak to our staff through a three way telephone conversation in their own language. We also have new funding available for translation and face-to-face interpretation.

We have added a new referral advice clinic at St. Christopher's Drop in Centre on Monday afternoons. Barbara Hurd is also staffing our Monday morning St. Stephen's Meeting Place clinic where clients are linked to community and legal services.

Japanese Ministry of Justice

In February a Japanese delegation came to visit our clinic. Takeshi Matsumoto and Yoshitaka Kagami of the Japanese Ministry of Justice were accompanied by Vicky Moretti, LAO VP for the Greater Toronto Area. They had a very fruitful discussion with Board and staff members about legal aid clinics and structures for delivering legal aid. We were honoured to be chosen for this exchange of ideas and presented guests with a word poster of Kensington market by a local artist.



Takeshi Matsumoto, Gary Newhouse, Vicky Moretti, Yoshitaka Kagami

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Successes

* **Evictions averted:**

landlords withdraw applications
and tenancies preserved

* **Landlord's efforts**

to pass utility charges
directly to tenants thwarted

* **Successful**

refugee claim – now
Permanent Resident

* **Ontario Disability Support Plan**

reinstated

* **Criminal Injuries Compensation Board award**

of \$ 10,000.00

* **Successful Humanitarian & Compassionate**

Application: permanent residency
application granted

* **Evictions delayed:**

more time to vacate, compensation to
tenants

* **Mediated agreements:**

low re-payment plan

* **Rent Geared to Income:**

housing subsidies re-instated

* **Maintenance issues:**

brought to Landlord &
Tenant Board and
compensation received

* **Client remains**

Housed: ODSP pays
all arrears

* **Disability Adjudication Unit reversed decisions:**

ODSP granted

*KBCLS
presented a very
successful
“Immigration
and Refugee
Law 101”
information
session to
shelter workers.
This was an
opportunity for
shelter workers
to better
understand the
immigration
system so as to
be able to advise
and refer clients*

Successes

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HOUSING HELP

A housing help worker is at Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services every second Tuesday afternoon to assist individuals in finding safe and stable housing.



Board Membership

We are seeking volunteer members for our Board of Directors and Committees. Board members must live, work, or have a significant interest in our community and agree with our Statement of Principle. Experience in finance, human resources or labour law an asset. **For further information**, contact Isabella Meltz at 416-924-4244 ext. 223; meltzi@lao.on.ca

KENSINGTON-BELLWOODS STAFF



Back row: Emma van Leusden, Nina Hall, Toni Schweitzer, Rosa Tavares, Lee Tenenhouse
Front row: Mindy Lopes, Barbara Hurd, Isabella Meltz
Top right insert: Laura Mulder

2010-2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Anthony Guindon, Dan McIntyre, Hilary Cook, Judith Parker, Gary Newhouse, Lisa James
Not pictured: Zachary Tucker Abramson, Kevin Lee, John Greco