

# 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT



FUNDED BY / FINANCÉ PAR:



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada / Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada





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# Message from the CHAIRPERSON



As we celebrate our 46th year of serving the community, I would like to congratulate and express my sincere gratitude to the Kababayan Multicultural Centre board of directors, staff members, volunteers, funders, community partners, and all other groups and individuals who have made this another successful year.

During the period 2022-23, we delivered 8,675 services to 3,133 individuals, and 96 group sessions and workshops to 1,577 community members. We thank our long-term supporters - Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada; Province of Ontario's Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development; the City of Toronto, and others - for the \$705,250.00 funding that Kababayan received to deliver services to newcomers.

It had been an extremely productive year amidst continuing post-pandemic conditions, one that saw us launching a new program to help racialized, immigrant high school students on their postsecondary academic and career planning, and fulfilling important responsibilities.

Last year, the Board -

- completed a strategic planning that has clarified Kababayan's mission and vision;
- maintained major funding from three levels of Canadian government, and as well explored new funding opportunities;
- reviewed and enhanced the organization's reporting system in order to consistently meet important commitments;
- reviewed and enhanced internal controls, particularly in the area of data security, and
- continued to meet the highest quality auditing standards as verified by independent, external auditors.

We also welcomed three new members to the board whose combined skills and expertise on social work, education, and various programme management elements, has already begun to make an impact on Kababayan's direction and day-to-day operations.

Perhaps the most important recruitment that happened this past year was that of the new executive director. As Flor Dandal, Kababayan's executive director these past 34 years, leaves to enjoy a retirement she so rightfully deserves, Rizza Solis takes over. Rizza brings with her a growth mindset and many years of experience working with newcomers, and we are excited about this new chapter of Kababayan.

One area of growth is the use of new, digital technologies as service delivery platforms. The sector is abuzz with talk on this, and Kababayan, with Rizza at the helm, will look into this.

As always, we ask you to continue to join us on this new chapter of our journey. Together, we can achieve greater heights and reach more community members needing our help.

**Ben S. Corpuz**

# Message from the

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Today, September 9, 2023, the 46th Annual General Meeting of Kababayan Multicultural Centre, is also my last day of work as executive director. My first day at work in 1989 feels like it was just yesterday. I recall the marching order I received from the Kababayan Board: "Flor, you have a blank canvass before you. Feel free to create any program and service you deem will benefit (Filipino) newcomers to Canada."

And so that's what I did over the next 34 years. The years and decades had been one unending roller coaster ride – most of the time I felt joy, and there were moments when I felt scared, sad, and challenged, but through all of it, there were lessons learned and moments to cherish.

The most scared I felt was when I and my family composed of my husband and then two young children got lost inside a beautiful, thick forest park in Killarney, Ontario, for seven hours, during one of the youth summer camps that Kababayan regularly organized early on. A forest ranger was called in by the group, but luckily we chanced upon a hiker – who I really think was a being in that enchanted forest – who magically appeared and guided our way back to camp. Organizations tend to experience 'mission drift', to lose their focus in a harsh funding climate in order to survive. But I learned that Kababayan survived, even thrived, by following a clear guidance – the hiker that would guide us back to camp – to embrace a clear mission and vision, and by nurturing a spirit of collaboration – and not competition – in order to serve the newcomer's interests well.

The most challenging was in 1993, while Kababayan, together with over a hundred Filipino organizations, was fighting to stop racism against Filipino youth at the Scarborough Town Centre (STC). A disagreement among movement members as to the acceptable response by the mall administration resulted in harsh words being exchanged and motives being questioned. Outraged by the incident, the young people involved found power within them and staged a play, Mall fright, to tell their story. It was the youth's way of claiming their right to occupy space – a right that the mall administration had dared deny them – in this new country. What I learned in my 34 years working with newcomers is that there is no superior nor inferior culture, and that despite our unique traits, at the end of the day, we are all the same – all human beings, all immigrants, and we can all find our rightful place under the expansive, beautiful Canadian skies.

The saddest was when I saw clients going through unimaginable suffering. Three weeks into the job in 1989, I met a newcomer who had arrived in Canada a month or two prior. The female caregiver in her 20's had been sexually assaulted by somebody she had trusted, and the battery of medical tests, interviews by various government people, and court appearances to which I accompanied her, were the most gruelling, never mind for me, but for her. Amidst digitalization of many newcomer services, forced by the Covid-19 pandemic and spurred on by advances in artificial intelligence technologies, incidences like this reminds us that despite technology advances, there is still quite no replacement for face-to-face interaction and physical presence.

The most memorable was when I met Princess Diana at the Visible Minority Group office. Collaborating with individuals that hold office – Prime Ministers, Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament – is also unforgettable. I learned that succeeding in Canada is not having to make a choice between your original culture and Canadian culture; rather, it is embracing both. I built a career out of simultaneously championing Filipino heritage and helping newcomers understand, learn, and accept Canadian values and norms. The newcomer must actively participate in the Canadian body politic and not just remain a passive observer.

I am leaving Kababayan with the happiest of hearts. The tiny pink-walled office that I entered 34 years ago has grown tremendously. And while I'm already dreaming of chomping away through my decades-long reading backlog, resuming my aborted musical career as a guitarist, and beginning a new hobby of cooking healthful Mediterranean fare, I still dream for Kababayan to continue achieving its mission and expanding its reach to serve more newcomers in need. Towards this, additional funding, and a space at the proposed Parkdale Hub forecasted to be completed in 2025, as well as a space in Scarborough where many Filipino and Spanish-speaking newcomers live, would be most helpful.

To the past and present staff members, board of directors, funders, community partners, and resource persons, thank you all your support in enriching the services and programs of Kababayan, and making my work as executive director brighter, lighter and happier.

Long live, Kababayan!

**Flordeliz Dandal**

## Where our clients are from



During the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, the Kababayan Multicultural Centre served 3,133 individual clients and delivered 8,675 services to these newcomers looking to call Canada home. In addition, some 1,577 newcomers and community members joined the 96 group information, capacity- and leadership-building, networking, community-building, and recreational sessions that we organized and facilitated on various topics.

Our clients, 53 percent of whom identified as females and 47 percent of whom identified as males, represented at least 37 mother tongues. They came from at least 56 countries, with the Philippines, Mexico, India, Nepal, Venezuela, Colombia, Iran, Tibet, Ukraine, and Ecuador, making up the top 10 countries of origin.

Our work is organized along five themes: (1) Settlement; (2) Employment; (3) Youth and Family Support; (4) Seniors Community Support; and (5) Women Community Support.

# A snapshot of our work in 2022-23



**8,675 services**

– settlement, employment, family and youth support, seniors community support, and women community support services – were delivered to newcomers



**3,133 individual clients**

benefited from one-on-one consultations and case management



**1,577 community members**

participated in the various group workshops



**96 group sessions and workshops**

helped improve capacity, leadership, network, and wellbeing of community members

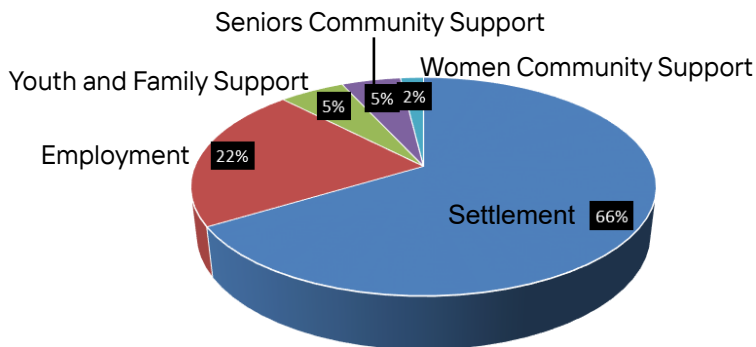
Among our clients,

**53%**  
identified as female

**47%**  
identified as male

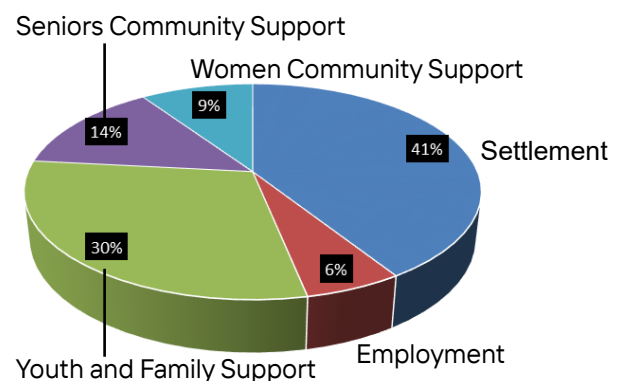
## Services Delivered

Total: 8,675



## Group Sessions Participants

Total: 1,577



# Programs

# SETTLEMENT



CPR Level C and First Aid Training

A total of 2,190 newcomers received support while adapting to a new life in Canada through various services, which include a newcomers' orientation, language and interpretation services, referrals to other programs and services, support in applications to government programs and services, employment support, computer and life skills training and workshops, supportive counselling, and individual advocacy. As well, 646 newcomers learned relevant information about life in Canada through the 44 group information sessions and networking events that we organized and facilitated.

Kababayan's Settlement Program is funded by the Settlement Program of the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), which also supports the Library Settlement Partnership (LSP), and the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) of the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development of the Province of Ontario.

**2,190 newcomers received support while adapting to a new life in Canada through various services, and 646 newcomers learned relevant information about life in Canada through 44 group information sessions and networking events**

Table 1. Types of Settlement Services				
	IRCC	LSP	NSP	TOTAL
Needs assessment	222	176	89	487
Referral	428	279	311	1,018
Information / Orientation	1,087	528	693	2,308
Interpretation	147	71	8	226
Solution-focused counselling	239	0	8	247
Employment-related	273	3	47	323
Government programs application support	331	277	127	735
Follow up	349	6	38	393
Others (e.g. Advocacy, Digital Coaching)	5	0	11	16
			<b>Total</b>	<b>5,753</b>

Table 2. Client Visits				
	IRCC	LSP	NSP	TOTAL
New	215	176	263	654
Returning	883	352	301	1,536
			<b>Total</b>	<b>2,190</b>

Table 3. Group Sessions Summary				
	IRCC	LSP	NSP	TOTAL
Group Sessions	20	9	15	44
Group Sessions Participants	270	132	244	646



# Types of services

**487**

newcomers assessed  
for their needs

**2,308**

oriented with useful  
information on Canadian  
systems and institutions

**226**

supported with  
interpretation of their  
settlement documents

**247**

counselled and assisted  
with solutions to their  
settlement challenges

**323**

offered employment-related  
information and services

**735**

assisted in filling  
out government forms

**393**

newcomers whose cases  
were followed up

**1,018**

referred to further  
programs and services

"I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Kababayan Multicultural Centre, especially to the Settlement Counsellors. Your help and support are greatly appreciated, especially during my work permit application. As a newcomer here in Canada, I felt the helping hand of this community extended to me. It gave me peace of mind from all my anxieties and desperations while settling in this foreign land. I will recommend your community to whoever "kababayans" that may need help in the future. Always grateful for everything that you have done for me."

- Elsie Munoz

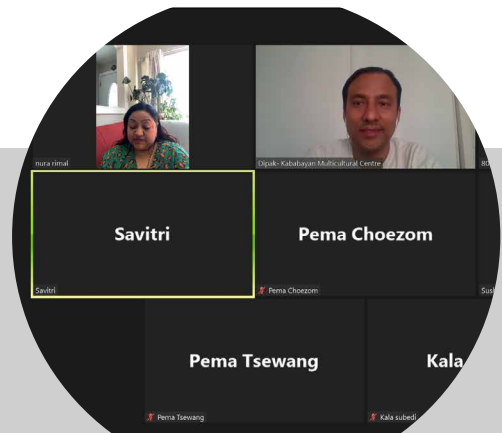
*"It gave me peace of mind from all my anxieties and desperations while settling in this foreign land."*



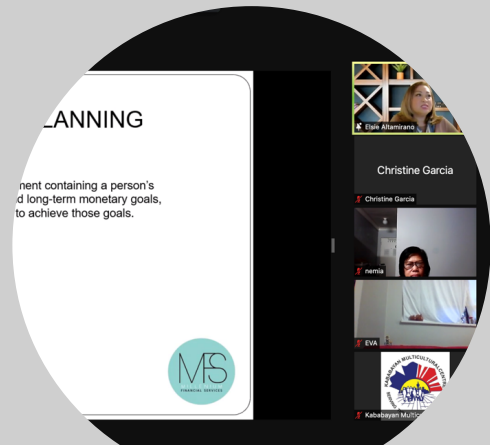
First-Time Home Buyer information session

**Table 4: Group Sessions Detail**

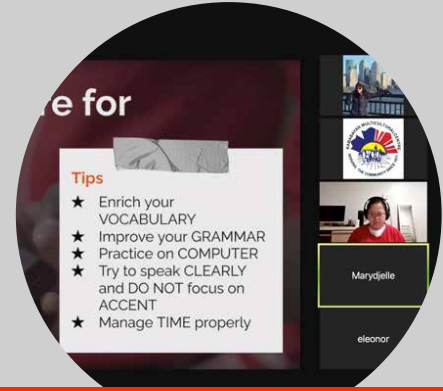
IRCC GROUP SESSIONS		
TITLE	Number of Sessions	Number of Participants
Community Safety and Security	1	15
Personal and Home Safety Rules	1	15
The Joy and Challenges of Family Reunification	1	30
The Benefits of Hybrid and Blended Learning	1	15
Accessing Social Services and Community Resources	1	13
The Importance and Benefits of Volunteering as a Newcomer	1	11
A Guide to Financial Wellness	1	12
CPR and First Aid Training	1	12
Stress: Ways to Manage and Reduce It	1	15
Information and Guide in Applying for Canadian Citizenship	1	12
S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting	1	20
Connecting Newcomers with Toronto Natural Resources	1	8
Important Things to do After you Arrive to Canada	1	10
How to Renew your Permanent Residency Card	1	11
Service Canada: Programs and Services	1	14
Health System in Ontario	1	10
Strategies for Coping with Culture Shock as a Newcomer	1	11
Mental Health session: Crisis as an opportunity for resilience	1	11
Affordable Housing programs	1	11
Information Session: Tax Season	1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>270</b>
LSP GROUP SESSIONS		
Citizenship Application and Test Preparation	1	8
Information Session on Discover Canada	1	9
Responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship	1	8
Canadian Political And Justice System	1	9
Newcomer Information Session on Tax Returns	1	8
New Canada Housing and Denal Benefits	1	11
Spousal Sponsorship Application- Q & A Session	1	6
Connecting Newcomer tax files to Accountants (Community Connection Event)	1	13
Community Well-Being Event (Community Connection Event)	1	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>132</b>
NSP GROUP SESSIONS		
Community and Volunteer's Engagement-Association of Filipino-Canadian Accountants: Tax Clinic	1	14
Personal Safety and Fraud Awareness and Prevention: Information Session	1	35
Accessing Community Resources and Social Services-Newcomer Information Session	1	16
Managing Changes and Transitions- workshop for newcomer families	1	13
Navigating Online Applications and Forms	1	12
Newcomer Orientation: Ontario Education System, OSAP, Bursaries, scholarship, College Registration	1	12
Community Connection and Networking: Newcomers and Long-term immigrants	1	12
Financial Management Information Session	1	10
Strategies for Improving English Language Proficiency	1	13
Improving Active Listening and Communication Skills	1	12
CPR Level C and First Aid Training	1	20
Financial Planning: Workshop for Newcomer Youth	1	30
Youth Information Session: Federal, Provincial, and Municipal programs, services and community resources for the Youth	1	20
Tax Information Information Session	1	8
First Time House Buyer Information Session	1	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>244</b>



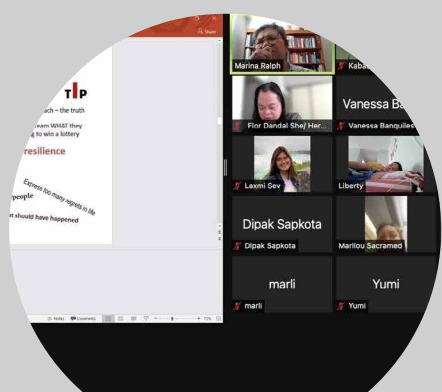
**Citizenship Test Preparation Session**



**Financial Management Information Session**



**Strategies for Improving English Language Proficiency**



**Managing Changes and Transitions-workshop for newcomer families**

# What our clients say

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*“It was a long journey for me but the LSP program made me feel that I was not alone and that there was help available when needed.”*

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“One of the first things you notice about Kababayan Multicultural Centre is that they are always welcoming you with a smile, open doors, and accommodating your needs. The first orientation we received was in gathering and organizing the required forms and documents to process our permanent residence as protected persons –finally my family and I got our PR cards! In addition to this, we were also referred to other community centers that provide Spanish-speaking services which is a huge relief and help because we were still struggling with English language barriers. To name a few of these services were: enrolling to English as a Second Language classes, applying for the Canada Housing Benefit one-time top-up, accessing mental health services, navigating government websites such as the Canada Revenue Agency, among others. My family and I are very happy for all the help KMC have given to all of us. A special thanks to the settlement counsellors and their students, who have always room to give us information to solve all our doubts about settling and involving in the Canadian society.

¡Muchas gracias! ”

- Brenda F.

“I landed into Canada through Live-in Caregiver Program. Becoming a permanent resident and reuniting with my family here in Canada was really a long journey for me as the processing of my permanent residence application took so long. On many occasions, I felt so helpless and frustrated too. However; I accessed Kababayan’s LSP Services and the LSP worker helped me in every step – from the application phase until a few months before my family arrived in Canada. Not only this, but also I have contacted the worker several times after my family members’ arrival in Toronto to get relevant information and referrals for their settlement. Finally, I feel relieved being reunited with my family here in Canada. It was a long journey for me but the LSP program made me feel that I was not alone and that there was help available when needed. I will keep using the services whenever I need it. Thank you, LSP Program.”

- Sarojani from Nepal

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*“One of the first things you notice about Kababayan Multicultural Centre is that they are always welcoming you with a smile, open doors, and accommodating your needs. ”*

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# Programs

## EMPLOYMENT

A total of 244 newcomers acquired increased knowledge of life in Canada through one-on-one consultations and case management. In addition, 92 newcomers acquired skills and connections to prepare them for the Canadian labour market through the 9 group information sessions that we organized and facilitated.

Funded by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Employment Program helps newcomers find suitable employment with the help of an array of partners acting as bridge between newcomers and their dream profession. We work with newcomers' strengths and passions, and we mentor them and help further strengthen their capacities through various skills training, workshops, and seminars on useful employment topics and issues. By educating workers on employment standards and their rights, we empower newcomers and contribute to advocacies calling for an end to systemic discrimination and racism in the workplace, including by supporting and working with professional and industry associations of immigrants.



Networking and mentorship event

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**244 newcomers acquired increased knowledge of life in Canada through one-on-one consultations and case management, and 92 newcomers acquired skills and connections to prepare them for the Canadian labour market through the 9 group information sessions that we organized and facilitated.**

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# Types of services



Networking and mentorship event

**244**

received employment counselling

**236**

benefited from a career assessment

**236**

assisted on their job search

**150**

prepared for job interviews through mock interviews

**239**

helped with a Canadian-style resume and cover letter

**243**

learned useful Canada labour market information

**207**

referred to related programs and services

**212**

received follow-up case management

**92**

learned useful career skills in group workshops

**Table 5: EMPLOYMENT Group Sessions**

TITLE	Number of Sessions	Number of Participants
Online Job Search Techniques	2	15
LinkedIn for Beginners	1	7
Effective Interview Skills	2	13
Resume Writing	2	12
Career Transition	1	9
Networking Event	1	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>92</b>

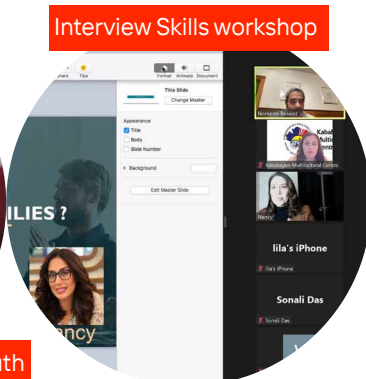
"I would like to send my gratitude and appreciation to Kababayan employment program. I was struggling with securing a job interview at a bank or a financial institute after I finished my education as mortgage broker. I was working at a private lender office during the pandemic but my ultimate goal was to work at one of the prestigious banks in Canada. KMC Employment counsellor helped me from the start to the end of my job search process. They helped me fix my resume, prepare for interviews, and showed me effective ways on my job readiness, and patiently assisted me on how to send application, respond to emails from employer, and so much more. They guided and coached me step by step until I was able to achieve my goal. I am always thankful for their guidance and support."

- Ronak Safavinia

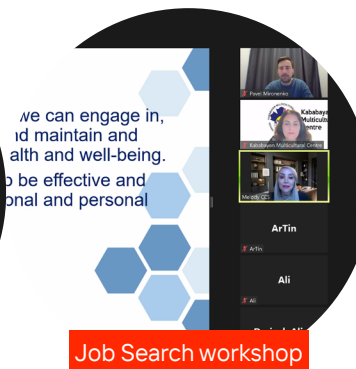
*"They guided and coached me step by step until I was able to achieve my goal."*



Career exploration workshop for youth



Interview Skills workshop



Job Search workshop



Resume Writing workshop

# Programs

## YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT



Vince Tangco, Youth Community Support Worker, during a mental health session at Northview Heights Secondary School.

A total of 110 racialized immigrant youth received supportive counselling, and career planning and post-secondary schooling planning support, through one-on-one consultations. In addition, 471 newcomers received information and guidance related to post-secondary schooling and career planning through the 20 group information sessions that we organized and facilitated. Some of them received support in developing a personalized financial plan, as well as articulated plans to enroll in post-secondary, professional, or trade education.

Funded by the Settlement Program of the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the Community Service Partnerships (CSP) of the City of Toronto, the Youth and Family Support Program supports youth at a delicate phase in their development and life journey by offering particular support that would help them successfully navigate the huge life event of immigration while laying a foundation for a joyful future in Canada. Through the Program, newcomer youth receive academic support, career and financial planning support, and life coaching.

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**“110 racialized immigrant youth received supportive counseling, and career planning and post-secondary schooling planning support, through one-on-one consultations, and 471 newcomers received information and guidance related to post-secondary schooling and career planning through the 20 group information sessions that we organized and facilitated.”**

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<b>Table 6: YOUTH AND FAMILY Group Sessions</b>		
<b>IRCC Group Sessions</b>		
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Journey to Post-secondary (Madonna CSS)	1	6
Setting up for Success (Madonna CSS)	1	8
Setting up for Success (Brebeuf CSS)	1	19
Setting up for Success (St. Joseph's Marrow Park CSS)	1	23
Setting up for Success (Loretto Abbey CSS)	1	12
Funding Your Post-secondary Journey (Northview Heights SS)	1	43
Journey to Post-secondary (Northview Heights SS)	1	54
Career Exploration and Employment Services (Northview Heights SS)	1	54
March Break Social	1	20
Tips for Studying and Test Preparation (Via Zoom)	1	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>CSP Group Sessions</b>		
Hepatitis C Information Session	1	11
Youth Summer Social	1	6
Setting up For Success (Northview Heights SS)	1	37
Setting Up Yourself For Success (Madonna CSS)	1	14
Maintaining Healthy Relationships (Northview SS)	1	54
Services for Immigrant Youth Intro (James Cardinal McGuigan CSS)	1	12
Self-Confidence and Self-Image (Northview Heights SS)	1	24
Youth Services Introduction Session (Newtonbrook SS)	1	9
True or False: Financial Information for Post-Secondary Education (Madonna CSS)	1	14
June End-of-School Year celebration and Youth Supporting Fellow Youth Workshop (Madonna CSS)	1	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>221</b>





Northview Heights Secondary School



James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic High School



Madonna Catholic High School

We were able to make friends from other schools that we have stayed in contact with even today. Due to this, we were able to easily create new memories since we all had similar interests and experiences in terms of being an immigrant teenager in Canada. The games and activities were also memorable because it reminded us of our traditions that we thought we'd never experience again. Moreover, we all had an opportunity to actively participate in different Filipino games. For example, our suggestions and opinions for activities were heard most of the time and were always taken into consideration, making our experiences better and much more enjoyable. Hence, we made deeper connections with the people around us while reconnecting with our traditions as Filipinos.

- Princess Reyes, St. Joseph Morrow Park Student

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*“Our suggestions and opinions for activities were heard most of the time and were always taken into consideration, making our experiences better and much more enjoyable.”*

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# Programs

## SENIORS COMMUNITY SUPPORT



A total of 218 seniors participated in our various information sessions, socials and recreational activities.

Funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) of the Employment and Social Development Canada, and the Community Service Partnerships (CSP) of the City of Toronto, the Seniors Community Support Program helps empower seniors with useful information, skills and experiences that they need at this time in their lives. We design and facilitate activities that help them deal with the practicalities of advancing years – e.g. accessing government pensions/benefits and housing services, volunteering, health and wellness – as well as face unique challenges, for example, on the issue of elderly abuse and family breakups and feelings of loneliness and isolation.



The new set of Kababayan Seniors Network officers

**218 seniors participated in our various information sessions, socials and recreational activities.**

**Table 7: SENIORS COMMUNITY SUPPORT Group Sessions**

TITLE	Number of Sessions	Number of Participants
Social Interaction & Engagement- Tibetan Seniors	1	15
Social Interaction & Physical Fitness (Virtual)	1	—
Information Session on Gardening	1	—
Zumba Dance Session	1	17
Information Session on Pensions, Government Benefits, Fraud, and Scam	1	31
Social Engagement (AGM)	1	35
Group-building Session/Election of Kababayan Seniors for GTA	1	25
Social Interaction & Proclamation of Kababayab Seniors Group (Officers)	1	34
Breaking the Cycle of Self-Isolation and Depression	1	9
Social Engagement (Zumba Session)	1	24
Fall Prevention Workshop	1	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>218</b>

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the services and programs. Seniors are so lucky to have Kababayan Multicultural Centre for the help rendered. It was a great help to every one of us. We have learned so many topics and very important discussions regarding health and others.

- Danielle Robinson

*“Seniors are so lucky to have Kababayan Multicultural Centre.”*



The *Community Stories* series shows the experiences of immigrant seniors as they adapt to life in Canada. Watch the story of Aguido, who had emigrated from the Philippines, on the Kababayan Youtube channel @kababayanmulticulturalcentre.



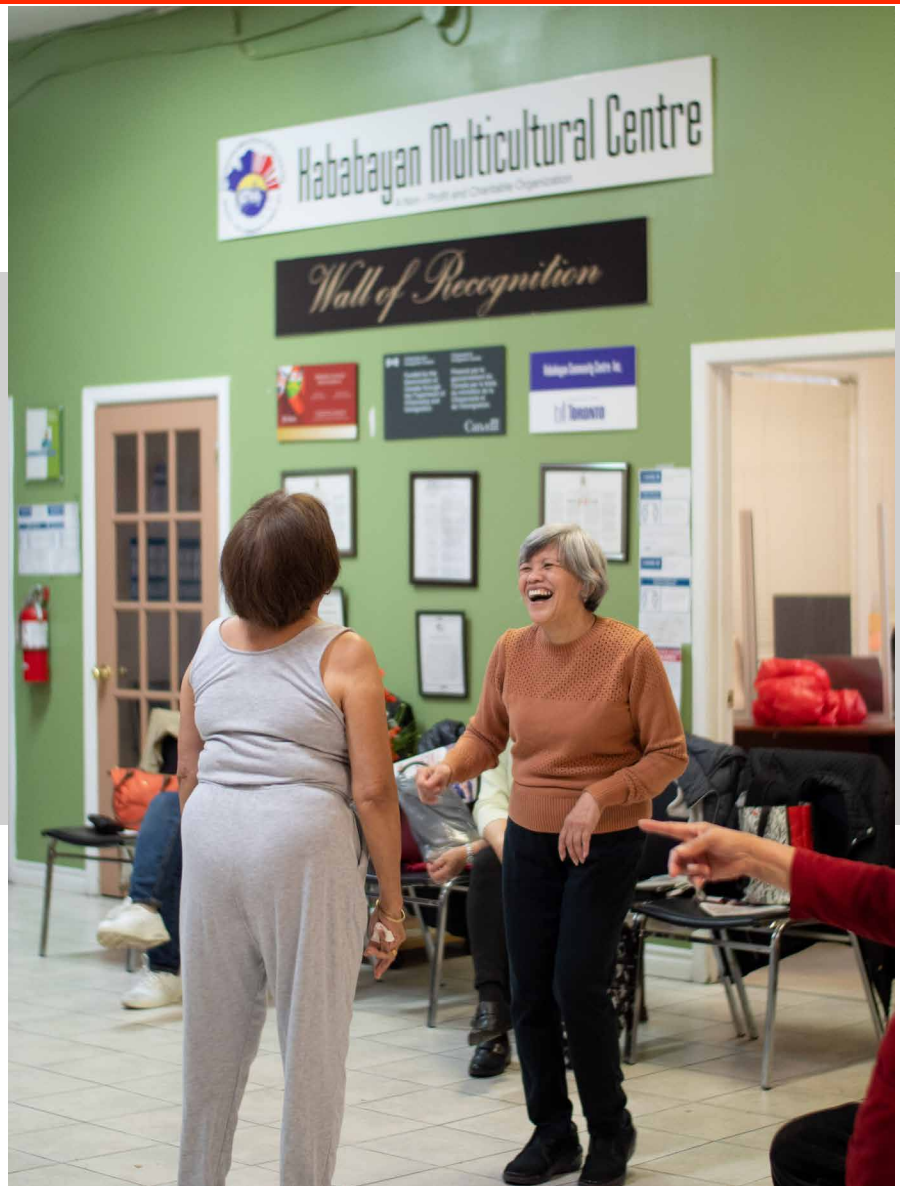
The *Community Stories* series shows the experiences of immigrant seniors as they adapt to life in Canada. Watch the story of Isabel, who had emigrated from Guatemala, on the Kababayan Youtube channel @kababayanmulticulturalcentre.

# Programs

## WOMEN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

A total of 150 women participated in our various information and learning sessions, socials and recreational activities.

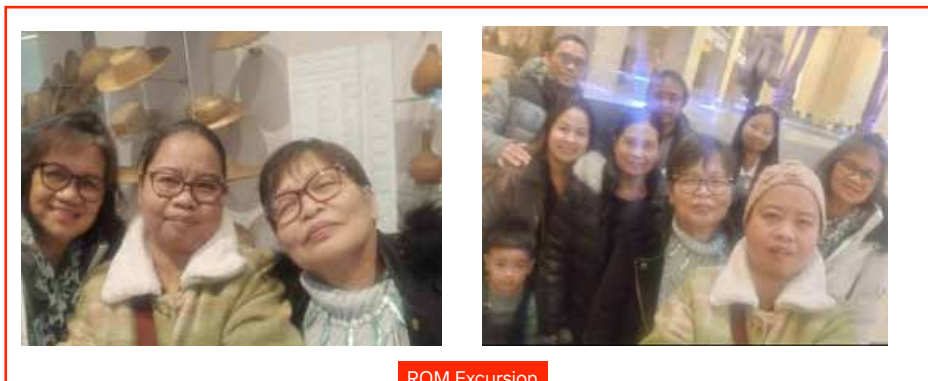
Funded by the Community Service Partnerships (CSP) of the City of Toronto, the Women Community Support Program helps empower seniors with useful information, skills and experiences that they need at this time in their lives. We design and facilitate activities that help them strengthen their professional and leadership skills, stand up for their rights, and respond to intimate partner violence.



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**150 women participated in our various information and learning sessions, socials and recreational activities.**

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ROM Excursion



Group Engagement Activities



Group Engagement Activities

<b>Table 8: WOMEN COMMUNITY SUPPORT Group Sessions</b>		
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Hepatitis C Information Session	1	28
Social Interactions: Healthy Relationship Among Family Members	1	20
Social Connections (Annual General Meeting)	1	13
Financial Planning and Money Management	1	13
Improving English Communications Skills	1	31
Improving English Communications Skills: Reading	1	5
Improving English Communications Skills: Writing formal Letters	1	8
Social Interaction & Self-Care	1	6
Rights & Responsibilities for Group Member	1	7
Mental Health & Women Group Building Session/Election of Kababayan Women's Group	1	9
Parenting Styles & Raising Children in Canada Information Session and Social Engagement	1	18
Royal Ontario Museum Excursion & Information Session	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>150</b>

# End of an era

# THANK YOU FOR THE SERVICE, FLOR!

Kababayan's long-serving executive director is hanging up the proverbial hat, and we look back on her over three decades of community service. The road to social justice for immigrants is a long and winding one and peppered with leaders like Flor whose passion for positive societal change is only matched by her big and generous heart and genuine concern for individual wellbeing.

Take a look at some of the highlights of Flor's 34 years leading Kababayan.



## 1977

Kababayan Community Centre is founded.

## 1989

### Feb 20, 1989

**Flor joins Kababayan as Coordinator**, the Centre's lone staff member. The Centre has an annual operating budget of \$37,000.

### December

'You and Canada', a newcomers orientation program begins, marrying both appreciation of the sending country's history and culture, and understanding of the new country's – Canada – norms, history, and culture. Conducted 66 times over the period 1989-99, thanks to resource persons Jojo Geronimo and Ricky Esguerra.

## 1993

Kababayan mobilizes a network of over a hundred Filipino community organizations to protest against discrimination of Filipino youth by the Scarborough Town Centre mall. Community members and activists – Mogi and Marlene Mogado, Hermie and Mila Garcia, Faye and Nestor Arellano, Carmencita Hernandez, Jojo Geronimo, Ricky Esguerra, Martha Ocampo, Fely Villasin – lead the anti-racism advocacy. A play, *Mall Fright*, written and directed by Ricky Caluen, is produced by Kababayan to further the anti-racism advocacy.

An abandoned, historical, City of Toronto-owned building is – under the stewardship of then Mayor David Miller and Councilor Chris Korwin-Kucynski, and with the participation of community and business leaders representing 34 organizations – transformed into the Parkdale Arts Cultural and Community Centre (PACC), a vibrant space for artists and community organizations, one of whom is Kababayan.

# 1998

The Care Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses is established by Flor, Yee Hong Geriatric Care's Amy Go, Woodgreen Community Centre's Julia Tao, and St. Michael's Hospital's Gaily Yardy, to help internationally-trained nurses get back to their profession.

# 2000

The After-School program begins with a focus on English, Science, and Math. Three years later, the program shifts to group sessions on life skills, leadership, and recreation, and delivered in different secondary schools - St. Patrick, Jean Vanier, Madonna, St. Mary, Sir Fleming Academy, Forest Hill Collegiate, James Cardinal Mcguigan, Northview Heights - and primary school - Maria Gorretti.

# 2001

*Proudly Pinoy*, under whose banner Filipino heritage is celebrated within the Toronto Catholic District School Board, begins, in collaboration with Jody Huang.

# 2002

**Flor assumes the title Executive Director.** The Centre has six staff members and an annual operating budget of approximately \$150,000.

# 2004

The Community Alliance for Social Justice, a network of some 100 Filipino organizations including Kababayan, is established to hold accountable the Toronto Police over the death of Jeffrey Reodica.

Over the decades, Kababayan's programs and services have been enriched by various partnerships and collaborations:

1313 Art Gallery, Association of Filipino-Canadian Accountants, Association of Filipino-Canadian Engineers, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Toronto, Canadian-Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society, Catholic Community Services of York Region, Circle of Care, Downsview Community Legal Services, Downsview Services for Seniors, Family Service of Toronto, JVS Toronto, KCWA Family and Social Services, Local Immigration Partnership-Toronto North and South, North York Community House North York Food Harvest, North York Women Centre, Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre, Parkdale Community Information Centre, Parkdale Intercultural Association, Philconpro, Philippine Labour Attaché Office, Philippine Teachers Association of Canada and Physiotherapists Association, Sick Kids, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Public Library – Parkdale branch, Unison Health and Community Services

“I thank the following who have served as resource persons on various subjects, for sharing their skills and expertise and their generosity of time and spirit: Albert Quirante, Marina Ralph, Deena Santos, Monica Batac, Marydjelle Tolentino, Lani Aguinaldo, Martha Ocampo, Fely Villasin, Ricky Esguerra, Jojo Geronimo, Voltaire Rosacena, Karla Villanueva Danan, Ramon Andal, Gabriela Pinho, and Angelo Matela.”

*Kababayan would not have thrived without the wise counsel and steadfast support of the following, especially during challenging times. To Bert Montemayor, Rosa Tanega, Carmencita Hernandez, Ruben Empalmado, Aguido Dela Cruz, Ricky Esguerra, Jelbert Real, and Ben Corpuz, thank you so very much!*

**Painting on a blank canvas that was Kababayan in 1989, Flor drew the outlines of Kababayan's youth, women, and seniors programs, which would go on to become mainstays of Kababayan's service offerings.**

**The youth summer camps have produced adults with exceptional leadership and interpersonal skills, and the fun outings and trips for seniors have always been most awaited by community members.**



The Kababayan community celebrated Flor's 34 years of community service on July 29, 2023.

*"I thank all the individuals that I have had the privilege and joy of working with at Kababayan these past 34 years – Loida Gatchalian, Ellen Pacelo, Ricky Caluen, Armela Marano, Amelia Basingan, Alberto Rodil, Tsering Norzom, Melanie Canlas, Aurora Rodulfa, Veronica Dichoso, Christina Nikpay, Glyn Narca, Mary Ann Santos, Eugene Suarez, Eve Marquez, Maripi Malana, Rowena Sunga, Christina Santiago, Rene Ventura, Ella Tan, Onnie Ramiro, Gizele Segovia, Paulina Corpuz, Len Salvador, Hosanna Jayme, Shova Adhikari, Dipak Sapkota, Uttam Makajo, Christine Garcia, Joel Cuevas, Cathy Miranda, Venus Benigno, Liberty Catbagan, Jane Mendita, Carolina Davila-Egüez, Parisa Rahnema, July Figueroa, Laxmi Jimiera, Lourdes Teodoro, Vince Tangco, Grace Zalun, Shane Torres, Jay Mangubat, and Madelline Romero."*



We thank Flor's family for being supportive of Flor's community work throughout these past decades.

## 2006

The Library Settlement Partnership, an IRCC settlement program delivered in select Toronto Public Library (TPL) branches, begins, and chooses Kababayan as one of 13 community organizations to participate. Thanks to Miranda Huska, Kababayan has since been delivering settlement services out of the TPL-Parkdale branch.

## 2012

The Bathurst-Finch Hub of community services is built after discussions about it began in 2007, with Kababayan as one of the eight organizations hosted at the contemporary building. Thanks to Unison Community Health Centre's Julie Callaghan's leadership, what would later become Kababayan's second home is realized.

## 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic hits and threatens food security of vulnerable residents of Toronto. With funding from the Community Food Centres of Canada, Food Harvest, and United Way, Kababayan reaches out to its vulnerable community members with food assistance.



Flor with present and former Kababayan board and staff members at her retirement party.

## 2023

Flor retires after 34 years of community service, leaving Kababayan with 15 staff members and an annual operating budget of approximately \$800,000.



# A new chapter begins

# WELCOME TO KABABAYAN, RIZZA



Kababayan welcomes its new executive director, Rizza Solis.

Read on, and get to know this woman who is ready to usher Kababayan to a new chapter.

## How will your first day at Kababayan look like?

On my first official day at Kababayan, I have two important goals:

First, I want to familiarize myself with the organizational culture by actively engaging with the staff. This involves understanding their perspectives, and assessing where Kababayan's strengths lie, along with identifying areas that offer potential for growth.

Second, I intend to connect with my colleagues on a deeper level by sharing my passion in helping the community and my vision for Kababayan: to foster a welcoming community for newcomers and immigrants from all walks of life by providing fair, inclusive, and human-centric services.

The ultimate goal is to empower newcomers to make well-informed decisions throughout their settlement journey.

---

*“What drives me to lead Kababayan is my own experience as a newcomer and the stories of other immigrants.”*

---

## Were you a newcomer once yourself?

I emigrated to Canada alone in 2015, and some of the most difficult challenges I faced as a newcomer was finding a community for support since I didn't have any family or friends here, and searching for a job that matched my career goals. Thankfully, I found a settlement organization that provides support to newcomers, and they played a significant role in helping me start my new life in Canada. Witnessing the incredible impact they were making in the lives of others, I realized that this was exactly what I wanted to do. Helping newcomers and immigrants settle in Canada was not just a professional goal, but a personal mission as well.

My journey in that organization began as a volunteer, and over time, I became a full-fledged member of the team. This journey has led me to where I am now, taking on the role of Kababayan's new executive director. My goal is to keep supporting and empowering newcomers in the same way that made a difference in my life when I needed it the most.

## What are you most excited about joining the Kababayan community?

I am incredibly enthusiastic about leading Kababayan towards greater achievements by implementing innovative and human-centric approaches in providing services to newcomers and immigrants.

Throughout this journey, I am committed to upholding Kababayan's fundamental values: compassion, collaboration, community engagement, equity, and excellence. I firmly believe that this organization possesses significant untapped potential to expand its reach and create a more profound influence within the community they serve.

---

*“Leadership is not about being in charge; leadership is taking care of those in your charge.”*

---

## Which leaders inspire you? What are your thoughts on leadership?

My parents have always been my source of inspiration. They've held leadership positions at Couples for Christ, a Catholic lay movement, for over 30 years, and they proudly call themselves "joyful servants". Their approach to leadership has always been characterized by passion, integrity, and love, in guiding their community members.

In terms of my own perspective on leadership, I truly resonate with a quote by Simon Sinek: "Leadership is not about being in charge. Leadership is taking care of those in your charge." Just like my parents, my aspiration is to bring out the best in the people I work with, and create an uplifting environment for them. As executive director, I consider this to be one of my most important responsibilities.

I firmly believe that each member, volunteer, and staff within the organization possesses innate talents and ideas that can drive Kababayan's growth. My goal is to be the leader who recognizes and cultivates the potential in others. This aligns with my commitment in creating an environment where people are empowered to contribute and thrive.

---

*“My goal is to uphold the core values that Kababayan stands for, build upon its 46-year old legacy, while simultaneously embracing growth for the future.”*

---

## From your vast personal and professional experience, which experiences will you most likely draw from as you lead Kababayan?

At the end of the day, what drives me to lead Kababayan is my own experience as a newcomer, and the stories of other immigrants as well. While having the skills and technical expertise is important to fulfill tasks, the ability to empathize with the clients we serve holds equal significance. If I can't put myself in their shoes, it becomes challenging to support them with the genuine passion and care they deserve.

## What are your interests outside of work?

Outside of work, I have a few things I really enjoy. I love taking long walks in nature – it's a chance for me to feel connected to the outdoors and clear my thoughts. Reading books is a big hobby of mine, too. It keeps me learning and helps me see things from different perspectives. Another thing I find enjoyable is dining out with friends and just enjoying a meal together. It's a simple joy that brings us closer.

But what means the most to me is the time I spend with my family, especially with my 2-year-old daughter. These moments are incredibly special and remind me how important it is to have a good balance between work and personal life.

## What is your message to the Kababayan community?

To the Kababayan community, I'm truly honored to step into this role as the new executive director of this remarkable organization. I recognize the significant impact this position holds in the lives of newcomers and immigrants, and I'm fully committed to this responsibility.

My goal is to uphold the core values that Kababayan stands for, build upon its 46-year old legacy, while simultaneously embracing growth for the future. With the unwavering support of our dedicated Board of Directors, the dedication and expertise of our passionate Kababayan staff, and the contributions of our volunteers and members who pour their heart and soul into their work, I hope that you will continue to support Kababayan's vision of building a strong immigrant community by empowering newcomers as we move forward together.

# Programs and Services

**All services are free and confidential.**

Our counsellors deliver services in English, Farsi, Hindi, Nepali, Spanish, and Tagalog.

Services are delivered both in-person and virtually.



## SETTLEMENT

**Contact: 647-617-1378 / 647-617-0425 / 647-617-1057**

- Information and newcomers' orientation
- Referrals to access other programs and services
- Interpretation
- Support in government programs and services application
- Employment-related
- Settlement counselling
- Family reunification
- English conversation classes
- Computer skills training
- Life skills seminars
- Group information sessions on settlement



## EMPLOYMENT

**Contact: 437-999-6112**

- Employment counselling
- Career exploration, goal setting and planning
- Job search assistance and workshops, e.g. LinkedIn workshops
- Networking with employers
- Resume and cover letter preparation
- Mock interviews
- Labour market information and exploration
- Referrals to more information and programs



## YOUTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT

**Contact: 437-999-6083 / 647-328-9239**

- Academic support
- Financial planning support for post-secondary schooling
- Financial literacy training
- Career planning
- Life coaching
- Supportive counselling
- Information sessions on topics that impact youth and family wellbeing
- Leadership trainings and workshops
- Summer activities and festive seasons celebrations



## SENIORS COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**Contact: 416-839-6851**

- Socialization, recreation, wellness
- Support on topics that impact elderly wellbeing, e.g. mental health, elder abuse
- Information on government benefits e.g. OAS, GIS, seniors housing, CPP applications
- Supportive counselling



## WOMEN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**Contact: 416-839-6851**

- Leadership trainings and workshops
- Supportive counselling
- Support for women in abusive relationships
- Skills development

# Meet the KABABAYAN TEAM

## Board Members



**Ben Corpuz** Chairperson



**Isidro Buquiron** Vice-Chair.



**Ana Labasug** Secretary



**Mayome Abubo** Asst. Sec.



**Amalda Ada** Treasurer



**Florentino Gecolea** Director



**Jecris Tubigon** Director



**Ruth Marie Wilson** Director

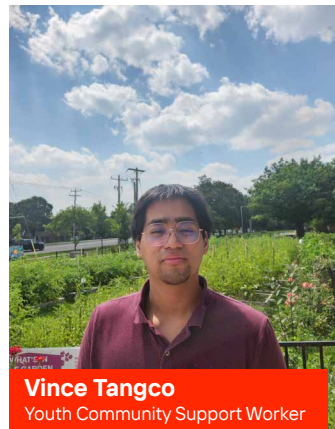
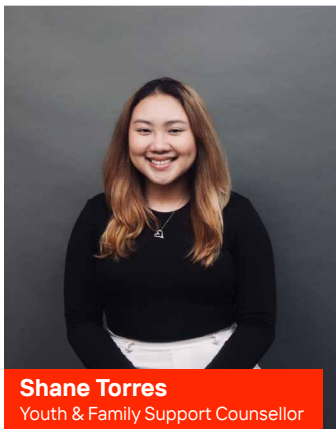
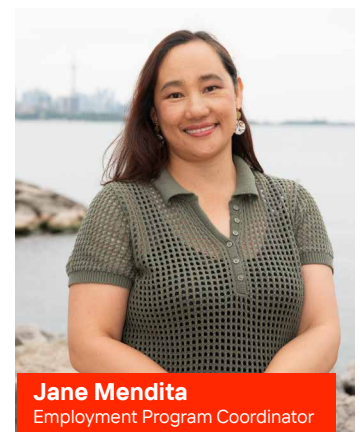


**Veronica Javier** Director



**Lonylee Garcia** Director

# Staff Members



# Friends, allies, supporters

# THANK YOU VERY MUCH!



## Other Staff Members 2022-23

Lourdes Teodoro  
July Vic Menor Figueroa

## Partners, Friends and Supporters

Alzheimer Society of Toronto  
Association of Filipino-Canadian Accountants  
Bathurst-Finch Food Coalition Emergency Task Force  
Brebof Catholic College  
Care Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses  
Circle of Care  
COSTI  
Council of Filipino Canadian Professions of Ontario  
CUIAS Immigrant Services  
Culture Link  
Downsview Community Legal Services  
Durham Centre of Excellence  
Family Service Toronto  
Fil-Can Social Worker Network  
Filipino Canadian Community House  
Filipino Construction Professionals of Ontario  
Greenest City  
James Cardinal Mcguigan Secondary Catholic School  
Jobstart  
JVS Toronto  
Local Immigration Partnership (North and South)  
Lorretto Abbey Secondary Catholic School  
KWCA Family and Social Services  
Lumacare  
Madonna Catholic Secondary School  
Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto  
Mutual Aid Parkdale  
Northview Heights Secondary School  
North York Community House  
North York Harvest  
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants  
Parkdale Activity – Recreation Centre  
Parkdale Community Health Centre  
Parkdale Community Legal Services  
Parkdale Intercultural Association  
Parkdale People's Economy  
Philippine Advancement Through Arts and Culture

Philippine Consulate General  
Philippine Overseas and Labour Office  
Philippine Teachers Association of Canada  
Royal Ontario Museum  
Sick Kids  
St. Mary Catholic Academy  
Toronto Catholic District School Board  
Toronto District School Board  
Toronto Metropolitan University  
Toronto Police Services  
Toronto Public Library-Parkdale Branch  
Toronto Public Health  
Unison Health and Community Services  
Volunteers  
West Neighborhood House  
Woodgreen Community Services

## Social Service Study Program Placement Students

Katherine Montgomery – George Brown College  
Marie Shane Pielago – George Brown College  
Ofelia de Fiesta - Medix College  
Princess Margarette Lozano – Centennial College  
Tomilola Fapohunda – Seneca College  
Vince Tangco – Centennial College  
Von Angelo Atrero – George Brown College

## Funders

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada  
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Province of Ontario  
City of Toronto  
Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange  
Community Food Centres Canada  
Employment and Social Development Canada  
Microsoft  
New Horizon for Seniors Program



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## GET IN TOUCH WITH US

### Downtown Toronto

1313 Queen St. W, Toronto, ON M6K 1L8  
416-532-3888

### Bathurst-Finch Hub

540 Finch Ave. W., North York, ON M2R 1N7  
416-633-5056

### Toronto Public Library-Parkdale Branch Library Settlement Partnerships

1303 Queen St. W, Toronto, ON M6K 1L6  
647-836-9578

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

**Words :** Madelline Romero

**Layout :** Elle Jullia De Guzman



# Kababayan Multicultural Centre

Working towards a just and equitable Canadian society  
with strong immigrant communities

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