



News release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Government of Canada provides funding for COSTI Immigrant Services

TORONTO, ONTARIO—Canada's largest education and social service agency with a specific mandate to provide services to immigrants and refugees has received \$10,000 in federal funding. Davenport-area Member of Parliament Mario Silva made the announcement on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. Funding is being provided under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative, one of the components of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), and was administered by the City of Toronto.

COSTI Immigrant Services is using the funding for the upgrade of computers at the agency, which also allows the organization to increase the accessibility to them as a resource for clients. Many clients use the computers to search for stable, affordable housing.

"COSTI is a leader in community services to newcomers throughout the City of Toronto," said Mr. Silva. "Individuals and their families who are new to the area are at an increased risk of finding themselves without a home. The Government of Canada and our partners are more than happy to help improve COSTI's services to those individuals."

"It's good to see the federal government investing in Toronto's social infrastructure. This is a good example of a federal/municipal partnership delivering for those who need it most," stated Councillor Cesar Palacio, Ward 17 Davenport.

"We welcome the opportunity to upgrade our aging computer equipment," said Mario J. Calla, COSTI's Executive Director. "COSTI's Housing Help program has operated for the past 15 years to serve the homeless, the under-housed or those at risk of becoming homeless. Computers provide a real advantage to people that have multiple barriers in their lives. Our clients use the computers for housing search tasks and other program related activities."

COSTI operates five employment and training centres throughout Metro Toronto and York Region, six E.S.L. training centres, a centre for foreign-trained professionals and trades people, a rehabilitation centre for people with disabilities, a family counselling centre and a 100-bed reception centre for people who have come to Canada as refugees. The agency is a leader in community services, using a client-focused and proactive approach in planning, developing and delivering services. With over 200 staff who together speak more than 60 languages, COSTI provides services to a diverse client base of 42,000 individuals annually.

The Government of Canada's NHI works in partnership with community organizations, the private and voluntary sectors and other levels of government to develop local solutions to challenges faced by homeless people and those at risk. The NHI was launched in December 1999 and has been extended until 2006. The total contribution to alleviate homelessness in Toronto during this period is over \$121 million.

Funding is provided for in the 2005 federal Budget.

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Since 1999, communities across Canada have undertaken more than 4,000 projects funded, wholly or in part, by the NHI.

The funding to date has been directed towards the following projects:

- the creation of more than 10,000 new, permanent beds in shelters and in transitional and supportive

facilities;

- **the funding of 966 projects enabling organizations to purchase, build or renovate emergency, transitional and supportive facilities;**
- **the funding of more than 560 projects enabling organizations to purchase, build or renovate facilities that host support services, such as clothing banks, food banks, drop-in centres and soup kitchens;**
- **the funding of 1,391 projects enabling organizations to provide support services such as training, skills development, counselling and psychosocial support, as well as to provide materials such as clothing and blankets; and**
- **the transfer of 50 federal properties worth over \$9.2 million, which will result in the creation of 268 transitional and affordable housing units.**

For more information on the Government of Canada's NHI, visit our Web site at www.homelessness.gc.ca

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