



**RICHMOND WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017**

RICHMOND WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

Mission Statement

*To provide a supportive environment in which all women are supported
and encouraged to achieve their fullest potential*

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Annual General Meeting Report
Richmond Women's Resource Centre
Richmond Caring Place
#110 – 7000 Minoru Blvd
Richmond, BC V6Y 3Z5
Telephone: 604 279 7060
Email: office.rwrc@shawcable.com
Website: www.richmondwomenscentre.bc.ca



Special thanks to Richmond Firefighters Society, Local 1286, who donated this huge cheque for the second year in a row.

Special thanks to \$500 cheque contributor Gord Pipkey of Real Mortgage Services.

Special thanks to \$500 cheque contributor MacDonald Realty.

These cheques were presented to much applause at the International Women's Day Celebration, "Reach for the Sky" on March 4, 2017.

AGM AGENDA

Annual General Meeting 2016-2017

7:00 - 9:00pm

May 31, 2017

Room #340 – 7000 Minoru Blvd,
Richmond, BC

- ❖ Welcome & Introductions
- ❖ Approval of 2016 AGM Minutes
- ❖ Approval of 2017 Agenda
- ❖ Board of Directors' Report
- ❖ Treasurer's Report
- ❖ Executive Director's Report
- ❖ RWRC Website Highlights
- ❖ Program Highlights: Facilitators' Presentations
- ❖ Event highlights
- ❖ Existing Board to stand down
- ❖ Election of new Board
 - Present slate for new Board
 - Other nominations
- ❖ Recognition of Volunteers
- ❖ Closing Remarks: Request for support / Special Thanks
- ❖ Adjournment

AGM MINUTES

Annual General Meeting 2015-2016

May 30, 2016

Room 340 – 7000 Minoru Blvd,
Richmond, BC

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Welcomed honoured guests, board members, staff and volunteers.
- 55 people attended

2. Call to Order & Approval of Agenda M/S/C

3. Approval of 2015 AGM Minutes M/S/C

4. President's Report

- Welcome to volunteers, staff, special guests (Bill McNulty & Linda McPhail).
- Introduction of RWRC Board members
- President, Mary Scott, summarized RWRC's past year, noting challenges faced by the Centre, challenges to come and the successes that we shared.
 - ✓ RWRC has applied for more grants
 - ✓ 4 successful fundraisers – 2 Sing-alongs: Beatles and British Invasion with the Beatmerchant, Steveston Brunch at the Steveston Seafood House, and the 40th Anniversary/International Women's Day Dim Sum at the Continental Seafood Restaurant.
 - ✓ Created a new, more functional RWRC website
 - ✓ RWRC can now be found on Facebook & Twitter
 - ✓ Advised that the Centre will again be closed during the summer, and will re-open in September.

5. Treasurer's report

- Acting Treasurer, Shireen Gregorius, summarized the Centre's financial situation.
- Fundraisers generated \$22,000+.
- Advised that it was still necessary to close the Centre during the summer.

6. Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director, Florence Yau, summarized the Centre's activities and programs
- Introduced RWRC Program Facilitators
- Program Facilitators provided a brief summary about their programs.

7. Other Business

- Mary Scott provided an overview of future plans for the Centre.
- Volunteers were invited to the Planning/Fundraising meeting on June 18th, 2016.

- Chris McDowell invited everyone to play, at the end of the meeting, the “A Little Extra Comfort Fund” game to support the little extras that program facilitators need.

8. Election of New Board

- Colleen Glynn agreed to chair the meeting to allow all board members to step down from their positions so that a new board can be elected.
 1. Board members who resigned – Mary Scott, Chris McDowell, Bea Subion, Melissa Koay, and Tina Deng.
 2. Election of RWRC Board 2016 – Tammi Belfer, Shireen Gregorius, Marielle Demorest, Iveta Williams, Chris McDowell

9. Recognition of Volunteers

- Volunteers were recognized and given Certificates of Achievements.

10. Closing Remarks/Thanks

11. Adjournment

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

Good Evening,

Thank you all for attending the Annual General Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation evening of the Richmond Women's Resource Centre.

We welcome all our volunteers and special guests, and thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules.

We would like to take a moment and acknowledge and thank our Past President, Mary Scott, who still takes a keen interest in the Centre, although she now lives in Victoria. Mary, you are an excellent mentor and guide. Thank you.

Our present Board of Directors are: Tammi Belfer, Marielle Demorest, Winnie Lee from the Richmond Cares Richmond Gives Youth Now Program, Chris McDowell who represents ROSE, Remember Our Sisters Everywhere, and Shireen Gregorius, the Treasurer. As you can appreciate, our Board is small but powerful. We operate as an Executive Committee and we have managed to accomplish many tasks this past year. The total hours contributed by our Board of Directors are well in excess of 950 hours for the year.

We want to offer our thanks and appreciation to the two ladies who are the faces of our Centre and who are responsible for the day-to-day smooth operation and administration of the Richmond Women's Resource Centre: Florence Yau, Executive Director and May Wang, Administrative Assistant. The Board also acknowledges the excellent facilitators of the many different programmes that the Women's Centre offer.

Last year, when Mary Scott made her address, she advised that we were finally "crawling out of the financial hole". This was due to the diligence and hard work of our Board of Directors and supporters. Working with Centre staff, we organized and ran successful fundraisers, applied for grants and received donations that we knew were necessary if we wanted the Centre to continue to be financially viable. The Centre is now in a better position, but we are not out of the woods yet. We also realize that, if we are to continue with our programmes, we cannot sit on our laurels and wait for "things" to happen. The Board and staff must create the environment whereby we achieve financial stability.

This year, we held our second annual International Women's Day Dim Sum at the Continental Seafood Restaurant. We are happy to report it was a huge success netting \$10,000. Special thanks to MLA Linda Reid, Councillor Carol Day, Senator Mobina Jaffer, and singer Sybil Thrasher, for their contribution to the success. When asked for their assistance or support for our Centre, they never hesitated for one moment. Special thanks to the Richmond Firefighters Local

1286, MacDonald Realty and Gord Pipkey all of whom made generous donations to the Richmond Women's Centre for International Women's Day.

As we continue to get our financial house in order, we must be very diligent in monitoring our expenses. In that vein, we will again close the Centre for the summer.

We recognize in this fast moving "tech savvy" world we live in we must update our day-to-day operations and programmes. This will be our focus moving forward. Thanks to Chris McDowell and Clare Yow, we now have our website updated and we encourage all of you to please visit the RWRC site. Thanks to Winnie Lee, our Facebook Page and Twitter accounts are active and up to date as well. (BC RWRC@BC_RWRC).

Our future looks bright. We will be launching a RWRC Empowerment Speakers Series providing education and information to the public, engaging in appropriate partnerships to deliver new programmes relevant to women's needs and, of course, our annual social fundraising events.

Look for your invitation to join us for this year's Steveston Seafood House Brunch. Stay tuned and follow us on our website, Facebook and Twitter.

In conclusion, we would appreciate anyone who is interested in joining our Board of Directors to please contact Florence Yau. This is a very rewarding and exciting time in the life of the Richmond Women's Resource Centre.

Thank you again for attending our Annual General Meeting tonight.

Shireen Gregorius

On behalf of the Board of Directors
Richmond Women's Resource Centre

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The Richmond Women's Resource Centre continues to serve the community by delivering programs and services that make a difference in women's lives. Our mission is to empower women by providing educational, training and support programs. It is my pleasure to introduce this year's Annual Report.

We are proud to report that from April 2016 to March 2017 we responded to more than 6,000 individuals and provided them with important community programs and services. Many highlights of the past year are illustrated throughout this report.

Continued funding from our core funders: the Province of British Columbia, City of Richmond, Richmond Literacy, Health Sciences Association and financial support from our members, donors and community enable us to offer popular programs and services such as:

English Conversation and English Writing
Computer Training, Information and Referral
French Speaking Women's Support Group
Grandmother's Support Group
Single Mother's Support Group
Hot Ink Creative Writing for Teens

Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinic
Peer Support
Canadian Work Experience Program
Richmond Shares
Remember Our Sisters Everywhere
Movie Night

We would like to thank our members, donors and supporters for their participation in many of our activities and celebrations, including workshops, potlucks, movie screenings, December 6th Candle Light Vigil, Christmas Party and the International Women's Day celebration and fundraiser.

With your support we were able to raise the much needed funds to continue to provide services to women in the community.

RWRC could not do its work without the dedicated staff and volunteers. A big thank you to our Board members, office staff, facilitators and all our volunteers for your commitment to ensure women have access to our programs and services. Our 45 amazing volunteers contributed 1,444.75 hours of valuable volunteer work in the last year! Thank you for contributing your time, talents and passion to help build the work at the Centre. We are grateful for the resources we have and we are confident that together we make a difference in the lives of women!

I look forward to this coming year. Thank you for your support and we invite you to help us continue to change women's lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Florence Yau
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Every year the current Board of Directors “stands down” at the Annual General Meeting, and a new Board is voted into position by the membership of the Richmond Women's Resource Centre.

The RWRC Past President Mary Scott will be present to conduct the proceedings.

STAND DOWN OF 2016-2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marielle Demorest
Chris McDowell
Shireen Grégorius
Tammi Belfer
Winnie Lee (Youth Now)

2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTOR NOMINEES

Marielle Demorest
Shireen Grégorius
Tammi Belfer
Winnie Lee

STORIES FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS

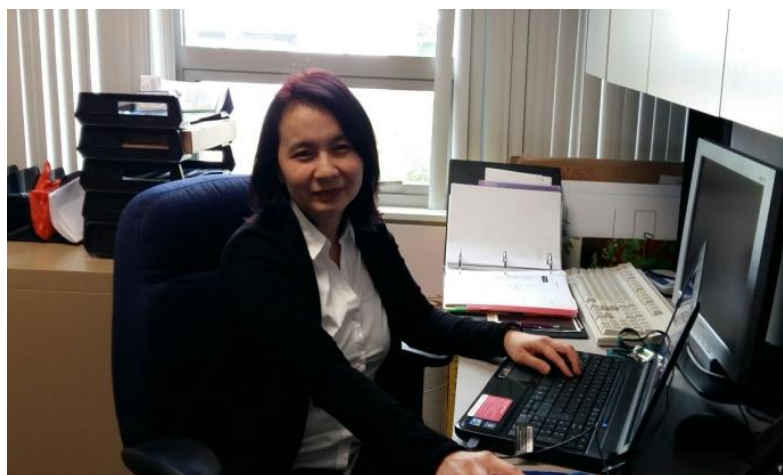
Priscilla Tarigan (Work Ready Program participant in 2016):

As a newcomer, I realized it is my obligation to learn and adapt to Canadian culture. I am very grateful RWRC gave me the opportunity not only to learn many skills from Work Ready Program but also to contribute to community by volunteering at Richmond Shares Program.

It is a privilege to join this program from which I have gained a lot. The course is not only rich in content but also perfectly suited to newcomer's needs. It helped me so I can adjust myself faster and be more beneficial to the society. I learned a lot about Business English writing, communication skills, computer skills and writing a cover letter and resume. The instructor guided me as well on how to respond to interview questions correctly. The mock interview has given me an opportunity to practice my interviewing skills in an environment similar to an actual interview. It helped me to clarify responses to certain questions and the instructor provided me the constructive feedback on areas where I may have weaknesses. I really appreciate the RWRC is able to provide this course with amazing instructors. The instructors were so dedicated and teaching from their heart in preparing the participants to be ready working and adapting in Canadian workplace and culture.

The experience of being a volunteer at Richmond Shares Program has become another unique part of my life. It enabled me to gain Canadian working experience, practice my English, learn more skills and helping a wide range of people in need. It is amazing to learn that the culture of giving and sharing has made people always be grateful for their community life. I am always excited and enjoying my volunteer work. I truly feel I am doing something important to help others.

The women I meet in RWRC are amazing. They are so independent, well-organized and supportive. I could not be more thankful for the opportunity to volunteer at Richmond Shares and be a part of RWRC community.



MJ Marquez (Work Ready Program participant in 2016):

I came to Richmond, BC in November 2015, without any idea of where or how to start my career in a new environment. I tried to explore my surroundings and decided that the Caring Place was a good place to start. As soon as I got in the building, I headed to the bulletin board to see what resources were available for someone in my situation.

The Work Ready Program caught my attention. It was a three-month course that gave you a certificate of completion at the end of it. I walked to Richmond Women's Resource Center office and inquired about the program.

May scheduled me for an interview. Sarah Ross made me feel that I can possibly excel in the field I want to be in.

While I was attending the Work Ready Program, I worked at Tim Horton's at Richmond Center. I was able to practice some of our lessons in communication. In June 2016, I was able to get a job at YVR as a check-in agent. The interview skills we learned from the class definitely helped me in getting the job.

Just last month, I was able to get in a job where I really belong, the job I don't see as a job because I love doing it. I am now the Sales and Marketing Specialist for West Canada of LBC, a prestigious cargo and logistics company in the Philippines and other parts of the world.

I would like to share my success with RWRC and all the people behind this office – May, who always has a smile on her face, Florence who seems to be always on the go because of the tons of activities she needs to attend to, Laurie, our patient Computer teacher and of course, Sarah who kept us motivated for each and every class we have with her.



ANNUAL REPORTS FROM PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Grandmothers' Support Group

Program Attendance: 243

In the past year, the Grandmother's Support Group held nineteen sessions which included:

Six workshops

These workshops focus on health and safety issues. On safety issues, our guest speaker CST Barry Edwards from RCMP provided us with two workshops on "Personal & Home Security" and "Pedestrian Safety"; Daniel Leung from Richmond City Hall gave a presentation about emergency preparation. On health issues, we had workshops about brain health, diabetes and arthritis. Guest speakers are from Alzheimer Society of BC, Canadian Diabetes Association and the Arthritis Society.

Picnic party in Minoru Park

Singing, dancing, sharing delicious food, and taking pictures were the favorite activities of the grandmas during the party.

Learning English

Grandmothers show great interest in learning English because they find that language is the barrier for them to communicate with local people, participate in the activities or programs, and access community resources.

Older Women's Dialogue Project (OWDP)

Grandmothers continuously participated in Older Women's Dialogue Project (OWDP) conducted by Canadian Centre for Elder Law and the West Coast Women's Legal Education and Action Fund. The significant achievement this year of OWDP is that fourteen grandmothers had a one day Victoria Tour on July 28th, 2016. With over 1600 copies of signed petition we had a meeting with Mr. Martyn LaFrance, Chief official of Ministry of Health of BC. On September 30th, the grandmothers attended a National Senior's Day event. They were given opportunities to share the experiences, problems, barriers and thoughts about oral hygiene and dental care for low-income seniors. All the grandmothers are actively involved in the project and quite co-operative during the meeting.

In summary, grandmothers love all the activities and services we provide to them, and actively participate and support all the activities. They also enjoy chatting with other members in the beginning of the group time and building sisterhood relationships.

Patricia Wang



Grandmothers on a Field Trip

Basic English Conversation

Program Attendance: 668

English language proficiency is an important skill at any job interview. Grammar comprehension increases Canadian citizenship success. "Proper" English grammar isn't always a priority for everyday survival English. Grammar is an important part of Monday groups but speaking remains foremost. Actively speaking generates more involvement than understanding confusing grammar.

Combining practical survival English with grammar games ensures learners absorb and remember. I try to keep them attentive during class, while extracting as much speaking and grammar value from each session. Will learners be able to use their new language on a regular basis? This is the goal I keep in mind while balancing instruction time with practice time.

The RWRC staff and volunteers work hard and extensively to provide dynamic support to all women. I can't express how grateful I feel to the RWRC for giving me value. I see acceptance, satisfaction and comfort reflected in the faces of women connecting with the strength of the women who form the backbone of the organization.

The committed learners deserve well earned recognition in their pursuit of excellent English communication. I encourage them all to keep up their first-rate ability to bring empowerment to each other.

Carol Brindle



Basic English Writing

Program Attendance: 211

This class is designed to help ESL students to learn Standard English grammar and usage. They also learn to build different types of sentence structures in order to express their ideas clearly and effectively.

In this class students learn how to:

- Join sentences using conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs.
- Use either and neither correctly.
- Avoid making mistakes with confusing words such as lose/loose, loss/lost, sale/sell/sail, borrow/lend, lay/lie, raise/rise and etc.
- Use present and past participles.
- Use linking verbs, helping verbs and action verbs correctly.
- Avoid using the wrong verb tenses.
- Edit their own sentences and make the necessary corrections.

The students find this class very helpful because the worksheets reinforce their understanding of all the grammar points and sentence structures learned. They feel that they are gaining more confidence in using English. They also believe that, with improved English skills, they have better chances in applying for jobs.

Winnie Kwok



Computer Training

Program Attendance: 169

Computer Training program offers Office 2010 training in Excel and Word and Internet – email, helpful search tips for everyday needs. It also provides training for Work Ready program participants.

Every month files left on the computers are removed. All software is updated so we stay current as well. By keeping the computers clear of files we can insure our computers remain relatively fast and not get bogged down. That way too, students always have their files on their flash drives. We installed a newer version of Professor Teaches. We now use Professor Teaches Office 2010. Some computers have headphones plugged in so students can listen to files on the internet such as Youtube. Mavis Beacon is also used in the lab for practicing typing skills.

We get a lot of compliments on our tutorials that we use from our Work Ready students. The tutorials, with skill consolidation exercises, are designed to teach Word (including mail merge), Excel (including formulas, graphing, charting and Lookup Tables), and time permitting, PowerPoint. The tutorials also include a lesson on the Office drawing tools.

Laurie McEwan



Richmond Shares

Program Participants: 550

MISSION: Richmond Shares is dedicated to serving low income families in Richmond.

This past year, Richmond Shares helped a wide range of people in need: new immigrants, single mothers, seniors and low income families. We found some nice clothes suitable for job interviews for a lady who started her new life by finding a job after years of sickness leave. We also found four sets of mahjong games and tables for the senior club members at Hamilton Community Centre.

Last October, we were granted \$1,000 in funding by the Health Sciences Association of BC. With this fund, we printed and sent out more quality posters and request letters to more community organizations to promote our program.

Our biggest investment with this fund will go to the website. Clare Yow has started the project of redesigning the Richmond Shares website. She estimated the project will be completed by July 2017. We look forward to having a fresh and more vibrant website, with more convenient and efficient searching and uploading capacity.

Here I would also like to take the chance to thank our dedicated volunteer Priscilla who has been with Richmond Shares since last November.

Please share these stories with your friends and neighbors.

Story 1: Color of love

One day in October 2016, I picked up this phone call from a lady. "Hi this is McKay, I need blanket, and I need 12 blankets." I asked her what kind of blankets she needed, and why she needed 12. She repeated again and again: "I need blankets, I need 12 blankets...." I listened carefully, and then I realized that she did not mean she needed, but she "knitted" 12 blankets and she wanted someone to have them! She explained to me that she had been knitting blankets and donated to different places for many years. I went to her place to collect 12 colorful blankets. I found the perfect place to donate them: A Senior's Home. They are perfect for the elderly to cover their knees with while sitting or watching TV.

I told Mrs. McKay that her hand knitted blankets all went to the senior home and were being treasured. She was very delighted and promised she would keep on knitting!

Story 2: Sound of love

In June 2016, I had a request from Benoit of an organ donated by Mary, which had been posted in our web site for quite a long time. He wanted to have this organ for his mother, Sara, because he knew that she had planned to learn playing piano all her life but never had a chance.

Sara's husband had a stroke two years ago that changed their newly retired life. In order to help him recover, she went back and forth between her home in Richmond and the rehabilitation clinic in Vancouver everyday for more than a year. She was always by her husband's bedside because he had problem with movement and language caused by the stroke. Sara was told that the road for her husband to recovery could be slow and frustrating. She was worried, exhausted and stressed.

Last June, the stroke survivor was transferred to a nursing home in Richmond, and he got back most of the skills and abilities he lost. Sara was so happy and relieved to have some time of her own.

Benoit's request of the organ unfolded a story of love circle. In order to make her mom's dream come true, he also contacted a girl Sara baby-sitted until the girl was 12 years old. This girl is now a piano teacher and volunteered to teach Sara.

I still remember the day when we transported the organ from the donor's place to Sara's. It was not an easy job! Wallace and Benoit were the two small men with big hearts, struggling from one corner of the room to another, with sweat and excitement. Finally the organ has a new home! I saw tears in Sara's eyes. It was tears of gratitude and joy!

Finally mission accomplished.

Portia Kwok



Canadian Work Experience Program for Immigrant Women

Program Attendance: 249

The Work Ready Program has now been in existence since September 2008. As of March 2017, we have completed 26 sessions. Over the past nine years, the level of education and experience of our participants has continuously risen, and consequently more women are finding suitable employment after completing the Program and sometimes even before completion.

As we only have five volunteer slots available for participants at the Centre, we have an ongoing arrangement with Richmond Multicultural Community Services which provides us with extra volunteer opportunities when needed. We also continue to be associated with Dress for Success from which business clothes are provided free of charge to women seeking employment in an office setting.

I have facilitated this Program since the very beginning, and will soon be entering into my tenth year in this position. It has given me a great deal of personal satisfaction.

Sarah Ross



French Speaking Women's Support Group

Program Attendance: 249

The French Speaking Women's Support Group meets every Wednesday morning from 10am to 12pm at the Food Court at The Richmond Centre Mall. We exchange information on the events of the French Community, the Women's Centre programs and the events of the Richmond Community at large.

This year we hosted a workshop on homeopathy by Isabelle Caillet Homeopathe.

We also held a workshop by Jacquelyn Johnston on herbal medicine. Jacquelyn is a health coach.

Women who participate at our meetings come from all over the world, from Quebec, all over Canada, Hong Kong, Morocco, France, Africa, the Middle East. Some of these women have all kinds of questions on living in Canada.

All women are welcomed to join this group.

Respectfully submitted,

Marielle Demorest



Movie Night

Program Attendance: 83

Since 2011, Richmond Women's Resource Centre has screened over 50 free films for the community as part of our monthly Movie Night. The program grew out of a humble vision to bring self-identified women together to bond and discuss diverse topics facing women globally.

In the last year, we screened ten documentary and narrative films that touched on issues such as the social impact of our actions ("*Atomic Mom*," "*The True Cost*"), how women's bodies are culturally regulated ("*Mustang*," "*Mother of George*"), as well as featured profiles of feminist icons like Malala Yousafzai, Grace Lee Boggs, and Hina Wong- Kalu.

The format of each film night comprises of the screening followed by an open discussion about the film and related issues. With the wealth of knowledge and lived experiences in the room, each evening is a unique opportunity to share and learn from one another, acts that have always been profoundly integral to the Movie Night series.

My sincere gratitude to all the women who help realize each event through their presence and thoughtful engagement in the discussions, and kindly assisting me with setup or cleanup.

The films are an escape from our daily lives, but also a reality check that women continue to face unspeakable conditions worldwide. Our program is committed to highlighting their stories, learning from them, and taking action in whatever ways we can.

In Solidarity,

Clare Yow



Remember Our Sisters Everywhere

ROSE publishes violence prevention strategies online, with news of women working to end violence against women through protests, women's organizations, legal changes, education, self-defense, memorials, and countless other projects as people everywhere in the world call attention to the violence, including discrimination, harassment, rape, battering and murder.

I act as moderator, and an Advisory Committee of feminist women here and across Canada help to answer the challenging issues and questions that arise, and to investigate requests from various individuals and agencies who want their projects added to the ROSE Resources section of the website.

As the main researcher for ROSE, I've been reading about the genocide against the Yazidi people and the torture of Yazidi women and girls since 2014. This has been a difficult task which has made me feel I have to stop moderating the website because I'm not strong enough to face what is happening.

In July 2016, the international activist group One Billion Rising (founded by Eve Ensler, the writer of *The Vagina Monologues*) put out a call to RISE with Yazidi women and girls. What a relief for me. I was meeting with Senator Mobina Jaffer about a completely different matter when I showed her their poster "We Rise with Yazidi Women".

In response, we held a speak-out at the Women's Monument in Vancouver on August 3rd, 2016. August 3rd is the day when, two years prior, the genocide, torture and enslavement began. I learned about Yazidi survivor Nadia Murad and her call to the Canadian parliament asking them to bring Yazidi women and girls here as refugees. ROSE wrote a letter asking the government to find way to help them. The government was not focused on helping the Yazidi at that time, ironically because their persecution was based on religion. There was a policy or a legal technicality that was subsequently changed at the federal level in October 2016, when they voted unanimously to bring Yazidi refugees to Canada.

In the fall, ROSE launched a letter writing campaign for the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The days of activism are from November 25th, the anniversary of the day the Mirabel sisters were assassinated in the Dominican Republic, and continue to December 10th.

Letters asking the government to provide Yazidi women and girls with focused support were published on the ROSE website. Yazidi survivor and activist Nadia Murad has asked other countries to create trauma centres for women and children like those in Germany, and heartfelt requests for Canada to follow the German model are in these letters.

On February 24, 2017, ROSE held an open Yazidi Discussion Circle. About 40 people showed up to address this horrific, emotionally difficult reality. Senator Jaffer attended and spoke, and MP Jenny Kwan provided information by video. On March 8th, International Women's Day, we announced our follow up recommendations to government at *Marker of Change*, the Women's Monument in Vancouver.

Please see our press release, next page.

Christine McDowell, rememberoursisterseverywhere.com



Remember Our Sisters Everywhere
www.rememberoursisterseverywhere.com

For immediate release – March 8, 2017

PRESS CONFERENCE: March 8, 2017 10am at Thornton Park, Main and Terminal, Vancouver
A celebration of the arrival of Yazidi women and children to Canada

Vancouver - On International Women's Day, feminist activists, educators, advocates against gender violence and concerned citizens celebrate the recent safe arrival of Yazidi refugees to Canada.

In August 2014, the Yazidi community in Iraq suffered a horrific attack by Daesh/ISIS/ISIL. Many of the men and boys were slaughtered outright along with “older” women. Young women and children were enslaved and tortured. In 2016, the UN reported that atrocities, including daily rapes, against thousands of Yazidi women and girls continue. ^[i] Recent reports estimate more than 3,000 Yazidi women and girls remain captive. ^[iii]

Yazidi survivor Nadia Murad brought the plight of Yazidi women and girls to the attention of the Canadian government. On October 25, 2016 parliament unanimously declared “ISIS persecution of Yazidis a genocide” and pledged “to bring refugees fleeing the violence to Canada within four months.” ^[iii] Last month the federal government announced it had successfully brought 400 refugees to Canada, primarily Yazidis, and plans to welcome a total of 1,200 by end of 2017.

In Vancouver, a community discussion circle was held to explore ways to ensure sufficient support is provided to the refugees. The primary messages coming out of our gathering are:

- “We celebrate the arrival of Yazidi refugees to Canada and urge all levels of government to provide the financial and medical support, and psychological treatment for trauma recovery, so the refugees may settle and recover from their ordeals.”
- “We urge the federal government to provide additional funding over and above the \$28 million they have pledged for the Yazidis. In Germany, more than four times that amount has been set aside to assist a similar number of Yazidi refugees settling there.”
- “Many Canadian refugee services and systems are already working beyond their capacities. Additional support is needed, including the provision of enough translators.”
- “We recommend that the Canadian government publicly advocate for the freeing of Yazidi women and girls still held captive and tortured by Daesh/ISIS as an immediate priority to send a message of hope and the possibility of justice to victims, refugees, and those vulnerable to conflict-related sexual violence.”

We look forward to government announcements about how they will provide the necessary additional resources so these courageous newcomers have the best chance of a new life.

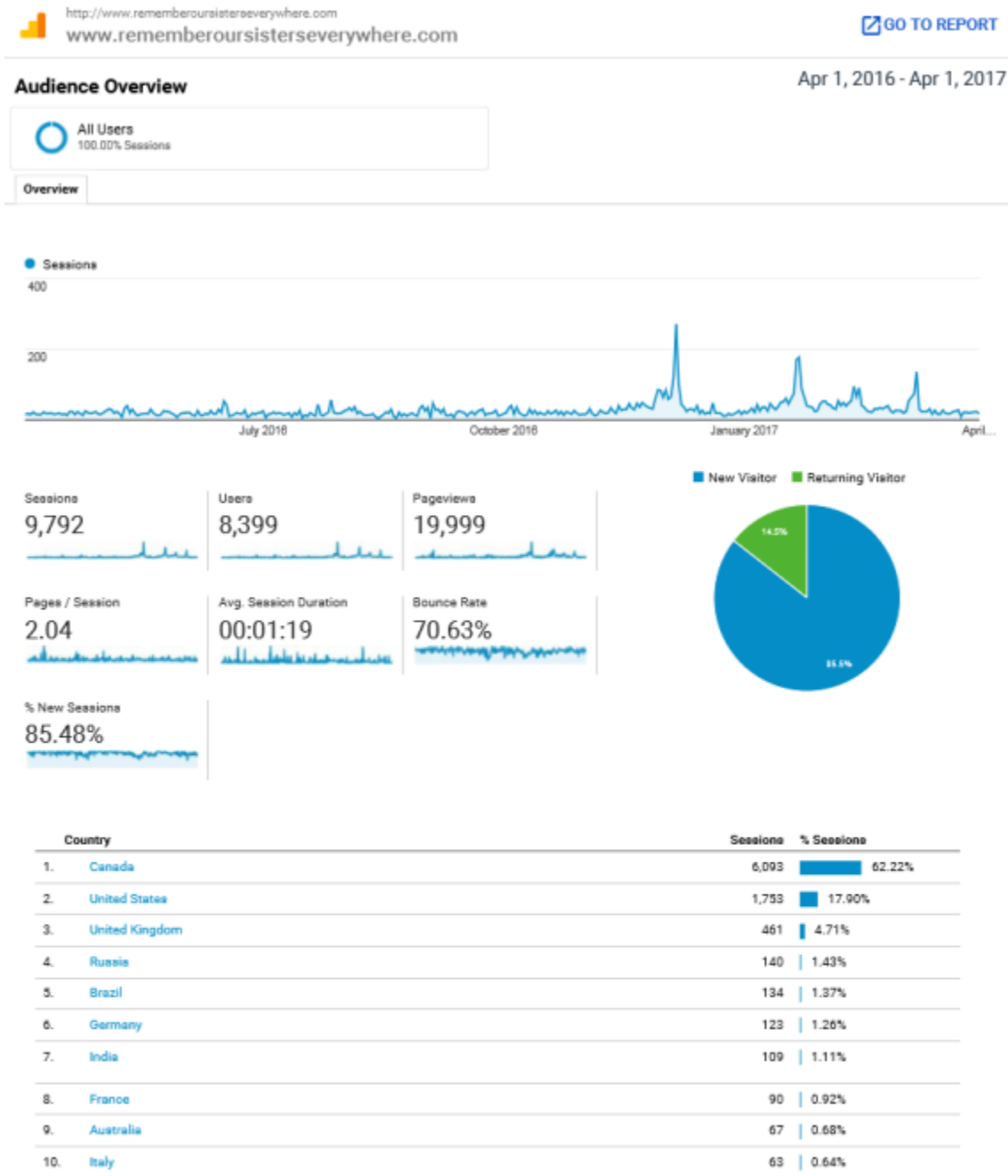
Remember Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE) is an online activist community that promotes the prevention of violence, and encourages local and international communities to remember and value the women and girls we have lost to violence. Press contact: rememberoursisterseverywhere@gmail.com

[i] UN News Centre: http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54247#.WCoJ3_krKF4

[ii] New York Post: <http://nypost.com/2017/02/22/new-hope-for-yazidi-women-once-held-as-sex-slaves-by-isis/>

[iii] CBC News: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/conservatives-yazidis-liberal-mccallum-1.3820299>

Remember Our Sisters Everywhere: Google Analytics



RWRC Women's Self-Defense Workshops

Attendance:

June 2016: four sessions, total 35 participants

Nov. 6, 2016: one session, 6 participants

Jan. 28, 2017: one session, 6 participants

The Richmond Women's Resource Centre is deeply grateful to Instructor Jennifer Kirkey for bringing Wendlido to women and girls in Richmond. Jennifer donates her time, passion and expertise by offering women's self-defense classes for free. This was her third year in Richmond.



Well done Jennifer!

ROSE participates in the workshops by creating posters and covering expenses. Women's Centre staff spread the word by sending out email notifications, poster the Caring Place, and posting information online.

If you can help us spread the word about this invaluable resource, please let us know.

Wendlido Women's Self-Defense

Wendlido instructor Jennifer Kirkey invites you to join us for a positive and empowering experience where you will learn how to protect yourself and how to defend yourself. In a safe, supportive atmosphere we will explore the four A's of self-defense: **awareness, avoidance, assertiveness and action.**

By becoming **Aware** of what is most likely to happen to you if you are attacked, you will be better at **Avoiding** the situation in the first place. If you cannot avoid the situation, then we will practice our **Assertiveness** skills to help you talk your way out of attack. Simple, effective **Action** techniques will be taught.

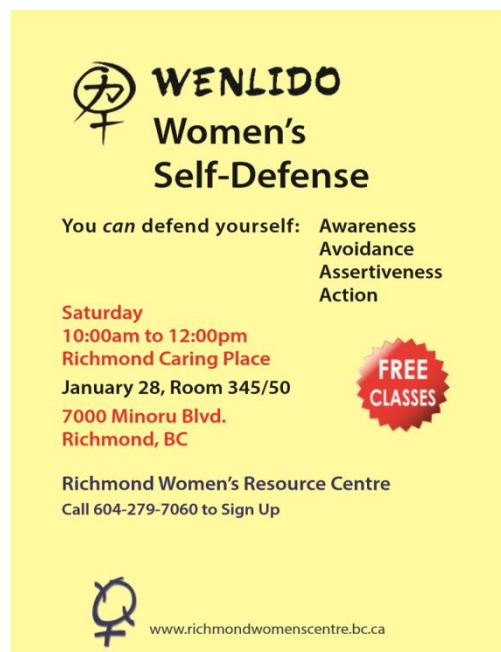
The workshop is a combination of interactive discussions on self-defense topics and hands on practical skills.

This is a **free** workshop for **women and girls**. Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

Background

Jennifer has been a member of WEST which is the Women Educating in Self-defense Training Society for more than 30 years. You can find out more about that organization by visiting their website:

<http://wendlido-west.webs.com/>




WENLIDO
Women's
Self-Defense

You can defend yourself: Awareness
Avoidance
Assertiveness
Action

Saturday
10:00am to 12:00pm
Richmond Caring Place
January 28, Room 345/50
7000 Minoru Blvd.
Richmond, BC

FREE CLASSES

Richmond Women's Resource Centre
Call 604-279-7060 to Sign Up

 www.richmondwomenscentre.bc.ca

RWRC Website Report

After undertaking a complete redesign of the RWRC website between 2014 and 2015, I was hired in October 2016 as a freelancer to manage the website on an ongoing basis.

Reporting to the Board and administrative staff, my duties include:

- Updating and archiving content as needed
- Highlighting timely events or projects on the homepage carousel
- Conducting technical maintenance including website backup and liaising with tech support

Whether promoting our annual International Women's Day fundraiser, the Income Tax Clinics, or the Community Assessment Surveys, it has been key that our website contains up-to-date and relevant information.

In January 2017, we eagerly added an events calendar to the website so that visitors can easily discover current and future programming activities each month.

Currently, I am working with our web host to upgrade website disk space, as well as refresh the Richmond Shares website. As RWRC has grown, so has our online presence. The disk space upgrade is a fundamental step so that both the RWRC and Richmond Shares websites can continue to inform, engage, and support our community without limitations.

In Solidarity,

Clare Yow

Google Analytics Snapshot for – April 30, 2016 – May 1, 2017

4,474 unique visitors visited our website over **5,987 different sessions** accounting for **20,074 page views**.

Of those unique visitors, **74.1% (4,436)** were new and **25.9% (1,551)** were returning visitors.

How did people find the RWRC website?

14.6% (874) directly – the website is bookmarked or typed into the URL bar

39.3% (2,344) organically – via search engines like Google, Yahoo, or Bing

46.1% (2,758) were referrals – people clicked on social media links or other organization's websites that link to RWRC

Examples of referring websites (number of referrals):

richmondcaringplace.ca (110); facebook.com (113); yourlibrary.ca (34); povnet.org (14); richmondchamber.ca (11); ubcwomenscentre.com (11); bcli.org (9); swanvancouver.ca (8)



Key Stats:

During the fiscal year from April 2016 – March 2017, Richmond Women's Resource Centre has proudly provided face-to-face services to 1,114 visitors who drop in the office for information regarding employment, education, health, immigration, family issues, parenting, and support. We served 3,834 participants through our education, training and support programs and workshops. Our program participants included women and girls of all age groups and diverse backgrounds, from high school teens, to adults and grandmothers, and from local residents to new immigrants. We provided information and referral services through 667 phone calls and responded to 890 email inquiries.

Our accomplishments were made possible because we had the privilege of working with 45 amazing volunteers, who contributed 1,444.75 hours of their valuable time to helping out with fundraising events, program facilitation, office maintenance and front desk support. They have added a vibrant and diverse atmosphere to the Richmond Women's Resource Centre. Our hard-working Directors of the Board have contributed 520.5 hours of volunteer work, such as organizing and coordinating fundraising events.

We would like to thank each and every one of them personally for their enthusiasm and support of the women in our community.

EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



DIM SUM

Saturday March 4, 2017

11:00am to 1:00pm

(Doors open at 10:30am)

Continental Seafood Restaurant

#150-11700 Cambie Road

Richmond, BC

\$40 per ticket, \$400 for table of ten

REACH FOR THE SKY Celebrate the Richmond Women's Resource Centre

Tickets can be purchased in person:

Richmond Women's Resource Centre
#110 - 7000 Minoru Blvd.
Richmond, BC
Mon. to Thurs.: 10:30am to 3:30pm
Phone: (604) 279-7060
Email: office.rwrc@shawcable.com

Or, Brown Paper Tickets online:

REACH FOR THE SKY:
A Celebration of the Richmond
Women's Resource Centre

<http://richmondiwd2017.brown-papertickets.com>



www.richmondwomenscentre.bc.ca



Women's Centre International Women's Day event a Community Success

The Richmond Women's Resource Centre celebrated its 41st anniversary and International Women's Day with over 180 guests enjoying a delicious Dim Sum at the Continental Seafood Restaurant.

Attending dignitaries took to the podium to share encouraging words about the importance of women's equality, including Senator Mobina Jaffer, Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie, MLA Linda Reid, MLA Teresa Wat, MP Alice Wong, Councillor Chak Au, and our MC Carol Day!





The 50/50 raffle ticket winner generously donated the prize money to Richmond Women's Resource Centre. Thank you!



Door prize winner excitedly hugs her door prize: a basket of Godiva chocolates.



Richmond Women's Resource Centre: Annual Report 2016-2017



RWRC Board members Tammi Belfer and Shireen Grégorius with Winnie Lee at the Youth Now Graduation Ceremony



The ROSE ceremony on December 6, 2016, held at *Marker of Change*, the Women's Monument in Thornton Park, Vancouver, BC.

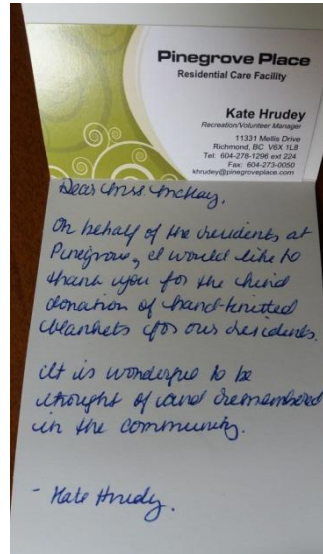


ROSE held an open Yazidi discussion circle which included a celebration of the arrival of Yazidi women and children refugees to Canada





Beautiful hand-knit blankets donated to Richmond Shares and a thank-you card from Pinegrove Place Residential Care Facility who accepted the blankets for their seniors.



Work Ready Program, Session 27 Graduation



2016 Christmas Potluck

